Marriage and Masculinities in Motion: Examining Migrant Husbands’ Experiences in Birmingham’s British Pakistani Community

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Declaration

I, Suriyah Bi, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Signed: ........................................

Date: ........................................
Abstract

The thesis examines marriage and masculinities in motion through the experiences of Pakistani migrant husbands in Birmingham, UK. Drawing on the detailed life history narratives of sixty-two migrant husbands, and forty-three community member interlocuters who were aware of and/or in contact with migrant husbands, over a thirty-month period (February 2016-August 2018), the thesis explores and is organised in three key sections: (a) aspirational masculinity, (b) liminal masculinity, and (c) (re)assertive masculinity. The first section of the thesis traces the shifts in the aspirations of migrant husbands before and after marriage and migration, showing that these shifts are experienced in relation to the masculine ideal of ‘transnational patriarch’. The second section explores the impact of marriage and migration on the experiences of masculinity. I trace the ways that migrant husbands can experience precarity, heightened levels of vulnerability, and domestic violence. As a result, I argue that migrant husbands experience a ‘liminal’ [in-between] masculinity. The final section of the thesis explores the ways in which migrant husbands practice agency and resistance. Three significant arenas of agency and resistance are highlighted: (1) engaging with Songs of Sorrow, a musical form that extends from Sufi Qawwali, (2) by engaging in religious practices that are unique to Birmingham’s ‘Sufi-scape’ in which migrant husbands develop a ‘prophetic masculinity’, (3) and by way of appearing financially secure in order to maintain their identity as ‘transnational patriarch’. The thesis engages with and contributes to the field of men and masculinity studies, migration studies, human geography, and the anthropology of Islam. The research also contributes to and paves a way forward for the ‘decolonization of Muslim men’.
Impact statement

Within academia, the thesis provides a nuanced account of the experiences of male migrants within transnational marriage, which is often skewed towards documenting female experiences. In doing so, the thesis demonstrates that men – particularly of Muslim and/or Pakistani backgrounds who are often portrayed as powerful patriarchs - can also be vulnerable and weak. As a result, the thesis contributes to men and masculinity studies by demonstrating that masculinities can be multiple and context-based. Further, since the masculinity and marriage for migrant husbands is explored through migration (motion), the thesis demonstrates that migration, marriage and masculinity are interconnected. For migration theory, this is a valuable contribution, as the ethnography shows that migration is a process rather than a one-off event or decision. The interconnection is demonstrated particularly through aspirational masculinity, liminal masculinity, and reassertive masculinity. Respectively, it is argued that space and place can also migrate, thereby motivating migrants; it is shown that migrant husband can become liminal themselves, which expands of Turner’s theory of liminal masculinity as a ‘temporary state’ only applied to transitional periods; and finally, it is shown that migrant husbands can exercise agency and resistance by creating alternative social currencies. Collectively, the findings of the thesis offer a nuance to the study of Muslim masculinities and therefore, can be seen to contribute to the decolonisation of Muslim men. For academics in the field, the thesis promotes a ‘compassionate’ feminist ethnography through which experiences of Muslim men are documented.

Outside of academia, the thesis advocates for compassionate approach to policies on immigration, as some interlocuters were denied of the right to family life due to the oppressive immigration rules. This included migrant husbands being separated from their children who were being raised in the UK in the absence of a father, for which there are extensive studies within the field of childhood studies detailing the implications. The thesis findings also advocate for services such as domestic violence help and mental health services to be more inclusive of male vulnerability, particularly within BME communities. It is acknowledged within the thesis that current mental health services lack in appealing to and therefore catering to BME men, which can perpetuate
racial and ethnic disparities and the stereotypes associated with them. Similarly, the thesis also makes strides towards raising awareness of domestic violence against men within Pakistani and/or Muslim communities, wherein it is generally viewed that only women are subjected to domestic violence. In sum, the thesis unpacks some of the deeply ingrained and unquestioned views regarding gender, migration, and Islam that circulate within the popular culture and society today.
“We wouldn’t ask why a rose,
that grew from the concrete,
for having damaged petals,
in turn, we would all celebrate its tenacity,
we would all love its will to reach the sun,
well, we are the roses,
this is the concrete,
and these are my damaged petals,
don’t ask me why thank God, and ask me how.”

— Tupac Shakur
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1. Introduction

This thesis investigates marriage and masculinity in motion through the case of Muslim migrant husbands in Birmingham’s British Pakistani community. The investigation comes at an important time when migration and gender dynamics are receiving intense media, policy, and public scrutiny. There is a growing body of research within men and masculinity studies that examines the diversity in masculine identities which are simultaneously context-based and embedded within transnational frames, thereby demonstrating that masculinities are multiple, complex and relational in nature (see Connell: 2005). For Muslim societies however, it is widely understood that men are powerful patriarchs, which is particularly true of masculinities within marriage. In addition, the heightened focus on counter-terror is more than often gendered, depicting Pakistani and/or Muslim men, inter alia, as extremists, powerful patriarchs, wife beaters, sexual predators and gang members (see also Hoque: 2019, 2). Within the diaspora context, men within the British Pakistani Muslim community are widely depicted in negative terms. Notably, however, a study by Charsley (2005, 2015) established that some migrant husbands within the British Pakistani community in the UK hold weak positions within the household, thereby unsettling common understandings of Pakistani and/or Muslim men. It is therefore important to further explore the nature and implications of their weak positions as it holds significance for the construction of masculinity amongst Muslim men, the impact on marriage as an institution, and for migration theory, as in this instance, these men come to occupy weak positions in and through migration, including through their interactions with immigration regimes. It is this particular window of exploration that has inspired this doctoral research.

My research has aimed to examine the changing experiences of marriage migration, which includes particular attention to the diverse power structures that migrant husbands have navigated, and that have constituted their experiences and positions in different ways across time and space. Three overarching research questions were constructed. The first question asked how migrant husbands experience marriage migration to the UK, the second research question focused on how migrant husbands perceived the relationship between marriage, migration, and
masculinity, and the third research question explored the ways in which migrant husbands perceived and negotiated their positions in their wives’ and/or in-laws’ households. The research questions aimed to gather detailed and nuanced insights of the experiences of migrant husbands and their own conceptualisations of their changing position in the transnational landscape they have navigated, often since childhood in Pakistan. Given this aim and my interest in exploring marriage migration from the perspective of migrant husbands within the context of their local (and transnational) context, the research methodology adopted for this research was ethnographic in nature, including semi-structured interviews, collecting life history narratives, and participation observation. Employing these methods, between February 2017 and August 2018, I conducted fieldwork with sixty-two migrant husband interlocuters, and forty-three community member interlocuters, in addition to conducting participant observation of a spiritual Sufi healer who provided some migrant husbands with talismans and wazifas [supplications from the Quran] to perform, in order to alleviate their hardships.

The thesis begins with a literature review, which aims to provide an in depth reading of key debates within the fields of transnational marriage migration, men and masculinity studies, and the trajectory of British Pakistani diaspora to the UK. This constructs a backdrop upon which the research is situated and subsequently informs the analysis of the findings. The next chapter details the methodological approach, including a justification of the techniques used, ethical considerations, and consideration of my positionality as a researcher. The thesis is then structured thematically around the key findings arising throughout my research, exploring, in turn, the three forms of masculinity that I identify as having been experienced by the migrant husbands who participated in my study: aspirational masculinity, liminal masculinity, and reassertive masculinity.

Section One of the thesis, Aspirational Masculinity, consists of three chapters that explore migrant husbands' aspirations, and trace the way in which these aspirations change before, during, and after marriage and migration. The first of these chapters draws on life history interviews to demonstrate that the aspiration to migrate is often planted, nurtured, and facilitated by family members sometimes long before the physical migration journey to the UK begins. This includes the making of the migrant husband through food and diet choices, clothing apparel, and hairstyles,
and the use of technology and social media to market the migrant husband as an attractive spouse for a British Pakistani woman, and her family. However, in some instances, the planted aspirations did not flower in the way migrant husbands and/or their families had hoped, as a result of which revisions to aspirations were required.

The differences between imagined and lived experiences of migration and marriage is further highlighted in the second chapter of this section, wherein the concept of the transnational patriarch is introduced as a masculine ideal that migrant husbands aspire(d) to, both in Pakistan and after migrating to the UK. I argue that the figure of the transnational patriarch comprises three elements: businessman, family man, and respected man. The chapter demonstrates the way in which these three elements are intricately linked and enable the migrant husband to maintain his image as a successful migrant man, within a transnational context. This also indicates the significance of the symbolic weight attached to migrating to the UK that operates as a currency that determines social standing, respect and honour and echoes the notion of desire being recognised only outside a nation, yet recognizable within the nation (Rafael: 1997, 271).

The third chapter within this section focuses on the experiences of migrant husbands after marriage and migration in order to better understand the migratory route of the aspirations that were held prior to marriage and migration. Building on the literature vis-à-vis ‘waithood’ (Singerman: 2007, Honwana: 2012), I argue that migrant husbands enter a period of waithood after marriage which is triggered by immigration rules and regulations set out by the UK Home Office. For some migrant husbands, the waithood period increases anxiety, emotional distress, and marital instabilities. Those who overcame this initial waithood period and successfully migrated to the UK are met with different expectations of responsibilities tied to being a migrant husband, and laboring and citizenship struggles. This chapter provides an insight into the way in which different actors within the various spaces in the transnational context - such as that of the in-laws in the wife’s household, the state through immigration documents, employers in the workplace – exert influence and power upon the migrant husband and as a result, create dissonance between migrant husbands’ imagined and lived realities both before marriage and migration, and upon marriage and migration.
The narratives presented in this first section come together to demonstrate that migration is not only an ongoing journey (Carling: 2018) that can take place in stages (Scheibelhofer: 2018, 999), but can also include starts, stops, blockages, diversions, interruptions, and restarts (Collins: 2018: 972). Furthermore, I show that aspirations also undergo migration, which suggests a deeply interwoven relationship between migrant husbands, their social imaginaries, and their lived realities, echoing Borden’s (2001) argument that space and the body are internalised within one another. Since the site of aspiration making often begins and most certainly includes the social imaginary (see also Appadurai: 1990), migration journeys should also include the landscape of the imagination in addition to geographical countries or locations that migrants travel through and between. My analysis of aspirational masculinity thus demonstrates that the social imaginary is a significant location to which migrant husbands revert, and is significant in the way in which social events unfold for migrant husbands within diverse spaces including the home, workplace, and community.

Section Two of the thesis, Liminal Masculinity, focuses more closely on the experiences of migrant husbands post marriage and migration to the UK, and in doing so, provides a nuanced insight into the dissonance between the experiences of migrant husbands at different times in their life histories. The first chapter in this section shows that migrant husbands can lead precarious lives due to entering periods of waithood, powerlessness, and inferiority before, during and upon marriage and migration. This lays the foundations for understanding migrant husband masculinities as liminal, as migrant husbands are increasingly ‘in-between’ their identity as transnational patriarchs, as they had once envisioned it. Further, at the heart of the precarity is a lack of power, control, and agency over life events, and being at the mercy and control of many of those within their social fields such as wives, in-laws, and employers. Through this insight, it becomes increasingly apparent that the migration of a weaker man such as the migrant husband, helped construct the transnational patriarchal identity of pioneer generation of migrant men. This finding echoes Fischer’s (1990: 103-104) argument that the highest form of izzat [honour], which is usually seen to be associated with the female body, is in fact associated with the regulation of men’s bodies.
The second chapter in this section explores diverse manifestations of migrant husbands’ weak position, providing insights into a little researched area: how men cope with and navigate the changes brought about by what is conventionally known as uxorilocal marriage, in a transnational setting. It is found that factors such as lower levels of education, consanguineous or close kin marriages, and cultural differences are related to heightened levels of vulnerability amongst migrant husbands. All of the total sixty-two migrant husbands who participated in the study had experienced verbal abuse and forty-seven had experienced physical abuse at the hands of their wives and/or in-laws and/or employers. The levels of abuse indicate migrant husbands’ silence and invisibility, which juxtaposes the broader narrative wherein Pakistani men are often depicted as powerful patriarchs. The findings also speak to the theory of liminality, as they demonstrate that migrant husbands can occupy liminal states over long periods of time and by extension, the migrant male body can then be viewed as a critical space and social location, wherein not only the past, present, and future unfold simultaneously, but also upon which migration takes place. Given the paucity of research vis-à-vis the vulnerable positions of migrant husbands, and their experiences as survivors of domestic violence, the ethnography makes a valuable contribution to the field of men and masculinity studies.

The third chapter considers the implications of domestic violence against migrant husbands for power dynamics within the British Pakistani community. This is a pertinent consideration given that Pakistani and/or Muslim men are often depicted as powerful patriarchs and oppressors of women. In essence, my research shows that there are multiple patriarchies that exist in the British Pakistani and/or Muslim community, some of which are oppressive to both men and women (also see Joseph: 1996). I also demonstrate that the transnational dynamic in which citizenship status is a key actor, determines relations between and across genders. In some ways, then, British citizenship performs as a symbolic currency that transcends the patriarchal system that is conventionally seen to operate within the British Pakistani and/or Muslim community. As a result, traditional notions of honour and shame take on different meanings within this transnational context involving migrant husbands, as they are no longer tied only to the bodies of women. Due to the shifts in gender positions and relations brought about by the transnational dynamic, I argue that the feminisation of marriage has occurred within the British Pakistani community. The
feminisation of marriage in my view, captures how marriage as an institution has become more favourable to women as a result of having kin in close proximity, a widening of space within which they can exercise agency, choice and preference (including both marital and sexual) and by extension, women are often able to determine the direction of power by using their citizenship status as leverage. For masculinity, then, this chapter demonstrates that migration, including social migration within marriage, can place masculinity in motion.

Section Three of the thesis, Reassertive Masculinity, consists of three chapters that explore the mobility of masculine identity caused by marriage and migration. The section demonstrates that migrant husbands can practice resistive agency (see Holland and Skinner: 1995) through engaging with musical forms such as Songs of Sorrow, which enables them to express emotions, experience solidarity, and build a virtual community. Gender dynamics are invoked through the lyrics of the songs, which can function as vehicles to establish social truths that resonate with pre-existing patriarchal gendered ideals. I argue, however, that these songs should be viewed as a safe space for migrant husbands to express themselves, similar to the songs through which women have expressed thoughts of harming their husbands (see Raheja and Gold: 1994, Abu-Lughod: 1990). The second chapter shows the significance of religiosity in acquiring important forms of religio-social capital, including trust. Focusing on a close reading of the cases of my interviewees, I show that some migrant husbands practice what I refer to as ‘prophetic masculinity’ in order to rebuild their masculinity by aligning themselves with the holy and/or sacred within a religious landscape of Sufi-scapes, which, in turn, are also a product of the transnational dynamic. The final chapter in this section subsequently demonstrates the ways in which migrant husbands perform finances to keep up the appearance of being successful transnational patriarchs in spite of diverse challenges and negative experiences in the UK. A key finding emerging throughout the research pertains to the ways in which the wives, sisters, and daughters of migrant husbands had individual purchasing power, which – in the cases I discuss – they actively chose to exercise to help alleviate the hardships of migrant husbands, as their honour and social standing in the community is intricately interwoven with that of their male kin. This finding leads me to argue that honour is not one-dimensional in form or practice within the British Pakistani community. Instead, honour, it seems,
is context dependent, as it works differently within a single household compared to within a community of many households, and between married couples compared to a group of people.

Together, the three overarching sections of the thesis and the nine chapters that they comprise, trace the journey of migration that migrant husbands undergo through marriage but also the journey of migration that their masculine identity, social lives, and marital lives undergo. Therefore, the research provides a nuanced account of the impact of the migration:marriage:masculinity nexus; that they are intricately interwoven, and that migration through space, place, and time simultaneously invokes migration operating in and through the space and place of the body. Migration is therefore an embodied experience through which space and place are internalised (see also Borden: 2001). The findings overall, contribute to men and masculinity studies, migration studies, and the anthropology of Islam and Muslim societies. The overarching outcome of the research, which will be further discussed in the methodology and concluding chapters, is that the research contributes to and paves a way forward for the ‘decolonization of Muslim men’. In doing so, I draw on a vibrant body of literature that explores South-South relations (Connell: 2007, Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley: 2019), particularly within academic spaces that can continue the colonial legacy in and through knowledge production (Murrey: 2019). By reflecting on my positionality within the academy wherein, in my view, I have been subjected to discriminatory policies that have rendered me mute and marginalized, I find that my positionality is interconnected with that of my interlocuters and therefore, their ability to be ‘seen’ and ‘heard’ is compromised. As a result, I argue that the structures of the academy fail to accommodate for positionalities and viewpoints that may disrupt the ‘Eurocentric’ narrative (see El-Taleb: 2012, Patel: 2019, Murrey: 2019).

I demonstrate that there are not only multiple souths and southern voices in the metropole (see also Connell: 2007, 2014, de Sousa Santos: 2014), but also as I am an embodiment of the South (through my positionality) who is researching a community that also embodies the South in many ways, I am ‘doing’ decolonial thought (see also Smith: 1999). This is to say that this research is both a practice and embodiment of decolonial thought, as both my voice and the voice of my interlocuters are brought to the fore despite the various and multiple forms of structural
oppressions faced in and through the doctorate study. As a result, Muslim men at the centre for this research are re-oriented within the space of academic knowledge production, as having diverse experiences that include experiencing vulnerability, instability, and precarity, and thereby the research transcends the negative grand narratives through which Muslim men can often be depicted.
2. Literature Review

Introduction

This thesis builds upon and aims to contribute to key sets of literature within migration, marriage, and masculinity and thus, the literature review chapter is organised accordingly to these overarching themes. The first section of this chapter takes each of the three interconnected factors (migration, marriage, and masculinity) individually, and discusses key debates within these fields which are of relevance to some of the questions that underpin the thesis. First, I provide an overview of key contributions to the literature on marriage migration, on both the global and local levels. Next, interdisciplinary contributions will help trace patterns and forms of marriage, exploring key forms of marriage migration, and teasing out the impact of contemporary migration trends on gender roles and identities. Theorisations of the private and public spheres and notions of the home emerge as particularly useful, in examining these key forms and trends.

In the second section of this chapter, I provide an overview of men and masculinity studies and trace their strengths and weaknesses from the late 20th century to date. Within this subfield, the vibrant literature on men, migration, and masculinity is further explored, which speaks to the project’s ambition of demonstrating the interconnectedness of the three factors of migration, marriage, and masculinity. It is in this section that I will emphasise the nexus between migration, marriage, and masculinity and consider the nexus itself.

In the third section of the chapter I aim to draw out contributions to the academic fields of migration, marriage, and masculinity within the context of the British Pakistani community. First, I trace the community’s historical, social, and cultural roots in Britain. Next, marriage trends and practices are discussed, after which and I consider the contours of shifting gender roles and agency within marriage, setting the backdrop for the significance of the research at the centre of this thesis: the diverse experiences of migrant husbands.
2.1 Delineating the Contours of the Marriage, Migration and Masculinity Nexus.

Over the last two decades, scholarly consensus has established that structural forces lead to both the inception of migration and its perpetuation (Massey et al. 1998), which can be understood as the ‘drivers of migration’. Drivers of migration have conventionally been focused on disparities between the place of origin and the place of destination. Classical literature in the field suggested that migrants were pushed by low incomes in their countries and pulled by better prospects in more affluent countries (Lee: 1966, Harris and Todaro: 1970), which is otherwise known as the ‘push-pull’ model. However, critics of this approach have long argued that centuries of exploitation of poor countries by rich countries created longstanding inequalities, which drive current migration trends (Castles and Kosack: 1973, Sassen: 1988).

Alternative explanations for the inception and perpetuation of migration have taken a micro-level approach, such as focusing on household decision-making (Stark: 1991), or macro-level approaches such as the role of social-networks (Boyd: 1989). While these are useful approaches that provide nuanced insights into the significance of individual and group agency, they mute the importance of structural dimensions, such as poverty, which was seen as a key structural driver of out-migration. There has however been increasing recognition that the poorest can rarely migrate due to lack of resource (Tapinos: 1990), UNDP: 2009) and therefore, while there are strong relationships between migration and the alleviation of poverty, poverty may not be a driver of migration, as once understood (Van Hear and Sorensen: 2003).

A shortcoming of such models and approaches is the presentation of migration as a single action rather than a process (Van Hear et. al: 2018). In its original presentation, push-pull failed to account for changing motivations, altered circumstances or modified decisions en-route (De Haas: 2011). This is situated within a broader move within the literature that has increasingly to acknowledge that migration is entangled in myriad social, cultural and emotional laden power relations (Pratt and Yeoh: 2003, Silvey: 2004, Silvey: 2006) and therefore, migration theories need to account for the way in which migration is situated in geographies, emotional valences, social
relations and obligations, and political and power relations (Carling: 2018, 911), in a multifold of ways.

A further shortcoming of the push-pull model is the way in which the migrant is understood as a figure without its own history and social force (Nail: 2015, 4) but rather, the histories, presents, and futures of the migrant have been scripted through the lens of the nation state and the concept of the citizen where stasis, rather than movement being conceptualised as a normal state of being (Casas-Cortes et.al: 2015, Collins: 2018, 965). People however, engage in migration for diverse reasons from work, to education, to marriage, the latter of which is the focus of the thesis. Anthropological literature of love for instance (Inhorn and Neguib: 2018, Inhorn: 2017, Constable: 2005), had demonstrated that migration can be a deeply embodied driver of marriage. In light of these critiques of such conventional viewpoints, this section of the literature review explores push-pull factors in marriage migration more closely.

2.1.1 Marriage Migration

The association between marriage and migration has been documented across both space and time by both historians and anthropologists, who have written extensively about marriage migration as a dimension of social life in early modern and modern Europe (Kertzer and Hogan: 1989, Moch: 1992, Netting: 1981), and in colonial America (Adams and Kasakoff: 1980, Norton: 1973). This has included the documentation of the transportation of marriage practices such as consanguineous or sororate marriages across borders (Baykara-Krumme: 2016, Brettell: 2015, Reid: 1988), while others have documented the “international marriage market” of the nineteenth-century that included arranged marriages, and third-party matchmaking among first-generation immigrants in the United States (Sinke: 1999). Twentieth-century accounts of US immigration have afforded insights into the practice involving Japanese “picture brides” (Tanaka: 2004) and post–World War II “war brides” (Zeiger: 2010).

Globally, men and women are migrating to marry or marrying in order to migrate. This marriage-related mobility takes several forms of which one is known as ‘female deficit’. For example, Cole (2010) has documented the experiences of Malagasy women who marry French men who have
difficulty finding French wives who are willing to tolerate the difficult life of a farming wife, and settle with them in rural areas of France. For Malagasy women these marriages are a way to escape the poverty of their circumstances at home. As a result, Cole (2010) argues that Malagasy–French marriages are about more than the commodification of marriage and citizenship, rather husbands and wives work together in running a business, caring for elderly parents, and building a home in Madagascar (Cole: 2014, 532). Other benefits include French men gaining lively and hard-working wives who will care for them in old age as opposed to “egotistical and materialistic,” (2010: 535) French women who would make ‘bad’ wives, and Malagasy women gaining French citizenship, companionship, and help with their family in Madagascar. Cole’s ethnography therefore offers nuance and challenges the simple dichotomy between love and strategic marriages, in the context of migration.

Asia is another context where there is extensive research relating to marriage-migration (Constable: 2005, Fan and Huang: 1998, Freeman: 2011, Lee: 2012, Yang and Lu: 2010). Faier’s (2007) study of Flipina women who arrive in Japan as labour migrants to work in hostess bars under six-month entertainment visas, subsequently choose to marry Japanese men and settle through a spousal visa. Faier argues that through love, Filipina migrant women are navigating both “the perils and promises of their transnational encounters...[and] claiming a sense of humanity, countering the stigma associated with their work in bars, and articulating a sense of themselves as cosmopolitan, modern, and moral women who possessed an emotional interiority” (2007: 149).

Bride-deficit marriage-related migration can also occur within national borders due to local identity markers such as caste, language and state boundaries. Kaur (2012) shows that men from the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh experience difficulty finding local wives for a number of reasons including lack of wealth and income, older age, damaged reputations, or were previously married. The low sex ratios due to longstanding cultural preferences for girls (see also Dasgupta: 1990) and new reproductive technologies that enable the selection of sex of offspring. To resolve this, suitable spouses are found across long distances of more than one thousand kilometres, which distributes women from areas with better sex rations (particularly West Bengal). Due to the considerable distance, the bride’s family are afforded greater negotiating powers to alleviate
instances where they cannot afford a dowry, if they require money, or if a daughter is too old, unattractive, or has been married before.

A second form of marriage migration is the practice of mail-order brides (Jackson: 2002, 2007). Based on research in Japan, Kojima (2001) argues that the mail-order bride system has developed in response to women’s resistance in industrialized countries, who reject conventional forms of marriage due to the inherent ideology of oppressive domesticity (2001: 204). As a result, mail-order brides are substitutes for local women. The rise of the internet has increased the practice (Constable: 2003, Johnson: 2007, Johnson-Hanks: 2007), which has raised concerns about ‘bride-trafficking’ (Johnson: 2007), the risk of domestic violence against these brides at different stages of the migration process (Menjivar & Salcido 2002), and the continued inclusion in economic inequalities (Chun: 1996). Such concerns have led legal professionals and scholars to argue for better regulation of the mail-order bride business (Lloyd: 2000, Narayan: 1995). Constable (2003) however, assesses women’s agency as well as broader gendered geographies of power and inequality, arguing that women and men involved in these marriages often exercise “informed and logical” (2003, 6) choices when deciding with whom to correspond and meet with, to assess compatibility for marriage. Constable also urges readers to consider that the men and women who engage in these relationships operate “within a particular historical and global context, as people who both exert power are subject to it” (Constable: 2003, 9).

A third form of marriage migration is marriage among first and second-generation immigrants who turn to the homeland and/or countries of heritage to find a suitable spouse. Such marriages are often arranged or semi-arranged in nature, and have been observed among South Asians in the United Kingdom (Gardner: 1995, Shaw: 2001, Pande: 2014), North African Muslims in suburban Paris (Selby: 2009), Turks in Belgium (Timmerman: 2006), Timmerman et.al: 2009), and Jat Sikhs in Canada (Mooney: 2006). Although most arranged marriages of this nature are conducted in this way involved foreign brides, there are some examples of foreign husbands such as the case studies by Charsley (2005) of migrant husbands in the British Pakistani community, and Gallo (2006) of South Indian migrant husbands in Italy. These marriages have been noted to protect family assets and honour, and continue religious and cultural practices and observances. However, they are
generally portrayed in national discourses in a negative light (see Schmidt: 2011, 268), which is symptomatic of broader structures of oppression that determine who is classed as a desirable and undesirable migrant, and which forms of union and family reproduction are desired. There is also extensive literature within the sub-section of this form of marriage migration that details the adverse effects of these unions, leading to domestic and honour based violence (Alkpinar: 2003, Kortewage: 2012). In some ways, the next form of marriage (marriages of convenience) overlap with unions amongst first and second-generation immigrants who look for spouses in their home countries, as they can involve convenience. These should however, be treated as separate due to the way in which they can be fraudulent.

In the United States, the post-1965 immigration policies that emphasised family reunification have increased the likelihood of individuals misusing these policies to secure permanent residence (a green card). In other words, someone may be paid to participate in a marriage of convenience and to act as the sponsor for the individual interested in immigration. Upon successful migration and citizenship of the ‘fraudulent spouse’, the marriage would then be terminated (Brettell: 2017, 86). It has been estimated that the number of foreign nationals who have obtained green cards on this basis has doubled since 1985 (ibid). In response to this, the United States passed marriage fraud amendments to the Immigration Act of 1965, introducing penalties for those involved in such sham marriages, and a two-year provisional green card was created for immigrant spouses of citizens and permanent residents (ibid). Such suspicions of fraudulent marriages are also prevalent in Europe, such as the UK wherein the Primary Purpose Rule which was in effect from 1985-1997, required would-be spousal migrant that immigrant was not the primary purpose of their spousal immigration application (Menski: 1999, Lutz: 1997). While this practice was abandoned due to being unfair, the UK and other countries in Europe continue in their practices of ‘moral gate-keeping’ of such unions by placing minimum lengths of time on marriages before an application of family reunification can occur, and/or citizenship status is granted (Brettell: 2017, 86).

The above-mentioned case studies have provided a grounding to the different ways in which marriage-migration can occur over time and space, and the ways in which these marriages and unions can be exposed to heavy regulation from states and governments, and structures of
oppression. The subsequent discussion focuses in more detail on the marriages between second and third generation immigrants, which will assist in framing the interlocuters at the heart of this thesis; Muslim migrant husbands from Pakistan.

2.1.2 Transnational Marriage Literature

Transnational marriages can be understood as referring to marriages taking place within pre-existing active transnational networks, and between people who are habitually resident in different states (Charsley, 2012: 19). Such marriages spanning borders are not a new phenomenon. In the days of British rule in India, the East India Company shipped single British women to India in the hope of providing wives to its employees, as “they wanted middle-class British girls who could share the high purpose of empire” (MacMillan: 1988, 11). ‘Picture brides’ joining Japanese settlers in the America during the early 20th century provide another example of cross border marriages. These marriages were subject to significant policing from both the Japanese and American states: men were required to fulfill financial criteria to demonstrate they were able to support a family and, on arrival, wives were required to pass medical checks, and those with diseases were barred from entering the US (Ichikawa: 1980, Lee: 2003). Another historical example of marriage migration is the estimated 70,000 ‘war-brides’ of WWII who migrated to the US in the 1940s to join their partners (Virden, 1996: 1). Such cases were clearly marked along racial and ethnic lines, as those from India and South East Asia were not granted the same privileges, and Japanese wives were not permitted entry in the US until 1952 (Kaiser, 2008: xxxix – xxx). These case studies show that racial and ethnic dynamics, hierarchies of desirable and undesirable migrants, promotion of certain forms of marriage and reproduction while barring other unions, are deeply embedded in migration policies (see also Vukov: 2003, Lee: 2002, Yeoh: 2012).

Recent scholarship on transnational marriages stems from a variety of academic traditions and is therefore, fragmented (Charsley, 2012: 4). There are however, a number of overarching themes, which can assist in comprehending this varied body of literature. For instance, Mahler and Pessar’s concept of ‘gendered geographies of power’ (2001) is a useful way to frame the literature on transnational marriages, as it denotes the ways in which gender and status are complicated by
transnationalism and mobility. This concept is useful for analysing the experiences of migrant husbands, as their masculine identities are negotiated in and through the transnational space, and the transnational space is organised by their masculine identities. A parallel case study to that of migrant husbands in the British Pakistani community is that of Turkish Danish households (Liversage: 2012) where the concept ‘gendered geographies of power’ has been useful in understanding transnational marriages, which provided the Danish-raised and Danish-citizen spouses, considerable power over their Turkish spouses in their relationships (2012: 1132).

A second useful concept in framing the literature on transnational marriage and constructing the lens with which we can understand the case of migrant husbands, is ‘cartographies of desire’ (Constable 2005a: 7), which comprises the gendered imaginings of potential partners from different countries. These ‘cartographies of desire’ are able to map sexually desirable characteristics, as exemplified in the reputation of Thai brides as highly desirable (Sims: 2012) as well as other characteristics desired in a spouse that are lacking in the local marriage market. For instance, for ethnic minorities in western countries, women from ‘back-home’ can be seen as chaste and uncorrupted, attributes which are often desired in a wife and mothers of the next generation (Shaw and Charsley: 2006a, Constable: 2005a). Similarly, research has documented that ‘western’ men can view wives from Asia or the former Soviet Union as a positive contrast to local women who can be overly-demanding or career-oriented feminists (Johnson: 2007, Mand: 2003, 110). Desire is therefore a significant driver of migration that enables us to understand that people engage in migration for different reasons, and thus encourage the exploration of the ways in which desire plays a role in the decision making processes of migrant husbands. While sexual characteristics may not be a significant driver of desire for migrant husbands, the concept is nonetheless useful for mapping the desire of migrant husbands (and perhaps also of their families) and in understanding why transnational marriages of this form, continue to be practiced. The literature on aspiration and desire (Carling and Collins (2018) can advance this exploration further, and thus offer nuance to the drivers of migration.
An additional framework through which the literature on transnational marriage can be viewed is as a ‘strategic and motivated practice’ (Charsley, 2012: 7). For instance, Constable (2005a) demonstrates how transnational marriages can be sought as an opportunity to leave undesirable situations, including poverty or sex work in countries of origin, or to escape the stigma of divorce (Constable: 2005b, Mix and Piper: 2003). Such marriages (often referred to as marriages of convenience) have given rise to the increase in policing through immigration policies in various states such as Europe, which demonstrate that states are continuing a long-standing policy of control, which is highly racialised and gendered. For instance, under a Conservative Government, the UK has raised the age of eligibility for transnational marriage from 18 to 21, introduced pre-entry English language requirements for spouses, increased the length of probationary periods for migrants on spouse visas, and introduced higher income requirements, all of which make it increasingly difficult for spouses to be granted a visa (Qureshi, 2016: 1219). These insights enable us to become aware of the different actors involved in the marriage migration process, all of which have different motivating factors in promoting or engaging in marriage migration; from states promoting and/or impeding certain marriages, to the preferences of ‘settled’ partners who wish to ‘bring’ spouses to join them from abroad, and of prospective spousal migrants, and other family and community members.

The above-mentioned conceptual frameworks speak to an interdisciplinary body of literature, which can be fruitful in understanding the complexities of migrants navigating the migration process in various contexts. The cited literature also exhibit a tendency to evaluate contextual experiences of transnational marriage migration along social lines and identity markers such as gender, class, ethnicity, race, and educational attainment. For my research, I endeavor to follow in the foot-steps of scholars who have provided the rich case studies and ethnographies mentioned above, and employ an intersectional and interdisciplinary approach, with the aim of providing a nuanced\(^1\) documentation of the experiences of migrant husbands.

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\(^1\) There are always going to be perceptions and representations, which take us away from ‘the truth’ and more towards the complexities and the ever-shifting processes negotiated by people over time and space particularly, as the subject of migration receives intense negative media attention in receiving countries.
2.1.3 Gendered Experiences of ‘Out-Migration’ for Marriage and/or Household Purposes

In order to explore and understand the gendered experiences of migrant husbands in motion, it is useful to consider other case studies of ‘out-migration’, where the migrants in question are disadvantaged and/or vulnerable particularly in relation to the space of the home. The term feminisation of migration (Castles and Miller, 2003: 9) has been employed to illustrate a single gendered pattern in migration (Lan: 2006). The global increase in female migrant domestic workers, especially those working as nannies and maids, is a hallmark of the term. Globally, it is estimated the number of migrant domestic workers anywhere between 53 and 100 million (ILO: 2013). In the Asia Pacific region, it is estimated there are 21.5 million domestic workers. Within the region, the small city-state of Singapore attracts migrant domestic workers (MDWs) mainly from the Philippines, Indonesia and Sri Lanka (Yeoh: 2012) and is an example where state policies are designed to ensure that MDWs are no more than a transient force (Yeoh: 2009, 117, Cheah; 2009, Devasahayam: 2010). State policies regulate their employment as well as limiting the number of MDWs more broadly, to ensure their temporary status. This includes an initial two-year work permit that is renewable to a maximum of eight years, and which requires the MDW to undergo a bi-annual medical examination to test for pregnancy and venereal diseases. In addition, employers are required to pay a levy and a security bond which are forfeited if the MDW fails to comply with any of the conditions stated in the work permit visa (Yeoh: 1999, Cheah: 2009, Devasahayam: 2010, Tan: 2010). Such immigration policies relegate MDWs - the majority of whom are female - as invisible members of society, which resonates with the Untouchables in India’s caste system (Dumont: 1980). Similarly, Killias (2010) explored the MDW experiences in Malaysia and argued that the legitimized migration scheme there has much in common with colonial indentured labour, operating as an instrument of subordination. This case study is therefore exemplary in demonstrating the way in which the state permeates the space of the home to regulate MDWs and defines the gendered geography of power (Mahler and Pessar: 2001) which they become part of. Since migrant husbands also have significant dealings with the state as a result of the spousal immigration visa application, it is important to consider the ways in which, if
any, the state continues to play a role in determining migrant husband experiences after migration and settlement.

Another sub-field from which literature on gendered experiences of ‘out-migration’ emerges is that of spousal separation, and its impact on family dynamics (Montes: 2013). Stay-at-home women left behind by migrant men have long been the main focus of academic research (Montes: 2013), with the impact of the absence of their migrant spouses on their psychoemotional well-being documented as causing anxiety, depression, and sometimes suicidal ideations (Amado: 2010, Dreby: 2006, Hondagneu-Sotelo: 1994, Parreñas: 2001, Saddiqi and Ennaji: 2004, Salgado de Snyder: 1993). However, the left behind wives were then increasingly studied in contexts where they themselves became migrants due to the high labour demand from the global care industry, which had implications for household dynamics due to their increased breadwinner status and nature of their transnational motherhood practices (see also Hoang and Yeoh: 2011, Pareñna: 2005). Some academics have noted the overemphasis of this women-only approach in the early stages of academic inquiry in this field, which left changes in masculinity identity either underrepresented or oversimplified (Montes: 2013, 475). However, as noted previously, gender analysis has shifted away from studying female-only experiences of migration as gendered experiences, which I will now turn to consider in more detail.

Re-writing of men in gendered accounts of migration

In recent years, academics have contributed rich and detailed studies to the field of men and masculinity studies that provide insights to the experiences of men in and through migration (Inhorn: 2018, Walsh: 2011, Kleist: 2010, Jansen; 2008). These include Inhorn’s (2018) study of Arab male masculinity in relation to assistive reproductive technologies, which demonstrates that men are able to practice hope and resistance in partnership with their wives, and often remain strong and hide emotions from their wives in order to be supportive towards them in times of hardship and distress. Walsh’s (2011) study demonstrated that British ex-pat men regressed in their masculine performances when in Dubai, compared to their British counterparts who
remained progressive regarding gender roles within marriage. This particular case study demonstrated that space and place can organise gendered performances and gender relations. In comparison, Jansen’s (2008) study demonstrated how a remembered space and place organised masculine performances of and gender relations amongst Bosnian men in the host country, which indicates that gendered geographies of power (Mahler and Pessar: 2001) can travel with migrants.2

Specifically within transnational migration contexts, research by Gallo (2006) and Charsley (2005) demonstrates how uxorilocal marriages - where men migrate to join their wives’ households - have taken on new meanings. For instance, in Gallo’s (2006) study, migrant husbands from South India to Italy found it challenging to adjust to the host country where they are afforded employment through the professional networks developed by their wives, as this emasculates them. In addition, the perception of these wives as being ‘loose women’ impacts migrant husbands negatively, as they view taints to their wives’ honour as compromising their honour. The gendered geography of power (Mahler and Pessar: 2001) that exists in this study therefore structures migrant husband experiences positioning them – in their view – as inferior to their wives and as a result, some migrant husbands return to India with their children, as their wives continue to remain and work in Italy. While in the traditional anthropological literature, uxorilocal marriages suggest that husbands complete integration into their wives and in-laws households after which there is no further movement, through migration, uxorilocal marriages have acquired new meaning in that there is likelihood of continued change and motion. This is also echoed in Charsley’s (2005) study where it is shown that Pakistani migrant husbands often abandon wives after acquiring their British citizenship.

Charsley’s (2005) work resonates with a body of literature within marriage-migration that documents domestic violence against female spouses, highlighting the rise of ‘disposable’ wives. (Anitha et al: 2016, Dasgupta: 2000, Lee and Hadeed: 2009). Such accounts indicate that the transnational household may be equally if not at greater risk of becoming a site of conflict compared to a household comprised of a non-transnational couple (Kaika: 2004). Foucault stated

2 See also Clifford (1992) concept of travelling cultures.
“where there is power there is resistance” (1978: 95-96), which paves the way for an exploration of the ways in which migrant spouses exercise resistance and agency. The next section will therefore consider the ways in which migrant spouses exercise agency, and how doing so can impact identity and gender relations.

2.1.4 Agency, Identity, and Gender Relations

The households in which transnational migrants reside can be imbued with the complexities of both modernity and tradition, which can impact gender relations in different ways. For example, while traditional and/or cultural values may suggest that women ought to raise children and complete domestic chores, modernity may introduce technological advances and developments in family planning (Greenwood et al; 2005, Propenoe; 1993) that introduce shifts to these values and beliefs. For instance, Shaw (2000) suggests that the legacy set by wives of pioneer migrants who lived outside their mother-in-law’s household had greater levels of autonomy, which has been documented to influence subsequent generations of British Pakistani women, leading them to have very different expectations of domestic relations of authority from those of their Pakistani husbands. When such effects of migration are combined with state policies and laws, female autonomy can be catalyzed. Mooney’s research (2006) portrays Sikh women becoming ‘agents of marital citizenship’ upon migrating to Canada, documenting how one woman’s marriage was the catalyst for the migration of a further twenty-two members of her family. Mooney (2006) suggests that as such, women’s power within the family may be enhanced and new opportunities for employment within the diasporic context, may further boost their standing. Similarly, Gallo’s (2006) ethnography of Malayali maids in Italy demonstrate that women benefited from migration in terms of their autonomy and control so much so that they opened job opportunities for the husbands who join them after marriage. Gallo (2006) highlights that this high dependency on their migrant wives, causes an erosion in their masculine identity, which is further catalyzed by the gendered views of kin in their home country.

In instances where women migrate for work independent of their spouses, left behind husbands’ identity may be affected. Hoang and Yeoh (2011) capture this in their account of left-behind husbands of breadwinning wives in Northern Vietnam, who juggles childcare responsibilities along-
side employment, as they do not want to be perceived to be relying on their wives’ remitted incomes. This case study together with Gallo’s (2006) work, provides an insight to the erosion of men’s power in instances where household dynamics are transformed as a result of migration, and gender dynamics are directly impacted. Some academics have noted that an inability to bring home an income can translate into an erosion of power for men, causing them to turn to drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence to cope with their loss of power and status (Ashwin and Lytkina: 2016, 196; Kabeer: 2007, 52). In some instances however, it is incompatibility and dissimilar aspirations between spouses (Shaw and Charsley: 2006a, Constable: 2005a, Johnson: 2007, Mand: 2003, 110) that can lead to men in western countries subjecting their migrant wives to physical abuse (Qureshi and Shaw: 2015, Qureshi: 2016, Charsley: 2005).

Collectively, such case studies indicate that migrant men and women can experience difficult circumstances. A number of scholars have pointed out that within transnational marriages however, both women’s and men’s sense of independence and wellbeing is under considerable pressure due to shifting gender roles, often leading to a higher incidence of abuse (Espiritu, 1997: 75, Luu, 1989: 68). As a result, the transnational household can be seen as a site of conflict, contrary to the spatial inscription of the home as a ‘safe’ space and a site of security (Capers: 2011: 999, Kaika: 2004, Brickell: 2011). The social and gender inequalities, power relations and violence that were meant to be kept outside the modern home are reproduced within the ideological prison (Millet: 1977) of this private space (Brickell: 2011). The increasing recognition of the unequal power relations and violence occurring within the home has introduced the emergence of the policing of families³ (Donzelot: 1980). What happens between a husband and wife within the space of the home is also a matter for the state (as previously mentioned regarding historic migration policies), which suggests that the boundary between the public and private is permeable (Capers, 2011: 980). The policing and surveillance of violence (and home affairs more broadly) in this way (Capers, 2011: 989) transforms the home into an arena in which the public sphere stages the play of citizenship, morality, and law, by controlling intimate relationships.

³ More recently, the policing of families has extended into the counter-terrorism narrative where families are a source of intelligence and the government prevent strategy places suspected families under surveillance (Awan: 2012, Qurashi: 2018).
The policing of the household in this way can also translate into changes in immigration policies. For instance, the rise of forced marriage in the UK particularly among South Asian communities (Gill: 2016), has been cited [by the state] as justification for recent regulation changes, including the increase in the minimum age for migrant-spouses to 21 (Charsley, 2011: 7). The UK state has also asserted its aim to protect citizen women by deporting violent migrant husbands, although migrant wives have also been subjected to threats of deportation (Charsley, 2005: 334) if they failed in their duty as wives and daughter-in-laws. My research complements this emerging focus by exploring how Pakistani men experience marriage migration to the UK, including the vulnerabilities that they might face as a result of their dependence upon their British wife for their visa, and their leave to remain in the UK. The role of the state in regulating bodies through citizenship laws is evident for migrant husbands, which in turn resonates with the case of MDWs in Singapore. This doctorate research then also builds upon and contributes to the expanding body of literature on men, masculinities, and migration.
2.2 Men, Masculinity, and Migration

2.2.1 Key Approaches and Concepts

Since the 1950s, sociological research on men was dominated by the social determinism of sex-role theory (Wedgwood: 2007). In 1985 Carrigan, Connell and Lee produced a paper titled ‘Toward a new sociology of masculinity’ (Carrigan et. al: 1985), which was a crucial development in gender theory. The paper overcame the social determinism of sex-role theory and stressed that the domination of women is not an inevitable practice of all men. In the article, the authors advocated the study of historically-specific masculinities rather than studying ‘men’ as a homogenous group. Male domination, they argued, is a dynamic system that is constantly reproduced and reconstituted through gender relations under changing conditions, including resistance by subordinate groups (Carrigan et al. 1985, p. 598). Amongst the theories further elaborating and developing this approach, Connell’s theory is particularly significant, coming to be widely known for its key concepts “hegemonic masculinity” and “masculinities”, became the trademark of the field (1987; 2005). Connell argued that hegemonic masculinity defines a group of men who accept, legitimate, and reproduce patriarchal aspects within the society. This dominant position of particular males and the subordination both of females and other non-dominant males is sustained, as discussed above, through mass media, advertising, commercial television or pornography as well as division of labour into men’s and women’s work. Nevertheless, ‘hegemonic masculinity’ corresponds to the positions of only a small number of men (Carrigan, et al., 1985), and there are diverse conflicts between collective and dominant expectations and men’s real lives. Consequently, hegemonic masculinity (and femininity) is constructed in relation to marginalized and subordinated - or subaltern - masculinities (and femininities).

Connell’s explanatory theory predominantly focuses on the dynamics of the masculinities of the developed and industrialized societies, leaving limited space to the regional and local masculinities. In this thesis, building from Connell’s theory, it is proposed that regional and local masculinities are contextually constructed. Amongst other debates, Hearn’s argument on using “hegemony of
men” instead of “hegemonic masculinity” in masculinity studies (Hearn: 2004), Kimmell’s debate on the relation between homophobia and masculinities (Kimmel: 1996), Messner’s Wetherell and Edley’s psycho-discursive approach (Edley and Wetherell, 1997; 2001; Wetherell and Edley, 1999), Bourdieu’s “masculine domination” (Bourdieu, 1995) and his successor Coles’ idea of “mosaic masculinities” (Coles, 2008; 2009) became influential as well as Connell’s theory.

A large body of research has in turn focused on the ways in which masculinities change over time and space. For instance, in the context of Mexico, Gutman (1996) employed these concepts to demonstrate how the imagery of machismo can develop historically and become interwoven with the development of Mexican nationalism, resulting in enormous complexity in the lives of Mexican men (Connell, 2005: 834). For instance, Morrell (1998) documents gender transformations in South Africa associated with the end of Apartheid, a system of segregated and competing patriarchies. Ferguson (2001: 834) traces the decline of traditional ideals of masculinity in Ireland characterised through examples of the celibate priest and the hardworking family man, and how more modernized and market-oriented models of masculinity have replaced them. The variability of masculinity in different settings, which is relevant to the thesis in exploring the experiences of migrant husbands, led to the emergence a number of key approaches, such as the comparative ethnographic approach (Cornwall and Lindisfarne: 1994), the social constructionist approach (Hibbins and Pease: 2009), discursive approaches (Peterson: 1999, Wetherell and Edley: 1999), and the globalization of gender approach (Connell: 2005, Gutman: 1996). These approaches are hoped to be useful in understanding the masculinity of migrant husbands in motion. I will now turn to consider each of these.

2.2.1.1 Comparative Ethnographies Approach

The comparative ethnographies approach in particular enabled the development of masculinity theory, as it broadened the understanding of masculinity in a variety of settings. Cornwall (1994) documents how the identities of transsexuals in Salvador, Brazil, are multifaceted as their activities include prostitution and religious cults known as Candomble. She argues that transsexuals have both a male and female body depending on which parts of the body are considered significant in determining sex at any given moment. In other words, transsexuals can be a woman or a man
according to the setting and activity in which they take part (Cornwall and Lindisfarne: 1994), which demonstrates strategic agency and choice being practiced depending on the time, place and space. Similarly, Shire (1994) considers how different masculine identities are constructed through time in different social spaces such as in rural Zimbabwe. He documents how boys were taught to be fluent in men’s language when in public meeting places, and to learn tips for successful love making from elder kinswomen when in women’s spaces such as the kitchen. This shows that men can employ different spaces in multiple ways in order to achieve their goals, which is relevant to the research questions at the centre of the thesis concerned with the differences in experiences of migrant husbands before, during, and after marriage and migration, and the ways in which if any, migrant husbands practice resistance.

Kimmel (2000) notes that several ethnographies show how local forms of masculinity differ from norms of masculinity in the West and thus, the models of masculinity familiar in western discourses do not work for the realities of gender in other cultures. Such ethnographic studies have shown that masculinity is a culturally bounded concept that may have limited relevance outside the western tradition. For instance, Gilmore (1990) finds that masculinity across countries such as the Truk Islands, Ethiopia and East Africa amongst others, means very different things.

In my opinion, viewing the body as a ‘setting’ has further developed this approach. Cornwall’s (1994) study exploring how the identities of transsexuals in Salvador, Brazil together with Rubin’s (2003) and Namaste’s (2000) studies are critical in exploring more nuanced geographies within a ‘variety of settings’, such as the body. They highlight that the transsexual experience highlights modernity’s treatment of the body as the “medium through which selves interact with each other” (Rubin, 2003: 180). They find transsexual life courses are not inherently counterhegemonic, which brings Connell (2005) to argue that bodies are both objects of social practice and agents in social practice (Connell: 2002). Connell argues there are circuits of social practice that link bodily processes and social structures, which can pass through institutions, economic relations, and cultural symbols, without involving the physical body (Connell, 2005: 851). In other words, the concept of masculinity is disconnected from the physicality of the body and can be constructed through social practices external to the body. This disconnection points towards the possibility
that the enactment of masculinity can be a setting in its own right. As a result, this is a useful approach in understanding the experiences of migrant husbands, as it encourages the exploration of the migrant husband’s body as setting through which their different selves interact with each other, and how the enactment of masculinity in different ways, may be a setting upon which they may locate themselves.

2.2.1.2 Social Constructionist Approach

Hibbins and Pease (2009) advocate for a social constructionist approach to the study of men and masculinities, in which they acknowledge that masculinities vary from time to time and place to place, and yet argue that within these times and places, masculinity both intersects with and is constituted through other forms of social division such as race and class (Connell: 1987, Connell: 2002, Edley and Wetherell: 1995 208). In doing so, they challenge the centrality of the West within the men and masculinities literature, by exploring the intersections between such forms of social division. Gilbert and Gilbert (1998) argue that race and ethnicity construct different sets of relations with gender, highlighting that men who are not part of the dominant culture – and therefore subaltern⁴ – ought to work out their gender identity by “negotiating the meanings and practices of their own original culture and that of the dominant majority” (1998: 146). Choi’s (2016) work on subaltern masculinity in China is particularly striking. She documents the experiences of rural-to-urban migrant husbands who have gradually accepted their wives’ decision to migrate to the city for work. She suggests the migrant husbands are confronted with the tension between the expectations of the male as breadwinner as per their patriarchal family contexts, and the inferior social status and economic marginalization they experience in urban areas. They develop a subaltern masculinity both in reference to their patriarchal family context, and the hegemonic ideals of masculinity in urban areas of China.

Paul Willis’ (1977) account of working-class boys becoming working class men also speaks to the social constructionist approach. He highlights the specific form of masculinity the boys exhibit,

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⁴ Subaltern refers to groups and individuals who are positioned as marginalized and without agency, and that exist in relation to hegemonic ideals (Spivak: 1988, Rogers: 2008, Hibbins and Pease: 2009).
which is deeply embedded in a counter-school culture of resistance and opposition to academia and authority more broadly. Willis stresses that class is a structural condition that constrains symbolic work and the attitudes associated with them. Similarly, Claire Alexander (2004) demonstrates how the gendered nature of the 2001 riots in the city of Oldham, England, treads along the lines of the portrayal of Asian communities as implicitly patriarchal and as a ‘problem community’, which includes the demonization of South Asian masculinities, pushing them towards economic marginalization and cultural inadequacy. These ethnographic works exemplify the significance of intersectionalist factors in the construction of masculinity in different settings. They also demonstrate how external factors such as media representation (Abbas: 2001, Akhtar: 2014) affect the construction of masculinities in different communities. A key insight I extrapolate from these works is the notion of relational and competing masculinities. This is to say that the boys in Willis’ study and the gangs in Alexander’s work can be seen to be subordinated in relation to the state or the authority, which can be also be interpreted as masculine. By extension then, it can be questioned as to whether Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity can be best applied to states and/or governments, as a common theme in all societies, localities, and contexts, the notion of men attempting to define themselves either in relation to or in defiance of the state and/or governments, which is an overarching theme of how we study masculinities in relation to migration.

2.2.1.3 Discursive approach

A discursive approach to masculinity (Peterson: 1999, Wetherell and Edley: 1999) suggests that men are not permanently committed to a pattern of masculinity. Rather, they make situationally specific choices from a cultural repertoire of masculine behaviours (Wetherell and Edley: 1999). Collier’s (1998) work offers a fruitful contribution to this approach, as he questions the recent ‘masculinity turn’ in criminology based on social constructionist accounts of masculinity. As a discipline, criminology was heavily gendered and associated men with committing crimes such as rape, burglary, homicide; however with the increasing feminist literature, the discipline itself began questioning what is it about certain men that induces them to commit crime. Criminology’s
views on masculinity resemble the work of Cornwall (1994) where transsexual masculinity was found to be disjointed from the body and also speak to Connell’s (2002) argument that the body can be constructed through external processes.

Viewing masculinity as a set of variable practices due to intersectional identity markers and intersections of structure of oppression of discrimination and violence (including racism, patriarchy, and capitalism) that are actively developed and negotiated in relation to other forms of identity in particular cultural contexts (Wetherell and Edley: 2014), has enabled criminology to contextualise crimes perpetrated by men in different settings. For instance, there is a large body of literature that highlights the positive correlation between poverty, ethnicity, race, and crime (Oliver: 2015, Alexander: 2004, Everett: 2002). This has extended to the focus of racial bias in sentencing which has been linked to the overrepresentation of minority groups in prison particularly in the United States (Snowball and Weatherburn: 2007), as a result of which prejudice screening mechanisms have been introduced (Schuller et. al: 2009). Such contributions, in my view, point towards the assigning of a subaltern masculinity (through racial bias for instance). In this way, the discursive approach has initiated a two-way conversation where the context of men who commit crime is considered in conjunction with the institutional systems implicated in processes of racialization. This is an example of the ways in which an intersectionalist mode of analysis helps us understand how people with diverse, intersecting identity markers (self-ascribed and ascribed by others) act and are acted upon in the context of intersecting structures of oppression and bias. This approach will therefore be helpful for analysing how male Muslim migrants from Pakistan experience and navigate multifarious structures of oppression, including patriarchal expectations, institutional racism in the immigration system, racialization and criminalization processes. Encompassing this approach, the subsequent discussion of global-local gender relations will provide further insight into the diversity of experiences shaped by these processes.

2.2.1.4. Globalisation of gender approach
Connell (2005) argues that in order to arrive at a global understanding of masculinities, largescale social relationships such as global market relations, migration and ethnic and cultural conflict need to be considered. Gutman’s (1996, 2002) work on men shaping their lives and their masculinities in an urban working-class environment in Mexico City demonstrates the relationship these men have to the broader economic and social processes that are reshaping their world. In this way, the global affects the local and vice versa. In this approach, the gendering of international relations, international trade, and global markets and the state (Connell, 2000: 40), which are arenas in which the politics of gender plays out, should be considered in the construction of masculinity (Enloe: 2014, Enloe: 2004, Smith: 1998). Crucial to this approach is showing an appreciation of the historical processes that underpin current international relations.

Morell’s (2001a) case study is exemplary of this, as he highlights how the process of conquest and colonisation has played a role in the construction of masculinity of white boys in Natal, South Africa. He documents that the transition from apartheid has given rise to a disrupted social landscape in which unemployment is rising, acts of violence are on the increase, and the HIV and AIDS epidemic is growing, to which the counter mechanisms involve the reconstitution of rival patriarchies in different ethnic groups. In this way, historical and transnational processes are key in understanding how masculinity is constructed, negotiated, and navigated. For the case study of migrant husbands, this approach is helpful in ensuring the broader and historic intersectionality of structures of oppression though space and time, play a role in shaping their experiences.

### 2.2.2 Key Insights from Gender Studies and Migration

As illustrated in the previous section, men and masculinity studies have developed key insights vis-a-vis variability, as central to the understandings of men’s lives. The study of migration also speaks to the heterogeneity of male experiences, as hierarchy, exclusion, and the marginalization of men can occur through immigration and citizenship policies, which are further cross-cut by social factors such as race, class, and ethnicity. Migrant men can be seen as subaltern variants to localized male dominance(s) in host countries (Hibbins and Pease: 2009). There is a rich body of literature that traces how men and women experience migration in different ways, how
patriarchal systems, ideologies and practices are reaffirmed, reconfigured or challenged in the processes of migration and settlement, and how they reproduce and encounter patriarchal ideologies across different cultures and transnational migration communities (Pessar, 1999: 13). Hopkins and Noble use the expression ‘mobile masculinities’ to capture this experience, since migration entails a constant reworking of masculinity (2009: 815).

The “constant reworking of masculinity” (Hopkins and Noble: 2009, 185) in processes of migration has been intricately weaved into a number of studies that have focused on the household, family, and social networks (Boyd: 1989, see also Werbner: 1990). For instance, Kleist (2010) demonstrates the complex interactions between gender, transnational social networks, and state policies, which construct masculinity in a specific way. Specifically, Kleist documents Somali men in the diaspora as viewing Canadian Somali women as economically autonomous which they associate with a decrease in the respect they are given in within their households. Somali men attribute the increased autonomy of their wives to the government providing social welfare to the family (ibid). In this way, there is a transfer of male authority to the welfare state, reflecting female empowerment and male misrecognition, and once more testifying that states and/or governments may be best understood as possessors of hegemonic masculinity as per Connell’s (2005) theory. The gendering of the state has replaced the internal gender dynamics of the household and caused men to feel emasculated. In Kleist’s work, Somali men created alternative social spaces where they could be recognised as men with authority. Kleist’s study is one of many that focus on men and masculinities within migration that document how men negotiate, react and respond to male and female gender identities encountered through the migratory process. There are pressures on men to be the main breadwinner in the societies in which they are settled and continue to maintain their authority in the family; however, there are a range of personal, cultural, educational and systemic barriers that can hinder their ability to realise their expected role as ‘men’ (Hibbins and Pease: 2009, see also Al-Sharmani: 2010).

Ethnographies of the masculinity of men in migration have in particular embodied the social constructionist approach (Hibbins and Pease: 2009). Factors such as citizenship status, ethnicity,
race, class, and age are important in constituting migrant masculinities, as they intersect with gender in locally specific ways (Nare: 2010). For instance, Datta et. al (2009) examined the narratives of male migrants of various nationalities working in low-paid jobs in London and concluded that while men valorized three performances of hegemonic masculinity through migration (providing for their family, risk and adventure, and bettering the self), their narratives also suggested loneliness, vulnerability of their immigrant status and their embodied experience of displacement and discrimination. Shen (2008) shows how for Taiwanese businessmen in China migration enables a performance of ‘hyper-masculinity’ through the consumption of the bodies and labour of female sex workers. Forms of ‘hyper-masculinity’ appear in more subtle ways through Walsh’s (2011) study of British home-making practices in Dubai in which she highlights how middle-class men reversed to hegemonic forms of masculinity upon emigration to Dubai. Their wives expressed how their relationships were egalitarian in England, as their husbands would help out in the home and consult them when making decisions. However, upon emigration, ‘expatriate’ masculinity took prominence as many men discovered they were superior to their Arab colleagues due to their citizenship and race.

A different perspective of masculinities from the Arab peninsula is provided by Inhorn (2018) who carefully documents the experiences of migrant men and women experiencing difficulty conceiving, through couple interviews within the Arab refugee community, in America. Accessing IVF treatments in this ethnographic piece came through as a form of resistance to the experience of war and forced displacement, through which a new masculinity emerged that did not resemble traditional Arab masculinity. Instead, migrant men were supportive of their wives despite not being able to bear children, and they did not remarry. As a result, Inhorn (2018) proposed the theory of ‘emergent masculinities’, to demonstrate this new approach to being a man, marking a clear break away from the forms of masculinity exhibited in the older generation of Arab migrant men.

I would argue that there is potential to extend this concept of ‘emerging masculinity’ further by applying liminality theory, which could better account for the reworking process (see also Hibbins
and Pease: 2009). Turner’s (1999) work documenting the experiences of men in Burundian refugee camps in Tanzania, is a particularly pertinent ethnographic example through which to demonstrate my argument. Turner views the camp as a liminal or in-between space, which illustrates that space-time complexes that are neither ‘home’ nor ‘away’, are geographies of power that continue to construct masculinity in a similar fashion to more permanent settings. My argument extends beyond this, as it suggests that masculinity itself is liminal [in-between] due to constantly being reworked and renegotiated. Jansen’s (2008) study on Bosnian refugees helps tease this out further. He documents status loss experienced by men as a result of migration, which caused them to stubbornly cling on to their ‘remembered’ personhood before the war in Bosnia. The men described having counted as someone in this ‘space-time’ capsule and continually exercised their masculinity from memory in newly carved out social spaces. In this instance, masculinity is in between the remembered and the practiced reality. Taking this further then, we can hypothesise that a liminal masculinity is present in migrant and/or mobile masculinities as masculinities ‘emerge’ (following Inhorn: 2018), or in some cases may aim to conform to hegemonic masculinity (as Connell: 2005 proposes).

2.2.3 Crisis of Masculinity

Another important theme within the sociology of gender, recognised not only by theorists, but also by media and popular culture, is gender oppression, and the extent to which masculinity is seen as being in crisis. This resonates with the ways in which gender oppression and processes of the racialization, criminalization and/or pathologization of men and masculinities are part of the broader system of power relations, as noted previously. Within the last twenty years the subject of ‘man’ and ‘maleness’ has become an explicit topic of political, educational, academic and media debates (Hearn and Pringle: 2006). Men were often positioned in the centre of public as well as private agendas. Power and authority appeared to be taken-for-granted, unquestionable and natural elements of male identity (Beard: 2018). Nevertheless, this line of reasoning is slowly shifting as evident in public discussions on masculinity, which have taken new directions. Particularly, there is a growing awareness that masculinity can be equally imbued with complexity as femininity. Recent press coverage for instance, explores and conveys the moral panic about
men and boys. Examples of newspaper headlines from recent years include: “Save the Male! Britain’s Crisis of Masculinity”\(^5\) (The Spectator, 03 May 2014), “Men or Mice: Is Masculinity in Crisis”\(^6\), (The Guardian, 06 October 2017), “International Men’s Day 2018: The shocking Statistics you need to know”\(^7\) (The Telegraph, 19 November 2018). Recent deaths as a result of homelessness conditions in the UK that have received widespread media coverage, have involved male homelessness victims\(^8\) 9 10 11. However, a public reaction regarding the gendered nature of these statistics has been absent. There is a widespread agreement that boys face difficulties in adapting to pressures and the complexities of modern life (Singleton: 2007). If newspaper headlines are to be believed, boys are facing difficulties within socio-economic and socio-psychological areas such as education, health, personal relations, employment or criminality. This rise in publicly expressed concern about male disadvantages is also grounded in academic research, particularly their underachievement at school (Madden: 2000, Calvin et.al: 2010).

The male crisis is also attributed to issues of men’s health such as heart diseases, cancer, excessive smoking or drinking (Whitehead: 2002). Moreover, mortality rates indicate that men’s life expectancy is about seven years shorter than that of women. Messner (1997) points out that the costs of masculinity include shallow relationships, poor mental well-being, and lack of work-life balance. Many research studies (Mansfield and Collard: 1989; Duncombe and Marsden: 1993) specify that men avoid emotional commitment, are unresponsive to emotional intimacy and do not discuss their own feelings or needs. The British Psychological Society has referred to suicide

\(^5\) “Save the Male! Britain’s Crisis of Masculinity”: [https://www.spectator.co.uk/2014/05/the-descent-of-man/](https://www.spectator.co.uk/2014/05/the-descent-of-man/)
\(^7\) “International Men’s Day 2018: The shocking Statistics you need to know” [https://www.telegraph.co.uk/health-fitness/mind/international-mens-day-2018-shocking-statistics-need-know/](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/health-fitness/mind/international-mens-day-2018-shocking-statistics-need-know/)
rates amongst men as a ‘silent epidemic’ (Baffour: 2018). Stephen Platt (Scotsmen: 2009) the director of the Research Unit in Health, Behaviour and Change at the University of Edinburgh argued that the highest suicide rates are among working-class men from deprived areas who have no educational qualifications and live in poverty. Moreover, the terminology of ‘crisis’ is applied to teen violence as the levels of crime and criminality are very high especially among working-class young males (Whitehead: 2002, 53). They are often defined and regarded by society as ‘dangerous others’. This idea of ‘otherness’ is mostly linked with black males and the representation of their ‘natural’ tendency to commit crime, in spite of extensive evidence to the contrary (ie. Martino and Meyenn: 2001).

Such public and academic contributions point towards a severe crisis of masculinity, which encourages the question of how this crisis has come about. Connell (1993) pointed out that confusion and uncertainty about what it means ‘to be a man’ has been attributed to the impact of feminism. It is important to highlight that different men distinguished along racial and/or ethnic lines can be portrayed differently by the media, which can have different consequences on the crisis in masculinity. The same way in which there are multiple masculinities across time and space, the crisis of masculinities should also be correspondingly seen as multiple. In recent years, this has been particularly evident in cases where white men who have committed terrorist activities are framed as suffering mental illnesses, whereas brown men who have committed terrorist offences are immediately labelled as terrorists with no reference to any mental health issues they may have been suffering from, being made. Such depictions actively shape the crisis in subaltern Muslim masculinity differently compared to men with alternative intersectional identity markers. This is important to consider when exploring the experiences of migrant husbands, as they enter a host country in which not only alternative and multiple hegemonic and competing masculinities exist, but also the boundaries within which their masculine identities can exist and possibly even develop, are pre-set by way of the broader oppressive systems in operation.

As Whitehead (2002) argued, the idea of a ‘crisis of masculinity’ has refocused attention on the masculinity of white, middle/upper-class, heterosexual men. This statement is in line with Connell’s (1995) theory of hegemonic masculinity, which defines a group of men who accept,
legitimate and reproduce patriarchal aspects within the society. This dominant position of particular males and the subordination both of females and other non-dominant males is sustained, as discussed above, through mass media, advertising, commercial television or pornography as well as division of labour into men’s and women’s work. Nevertheless, ‘hegemonic masculinity’ corresponds to the positions of only a small number of men (Carrigan, et al: 1985), and there are diverse conflicts between collective and dominant expectations and men’s real lives. Consequently, hegemonic masculinity (and femininity) is constructed in relation to marginalised and subordinated masculinities (and femininities).

2.2.4 Silenced/Muted Masculinities

The studies discussed thus far speak to the heterogeneity masculinity in different contexts around the world, while their rooting within academic disciplines also means that these studies at times also reproduce the gendered norms through which we view men and women and their gendered performances (see also Montes: 2013). For instance, many ethnographies that focus on migrant experiences tend to associate feelings of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation with women migrants (Hoang and Yeoh: 2011, Pareñña: 2005) as a result of which, some academics have noted the overemphasis of a female-centred approach and the under-exploration of emotional experiences and mental health amongst migrant men (Montes: 2013).

A careful analysis of some ethnographic insights demonstrates that tropes of silence and invisibility are also present amongst male experiences. For instance, Turner (1999) demonstrates that the work of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Burundian refugee camps has led to women identifying UNHCR as “a better husband” (Turner: 1990, 2), which results in men experiencing a loss of status and unemployment as a result of which they are unable to provide for their families and thereby subjecting male refugees in the camp, to further humiliation. It is interesting to note that the gendered aspect of the male breadwinner shifts from men to an organisation, the UNHCR. The ability of the UNHCR to not only play a gendered aspect, and a position – the husband – but also the removal of a gender (male) from their traditional role is
revealing in that, masculinity and femininity are not only performed aspects of gender, but can also be performed on, which makes them vulnerable and invisible to large institutions.

Tropes of silence and invisibility also surface in Hart’s (2008) ethnographic insight of Palestinian refugees in the Hussein refugee camp, in Jordan. Young males within the camp were described as ‘mukhayamjii’ - a particular style of masculinity - which afforded them dominance both within the public, and private spheres of the camp (2008: 67). However, in the private sphere of the home, while the younger brother’s position was privileged to that of his sisters, in relation to his elder brothers his position remained lowly (Hart: 2008, 70). In this way, age became a central index of authority, positioning individuals differently within their social setting. At the same time, these young males in the public sphere of the streets of the camp were subjected to sexual violence afflicted by other ‘mukhayamjii’, who selected their victims based on assessing the degree to which their victims performed masculinity. Those that performed to the highest degrees would take on the role as ‘inserters’, and those with a lower degree of complying with the ideals of masculinity, would take on the role of ‘insertee’. A hierarchy of power relations guided by, and built upon the hierarchies of masculinities within this social geography, determined the direction of violence. In this way, some men in the camp embodied silence and vulnerability, and their masculinities were muted in comparison to competing masculinities within the camp. Without such nuanced ethnographic investigation, such differences can escape the understanding of a social complex. Echoed here through Hart’s work is the importance of using an intersectional approach (Collins and Bilge: 2016) in exploring both inter-and intra-gender relations, as traditional behaviours associated with specific genders may have. Further, the way in which men are able to exercise agency in migration can shed light on how different forms of masculinity are reworked and renegotiated, which is the focus of the next sub-section.

2.2.5 Sources of Agency in Migration

The case studies mentioned above show that migration can lead to a great variety in masculine forms exercised by men. While some form of masculinities become silenced and subordinate to mainstream forms of masculinity, other forms of masculinity can facilitate agency in migration.
The case studies also show that subordination and agency can occur side-by-side. For example, in Hoang and Yeoh’s (2011) work, left behind husbands’ identity as labourers became a medium through which they exercised agency, as they used their own finances rather than the remittances of wives, in order to prevent from being seen as weak. As a result, they were able to minimise the level of damage that their wives’ migration caused to their masculine image. Similarly, Gallo’s (2006) ethnography on Malyali migrants in Italy documents how they are socially constructed in the community, as a symbol of lower status due to their dependence on their wives’ remittances and sponsorship. At the same time however, their wives’ sponsorships provided them legal status as domestic servants and as educated and trustworthy people who were more easily accepted within Italian homes. In turn, Bosnian refugee men in Jansen’s (2008) ethnography illustrates the way in which past masculine identities are inscribed onto their current sociocultural geographies, which was employed as a tool at a time when this older generation of migrant men was being forgotten. For expatriate, middle-class, British men in Dubai, objects such as maps, paintings and photographs were imbued with memories and were placed in the home as a way to manage self-identity, self-esteem, and construct and present a coherent narrative of the self (Walsh: 2011).

Music – which has emerged as particularly important in the context of my interviews - is another significant source of agency that can also be viewed as an extension of masculinity. Greenberg (2009) documents the experiences of a Palestinian hip-hop crew called G-Town from the Shu’afat refugee camp in Jerusalem. G-Town are viewed in line with the broader phenomenon of marginalised youth borrowing and adapting African-American hip-hop culture to their socio-political contexts. Rap music is used as both a vehicle to express their opposition to the Israeli
occupation of Palestine and to reclaim their masculinity, as the occupation has led to the widespread emasculation of Palestinian men. Through music, their audience, which is largely male, are in turn inspired to resist the Israeli occupation. This further supports the notion that hegemonic masculinity may be helpfully understood as being applied to states and/or governments, and more broadly the diverse structures of inequality and oppression. In turn, Schade-Poulsen (1999) documents the importance of Rai music for Algerian men. The lyrics of Rai songs deal with male-female relationships, generational relationships, the problems of youth, and the struggle experienced by Algerian men to find a place in a conflicted society. In a similar vein, my research on migrant husbands in the British Pakistani community, has shown how music is employed as a form of agency and resistance, which is discussed in detail in part three of the core thesis. Having set out the contours of marriage-migration and masculinity literature, the approaches pertinent to the study of spousal migration, and to understanding men and masculinities in motion, in the remainder of this chapter I turn to introducing the social and historic contexts of my interlocuters.
2.3 The British Pakistani Context

2.3.1 Marriage Migration in Numbers

The number of spouses granted settlement in the UK has been increasing since 1997 when the Primary Purpose Rule - under which applicants had to prove that their marriage was not primarily motivated by immigration - was introduced. In 1994 the number of spouses granted settlement in the UK was 30,190, increasing to 77,380 in 2009 (Home Office: 2011), and in 2011, spouses were the largest single category of migrant settlement in the UK: 39% in 2008, and 40% in 2009 (Home Office: 2011). The UK Home Office has documented over 70 countries of origin of migrants settling as spouses in the UK. Fourteen of these account for the largest numbers of marriage-related migrants (Home Office: 2008) (in descending order):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of spouses (1000s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>8,865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>7,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>3,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>2,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>2,515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>2,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>1,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>1,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>1,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>1,190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Number of spouses as per country of migration to the UK in 2008.

As noted in Table 1, the largest proportion of migrant spouses in the UK originate from the Indian subcontinent (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), representing a third of all spousal settlement grants in 2008. The most recent figures while they do not provide an ethnic breakdown as per the table above, are organised per continent. According to the Migration Observatory (2018), Asia was the most common region of origin for family and dependent migration. In 2016, 37,900 family
migrants were from Asia, or 62% of the total, of which 12,000 were admitted as spouses. More specifically, in 2016, 27,095 migrants from India/Pakistan/Bangladesh were admitted as family and dependents (Migration Observatory: 2018).

The historical colonial relationship between the Indian subcontinent and Britain (Dumont: 1980) generated a resource for labour migrants for Britain’s post-war economy (Ballard: 1994) and thus, orchestrated migration histories in the UK. Initially, migration to Britain predominantly took the form of male labour migration; however, during the 1960s and 70s the second wave of migration from the region included family reunification, with wives and children joining the male migrants in the UK (Coleman: 1995, Gardner: 2006, Gardner and Shukur: 1994, Ballard: 1994). The third wave of migration was characterised by these children and their UK-born offspring reaching marriageable age, and transnational marriages were conducted as a means of strengthening ties with the country of origin (Ballard: 1994, Shaw: 2006).

The general pattern of marriage across South Asia involves brides moving to their husband’s households (Bradby: 2000, 236). However, in some parts of India, although rare, conventions of husbands moving to the wife’s household do exist (Busby: 2000), and even where residence in the husband’s household is the norm, some men may live with their in-laws for practical reasons (Charsley: 2005, Kumar: 2012). Since relatively equal numbers of wives and husbands from the Indian subcontinent are granted settlement in UK (in 2008 the proportion of wives were 52% for India, 56% for Pakistan, and 54% for Bangladesh - Home Office: 2011), it is reasonable to infer the mobility of men and women through transnational marriage is relatively balanced.

2.3.2 Migration, Marriage, and Masculinity: The British Pakistani Context

Since the end of World War II, many parts of Europe have been host to migrants. In order to make up the labour force shortage, Britain in particular encouraged the immigration of labour migrants from Commonwealth countries, South Asia, the Caribbean, and South Africa (Hansen: 2000). The Pakistani migration pattern to Britain has been defined in three waves (Ballard: 1994): during the 1950s and 1960s single men from Pakistan migrated for work. Amongst other groups, during the
1970s and 1980s men were joined by their wives and children, and since the 1980s onwards, transnational marriages between second and third generation British Pakistanis have been conducted (Shaw, 2006: 211). Today Britain is home to approximately one million British-Pakistanis (Shaw, 2006, 2010), two thirds of whom are from the northern areas of Pakistan, and the remaining one-third from the Punjab (Ballard 1994: 122). Geographical differences surrounding the home country have influenced settlement patterns in Britain, since Mirpuris predominate cities such as Bradford and Birmingham, while Faisalabadis predominate Manchester and Glasgow (Shaw: 1988, 2000, Werbner: 1990). Similarly to settlement patterns, migrant communities inevitably travel with their cultures (Clifford: 1997), which are renegotiated and reworked.

Amongst members of the British-Pakistani community, the practice of arranged marriage is common, and has translated into arranged transnational marriages amongst the second and third generations. As noted above, such marriages across borders are instrumental in maintaining and creating new links with relatives in Pakistan (Shaw: 2006). In 2000, over 10,000 Pakistani nationals of which 2740 were males and 5560 were female obtained entry clearance to join spouses in Britain (Home Office: 2011). A large proportion of these marriages are also consanguineous, which is demonstrated by a study conducted by Shaw (2001): 57.6% of marriages in Bradford were arranged and consanguineous, and 71% of marriages in Oxford were arranged and consanguineous amongst members of the British Pakistani communities. Moreover, academics in the field have noted that British Pakistani families live in joint households in which a number of married couples who make up the extended family, live in the same household (Shaw: 2001, Ballard: 1994). In instances where the household capacity cannot accommodate the growing joint family, families purchase houses on the same street and one or two married couples will move into the house next door (Ballard: 1994). As a result, these characteristics of the British Pakistani household correlate with the household formation trends of Eastern Europe migrants described by Hajnal (1982; see also Werbner: 1990, Ballard: 1994, Shaw: 2006).

Due to the disconnect between home and school and/or public life, Ballard (1994) argues that
young British Pakistanis live between cultures and adopt a code-switching technique, allowing them to maneuver between their private lives within the home and their culture, and their public lives within the school or workplace. Claire Dwyer’s (1999) ethnography demonstrates how young girls in the British Pakistani community navigate home and school life in the context two different schools. The role of class is particularly highlighted, as girls whose parents were in white-collar jobs were more likely not to wear a headscarf and view modesty in more fluid terms whereas girls from working class backgrounds were likely to dress more conservatively. The interplay of culture, religion, class, generational difference, ethnicity, and gender have created a complex social web for young British Pakistanis, which impacts, inter alia, employment, education, public participation, and also marriage (Ballard: 1994, Qureshi et. al: 2013).

2.3.3 Gender and the Pakistani Community

Gender dynamics within the British Pakistani community can be viewed within the context of education in particular. Literature on educational opportunities for young British Muslim women (Brah, 1996; Haw: 1998, Shain: 2002) emphasises the gendered influences of parents and teachers on their aspirations. The increase in numbers of young women amongst this group attending higher education has been highlighted (Dale et al.: 2002. Hussain and Bagguley: 2007), which reflect the changing cultural norms, as well as the aspirations of young girls in this group. More recently, girls in the British Pakistani community have been noted to outperform boys (Dwyer and Shah: 2009). Dwyer and Shah document the change in gender ideologies to be associated with increasing divorce rates in the British Pakistani community, which has led to parents supporting education and employment for their daughters (2009: 1120).

For young men in the British Pakistani community, gender identity has been found to be a more complex factor, as the exhibition of a range of masculinities construct aspirations and values in specific ways. For instance Dwyer et. al (2008) document particular attitudes towards education and work, which were influenced through various factors such as peer group pressure which weakened ties with families and encouraged boys to participate in illegal activities, and gender ideologies which reinforced breadwinning roles of men through business ventures (Dwyer et. al,
Academics such as Tariq Modood have written extensively around the anxiety surrounding the criminalization of young Pakistani men (1997: 147, see also Alexander: 2004, Hoque: 2019, 5).

The notion of the British Pakistani community as a ‘problem community’ due to its patriarchal nature, is further sharpened through the literature on forced marriages and domestic violence in particular. Macey (1999) highlights that the role of young Pakistani men’s participation in gangs in the City of Bradford is directed at all sectors of the population, and yet young Asian women are common victims. Domestic violence remains a taboo subject to an extent with women expressing frustration regarding the collusion of religious leaders with perpetrators in the community, as the former often advise them to behave as dutiful wives (Macey: 1999). The conservative views of many members of the Pakistani community towards female dress and behaviour are inextricably linked to concepts of honour and shame (Afshar: 1994, Kassam: 1997), and have been dubbed as ‘policing women’. In their extreme forms, such views can translate into honour-based violence in the form of forced marriages and honour-based murders (Gill: 2008).

2.3.4 Interrogating Shifting Gender Roles within Transnational Marriage

The migration and transnationalism literature however, suggest that shifting gender roles can lead to tensions and abuse (Espiritu 1997: 75; Luu 1989: 68). Within the Pakistani community in particular, Shaw (2006; 336) reported that since the pioneer generation of British Pakistani women constructed their household dynamics in the absence of a dominating mother-in-law, younger generations of women now have different views on household power relations in comparison to their migrant husbands (Shaw; 2000). In addition, Charsley (2013) reports how some families reserve their rights to delay the rukhsati [sending off the bride] until the groom joins his wife in the UK, and some brides felt that it should be the husbands that ought to cry as it was they who would be leaving their families behind (Charsley; 2013). More recently, Qureshi (2013; 13) has reported how middle-aged women use the notion of sabr [patience] to invoke guilt in husbands and children. As a result, we see that migration has widened the spaces in which British Pakistani women can assert themselves, particularly within marriage (see also Qureshi et. al; 2012, Mooney; 2006), even at early stages of the life-cycle. Changing dynamics of the host society can also
permeate the migrant community and further exacerbate the shift in gender roles and the widening of the spaces in which women can assert themselves (see also Alexander; 2013, 342), such as developments in family planning and technical innovations in the home (Greenwood et.al; 2005, Propenoe; 1993).

The impact of these shifts in gender dynamics on sons, husbands, and fathers within the British Pakistani community have received little attention. From case studies across time and space of the ways in which men navigate shifts in gender dynamics especially in and through migration it can be hypothesised that Muslim men experience social and emotional turbulence. The ways in which men manage this turbulence requires exploration and nuance, as Muslim men particularly of Pakistani heritage, are often depicted as oppressive, powerful patriarchs, gang members, and sexual predators (see also Alexander: 2001, Hoque: 2019, 2). The thesis aims to contribute to this gap in the literature by exploring how Muslim migrant husbands from Pakistan navigate the shifts in gender dynamics, upon marriage and migration to the UK.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has traced a number of bodies of literature, namely marriage migration, men’s gendered experience in and through migration, the heterogeneity in masculine forms through time and space, and the role of agency and resistance in migration. Together, the literatures demonstrated a gap in understanding the connections between men, masculinities and migration in context of marriage migration. Thus, the research questions at the centre of this thesis can make a valuable contribution in understanding these connections.

A key theme emerging from the literature was the viewing of masculinity as a set of variable practices due to intersectional identity markers and intersections of structure of oppression of discrimination and violence (including racism, patriarchy, and capitalism), that are actively developed and negotiated in relation to other forms of identity in particular cultural contexts. These processes can create hierarchies of desirable and undesirable migrants, promote certain forms of marriage and reproduction, while barring other unions, are deeply embedded in
migration policies and are thus important to consider when studying the experiences of migrant husbands, as they are located within these broader structures. Such insights also enable us to note the different actors involved in the marriage migration process, all of which have different motivating factors in promoting or engaging in marriage migration; from states promoting and/or impeding certain marriages, to the preferences of ‘settled’ partners who wish to ‘bring’ spouses to join them from abroad, and of prospective spousal migrants, and other family and community members. All of these elements define the social context within which migrant husbands are situated, and therefore should be accounted for in any analysis of migrant husband experiences of marriage migration.

Amongst the cases discussed were that of racial bias involved in sentencing of ethnic minorities, which led to overrepresentation of minority groups in United States prisons (Snowball and Weatherburn: 2007). Such examples speak to the importance of the potential of intersectionalist mode of analysis in helping to understand how people with diverse, intersecting identity markers (self-ascribed and ascribed by others), act and are acted upon in the context of intersecting structures of oppression and bias. This is an important consideration which will be helpful for analysing how Muslim migrant husbands from Pakistan experience and navigate multifarious structures of oppression, including patriarchal expectations, institutional racism in the immigration system, and racialization and criminalization processes. These case studies also indicated the existence of subaltern masculinities that exist not only in relation to hegemonic ideals of masculinities, but also in relation to the structures of oppression, including states and governments. This is a pertinent consideration for analysing migrant husband experiences as, they are not only ‘immigrant men’ in relation to British born Pakistanis and/or Muslims and men from alternative multiple intersectional identity markers, but also the state and its multiple powers that govern immigration, employment, domestic violence, and more. The analysis of migrant husband experiences therefore, requires not only an intersectional approach in terms of identity markers, but also an intersectional approach at macro and micro levels of social structures.

The diverse range of case studies also showed that men can employ different spaces in multiple ways in order to achieve their goals. This is helpful for the exploration that follows the research
questions, as they are concerned with the differences in experiences of migrant husbands before, during, and upon marriage and migration, and the ways in which if any, migrant husbands practice resistance, which encourage the question as to whether specific spaces are employed in different ways to achieve certain aspirations and/or goals. A specific case study that informed this approach was that of transsexuals in Salvador, Brazil, as their ‘selves’ interacted with each other differently in different spaces and times (Rubin: 2003, 180). In this way then, we can view masculinity as disconnected from the physicality of the body and therefore, constructed through social practices external to the body and instilled and embodied within the male body at a later stage(s). This disconnection points towards the possibility of the enactment of masculinity as a setting in its own right, which is an incredibly useful approach in understanding the experiences of migrant husbands, as it points to the possibility of the enactment of masculinity as a setting upon which the migrant husbands locate themselves. In analysing experiences of migrant husbands, it will be important to bear in mind that masculinity may not necessarily be ‘internally’ embodied, reworked and reproduced but rather, can be embodied, reworked and reproduced ‘externally’ of the body in different spaces.

An additional theme that emerged was that of desire as a driver of migration, which is useful in exploring the way in which desire plays a role in the decision-making processes of migrant husbands. While in the literature desire is often referred to as sexual characteristics, for migrant husbands the concept in a broader sense could enable the mapping of their desires and aspirations, and that of their families. The literature on aspiration and desire (Carling and Collins: 2018) can advance this exploration further, offering nuance to the drivers of migration in the particular context of migrant husbands and thus, shed light on why the practice of transnational marriage amongst migrant husbands continues, despite the weak positions they can occupy upon marriage and migration (see Charsley: 2005).

In employing these approaches and concepts, I aim to contribute to the literature of men and masculinity studies by providing insights to the experiences of Muslim migrant husbands from Pakistan. I endeavor that this will further extend to contributing to the study of Muslim men, which
is a rich and growing body of literature (see Inhorn: 2017, Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Qasmiyeh: 2010, Marsden: 2005).
3. Methodology

In this chapter I discuss my approach to collecting and analysing my research findings. I first explain the aims and questions underpinning my research, outlining my research design, and justifying the choice of particular research methods. This is followed by a description of the methods involved in data collection and analyses. I then go on to examine ethical issues in the context of vulnerability and domestic violence and reflect on my positionality as a British Muslim woman of Kashmiri heritage investigating the experiences of migrant husbands, many of whom I share ethnic heritage with.

3.1 Research Aims

Between mid-February and April 2017, I conducted a pilot study which involved semi-structured interviews with fifteen Muslim migrant husbands from Pakistan, in the city of Birmingham. The aim of this pilot study was to explore the forms of support available to migrant husbands and test the research methods prior to beginning the fieldwork, for the doctoral research. The study highlighted that migrant husbands employed more than one form of support and provided an insight into mechanisms underpinning various forms of support, which were previously not addressed in my research proposal and research questions. While the focus on the study was to explore support mechanisms available to migrant husbands, during fieldwork, I discovered significant overlap between support systems and the ways that migrant husbands (re)assert masculinity. The semi-structured interview mode provided participants the space to express themselves and as a result, their responses entailed significant elaborations. Participants also explained how the support systems available to them made them feel and the impact it had on marital household power relations. The overarching theme emerging from the narratives was that migrant husbands carved out ‘creative approaches’ to alleviate hardship and suffering in five distinct arenas: religion, music, networks, technology, and finances. In different and multifaceted ways, these spaces enabled migrant husbands to navigate the hardships they encountered upon marriage and migration to the UK, in particular to reassert masculinity. The narratives also
highlighted the various ways in which migrant husbands maneuver migration, marriage, and masculinity within a gendered geography of power in which they are largely invisible.

This pilot study laid the foundations for the doctorate research, as it confirmed that migrant husbands can experience hardship upon marriage and migration to the UK. It also expanded the focus of the PhD research in a number of ways. While initially the proposed research aimed to study the manifestations of the weak positions of migrant husbands, after analysing the findings of the pilot study, I incorporated the expectations of migrant husbands prior to marriage and migration and how these shifted (in any way) upon marriage and migration, as one of the research focuses. Since the preliminary findings indicated the reassertion of masculinity through music, finances, religion, networks and technology, the exploration of resistance and agency upon marriage and migration was also incorporated as a key research question, which further expanded to exploring religious spaces in relation to navigating migration, marriage, and masculinity.

Another expansion of the research post-pilot study was the framing of the experiences of migrant husbands as constantly being reworked, and in flux. Interlocuters, their marriages, and their masculinities remained in motion, despite the migration journey having been achieved. This was significant in shaping the overarching research aim: “to explore marriage and masculinities in motion by examining migrant husbands’ experiences in the British Pakistani community.”

3.2 Research Questions

This thesis employs a qualitative methodological approach to answer three groups of questions constructed to explore masculinities in motion for migrant husbands, in Birmingham’s British Pakistani community. Three overarching questions underpinned and guided the doctoral research. The first research question explored how migrant husbands experience marriage migration to the UK. In order to effectively study their experiences, it was crucial to consider their expectations of marriage migration before marriage migration, as this laid the foundations for observing any shifts in expected experience and lived experience, which formed the first sub-question. It was also crucial not to limit any potential changes to ‘before’ and ‘after’ marriage migration, as the in-
between process is equally as important in bringing about change. As a result, a second sub-question asked how the expectation compared to during and after marriage migration. In light of the heterogeneity of masculine experiences based on intersectional markers of identity discussed in chapter three, the third sub-question asked how different migrant husbands experienced marriage migration based on identity makers such as class, ethnicity, and educational level.

The second research question focused on how migrant husbands – based on their experiences - perceived the relationship between marriage, migration, and masculinity, which enabled a deeper interrogation of the differences in experiences of migrant husbands before, during and after marriage migration. This required further nuancing through sub-questions the first of which asked ‘how do migrant husbands perceive and describe the ways in which ‘men’ experience marriage migration?’, ‘How do migrant husbands believe that migrant husbands to the UK should experience marriage migration?’ ‘On a normative level, how do migrant husbands believe that migrant husbands to the UK should experience marriage migration?’, ‘How do migrant husbands describe their experience of ‘being a man’ who has arrived in the UK through marriage migration?’, ‘How do migrant husbands perceive and describe the similarities and differences of ‘being a man’ (or ‘being a husband’) in the UK and in Pakistan?’, ‘Over time, how have migrant husbands’ experiences of their and their spouse’s position in their relationship changed?’ ‘Over time, how have their perceptions of the roles played by husbands and wives in the context of marriage changed?’ and ‘How does the migrant husband perceive the state in relation to the relationship between marriage, migration and masculinity?’. Together, these questions enable the tracing of shifts in migrant husbands’ experiences though time and space, including gender dynamics within marriage, and in relation to the state. In this way, these questions acknowledge the positioning of migrant husbands in a wider social context and thereby account for the constantly shifting social planes, at both the macro and micro levels, within which migrant husbands are implicated.

The third research question asked, ‘How do migrant husbands perceive and negotiate their position as migrant husbands within their wife’s family household?’. This question laid the foundations for the exploration of how migrant husbands navigate through shifting social planes
at both the macro and micro levels. Sub-questions included ‘How do migrant husbands experience and perceive their relationships with different members of their wife’s family?’, ‘How do they perceive their position and role within the context of their wife’s family’s household?’, ‘On a normative level, how do migrant husbands believe that migrant husbands should experience their position within their wife’s family’s household?’, ‘How do they negotiate their relationships with different members of this household?’, ‘How does the migrant husbands perceive the state in relation to his position in his wife’s family household?’, ‘What, if any, contact does the migrant husband have with friends, family, and other people outside of the household?’, ‘How, and why, are these contacts developed and maintained? (for instance, through social media, communications technology, etc)’, and ‘What forms of ‘support’ are available to migrant husbands in the UK? (ie practical support, emotional support, spiritual support, etc; provided in-person or online, etc).’ These sub-questions allowed for the exploration of different actors migrant husbands engaged with, and the ways in which social actors such as friends assist migrant husbands in navigating their experiences of marriage migration. In addition, this line of questioning enabled the further exploration of the findings of the pilot study, which indicated the practice of resistance and agency amongst migrant husbands.

3.3. Research Design

My research has been a primarily qualitative undertaking and has been deliberately designed to gain deep insight into the ways in which Pakistani migrant husbands navigate masculinity and marriage in motion. Indeed, as is acknowledged in the broader literature, qualitative research provides greater opportunities than quantitative research to engage with marginalized or hidden groups in holistic research, particularly on sensitive themes (Woodley and Lockard 2016: 321). Since masculinity and marriage in motion are sensitive and complex themes, and migrant husbands are members of an often marginalized and hidden group, a qualitative research design is ideal to explore and identify the dynamic experiences of male spousal migrants to the UK through ethnography and life histories by way of semi-structured interviews (see also Clifford: 1986, Miles and Huberman: 1994, 10).
In order for the qualitative research method to be effective, it is crucial that as the researcher, I reflect on the processes involved in the gathering, producing, sharing, and receiving of data (Finlay: 2002). In order to do so, recognition of my positionality (identity, values, power relations) is required (Jacobsen and Landau: 2003), which I will focus on in more detail at a later stage in this chapter.

3.4 Methodological Approaches

3.4.1 Feminist Approach

The goal of feminist scholarship has historically been to write women into academia through the inclusion of women’s lives and experiences (Abu-Lughod: 2008, 12), in spite of the existence of a serious crisis in feminism that involves many women voicing their concerns such as “that doesn’t include me and my experience” and “you can’t speak for all women” (Abu-Lughod: 1990). Questions such as ‘what does a feminist methodology entail and what does it mean?’ have been explored by many scholars (Abu-Lughod: 2008, McDowell: 1992, Caplan: 1988, England: 2006). There is a broad agreement that a feminist methodology includes acknowledgement of unequal power relations between the researcher and researched, positionality and reflexivity, and politics and accountability (England: 2006).

Firstly, the researcher must acknowledge unequal power relations between him/herself and their informants, as researchers are not independent from their interlocuters (Abu-Lughod: 2008, 405, Grosz: 1986, 1999). For instance, Smith (1988) notes that she positioned herself in her research as a White East Midlands woman, making it clear that her geographical ‘otherness’ as an East Midlander studying the West Midlands, was as significant as her gender. The level of nuance provided by Smith (1988) demonstrates how fragile the perception of being an ‘outsider’ is, and the significance of managing this efficiently. Secondly, acknowledging positionality involves taking

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12 This concern is one that I feel on a personal level and which initially discouraged me from adopting a feminist methodology within my research. However, my research journey has required me to become more flexible and open to new ideas and approaches, and after reading more widely around the subject, I have discovered that my research is inherently feminist.
into consideration how people view the world from their social and personal locations. Caplan (1988), who upon revisiting her field site after becoming a mother, saw the struggles of women participants differently. Vol’s (1990) ethnography of the construction of Black masculinity which involved her ‘hanging out’ with Black and Asian young men in the Midlands, also sheds light on the importance of reflexivity and positionality of the researcher, as colloquial language and behaviour was required to access her interlocuters. Reflexivity allows researchers to consider their position in relation to their research and trace the evolution in their thoughts through the fieldwork and interaction process. Finally, politics and accountability involves the consideration of the grave risk one can project onto informants (Stacey: 1988). These are dynamics and issues that I address in more detail below.

In sum, I employed a feminist methodology for this research, as it speaks to focusing on a neglected topic, the importance of carefully engaging with ‘invisible’ and ‘silenced’ subjects in order to depict, with nuance, their struggles and forms of agency (Abu-Lughod, 2008: 17), through collecting life histories and undertaking semi-structured interviews, and being part of what I am studying as an ‘organic intellectual’ (Gramsci cited in Crehan: 2002), ‘indigenous’ (Clifford: 1986), or ‘halfie’ ethnographer (Abu-Lughod, 2008: 27). As a feminist who recognises the grand narratives within feminism that can be oppressive in themselves to Muslim women, I have developed my own feminism over the years, which is integral to this thesis. The feminist methodology employed in this thesis is very much personalized and emerges from my own feminism: to extend the compassion I have been afforded at various times in my life to other minority and/or invisible groups, particularly attentive to social markers of difference (class, race, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, gender), listening carefully to the voices of members of this group and being attentive to the rights and needs of these individuals and rights for these groups. A crucial aspect of this personal feminism is to exercise and practice it as a form of speaking truth to power. In other words, my personal feminism is exercised in spite of current or popular understandings of these vulnerable groups and/or any personal negative experiences with individuals that self-

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13 My personal feminism has been extended to my work in Parliament where I have founded the Equality Act Review: www.equalityactreview.co.uk
identify within these groups. The latter is crucial to distance myself from any bias towards my interlocuters that may cloud my research and/or research analysis.

The nature of my personal feminism embedded within the methodology however strikes a note with Spivak’s (1988) work, in which she posits an important question; ‘can the subaltern speak?’ In other words, there is a risk that my research – albeit, I maintain, offering a valuable contribution to key scholarly, political and policy debates - may be speaking for migrant husbands, which would counteract the ethos underpinning my personal feminism. I aim to address this valid issue by interweaving my analysis with excerpts from participants, positioning them centrally in the thesis, and thereby framing my personal feminism as an ethos facilitating this positioning. In addition, as a British Muslim woman of Kashmiri heritage, I am able to ‘write in’ my experience as a Muslim woman with South Asian roots who is exploring – perhaps unconventionally – subjectivity and hardship amongst Pakistani Muslim migrant men that otherwise are at times homogenously viewed as ‘powerful’ masculine authorities in a patriarchal society. In doing so, I am strongly speaking truth to the power of patriarchy that can oppress both men and women, but also to the power of grand narratives that oversimply gender dynamics within Muslim communities as ‘men are the oppressors of women’. As a female researcher who views her own life-history as falling within the framework of multiple and alternative feminisms, and by way of my research aim to contribute to men and masculinity studies by demonstrating the multiplicity of masculinities, is my way of exploring and practicing what feminist methodology could be (Abu-Lughod, 2008: 27).

3.4.2 Intersectional Approach

It is important to take into consideration the subtleties of context and local identities when exploring migrant husband experiences. This is particularly important for masculinity studies, as commentators such as Hibbins and Pease (2009), have advocated for the use of a social constructionist approach, which accounts for variations in masculinities over time and place, as well as social factors such as race, class, ethnicity, and age (Connell: 1987, Connell: 2002, Edley and Wetherell, 1995: 208, Edwards, 2006: 104), and macro and micro structures of oppression. The pilot study conducted during the early stages of the doctorate studies indicated that a social
constructionist approach should be employed to explore inter-community differences as well as intra-community differences. For instance, within the Pakistani community, masculinity and marriage is experienced differently by the settled and locally born, compared to the marriage-migrant newcomers. Moreover, competing and multiple masculinities were organised by participants in a hierarchical fashion by age and citizenship status, across social fields such as the household and on social media platforms, such as Facebook. Applying an intersectional analysis can thus reveal the vulnerabilities of migrant husbands and provide an insight into the multiple identities and structural axes of power which can cast a silence over their problems, but just as crucially, cast a silence over the creative approaches carved out by migrant husbands to navigate diverse processes. In this way, an intersectional approach provides visibility to previously unrecognised vulnerable groups of men that are too-often homogenized and vilified as a social group (Yuval-Davis: 2006).

3.5 Data Collection Methods

My fieldwork took place between February 2017 to August 2018. I began with a pilot study in February 2017 which spanned to April 2017 and focused on support systems available to migrant husbands. I continued interacting with my interlocuters after the pilot study had concluded, as I did not want to give the impression of only taking an interest in interlocuters’ stories and experiences for my personal gain. This approach also helped to build rapport and trust with my participants. The continued interactions took the form of semi-structured life history narratives, which enabled me to include these as part of the fieldwork period as a whole. I was careful not to interact with migrant husband participants who had experienced domestic violence, as at that point in time, I had not received ethics approval. I had to therefore clearly communicate this to migrant husbands who were interested in taking part in the research prior to receiving the ethics approval, explaining the reasons why, and informing them I would be in touch in the near future, once I had received approval.
My ethics approval (for interviewing migrant husbands who had experienced domestic violence) was granted in April 2018, after which I made preparations to conduct interviews with migrant husbands who had experienced domestic violence, which included the management of any vicarious traumatization that may arise. For this, I produced a list of self-care management tools and techniques, including keeping a journal as a coping mechanisms and to manage my emotions, to protect myself as a researcher. I began interviewing migrant husbands who had experienced physical forms of domestic violence in May 2018 and concluded these in August 2018. During this period, a total of eighteen migrant husbands were interviewed. Overall when combined with those who had not experienced domestic violence, a total of sixty-two migrant husbands were interviewed for this research.

A second but important strand of fieldwork were the interviews with community member interlocuters, who during the research design stage, were identified as interlocuters who could provide valuable insights of migrant husband experiences of marriage migration. Interviews with community member interlocuters were on-going from May 2017 until conclusion of fieldwork in August 2018. At various points during this time, I explored certain themes in more detail with community member interlocuters that emerged with ongoing interviews with migrant husbands. This approach enabled me to practice intersectionality in perspectives of social actors that occupied social spaces at one time but from different social and personal positionalities. A total of forty-three community member interlocuters were interviewed for this research.

3.5.1 Life Histories with Migrant Husbands

As a main methodology underpinning this study, I employed life-history interviews, which involved asking participating to ‘tell me your story’, providing them a safe space to express themselves and share their experiences (Liversage: 2009a). Moreover, given that migrant husbands can be members of an invisible and silent (victim) group, the life history narrative method was an appropriate approach to place migrant husbands at the centre of the research. Since the initial research project at undergraduate level in 2013, I have found this approach to be the most fruitful,
as I am not only able to remind myself of my positionality – and privilege – and ensure that as a researcher I can do justice to the voices of the oppressed but also, to provide a safe space for participants in which they feel comfortable in sharing their stories and experiences, without feeling shame, being interrupted, or fear of being judged.

Once migrant husbands had made contact, I was able to explain the aims of the study and only after they had provided informed consent, I conducted life-history narrative interviews at a time that was convenient for migrant husbands. Interviews were conducted over the telephone, which enabled migrant husbands to exercise control over their anonymity and ensure their circumstances were not further compromised in any way by speaking to a non-kin woman from the community, which was in line with the sentiments expressed throughout my previous research experience in 2013. Interviews generally lasted between 60 and 90 minutes, were semi-structured, and conducted in English and/or Urdu and/or Mirpuri. A total of sixty-two life history narrative interviews – one per migrant husband – were conducted over eighty-seven (87) hours. These interviews were designed to capture the life histories/trajectories of migrant husbands, ease into the interviewing and folding of interlocuters into the fieldwork, and further details of their experiences were discussed in the semi-structured interviews. During these life history interviews, participants expressed that they felt empowered by the opportunity to speak share their stories, and therefore spoke freely on topics with minimal questions to prompt them. Where participants provided consent, interviews were recorded using a dictaphone and later deleted upon completion of the transcription. Interviews with community member interlocuters were conducted in person in a coffee shop, community centre, or over the telephone, and the same

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14 For my undergraduate thesis at Oxford University.
15 Often, as ethnographers and/or anthropologists the concept of fieldwork is approached and viewed as a space in which both the ethnographer/anthropologist and the interlocuters are constituted in equally. However, this needs to be unpacked and interrogated further. As anthropologists and/or ethnographers, we enter a space (the ‘field’) that is made wholly of our own conceptualisations and as part of our ‘field’ of study, and not one that ‘interlocuters’ view in the same way. To honour the interlocuters, it is necessary to invite interlocuters into the ‘field’ in an agentative way, in which their life histories are acknowledged and heard. This allows them power in a field and space otherwise constructed by us as anthropologists/ethnographers. Hence, an initial interview with each participant in which they are able to share their social and life history narratives, enables the subverting of the power structures inherent to the nature of fieldwork.
ethical considerations and counter mechanisms were applied to ensure informed consent was provided, and their safety was not breached in any way.

Following the initial open question, I improvised during the interviews developing questions from the interviewees’ own narratives and asking them to elaborate on topics that they had posited themselves. It is worth noting that it has been suggested that life-history interviews are retrospective constructions during the expression of which interviewees may reconstruct themselves, making it difficult to distinguish between the lived experience and aspired experience (Holstein and Gubrium: 2000). I was aware that interlocuters may also have a (potential) desire to present himself in a positive way (Holstein and Gubrium: 2000), which further complicates the distinction between lived and aspired experience. Collectively however, detailed narratives from migrant husbands offer us a particularly deep insight into processes concerning masculinity, marriage and migration, unfolding in domestic spaces, which are otherwise methodically difficult to investigate given their inherently private nature. Furthermore, during interviews with migrant husbands, it became apparent that participants regularly distinguished in their telling of their life histories between their lived experience and their aspired experience. For instance, Armaan talked about his current situation, which involved abuse from his in-laws, and clearly stated how he was thinking of making his life better by employing creative approaches.

3.5.2 Semi-Structured Interviews with Migrant Husbands

Semi-structured interviews provided a balance between the flexibility of an open-ended interview and a focused and structured ethnographic inquiry (Zorn: 2010). As particular themes emerged during fieldwork, I tailored my interviewing to be more focused on how migrant husbands felt, perceived, described, explained, and understood their experiences of masculinity, marriage and migration. A total of three-hundred and nineteen (319) semi-structured interviews which lasted between sixty and ninety minutes were conducted with sixty-two migrant husbands. Multiple interviews (on average three to five) were conducted with each interlocuter to gain an in depth understanding of their circumstances and afford participants with generous space during the interview to express themselves and narrate their stories at their own pace. During these
interviews, I relied on a number of probes such as detail-oriented probes (i.e. when did that happen? who else was involved?), elaboration probes (i.e. could you tell me more? why do you feel that way?), clarification probe (i.e. you said you were the one being divorced, what do you mean by that?), silent probes (remaining silent and waiting for the interviewee to continue), ‘uh-huh’ probe (encouraging interviewees to continue by making an affirmative but neutral comment), and echo-probe (repeat the last thing the interviewee said and ask what happened next) (Recoup: 2008). Due to the level of detail that I expected to be shared during interviews, I was prepared with a dictaphone to record interviews if interviewees consented to our conversations being recorded. Upon transcription of the interviews, I deleted the recordings.

3.5.3 Third Party Interviews

The research methodology extended interviews (both face-to-face and telephone) to community members who had knowledge about uxorilocal transnational marriages. This was initially a technique employed as part of my undergraduate research where a preliminary form of research with migrant husbands was conducted. Since the technique had helped to mitigate the anticipation of a lack of migrant husbands participants coming forward to take part in the research, and had also provided rich insights into community dynamics and perspectives of additional social actors in this early research project, I decided to maintain these interviews as part of the methodology for the doctorate research (see also Brophy, Jhutti-Johal and McDonald: 2005, Lushey and Munro: 2015). For each community member interlocuter I asked background questions relating to their life histories, as well as their connection to the migrant husband and/or his family in order to validate the information being reported. While interviews with migrant husbands rarely trailed off into new and/or unrelated topics, interviews with community members often extended on from the migrant husband experience. At first, I had attempted to limit these interviews to only discussing migrant husbands however, I began to view them opportunities to gauge an insight into the community dynamics more broadly, and therefore alternate accounts and perspectives to those of migrant husbands, who may not always ‘narrate’ their accounts in a historically accurate fashion (Sandelowski: 1991).
I was also able to learn about additional research phenomena such as the experience of young, educated but unmarried female participants, who saw me as sharing this identity with them, and therefore able to broach this topic (see also Hampshire et.al: 2012). Participants also (male and female) shared their experiences of and views on mental health, social mobility, and Islamophobia. Having developed a separate archive of this data during fieldwork, I aim to publish papers on these topics in the near future and share these unintended research finding. Due to the sharing of identity with many female participants (and some male participants), the line between informant and friend regularly became blurred (see also Holt: 2010, Hampshire et.al: 2012). I often questioned whether I could be friends with informants and the implications of this for the research. I recognised that if I did not seem ‘friendly’ this could jeopardise the research, as it may have been interpreted as selfish for wanting to communicate only about the research, limiting further disclosure. For participants who became friends, I would employ terms such as ‘so outside of the research’ or ‘leaving the research to one side’, or ‘putting the interview/research to one side for a moment’, to make it clear that I was no longer in the role of a researcher, and the contents of the conversations would not be incorporated into the research material. I also encouraged these ‘participant-turned-friends’ to also employ these terms so that I was clear as to what I can and cannot use as part of the research.

3.5.4 Participant Observation

Participant observation allows for the immense immersion in a culture and its day-to-day activities (Calhoun: 2002). It involves the researcher interacting with people in their everyday lives while collecting information, which can provide nuanced insights into the enormously rich, complex, conflictual, problematic, and diverse experiences, thoughts, feelings, and activities of human beings, and the meanings of their existence (Jorgenson: 2015). During fieldwork, an opportunity presented itself to observe a migrant husband who had established himself as a spiritual healer within the community. Hanif, provided amulets and wazifas (see Marsden: 2005) and performed spiritual healing sessions to remove black magic to alleviate various forms of tensions and
hardships people experienced. Hanif’s experiences provided not only an insight into the ways he was able to navigate marriage migration as a migrant husband, but also the ways in which members of the Birmingham Muslim Pakistani community – including migrant husbands – attempted to resolve their problems they encountered. A particular method that Hanif employed to remove effects of black magic, and for which he was well-known for was a ritual he performed using ink. He would pour the ink into a small container, read Islamic verses from the Quran, after which he would look into the ink and tell his patients what he saw. This method was referred to as daara.

From March 2018 to August 2018, I observed five spiritual healing sessions. In order to participate in the healing sessions, I was given strict instructions to follow in order to ensure I was not negatively affected by bad spirits through the removal of black magic, which patients were potentially afflicted with. I was specifically instructed to only attend at a time I was not menstruating, as this would expose me to ‘absorbing’ the asr [negative effects] of black magic, to wear clean clothing, and to perform wudu [ablution], which was thought to provide an added layer of protection due to being in a pure state (see also Douglas: 1966). During the sessions, my participation involved sitting on the side of the room. I did not actively participate in the healing ritual(s). I did however, offer and return greetings of slaam [peace be with you] to patients as they entered and left Hanif’s spiritual healing space. Hanif introduced me to his patients as a PhD student who wanted to observe the sessions if they were happy for me to do so. In instances where patients objected, I left the room and returned after the healing session had concluded, which I was required to do on two occasions.

3.5.5 Strengths and weaknesses of data collection methods

The data collection methods were dominated by telephone interviews, which not only provided access to interlocuters through increased availability of potential participants, but the lack of facial recognition negated participants’ concerns that details about their sensitive and ‘taboo’ disclosures could circulate in a tight-knit community. However, despite there being advantages of the telephone method, there are also some disadvantages that ought to be addressed. The
telephone interview can be structured by a certain power dynamic, aspects can remain hidden and/or be silenced (Holt: 2010), and participants can appropriate the space to reconstruct their identities which can blur the line between truth and fact (Holt: 2010, Sandelowski: 1991). This section of the chapter will address these issues in turn.

3.5.5.1 Power dynamics

My positionality as a Kashmiri un-married but educated woman, created multiple and complex layers of power dynamics during interviews with participants (see also Hampshire et.al: 2012). I was often asked “where I’m from ‘back-home’” by participants. At first I responded with “Azad Kashmir” to ensure details about my personal life were kept vague however, this response was unsatisfactory for the majority of participants who inquired further as to “where about in Azad Kashmir, Dadyal, Mirpur, Chakswari, Kotli [different cities in Azad Kashmir]”. I learnt to be more specific as interviews went on, as I did not want to give the impression that I was not being forthcoming about my roots. It appeared to be that establishing the area which my family was based was a significant factor in building rapport and credibility amongst participants (see also Hampshire et. al: 2012).

My ‘young and unmarried status’ was often inquired about by participants in interviews in a number of ways. For instance Khalid once asked:

Khalid: “Are you married?”

Me: “No I’m not.”

Khalid: “See, when you get married you’ll realise a lot of what I’m saying a little bit more. It’s difficult to sometimes understand where married people are coming from if you’re unmarried…but still you get me, of course you understand what I’m going through, but I mean if you were married you would understand, it grows you, you see life differently…”

Me: “Ah I see…”

Khalid: “When you do get married, and I pray you find a really nice husband who looks after
you, that you also look after him and don’t treat him how my wife has treated me...and keep a distance from your parents too, I mean see them often and stuff, but don’t let them take over your marriage, make sure you have that privacy between you and your husband...It’s so important otherwise it’s a marriage between four or five people and that’s when the problems start...

For Khalid, my unmarried status invited him to offer personal insights and advice as to how I should conduct myself and my relationships - not only with my husband but also with my parents – upon marriage. In this way then, my unmarried status rendered me ‘younger’ (not in age, but experience) and more naïve as to the inner-workings of marriage. This shifted the power dynamics in the interview, as Khalid established he ‘knew more’ about marriage and therefore his account was credible.

For others such as Mohsin, my unmarried status was welcomed:

“It’s good you’re not married you know, you have saved yourself from the headache...just focus on yourself...don’t be like us sitting here trapped and stuck, with several headaches [metaphor for issues]...”

At first I was concerned as to participants not wanting to open up to me due to my unmarried status, but as I progressed through fieldwork, I did not experience this to be a limiting factor. Being a “apni” [one of our own] woman in many ways was comforting to participants in a number of ways. For instance, some participants likened me to having a younger sister they could share their hardships with, others as a daughter. In some ways, I felt that their disclosing of sensitive and intimate details of their lives that very little people in their lives were aware of, was justified through forging a kin relationship of some sort (daughter or sister). This I thought, was also a way for some participants to religiously justify speaking to a woman about personal issues. Another layer of complexity to this was my British citizenship, which at times I felt afforded men an opportunity to ‘educate’ British Pakistani/Kashmiri women as to how to treat migrant husbands. For instance Hussain expressed:

“What you’re doing is so important. Nobody believes us men who go through this difficulty,
they always think we are in the wrong, but you can tell people that we are not in the wrong that it’s the wrong things that happen to us...and you should tell other girls as well, that if they marry from back home, treat the men with respect, they are someone’s son and brother, they are human, they have feelings too…”

Together then, it was the amalgamation of different aspects of my identity – geographical roots in the ‘back home’, age, gender, marital status - that created a dynamic within the space of the telephone interview that enabled men to talk about their life stories, and difficulties. However, these very aspects also silenced aspects of the research, researcher, the interlocuters, and access to fieldwork settings.

3.5.5.2 Hidden and/or silenced aspects

The combination of my identity as a young, unmarried, Kashmiri Muslim woman interviewing married Muslim men from Pakistan and Azad Kashmir, implicated already silenced and ‘taboo’ topics such as sex and sexual intercourse. For my interlocuters, as an unmarried woman I would not have engaged in sexual intercourse and therefore, such topics were off limits. I am unsure as to how different this outcome would have been if I were married, as then – presumably – my gender would have rendered discussions around sex and sexual intercourse off limits. On the other hand, perhaps my identity as a social researcher positioned in the academy would have enabled me to inquire in this area to some extent. Some interlocuters however did discuss issues around oral sex, particularly as to whether this was religiously permitted. Other participants mentioned how their wives were engaged in extramarital affairs as they saw a box of condoms in their wife’s handbag despite having no sexual relation with their wives for several months. On the whole, this was a line of questioning I intentionally steered clear of as I did not want to give off the impression that I was sexually active as an unmarried woman, which could have risked my credibility and reputation amongst my participants who were Muslim, and to varying degrees, subscribed to cultural codes of honour. Furthermore, while I could not facially recognise my participants, my participants were able to recognise me with a simple google search if they wished, and so I also wanted to protect my reputation in the community by ensuring erroneous and potentially defamatory information about me was not circulated. However, in instances where participants
themselves opted to share this information without prompting, I listened and asked open ended questions where appropriate.

An additional silenced and/or hidden dimension of the research was the perpetration of violence by the migrant husbands. While interlocuters did mention becoming angry and frustrated, and in some cases pushing their mothers or fathers-in-law away from them during a physically violent episode, or retaliating to abuse in self-defense, participants did not talk about initiating domestic violence. Statistically speaking, the sample size indicates that there is a high probability that some migrant husbands may have initiated domestic abuse. Third party interviews with community members provided alternative accounts, as some interlocuters described knowing of cases where the migrant husband was violent in a bid to establish his authority within the household. These accounts however, were few but nonetheless reliable as third party interlocuters, I found, had little incentive to be disingenuous. This does however raise questions around the authenticity of the voices of migrant husbands which will be explored in more detail next.

3.5.5.3 Truth or Narrative Fictions

Some scholars conducting qualitative research have argued that open ended and unstructured interviews produce stories of the lives of interlocuters, which incorporates the why’s, how’s, and what’s of experience (Sarbin: 1986, Sandelowski: 1991, Holt: 2010). A key element of these ‘stories’ is the way in which they can constitute emplotment (Holt: 2010, 113); a beginning, middle, and end (Gergen and Gergen: 1986, Toolan: 1988, Sandlowsk: 1991). Stories that entail such structure are also referred to as narratives (Sandelowski: 1991). While these narratives can provide agency to participants, especially those who are marginalized and/or disadvantaged, it can be problematic to view them as historical facts and/or historically accurate. Anthropologist Edward Bruner (1984) suggested that narratives are ‘life-as-told’ as opposed to ‘life-as-lived’ which is what actually happened, as they afford the narrator the opportunity to reconstruct themselves and/or the sequence of events in a way that can present them in a positive light (Sandelowski: 1991, Brody: 1987, Spence: 1982, Holstein and Gubrium: 2000, Holt: 2010). Given that migrant husband portrayed themselves in the role of victims or heroes, is can be said that the interviews provided a space for participants to reconstruct their identities and make a positive impression.
However, this does not necessarily and completely render their accounts as false. As Bruner (1986) suggested, we must focus on how experience is endowed with meaning, rather than preoccupy ourselves with knowing the truth. Using this approach then, we can learn a great deal about migrant husbands’ aspirations and desires, and therefore the migration experience more broadly. This is poignantly present in the chapter 3.1 where migrant husband stories are squared (to use the mathematical term), as some participants retell their stories through the visually choreographed stories that complement the lyrics of the songs of sorrow. In other words, migrant husbands employ stories within stories to tell their own stories, which is a powerful indicator as to how migrant husbands come to experience migration before, during and after the marriage and migration process, and in relation to different social actors, such as in-laws, wives, and the government. This particular technique of telling stories using stories within stories enabled the revelation of deeply rooted patriarchal views amongst migrant husbands, which otherwise may not have surfaced through interviews. Furthermore, the third party interviews with community member interlocuters provide an alternative angle into the community dynamic more broadly but also the way in which migrant husbands experience marriage migration and masculinity and thus, the broadening of the research methodology to include third party reporting assists in obtaining a more holistic view of the experience of migrant husbands.

3.6 Recruitment

In order to recruit participants for the PhD research, I used the already established contacts I had developed with migrant husbands from my initial research in 2013, as part of my undergraduate studies at Oxford University. Remaining in touch with my participants from my preliminary study in 2013 enabled me to tap into the network of migrant husbands in Birmingham for my doctorate research. Migrant husbands I interviewed talked about their participation in the research with their friends, who also became interested in participating. In addition to snowballing, a number of additional methods of recruitment were employed which included ‘word of mouth advertising’ via personal and professional networks, speaking to community leaders such as councillors, Members of Parliament, community organisations and organisers, requesting Imams of mosques in Birmingham to mention the research project to their congregations during Friday (jummah)
prayers, putting up posters in shop windows on Asian ‘high streets’ (such as Alum Rock Road, Stratford Road, Ladypool Road, Coventry Road in Birmingham), and placing flyers at the service tills in the shops for those participants who preferred discretion at recording the project contact details, without being seen to do so.

The additional methods were consistent with the snowball sampling technique, which involve establishing and managing relationships with gatekeepers, such as shopkeepers in Asian high streets, mosque leaders and Imams, community workers and local councillors. I explained to these gatekeepers the purpose of my research and asked them if they would be able to introduce me to any potential participants or signpost a physical location I could visit for example, a particular place of work or community location where migrant husbands gather. I then asked prospective interviewees a series of initial questions, where appropriate, to identify whether they were migrant husbands and whether they would be willing to participate in the research. In some instances, for example through an introduction facilitated by a religious leader, I did not ask migrant husbands directly whether they were migrant husbands, as the gatekeeper had completed this step. Once introduced by the gatekeeper, it was important that I identified whether the participant was willing to participate, rather than feel compelled to because the gatekeeper had requested them to do so. In some instances, migrant husbands who participated in my research introduced me to their friends who were also migrant husbands, which is also characteristic of the snowball sampling technique.

Employing these techniques enabled me to interview a total of forty-three community member interlocutors, and sixty-two migrant husbands. The sixty-two migrant husbands from whom I collected detailed life history narratives and semi-structured interviews were conducted between February 2017- and August 2018. The forty-three community members were interviewed between May 2017 and August 2018. The criterion for participation was: interviewees must be Pakistani men who have married a British national, and migrated and settled in Britain and are therefore migrant husbands. I did not pose temporal markers on migrant husbands – for instance specify that migrant husbands must have migrated only after 2005 – as this would have limited
the data range and may have skewed the findings in particular way. For instance, had I interviewed migrant husbands who married and migrated after 2005, I would have not been able to capture the role of state immigration policies in the making of the migrant husband, his aspirations, and experiences upon marriage and migration. Furthermore, I would not have been able to distinguish between competing masculinities, as migrant husbands that migrated prior to 2005 had a large role to play in not only establishing the appeal of becoming a migrant husbands, but also in in their relationship with incoming migrant husbands (as discussed in section one of the thesis). In this way, I was able to interview migrant husbands who arrived in the 1990s in addition to those who arrived three-to-five years ago, those who arrived before the English test requirements and those who arrived after, or who are still trying to migrate. In this way then, the interrelation between marriage, migration, and masculinity was effectively explored through the avoidance of applying a temporal marker at the recruitment stage.

3.7 Data Analysis

Once an interview had been conducted, I revisited my interview notes and transcribed the audio recording (where permission was given). Interview transcripts and written accounts of interviews and fieldwork observations were organised in folders on my laptop, which were password protected and subsequently manually coded into themes. The process of coding by way of ascribing themes was an analytical process that involved further techniques such as colour coding particular passages of interview transcripts, creating a list of the participants (using acronyms) and making brief notes as to the main themes emerging from their narratives, and active brainstorming, to recognise key themes that run through the interviews. Excerpts or verbatim quotations from interviews were highlighted using a colour key, and such quotations have been drawn upon in the thesis to highlight the importance of individual accounts, without presenting such accounts as being representative of other experiences. I also kept a themes journal in note hand form, which was dated throughout the fieldwork period. This allowed me to trace themes as and when they developed during the fieldwork process, as well as during the write up stage of the PhD.
I also kept a field journal to process emotions and inform my analysis based on ‘transparent’ data collection (Ortlipp 2008: 696). The role of the journal was to help me acknowledge my role as a researcher in the research process, and to actively identify and process my thoughts, reactions, and opinions to what I have seen, heard, and experienced. In doing so, I was able to constantly evaluate my research during the fieldwork (Lynch: 2004). I regularly asked myself questions such as “what is the research telling me that I did not know before?”, which helped me to understand the findings in relation to the broader research. Specific data analysis methods such as discourse analysis were employed in analysing ‘Songs of Sorrow’ (chapter 3.1). As several participants referred to one or two particular Songs of Sorrow during our interviews, I analysed the top three songs that were popular amongst my participants.

3.7.1 Discourse Analysis

The main aim of undertaking a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of these Songs of Sorrow was to explore the links between language use and social practice (Jorgenson and: 2002). Fairclough’s three-dimensional model (1992b) refers to language (and images) as a social practice, giving meaning to experiences from a particular perspective. A critical discourse analysis methodology allowed for the deconstruction of the ‘Songs of Sorrow’ some migrant husbands listen to as what they identify as a source of strength and support. Both the language and the images used in the videography complementing the language of the songs form social texts (Jorgenson and Phillips, 2002: 60), and are crucial in understanding the sociocultural phenomena and processes of change. More specifically, the dialectical relationship between social practice and linguistic practice that is evident through these songs is a focal site on the planes of which we can investigate how societal power relations between men and women in the British Pakistani community, between competing masculinities, and within marriage and the household, are established and reinforced (Fairclough: 1995).

When analysing the Songs of Sorrow, Fairclough’s (1992, 1995, 2002) framework was employed. Fairclough’s (1992) three-dimensional model involves (a) analysing the written texts, genres, types or categories, (b) interpreting the interaction (production and consumption) between the target
audience and the text, and (c) providing the context of the text and explaining the implications for social practice. Fairclough’s model combines micro, meso, and macro-level interpretation. At the micro-level I considered the various aspects of the textual/linguistic analysis, for example the use of metaphor and rhetorical devices, imagery, and emotion. At the meso-level, I considered the issues with the production and consumption of the songs, for instance, who produced the text, who is the target audience, how the text is accessed, what it means for the target audience, how the target audience understands the text and uses the text etc. For the macro-level, I explored the intertextuality and interdiscursive to consider the broad sociocultural currents that affect the texts under study. This included the notion of silent masculinities, hegemonic masculinity, and patriarchy. In this way then, the contours of masculinity in marriage and migration for migrant husbands were mapped.

3.7.2 Identifying Themes

After each research stage, and after every five to eight semi-structured interviews with migrant husbands, I paused to identify common themes. During my first five interviews with migrant husbands for the pilot study in March 2017, religion, music, and networks had emerged as recurring themes, and after several more interviews, additional themes such as technology and creative approaches to financial support systems emerged. I noted memorable quotes and case studies under each theme. Through this process, I realised a common theme threading through these five distinct arenas was the element of creativity used by migrant husbands to reconstruct not only the boundaries of the arenas, but their place within it. For the pilot study with community member interlocuters between March – June 2018, I followed the same process.

Once I completed the transcription process, I printed the transcriptions and went through each participant’s series of interviews over the year and highlighted common themes once again. This process afforded me a micro-perspective during the fieldwork process and a macro-perspective once the fieldwork had been completed, which not only ensured the data analysis was more rigorous, but also allowed me to view the fieldwork from a bird-eye perspective, reflecting on the
process thus far. It was during this process and in gaining a bird’s eye view, which took place during Summer 2018, that themes such as liminal masculinity and aspirational masculinity surfaced, which have become key themes under which the findings of my doctoral research are organised.

3.8. Site selection

I undertook ethnographic fieldwork with members of the Pakistani community in Birmingham. I applied a place lens through which to ground my analysis in the daily life of the British Pakistani community in Birmingham (Gieli: 2009, McLoughlin: 2012). This lens extended to the ‘practices of home as a household or domestic unit, in which many migrants also engage’ (Olwig: 2002, 216). The workplace, the mosque, and online social media platforms are additional sites in which migrant husbands also engage. As a result, the ‘gendered geographies of power’ that Mahler and Pessar (2001) place as a central research topic in migration studies (Liversage: 2012, 1120), extend to a number of social arenas. I was able to identify these social arenas due to having prior knowledge of navigating the city, as Birmingham is the town in which I was born and raised.

3.9. Ethical Considerations

The experiences of Muslim men, particularly their emasculation, can be a sensitive research topic. This is particularly pertinent in a context that is increasingly shaped by anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim sentiment (Redclift and Rajina: 2017), in a society where it is at the very least perceived that domestic tensions negatively affect women only, and where Pakistani men are often portrayed as predators and/or powerful patriarchs. Therefore, if conducted carelessly, the research could have upset and harmed migrant husbands who engaged in this study. I therefore took care to plan the study carefully in light of existing bodies of literature, previous research experience, and guidance by my supervisors and other academics within the field, with whom I consulted on a regular basis through the research design and fieldwork periods.
The migrant husband participants of the research were also individuals experiencing different forms of liminality (see Hampshire et.al: 2008). It was of paramount importance that the research captured this liminality and its implications for their gendered identities, their sense of space and place, and time. Due to their liminal situations, it was also inevitable that my interlocutors’ experiences would continue to shift and move throughout the research process, as well as the physical sites in which they are situated (see Dikomitis: 2004), and the mental projections of place and space in their retelling of their stories. As a result, migrant husbands may have different orientations towards time and space, which underpin notions of past and present, of place, and of relationships (see Smith, 1999: 55).

Judith Stacey’s (1988) reflections on the researcher placing their subjects at risk of manipulation and betrayal also strikes a chord with my research, as many of my informants were residing in irregular situations. In particular, during an earlier pilot study I felt compromised as a researcher due to the possibility of having to report an informant for what seemed to amount to benefit fraud. When completing my pilot study in 2017 however, I realised that my fieldwork in the city of Birmingham may continue to compromise my informants, as migrants in Birmingham may be stereotyped as potential benefit frauds (England: 2006, 290), in what is already a politically charged and politicised city due to its large Muslim community. This may also conflate with the already projected broader narrative(s) of Birmingham as a hotbed of terrorist activity (Abbas: 2017, McLoughlin et al; 2014), which could place my informants in further jeopardy. As previously noted, I was a researcher who had experienced victimization as a result of this broader politicization of Birmingham and its Muslims prior to beginning fieldwork. Therefore, it was of upmost importance to conduct my research in a way that did not expose an already vulnerable group of migrant husbands to further subjugation and hardship. My research design in its focus on marriage, migration, and masculinity enabled the steering away from issues relating to extremism, and I did not employ social media to discuss experiences of my interlocuters. The latter was an important consideration as I have social media accounts such as Twitter and Facebook through which I am

connected to politicians and journalists, who, had I been more transparent about my PhD research participants in the public domain, could have had severe negative impacts for both myself as a researcher, my research participants, and the longevity and continued feasibility of my research.

Strengthening my ethical considerations and approach to research further was my undertaking of appropriate preparation, through reference to social science methods and ethics training, and being granted ethics permission by the UCL Research Ethics Committee. In 2013 I successfully passed the Protecting Human Research course developed by the NIH Office of Extramural Research, and the HSCIC’s Information Governance Course. Drawing on insights gained throughout these processes, I employed an ethical conduct for the safety and protection of both my informants and myself, and in the way I handled research I collected during my fieldwork. A considerable proportion of the abovementioned courses were dedicated to the Data Protection Act (1998), with which my project was consistent, as well as with the upcoming General Data Protection Regulations which, in May 2018, replaced the Data Protection Act 1998.

3.9.1 Recounting Trauma

The experience of trauma - if experienced through the migration process - may further affect the way in which informants experience time, space, and place. I was aware that the ability of informants to retell their stories and therefore, engage in the research (Barakat et. al, 2002: 992, and Eastmond, 2007: 259) could also be affected. However, the ethnographic research method combined with oral testimonies was a powerful means of gathering detailed accounts of what may have happened (Barakat et. al, 2002: 999), as well as informally assisting informants, as oral testimony can be viewed as a form of therapy (Eastmond, 2007: 258). As a result of my awareness of these dynamics, I carefully constructed and posed questions so that I did not directly ask participants to recount painful experiences, such as those related to shame and/or violence. Instead, I designed broad interview questions to invite the participants to determine the details they were comfortable in sharing. In instances where participants recounted painful experiences during the interview, I took care to be compassionate, patient, and caring. I also offered participant(s) the opportunity to pause the interview and continue at another point or to
terminate their participation in the research due to emotional distress. In any case, as part of the referral process that I had developed in instances where sensitive issues arose, I provided a list of organisations to the participant so that they had the contact details of relevant organisations if they required further support. The referral process also helped me to manage any unintended outcomes of the research. For example, some of my interlocutors shared information with me around on-going cases of child-custody battles in a divorce/separation, and I provided a list of organisations the participants could contact to seek legal help if they wished to do so.

The recounting of trauma also extends to a whole new set of issues between the researcher and the informant(s): the expectations of informants from the researcher(s). Barakat et. al (2002: 994) highlight that informants may be motivated by what they perceive to be the researcher’s intentions or usefulness. My position as an ‘insider/outsider’ social scientist in some instances exacerbated this aspect, as – for individuals I was meeting for the first or second time only – my interlocutors perceived me to be a member of the community who shared their language, cultural, and ethnic background, and thus provided some leverage to apply coercive pressures in gaining assistance regarding citizenship related issues (see also Schep-Hughes, 1995: 410). As noted above, these were participants who were new to the research and who I had not previously worked with. While such explicit requests for assistance did not arise with interlocutors, I have previously interviewed interlocutors who have made such requests during pilot studies. In such instances, I reiterated my position as a researcher and the purpose of the study. Two participants who had expressed an interest in participating in the doctorate research, withdrew from the research after I had explained that I could not assist them with their citizenship status.

3.9.2 Informed Consent

The nature of the participants also raised issues around ethics and consent, as English was not their first language. I was aware there was a risk of misinterpreting the aims of the study and/or seek to exercise agency by using the research as a platform. Mackenzie et. al emphasise the need for participants to be fully and adequately informed about the purposes, methods and benefits of
the research, and that agreement to participate be fully voluntary (2007: 301). They also propose that the consent process should be iterative and secured through a process of negotiation at all stages of the research process (2007: 306-307). In order to ensure language was not a barrier to obtaining informed consent, I translated all relevant materials such as leaflets, participant information sheets, and consent forms in Urdu, and employed my multi-lingual skills when communicating with interlocuters.

I was also aware of Gramsci’s work on ‘organic intellectuals’ (Crehan: 2002), which is based on a hope that such intellectuals could speak for the masses who could not speak for themselves. Controversially, Gramsci notes that the ‘organic intellectual’ is superior in relation to the ‘oppressed masses’, and therefore has greater power. As a result, it is necessary to explore the complexities surrounding representation. Spivak states “the person who speaks and acts is always a multiplicity” (1988: 70). Speaking with my interlocutors and acting on their behalf is three-dimensional in that it involves simultaneously speaking to third-party organisations/academic fields and – in many ways - acting on their behalf when conducting research. This type of representation could be further exacerbated through the medium of the ‘insider/outsider’ anthropologist. It is paramount that the participants can speak for themselves through the research text as co-authors with the ethnographer as the scribe, archivist and interpreting observer (Clifford, 1986: 17).

As a result, it was crucial to obtain genuinely informed consent, which I envisioned to be a challenge when conducting qualitative research with migrant populations, who may also be vulnerable. For interviews with migrant husbands and/or their wives and/or community member interlocuters, I approached consent as an iterative process. As per the Declaration of Helsinki (2000), paragraph 22 states that “where written consent cannot be obtained, verbal consent must be fully documented and witnessed." In scenarios where participants did not wish to make themselves known in person due to the sensitivity of the nature of the migrant husband experience, I presented the option to audio-record the informed consent verbally on a dictaphone. In cases where the first two options were not agreeable with the participant, I informed them of
the third option, which involved the witnessing of the informed consent by a second, independent person.

1. Once the participant expressed an interest in taking part in the study, I briefed them about the research, its aims and objectives, possible risks, ethical considerations including maintaining their anonymity through agreeing to undertake telephone interviews only, and consent processes.

2. At this stage, I provided them with an information sheet and allowed them 48 hours to think about whether they would still like to participate.

3. After 48 hours, I contacted the participant and asked if they would like to proceed in taking part in the study. If they provided consent to continue with participation, I obtained iterative consent (mostly through verbal recording) and informed them that they can drop out of the study at any point.

With this three-step process I was able to strengthen the iterative consent process and ensure that participants had time to consider all the information in order to make an informed decision about their participation in the research.

3.9.3 Intruding on Privacy

There was also a risk of intruding on the privacy of informants and possibly placing myself at risk by entering the private home of a participant to conduct interviews, the latter of which was strongly discouraged by my supervisors. I was also aware that masculinity is a sensitive topic, and for men it may be shameful to talk about their experiences and, indeed, asking questions about this could be classed as intruding on their lives. As a result, during in-person interviews were conducted in a public space such as a community centre, which was a neutral space and therefore minimised intrusion. However, informants were comfortable in sharing their experiences and participating in interviews over the telephone, as this method protected their identity, which eliminated the risk of intrusion of their personal space.
3.9.4 Unintended Findings

During the early stages of fieldwork, one participant in particular caused me to be concerned about my position as a researcher, as a result of which I contacted my supervisor for advice. One of my interviewees was, it appeared, engaged in benefit fraud, and I was concerned whether I would be obliged to report him to the relevant authorities which could, in turn, compromise my ability to conduct research in future as doing so could easily lead to the interviewee in question sharing his suspicions with other members of the tight-knit network of migrant husbands, that I had reported his activities to the relevant authorities. In light of the importance of maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of research participants, and in recognition of the prevalence of migrants and individuals in irregular situations enacting administrative irregularities to maintain their lives and livelihoods, I decided – in consultation with my supervisor – that this was not a ‘crime’ that required me to breach my agreement of confidentiality and anonymity. This encounter and the subsequent discussion with my supervisor reasserted the importance of my developing a clear ‘unintended findings’ protocol, and to develop pre-established parameters for me to consider – in future interviews – inter alia, when it may be appropriate to stop an interview due to the nature of the disclosure; and/or when it might be appropriate for me to refer an individual to social services or other authorities. I gave these aspects considerable attention within the ethics protocols and application to the University College London Research Ethics Committee. I decided that an interview would be stopped, and/or social services should become involved if a participant raised concerns for his health and safety, was being abused at the time of the interview, or if his life or another individual’s life was in danger. The migrant husbands who participated in my doctorate research did not present with any such circumstances that warranted me to inform the authorities. However, in their narratives, there was considerable mention of fellow migrant husbands who were in difficult circumstances (such as experiencing domestic abuse).

3.10. Positionality

Researchers are known to bring to research their own ‘cultural and ideological baggage’. One of the key biases embodied by this is the assumption of the superior nature of Western research and
in doing so, collecting cultures and gazing at the subject of the research (Smith: 1999, 59). Research, particularly ethnography, fails to include the researcher in the analysis (Caplan: 1988, 8), which further echoes his/her authority and creates a false sense of credibility to the text. However, as noted above, the text is produced by the researcher after observing the subjects, therefore positioning the researcher as a medium between the research subject(s) and the reader of the text. In this way then, the text is produced through the embodied experience of the researcher, which provides the text with an added layer of meaning – that of the researchers view and positionality. It is therefore paramount that the position of the researcher is acknowledged and explored.

Gramsci (Crehan: 2002, Spivak: 1988, 78) considered the role of intellectuals in society and argued that it was "organic" intellectuals who had the ability to move away from ‘writing against culture’ (Abu-Lughod: 1990) in which they describe social life in accordance with scientific rules. It was the organic intellectual with ‘one foot inside the field and the other outside the field’ (Behar: 1996, 162) that can authenticate the research. Abu-Lughod (1990) and Hussein (1980) further echo Gramsci in their elaborations, as they argue that insiders studying their own cultures offer new angles of vision, and depths of understanding. Mammad (2001) further adds to the conversation through the notion of positionalities, which researchers should acknowledge, as belonging to the community of subject enables penetration into the community as an insider. My social positioning therefore endowed me with a “...superior almost organic knowledge of the community not accessible to outsiders, for example white people” (Mammad: 2001, 2), which authenticates the data. Some researchers have found that religious, ethnic, or political affiliations of researchers impact what participants are willing to share (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh: 2006, 312) and thus, my positionality as an ‘insider’ is a factor for the informants when deciding to disclose information they may not otherwise disclose. It is also important to consider that positionality as described thus far, can work against a researcher, as some participants may prefer to disclose information to an ‘outsider’ than an ‘insider’.
Furthermore, my position as a woman of the border, who is between places, identities, languages and cultures (see also Dikomitis, 2004: 7) positions me in-between the research community as a British-Muslim woman of Kashmiri - and/or sometimes of Pakistani\textsuperscript{17} heritage - and the academic realm as a social scientist. My ‘insider/outsider’ positionality remedies the ‘western knowledge as superior’ paradigm, as I embody or at least can understand the roots of the thought processes (even if I do not agree with these) that underpin the experiences of migrant husbands. As a social scientist and as a participant-observer (Dikomitis, 2004: 8), I have had to be engaged and detached at the same time. However, even the best ethnographic texts are ‘economies of truth’ and the way in which power and history work through them cannot be controlled (Clifford, 1986: 7). Structural powers such as the government and its immigration policies were always present in interviews and throughout the duration of my fieldwork as a legally binding obligation, which, for instance, would have required me to report immigration crimes if they had been disclosed (Farmer, 1996). One could call this a moral responsibility, but this extended equally to the informants (Scepher-Hughes: 1995) if an occurrence is witnessed in which the law is required to be enforced (see also Turner: 2004 and Smith: 1999, 68), and this was made clear on the participant information sheet and consent forms.

This reflection on the role of the law in research can be applied to other dynamics to help further unpack the contextual and structural situation of the research. For instance, Jules-Rosette (1978: 552) highlights that Evans Pritchard looked into the oracle using an experimental method but failed to turn the mirror upon the social context in which his own theory was rooted. In turn, Caplan (1988: 12) acknowledges the evolution of her beliefs and views rooted in her experience after becoming a mother on her ability to decode her research findings, and Dikomitis (2004) highlights how a place and space can evolve throughout the duration of the research. These contributions stress the importance of not only incorporating the contextual platform of the research, but also the occurrence of changes in the researcher and the field sites in parallel to the informant’s life histories and ethnographies.

\textsuperscript{17} Sometimes British Kashmiris who have roots in Azad Kashmir are known as British Pakistanis. Over time, the acknowledgement of people from Azad Kashmir as distinct from those from mainland Pakistan has emerged.
3.10.1 Changes in the Field Site

The field site (Birmingham), has witnessed many changes over the years. I recall when growing up in Birmingham, it was ethnic identity that organised community dynamics both internally of the British Pakistani community, for instance through dress codes, and externally of the community, through spatial and geographical dynamics with the Pakistani population spread out in much of East Birmingham, as opposed to the Sikh and Hindu communities who were spread out in North Birmingham and the Black Country (Sandwell, Dudley, and West Bromwich). However, since 2010, religious identity has taken precedent in Birmingham’s ethnic communities such as Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, and Somalis, who are both externally considered as ‘Muslims’ before their ethnicity, and internally identify as Muslims before their ethnic identity, and negative media narratives often appeal to their religious identity than their ethnic identity. This is a trend that has been increasing since 9/11, after which Muslims have remained under the spotlight as a ‘suspect’ community (see also: Abbas: 2011).

A number of incidents have taken place in Birmingham that have further placed Birmingham’s Muslims community in the national and global media. This has included the so called ‘Trojan Horse Affair’, where Muslim teachers in secular state schools were accused of imposing hardline Islamic ethos into the schools. A hoax letter alerted the authorities to the plot, and after a number of investigations by the government, it was found that while there was no evidence for radicalization in the schools, there was however evidence of a few teachers wanting to introduce a hardline Islamic ethos in the schools (Clarke: 2014). The aftermath of the Trojan horse affair – namely court hearings for the accused teachers – were still on-going during my fieldwork.

In March 2017, the world’s media had caused major delays on a major road connecting into Birmingham city centre; Hagley Road. At the time I worked at NHS England part time, as I was funding myself through my doctorate research. One afternoon after leaving work, I became stuck

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18 See also Hoque who notes a similar trajectory in Luton which has ‘enhanced its reputation as a site of fear’ (2019: 6).
in traffic on the bus journey into the city centre. As the bus drove past a little restaurant that the media crew and cameras had locked in the parametres of their lenses, I took to my phone to Google ‘Hagley Road’. To my utter shock and horror, I discovered that the London suicide bomber Khalid Masood had resided in the flat above the restaurant, which was a one-minute walk away from my work place. Once more, Birmingham became the focus point of terrorism in the ‘west’. I certainly witnessed a change in the behaviour and responses of informants at the time, who would complain about the Islamophobic incidents that they or a close family member or friend, were increasingly being subjected to.

As a result, migrant husbands’ life histories included the ‘multiple jeopardy’ (King: 1988, Bi: 2019) effect, where they were caught at the intersection of their gender, ethnicity, immigration status, citizenship status, invisible victim status and religious identity, which was a common reoccurring theme that was inextricably linked with migrant husbands’ life history narratives. This experience of multiple jeopardy also helped me to view the migrant husbands through their eyes, and not the eyes of a researcher who had, prior to entering the field, completed a linear research process by way of conducting a literature review. It was only upon reflection of the research findings that I realised I had entered the field with a tunneled vision of migrant husbands as Pakistani, husbands, and immigrants only. The life history narratives widened the lens through which I viewed my informants, as they revealed that migrant husbands were in fact embedded in a society and were also up against issues beyond the remit set out in a literature review that affected them, such as the Birmingham City Council bin dispute in the summer of 2017.¹⁰

3.10.2 Changes in Myself as a Researcher

In order to pursue my doctoral research in September 2015, I had decided to work as a teaching assistant in order to fund myself through the PhD programme. At my work place, I witnessed a teacher showing a class of 11-year-old pupils a graphic, 18-rated video of people jumping to their deaths during the 9/11 attacks. In my view, this was a safeguarding concern as viewing suicide in

¹⁰ [https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-47225570](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-47225570)
the media caused copycat suicide and according to global statistics, minors (11-18-year-olds) were most at risk of committing suicide. I raised the concern to my line manager only to find myself dismissed. I took the matter to an employment tribunal and after two and a half years of struggling as a litigant in person, while continuing with my doctorate studies and working part time to mitigate my losses, I won my tribunal case. The court ruled that I had been unfairly dismissed due to whistleblowing and was victimized. Despite overwhelming evidence, the judge did not rule in favour of the discrimination on religious grounds, which inspired me to founded the Equality Act Review Campaign in Parliament, to review the Equality Act 2010.

Throughout my PhD studies then, I was a student, my own barrister, and an employee. Ironically, I was also a victim, studying the victimhood of migrant husbands. I felt invisible and silenced in a similar way to migrant husbands. I also resembled my interlocutors, as I fought to be heard, for the wrongdoing that I experienced to be redressed, and for justice to be exercised; as a result, I embodied a multiplicity of statuses and positions (barrister, litigant in person, daughter, sister, friend, researcher, student, employee), the same way as migrant husbands were a multiplicity of statuses and positions (immigrants, husbands, sons-in-law, employees, citizen/not a citizen). This parallel with some aspects of my informants’ positions in the UK helped me understand their experiences and ‘step in their shoes’ in a way I had no previously been able to, facilitating and strengthening the ‘personal feminism’ methodology further. One of the key things that my experience helped to me to identify was the concept and/or the theme of ‘waithood’ (Singerman: 2007, Honwana: 2012). Without my experience in the tribunals and my own ‘waithood’ of the legal system, I am unsure as to whether I would have identified this as a theme emerging from the fieldwork.

I began to document my experience in the courts as a British Muslim woman of colour as an auto-ethnography. I experienced, especially through the courts, the way in which structural silencing occurs through legal-linguistic loop holes, and to have to represent myself, due to being denied legal aid (Bi: 2019). I began to understand the experience of the migrant husband as the ‘other’, because I myself increasingly began to find myself as the ‘other’, on the fringes of society. It was
sometimes difficult to switch off the barrister side of me during interviews with migrant husbands and community members. By this I mean in my questioning and envisioning the migrant husband in court fighting for his own justice. My world became coloured with the court case battle and I had to take a step back from the research and reflect. A major factor that assisted me in switching off the barrister side of me was winning the first half of the court case in March 2017, and the second half in October 2017. Early on in the fieldwork process (Spring 2017), I met with my supervisor to discuss my progress, who told me to “leave everything outside the door”, before coming into her office. This instruction helped me when conducting my interviews, as I was able to leave these challenging personal circumstances aside, before conducting the interviews.

There were also instances that required me to put aside my personal feelings towards the position of women and female empowerment in the British Pakistani community. Some participants shared with me how they felt about their daughters pursuing a higher education, stating that they ‘had gone too far’, and ‘the British government had given too many rights to women’. It was difficult to not take these comments personally, as my life would have been very different had I not pursued an education and the British government here did not afford me the rights and freedoms it does. In such instances, I found it helpful to revisit my research questions to help me bring back focus to the research aims and objectives. I also found it helpful to remind myself of the context of migrant husbands, further strengthening the ‘personal feminism’ methodological approach that I have developed throughout my research.

3.10.3 My Positionality within the Academy and Implications for the Research

the academy, in order to resist the continued perpetuation of inequality of knowledge production between the ‘metropole’ and the Global South(s) (Connell:2007, 2014). Connell (2013) and de Sousa Santos (2014) suggest that the ‘south’ is a metaphor, and Connell (2013) argues there are multiple souths in the world, including within the metropole. It is through this concept of the ‘south as metaphor’ that I position myself as embodying the ‘south’ due to my identity and positionality; a British Muslim woman of Kashmiri heritage, who was born and raised in the poorest constituency in the United Kingdom. The class aspect of my identity is particularly significant to highlight, as the United Nations recently stated that parts of the UK resembled the developing world due to abject poverty (UN: 2018), attesting to not only the notion of ‘multiple souths’, but also the notion of souths and voices of the south within the metropole (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley: 2019, 3). Throughout my time as a PhD candidate within the academy, my positionality has manifested in multiple and complex ways, with implications not only for me as a researcher and the interlocuters at the heart of this research, but also for marginalised and/or subaltern researchers who research marginalised and/or subaltern communities within the ‘metropole’. I will now turn to consider each of these.

As a woman of the borders and margins (Dikotomis: 2004, 7), the academy has in my experience, resembled an incubator within which levels of precarity and instability have heightened. This is particularly demonstrated by the absence of funding for the research through a UK Research Council or my institution, University College London. This resulted in immense financial strain on me as a researcher from a working-class background, leading to considering options to rescind at multiple points during the course of the PhD. In order to continue with the research, I approached institutions and organisations outside of the academy for funding. It is important to note that these organisations in many ways also embodied margins, borders, and are often subjected to the power of coloniality, as many of them are founded by Muslim philanthropists with the aim to balance the discrepancies in Black and Ethnic Minority student attainment gaps, and employability prospects. While University College London recently acknowledged the barriers faced by BME students particularly in pursuing graduate research degrees by way of offering Windsor Scholarships, in my experience, its policies have marginalised and placed me at the peripheries of the academy,
rendering me not only mute and silenced on many occasions over a four year period, but also physically unable to conduct research and/or complete my thesis. Most recently, I experienced this while at Yale University as a Visiting Assistant in Research to Professor Marcia Inhorn, during which I was denied financial assistance from University College London.

The University College London’s reasons for denying me funds ranged from my CRS (Continued Research Status), albeit I was a registered student, to viewing my initial plan to fund my doctorate research through employment, as not ‘robust’ enough. In my correspondence with UCL, I highlighted that there are multiple structural forces at play which disadvantage students like myself from BME and working-class backgrounds, which the system does not account for, and which result in our continued struggle throughout our educational trajectories, resorting to employment to fund education in instances where we have been unsuccessful in scholarship applications. University College London also on a number of occasions made inferences and statements including that I ought to not have accepted the research fellowship at Yale if I did not have the funds to undertake the fellowship. In my view, is the epitome of institutional violence and discrimination on the grounds of social economic class. If a Black person who inevitably will have been subjected to racial discrimination throughout their life course (see King: 1988) experienced racial discrimination on campus, and sought help from University College London, I do not believe its response(s) would include suggesting moving campus, rescinding, or stating that the student should not have pursed an opportunity because they should have factored in the likelihood of being subjected to racial discrimination. This is however, a position University College London maintains for students from lower socioeconomic and class backgrounds despite having the resources and power, to alleviate their situations. In this way, my PhD experience has sharpened my positionality as a BME and working-class researcher, resulting in the disheartening feeling that these identities are inescapable, and that my talent and potential as a researcher hold little or no currency.

My experience within the academy is also closely interrelated with my doctorate research study. It is my view that had the proposed research aimed to explore terrorism amongst Pakistani men,
or research that spoke to the already established grand narratives surrounding Muslim men, the
doctorate study would have received funding, and thereby, I would not have experienced the
precarity and instability that I have experienced through the duration for the doctorate study. Due
to the western ‘gaze’ (Said: 1978) and the grand narratives that have been produced and
reproduced in and through the power of coloniality in the academy (Murrey: 2019), Muslim men
have been perceived and portrayed negatively such as, as terrorists, gang members, powerful
patriarchs, wife-beaters (see for example Alexander: 2000, Abbas: 2014). Any suggestion that they
may be vulnerable, pierces and destabilises the knowledge production of the ‘other’. In this way
then, as a marginalised researcher researching a marginalised group, I have been subjected to
penalty because the power of coloniality through the ‘white gaze’, is deeply entrenched in
structures of the academy, preventing it from accommodating alternative modes of thinking and
being, that transcend the Eurocentric viewpoint (see also Patel: 2019, Murrey: 2019).

The interrelation between my positionality and the positionality of my interlocuters in the way
they are researched and are read in the broader literature, exacerbates and multiplies the
jeopardy (see also King: 1998, Bi: 2019) for both parties. In other words, as a researcher I am
further marginalised because of what and who I am researching (see also Smith: 1999 cited Patel:
2019, 42), and Muslim migrant men at the centre of my research are also marginalised as their
experiences are muted through the structural oppressions experienced by me, as the researcher.
In this way then, the ‘metaphor of the south’ (Connell: 2003, de Sousa Santos: 2014, Patel: 2019)
transcends to an embodiment of the ‘south’. However, in its completion and submission, this
research speaks to decolonial thought both in relation to embodied experience of both the
researcher and the interlocuters, and also in practice and the ‘doing of sociology’ (see Smith: 1999)
by the researcher. In resisting the multiple and overlapping forms of structural oppressions
throughout the PhD and completing the research the ‘decolonisation of Muslim men’ has been
possible. This is to say that through a feminist ethnography both the marginalised and subaltern
researcher and the marginalised and subaltern researched community, have been re-oriented
within the ‘metropole’.
Part 1: Aspirational Masculinity

Introduction

“Why do people migrate?” and “how do they choose where to go?” are questions that have gripped social scientists and also policy makers seeking to direct, increase or decrease immigration and emigration (Carling and Collins: 2018). Over the last two decades, scholarly consensus has established that structural forces lead to both the inception of migration and the perpetuation of movement (Massey et al. 1998), which can be understood as the ‘drivers of migration’ – the factors that get migration’s inception and perpetuation. Drivers of migration have conventionally been focused on disparities between the place of origin and place of destination. Framed as the ‘push-pull’ model, classical literature suggested that migrants were pushed by low incomes in their countries and pulled by better prospects in more affluent countries (Lee: 1966, Harris and Todaro: 1970). However, critics of this approach have argued that centuries of exploitation of poor countries by rich countries created longstanding inequalities, which drove migration. (Castles and Kosack: 1973, Sassen: 1988).

Alternative explanations for the inception and perpetuation of migration have taken a micro-level approach, such as focusing on household decision-making (Stark: 1991), or macro-level approaches such as the role of social-networks (Boyd: 1989). While these are useful approaches that provide nuanced insights into the significance of individual and group agency, they mute the importance of structural dimensions, such as poverty, which was seen as a key structural driver of out-migration. There has been increasing recognition however, that the poorest can rarely migrate due to lack of resource (Tapinos: 1990), UNDP: 2009) and therefore, while there are strong relationships between migration and the alleviation of poverty, poverty may not be a driver of migration as once understood (Van Hear and Sorensen: 2003). Castles (2004) has argued that the analysis should focus on inequality and uneven development as the major driver of global-South to global-North migration.
A shortcoming of such models and approaches is the presentation of migration as a single action rather than a process (Van Hear et. al: 2018). In its original incarnation, push-pull failed to account for changing motivations, altered circumstances or modified decision en-route (De Haas: 2011). This is situated within a broader move within the literature that has begun to acknowledge that migration is entangled in myriad social, cultural, and emotional laden power relations (Pratt and Yeoh: 2003, Silvey: 2004, Silvey: 2006) and therefore, migration theory needs to account for the multiplex nature of migration in the way in which it is situated in geographies, emotional valences, social relations and obligations, and political and power relations (Carling: 2018, 911). A further shortcoming of the push-pull model is the way in which the migrant is understood as a figure without its own history and social force (Nail: 2015, 4) but rather, and the histories, presents, and futures of the migrant have been scripted through the lens of the nation state and citizen where stasis rather than movement is taken as the normal state of being (Casas-Cortes et.al: 2015, Colins: 2018, 965).

Carling and Collins (2018) acknowledge these shortcoming and propose an alternative way of framing migration that speaks to a wide variety of movements and their implications. Their core concepts: aspiration and desire as drivers of migration, provide a more nuanced understanding to how migration is initiated, experienced, and represented. Carling and Collins (2018) employ aspiration and desire as concepts that encompass hopes, plans, ambitions or goals that can be clearly formulated or kept vague (see also Gutman and Akeman: 2008). Employing aspiration and desire as a framework to understanding migration also speaks to Quagalia and Cobb’s (1996) understanding of aspiration “as the ability to identify and set out goals for the future, while being inspired in the present to work towards those goals” (Scheiblhofer: 2018, 1003), and Bakewell, who argued that “people do not aspire to migrate, they aspire to something which migration might help them achieve.” This brings us to question whether migration is a means to an end or an end in its own right (Carling: 2014). Traditional literature leans towards viewing migration as an end in its own right, however the aspiration-desire framework enables the exploration of migrations as a means to an end, which steers towards the possibilities that can be realised through migration. Collins (2018, 978) argues that migration involves becoming as much as being. Becoming in this way, is more than the result of calculative thought on the part of migrants or governments, it is
about the transformation of subjecthood, about becoming more than just a migrant (Collins: 2018, 974). Migration is about who you are then, and not only where you are (Carling and Schewel: 2018, 954). The employment of the aspiration-desire framework is pivotal to migration theory (Carling: 2018, 917).

The aspiration-desire model may also serve as a critical framework for accounting for the continued migration to a specific place over a number of generations (Scheibelhofer: 2018, 1001), which previous theories have not been able to effectively account for. The British Pakistani community is a prime example that speaks to this question. The first flux of migration from Pakistan to Britain occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, as a mechanism to help rebuild the British economy after World War Two (Shaw: 2000, Ballard: 1994). This first wave of migration was characterised by male migration, which lead to the second wave during the 1970s and 1980s, involving the family reunification of male migrant labour workers who sponsored their wives and children to the UK. The third wave of migration occurred from the 1990s onwards, involving second and third generation British Pakistanis returning to Pakistan to marry, a trend that continues to occur today. While economic motivations may have underpinned the first and second waves of migration, the third and fourth waves that continue today – namely through transnational marriage - cannot be entirely explained by economic push factors due to the increase in Pakistan’s GDP, particularly through remittances sent by family members. It is important then to explore the reasons behind the continued practice of transnational marriage migration. We can do this by questioning what marriage migration means within a broader social field. Taking aspirations as a starting point to this endeavor may be fruitful approach.

In the first part of the thesis I lay the foundations to the various intersecting processes involved in constructing the aspirations of migrant husbands, and how these may differ before and after marriage migration. The first chapter demonstrates that migrant husbands’ journeys of migration often begin long before they embark on travel, which speaks directly to scholars who have argued that migration is an ongoing process (McCormack and Schwaren: 2011, Collins: 2018). The chapter

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20 See also Gardner and Osella (2003) on cultures of migration.
also demonstrates that individual aspirations of migration cannot always be disentangled from those of kin and community (Carling and Schewel: 2017, 958, see also Werbner: 1990), as for many migrant husbands, the aspiration to migrate can be rooted in the aspirations of their family members. The second chapter proceeds to exploring the manifestations of aspirations of family and community members of migrant husbands, and those of migrant husbands themselves, and the implications these manifestations can have for their masculine identities. The final chapter explores the experiences of migrant husbands upon arriving in the UK, where some became British citizens, and others were waiting to become British citizens. In doing so, the chapter demonstrates that migration is not a linear process as it can include starts, stops, interruptions, and restarts, causing migrant husbands to revise their aspirations (see also Scheibelhofer: 2018, 1003). Overall, this section of the thesis demonstrates that migration is not an individual choice or a single decision made at a single point of time. It demonstrates instead that migration is more than where a migrant is but who a migrant becomes, and that aspiration and desire are central to the migration, marriage, and masculinity of Pakistani migrant husbands. Further, the chapter shows that shifts in aspirations of migrant husbands are experienced in relation to the masculine ideal of ‘transnational patriarch’. In so doing, this part lays the foundations for analysing the role of intersecting structures, spaces, and actors in shaping the experience of marriage migration amongst migrant husbands, and thereby highlighting that the degrees of agency are shaped by external structures.
Chapter 1.1 Making the Migrant Husband: Health, Grooming, and Appearance

Introduction

The context of migration aspirations includes social norms and expectations about migrating (Carling and Schewel: 2018, 952). For some, migration is an almost a rite of passage among young men (Mundane and Diagn: 2013, 512), for others it is a form of fulfilment (Pajo: 2008). Often, individual aspirations of migration cannot be disentangled from those of kin and community (Carling and Schewel: 2018, 958), as the family can circulate ideas about the possibility and potential of migration (Collins: 2018). Certainly in the literature on Pakistani migration to the UK, the role of the family is shown to be pivotal in arranging marriages that can facilitate further migration (Werbner: 1990, Shaw: 2000, 2006). It is known that each year approximately equal numbers of male and female spouses from the Indian sub-continent are granted settlement in the UK (Charsley: 2011); however, the literature is heavily oriented in exploring the experiences and vulnerabilities of migrant women. There is thus a paucity of research into men who migrate through marriage to their wives’ or her parents’ household, who have been described within South-Asian communities as ghar dhamad [house son-in-law], a position which undermines the man’s ability to retain control over his wife (Jeffery, Jeffery & Lyon 1989: 37). It has been reported that the migrant husband is unhappy due to his weak position in the household (Charsley; 2005). Other than this, we know very little about Pakistani migrant husbands.

Recent scholarly contributions from Carling et.al (2018), Scheilbelhofer (2018, 1003), and Bakwell (2013) encourage us to explore the ways in which migrant husbands set out goals for the their futures prior to marriage and migration, and whether and if so how they hoped migration would help them achieve their aspirations and desires. The pre-sequel to the marriage and migration processes involved in transnational marriage has very rarely been explored, as scholarship in the field has in large focused on the experiences of migration post-migration, and/or upon arrival into the country of destination. This is a particularly significant area of inquiry as scholarship from the population studies field suggests that parental investment in male children in South Asia more
broadly, is greater than that of female children (Das Gupta: 1987, De Souza and Chen: 1980, Chen. et.al: 1981, Sen and Sengupta: 1983, Dyson and Moore: 1983) indicating that migration may involve early gendered investments. For instance, Das Gupta (1987) demonstrates that male children were given better medical treatment, greater fat in their food intake, milk, and other commodity food items, compared to female children, as male children were expected to become breadwinners and care for the parents during their old age. Borrowing from this literature then, we can question whether migrant husbands are moulded towards becoming migrant husband from an early age.

Against the backdrop of a trend of migration to the UK that has spanned seven decades (Shaw: 2000), in this chapter I trace the diversity of experiences of migrant husbands prior to marriage and migration in order to understand how he came about migrating to the UK. In doing so, I aim to trace the social trajectory of migrant husbands by situating them within their own history and social forces (Nail: 2015, 4), and in the myriad social, cultural and emotionally laden power relations (Pratt and Yeoh: 2003, Silvey: 2004, Silvey: 2006). I thus steer away from viewing migration as a singular decision made in a single point in time, but rather view migration as a process and an ongoing series of decisions.

A journey of aspirations

Many migrant husbands I interviewed were told by their families from a young age that they would marry a British girl and migrate to the UK, which led to them to ‘dream’ about migration since childhood. Asim, a 32 year-old migrant husband from Jhelum, Pakistan, who arrived in the UK at the age of 26 and is educated to sixth form level, told me:

Throughout my teenage years, I used to stay up at night thinking about it, thinking about what it would be like to go to the UK and live there...working there, coming back to Pakistan on visits...my parents would talk about the plan to ask for my uncle’s daughter in the UK...my hopes and dreams were building every time they spoke about it and they spoke about it a lot...I think because I was the only son too, they really wanted me to be in the UK to be better off so I could support them and the family...
According to my interviewees, parental aspirations played a large role in the marriage migration of migrant husbands, which often were first experienced in their asking for the hands in marriage of suitable British girls, within their kin and friendship networks. Armaan, a 29 year old migrant husband from Kotli educated to degree level arrived in the UK three years ago. His case was exemplary of aspirations of family members shaping his marriage migration. He told me:

*My mother asked for her brother’s daughter’s hand in marriage for me when she was born. It was publicly known that Sarish and I were to marry. My parents had told everybody...my mother was adamant that she wanted nobody else to be my wife, except for her brother’s daughter...*

When asked to elaborate on his mother’s reasoning for the particular choice in bride for him, Armaan told me:

*She wanted to strengthen the relationship with her brother, and make it stronger...also for me to go to England...she thought it was best if I was looked after by her brother, which she expected him to do because of their close-knit relationship...*

Some families decided to ask for the hands in marriage for their sons once they had reached a mature age and wanted to plan ahead. Suleman told me:

*Marrying a British relative and going to live in the UK was always something that was talked about because so many people in our extended family did that...but when I started my college studies, which I was going to complete in two years, my parents wanted to make sure my future was going to be stable, so they talked about the different rishta [proposal] options and families they could approach.*

In Suleman’s case, his entering sixth form symbolised his ‘coming of age’ and proximity to adulthood, and therefore marriage, which triggered the formulation of him becoming a migrant husband as a real possibility. However for Hamza, a 30 year old migrant husband from Islamabad, who arrived in the UK two years ago:
My family had always seen it [marrying a British woman] as an option but I wasn’t really bothered. If it was meant to be it would be…In all honesty, I didn’t think it would happen because we didn’t have any immediate relatives in England, but we knew the families of friends, and extended relatives who had relatives in England. My parents did ask for help from their relatives to propose to certain families and ask for their daughters, any daughters, they wouldn’t name anyone, they were happy with anyone from England, but their efforts were not very successful…I was surprised when my wife decided she wanted to marry me…we had met after a chance encounter on my way to the city one morning and we began coming and going to each other’s houses more from there, and eventually we were happy to be get married…my family were thrilled…their prayers had been answered.

The role of the families of migrant husbands in aspiring for these marriages and making efforts to arrange them, are clear, and speaks to Carling and Schewel’s position that individual aspirations of migration cannot be disentangled from those of kin and community (2017: 958). We particularly see this echoed in the narratives of Arman, Suleman, and Hamza whose families – albeit at different stages in their lives – were taking steps to achieve their aspirations to have their sons marry a British national and migrate to England. In Hamza’s case we particularly see the way in which young people of both genders are mobile in towns and villages, which increases the likelihood of interaction, which can materialize into marital choices. As noted above, in some instances, this was economically motivated as sons were considered to be breadwinners and carers for parents in old age. This speaks directly to the Quaglia and Cobb’s (1996) understanding of aspirations as the ability to identify and set goals for the future, while being inspired in the present to work toward these goals. The action(s) on the families’ part also show that migration is not a singular decision that is taken in a particular moment in time, often within a short time frame prior to departure, but rather, has involved long-term thought and planning (De Haas: 2010) on more than one individuals’ part. For migrant husbands, their becoming migrant husbands involved collective familial effort.

One question that arises in such processes pertains to the meaning that migration holds for the families involved. Horvaith (2008: 173) writes that migration can turn into a necessary social act
that is quasi-compulsory for some populations. In this way, migration may have acquired a symbolic function (Meyer: 2018) and may not be about migration of people per se, but the ideas that people share about migration (Easthope and Gabriel: 2008, 173). For migrant husbands’ families, migration was seen to be a means to acquiring higher status and honour, strengthening foundations of support in older age and complementing dreams of stable economic futures. Their aspirations then were connected to social class (Lowe and Krahn: 2000), which raises questions about the conventional view of economic drivers of migration in that honour and status, can be seen to supplement economic currency in this instance. The proceeding sections of this chapter consider the different steps that families took in order to increase the chance of their son migrating to the UK.

Health

Migrant husbands told me how their families would ensure they were healthy (see also Das Gupta: 1987) in order to increase the likelihood of being able to marry a British national. Armaan told me:

> At about age 16, I was not getting any taller which concerned my parents, as they wanted me to be at least matching in height to the girl they had chosen for me. They kept taking me to the doctors, who would prescribe vitamins and advised that I needed the best food...I ate a lot of fish, milk, and eggs to ensure my bones and muscles were strong...it didn’t help that Sarish had grown tall before me so when she came to Pakistan in 2005, she was at least a foot taller than me and my parents got very worried, they thought she wouldn’t want to marry me if I remained shorter...

Armaan’s narrative demonstrates how his parents’ aspiration for him to marry Sarish and migrate to the UK became embodied by Armaan (see also Collins: 2008, 966) through the physical changes his parents wished to invoke. This further highlights the importance of the image of the ideal migrant husband. While this will be explored further in the next chapter, it is important to consider the image of the migrant husband held by parents and families of migrant husbands, which directly shaped the ways in which they prepared migrant husband for marriage migration.
Some families recognised that good health was an integral part of successful marriage migration for potential migrant husbands, and therefore concealed the health issue of their son from British wives and their families. Selina, a 24-year-old British Muslim woman of Pakistani heritage who was had recently graduated with a degree in Sociology and Criminology, told me that her sister’s first marriage was to a relative in their village in Pakistan. However, on the wedding night, Selina’s sister witnessed her ex-husband having a seizure, which caused her to leave their bedroom immediately and call for help. She was told a short while later that her husband experiences seizures on regular basis. Selina’s sister demanded to be taken back to her parent’s home, which was a few minutes’ walk away, that very night without consummating her marriage. Selina’s sister told her parents what had happened and demanded a divorce as the family had deceived her by concealing her husband’s health conditions. Selina’s sister returned to the UK a few days later and filed for divorce. She married again twelve years later to a man who she became acquainted with through employment, with whom she currently has two children. Similarly, Tahmeena, a 22-year-old British Muslim woman who self-identified as Kashmiri as her family roots were in Azad Kashmir, and was currently studying for a degree in Psychology, told me that her sister had had a similar experience, where her husband’s learning disabilities were hidden by her in-laws prior to marriage. Tahmeena explained that when her sister met with her husband prior to marriage, she had not witnessed any signs of health conditions, as he had appeared well. Tahmeena’s sister divorced and five years later remarried her British-born first cousin who also lived in Birmingham. These cases demonstrate that health conditions were at times an obstacle for successful transnational marriages and as a result, were concealed from brides and their families in a bid to ensure the marriages went ahead. Understandably, brides and their families viewed this as betrayal and deception. As Tahmeena explained:

_The fact that they kept this hidden just shows how much they want their sons to get to the UK, they don’t consider the girls’ feelings...I mean we want healthy husbands, that’s not too much to ask for...but they think that just because we are married to them that we will stay married because of the shame associated with divorce, but really nowadays we don’t care...if something is not right, we won’t stick around, we will divorce and we’re not scared to do that...it was like that for girls back in the day say 20 years ago, but not now..._
Tahmeena provided a significant insight into the changing dynamics of the community particularly in relation to female autonomy. However, views regarding honour and shame vis-à-vis divorce continued to penetrate the way in which transnational marriages were conducted especially in circumstances where migrant husbands suffered from health conditions. Tahmeena’s and Selina’s insights demonstrated the existence of competing priorities and agency of different people involved in these relationships-in-becoming. While some prospective migrant husbands were not aspiring to migrate, some were; some parents actively planned marriages from a young age or later on in the man’s life, and sometimes these plans did not come to fruition for different reasons, including because chosen marriage partners resist and reject partners who do not meet their ideas of a ‘good’ or ‘ideal’ husband.

**Grooming and Appearance**

Imran, who is 25 years old from a village near the city of Dadyal in Azad Kashmir, arrived in Birmingham on a student visa in January 2018. He explained that his uncle facilitated his visa after numerous unsuccessful attempts to find him a British wife. Prior to his migration on a student visa, his uncle had approached numerous families within the *biraaderi* [extended kin network] with Imran’s marriage proposal for their daughters. However, the families of potential wives had serious concerns about the marriage proposals due to the mannerisms of his mother, who unfortunately, had upset many relatives in the village they lived. They were concerned the marriage would be imbued with many tensions as a result of his mother’s behaviour. Furthermore, Imran learnt that some potential brides did not wish to marry men from ‘back-home’ due to cultural differences, and lower levels of education amongst men in Pakistan and the lack of fluency in the English language, which would result in irregular employment that could increase Imran’s vulnerability. Imran expressed disappointment that he was unable to find a bride due to his mother’s behaviour as well as his Pakistani upbringing, which was unattractive for potential British brides who had received a university level education, and who now worked in the city.

He told me:
My uncle funded my education in Pakistan to college level, and made sure that I had clothes that were the same as those that British men wore, so jeans and t-shirts...my uncle and also my elder brothers who were the sons-in-law of my uncle would send me pictures of hairstyles that were trending in England...I would show these to my barber and tell him to copy them for me...my uncle and brothers told me that if I looked like a normal British guy the British girls would find me attractive...

For Imran, his uncles’ and brothers’ aspiration and desire to want to facilitate his migration translated into transforming his appearance and therefore his physical identity, to match that of what a ‘normal’ British Pakistani man would look.

Armaan spoke about the sudden and drastic changes his parents made to his wardrobe when Sarish arrived in Pakistan for a holiday with her parents:

While everyone knew that my parents had asked for Sarish’s hand in marriage for me, my mother’s step-sister’s in-laws asked for Sarish’s hand in marriage for their son too...It caused a lot of arguments...when Sarish was leaving to return to the UK, my parents decided that they would make a visit to the airport to see her off...we went to the shop and brought a shirt and jeans and new black shoes...the journey was very long and it was the middle of August which made wearing jeans very difficult in the heat. At the airport while we were saying our goodbyes, my mum and dad took me in front of Sarish so that she could see how I was dressed...they told me before that I need to shake her hand so I put my hand out and we shook hands...they wanted her to remember me in jeans and a shirt so that she knew that I was capable to be a British husband...

Armaan’s appearance was shaped by his family to align with what they believed was synonymous with the image of the British male, which they anticipated would lead Sarish to believe that Armaan was a suitable match for her. The embodiment of aspiration for their son’s marriage and migration to the UK translated into evoking aspiration and desire for marriage in a 13 year old girl, who had merely gone to Pakistan for a holiday. Due to the competition over British Pakistani girls
and women, premature action to secure a *rishta* in order to achieve aspirations of marriage migration took place, despite the potential bride and groom being under-age.

**Navigating Transnational Engagements**

After a new haircut and in his best clothes, Imran told me he would pose for photos against ‘natural backdrops’ such as flowers, or in front of his parent’s *khoti* [mansion] built using his uncle’s remittances. Once the pictures were taken, Imran would send them via WhatsApp to his uncle and brothers in the UK.

> My uncle, brothers, and my sister-in-laws would put my picture as their display picture on WhatsApp messenger so that when family members [in the UK] would message them, they would view my profile picture and see that I was a suitable person for their daughter.

It was anticipated that Imran’s pictures would indicate that he was an eligible husband for their daughters, as he was not very different in appearance from a potential ‘British’ born husband. It was hoped, then, that the appearance would evoke aspirations and desires in the families and even the prospective brides themselves, to consider Imran’s marriage proposal, and hopefully decide to marry him. Social media and new forms of technology were therefore critical in the *rishta* process.

During fieldwork, I was contacted by Aisha, a 26-year-old woman born in a village near Mirpur, Azad Kashmir, and living in Birmingham since 2015, who was trying to facilitate her brother Jameel’s marriage and migration to the UK. Aisha and her brother were interested in arranging a marriage with their uncle’s daughter, Amina, who was educated and working as a teacher. Aisha told me she would send money to her brother in Pakistan to ensure he looked his best, telling him to specifically purchase sunglasses and a silver chain to wear around his neck. She also sent him an iPhone to be able to take high quality images. I asked Aisha whether I could interview her brother via Skype for the research, which was later made possible. Jameel told me how he was well equipped with social media, technology, and computing, as he had taken courses at college
to become literate in this area to increase his chances of acquiring employment upon marriage and migration to the UK. He also told me:

I really like Amina; she is very beautiful and she also is educated...I sent her a friend request on Facebook and regularly comment on her photos but she doesn’t talk to me or respond to me...I post my photos on Facebook so that she can see me...see that I am good looking, well dressed, well-travelled, and well-educated. I go to Faisal mosque in Islamabad where there is beautiful scenery in the mountains and take pictures there...I make sure I wear the sunglasses and the silver chain and rings my sister old me to wear to look good...hopefully she will see that I am suitable for her...

Through Jameel’s narrative the importance of social media emerges as a powerful force to ‘market’ oneself in order to achieve one’s marital and migration aspirations, and desires. Jameel told me that by marrying Amina he would strengthen the relationship between his father and Amina’s father who were step-brothers. He admired his uncle in the UK and saw that he was a successful business man. He also was aware that Amina was well respected in the wider family and community due to her education and successful employment as a teacher, but also due to her dedication to her family, as she looked after her father when he was ill in hospital. If he were to become Amina’s husband and his uncle’s son-in-law, Jameel would acquire higher social status and honour both within his family and community in Pakistan, but also in the UK. The interview with Jameel permitted an insight into ‘aspiration-in-the-making’ for a ‘migrant husband-to-be.’ His interview was also pertinent, as it shows the role played by a sister and not only parents, in encouraging a particular performance of the self and the relationship between siblings in these negotiations. This points to the diverse identity markers and structures that frame people’s experiences and their respective abilities to not only have aspirations and desires, but also different capacities to act and follow through with these aspirations. In what follows, I show how the image of migrant husbands communicated through various social media platforms is connected to the image of the ‘British man’, which is constantly reworked into the embodied experiences of migrant husbands.
The Image of the ‘British’ Man

While the majority of my informants had already married and migrated to the UK, as a result of which they shared with me their retrospective views about the image of what it meant to be a British man, I also spoke to a small number of migrant-husbands-to-be, who were, at the time of the interview(s), in Pakistan. Jameel, who wanted to marry his cousin Amina and migrate to the UK, spoke to me in detail about what it meant for him to become a migrant husband and subsequently become British:

You know going to England is a big thing, it would mean you are a successful and powerful man. It would mean that nobody could bother you, threaten to take your land from you or tell you what to do. You would be the boss...You wouldn’t need to rely on anybody here [in Pakistan] either, because you were the one people would rely on...I mean that is a big responsibility, but what I mean is that you would be stronger than them...

For Jameel, migration to the UK symbolised power and higher status, and strength and ability to deal with individuals who may want to tell him what to do or ‘take his land’. This acquired power, status, and strength would translate into Jameel being respected and honoured by his family and community, in Jameel’s view. It seemed from Jameel’s narrative, that migrating to the UK was symbolic of what one could become (Collins: 2018, 974), and tethered to this symbolism of becoming were aspirations and desires (Carling: 2018).

In turn, for Khalid, who had migrated to the UK in 2015 after marrying a distant relative two years prior, the idea of being a British man was appealing:

Many people from our town had migrated to the UK, so it was quite normal to want to do that too...we would see these men who had gone to the UK come back with their wives and children to visit, and buy cars, and enjoy their holidays...they would renovate their homes or even build mansions...I mean if you go around in Dadyal, you will see khotiya [mansions] everywhere that have been built by these men who have gone to the UK and they sent
money back to build them...the reminders of what it means to go to England are everywhere....

For Khalid, migration to the UK had transformed the space and place around him through the building of lavish mansions, which men in his family who had migrated before him, had also done. Khalid sent me images of his Uncle’s mansion through WhatsApp, and explained how prior to this his uncle’s father had a simple house with four rooms, a kitchen and a bathroom. These mansions served as a constant reminder of what he could also achieve.

Figure 1: A mansion built by Khalid’s uncle in Azad Kashmir.

In this way then, what it meant to be a man had transformed over the years as a direct result of the migration undertaken by pioneer generations who had invested in improving their property, wealth, and family living standards in their home countries, all of which resulted in greater status and honour. As a result, the meaning associated with and attributed to migration in the early 1950s and 60s for pioneer generations of men and women, no longer held the same meaning for those that aspired to migrate today.
Saleem who migrated to the UK in 2005 told me:

Going to England meant that you could be this man that was doing well and achieving in England and in Pakistan...it meant that you could be this man that was looking after family in England and in Pakistan by sending money back home and because of this, people would respect him more.

Through these narratives, migration to the UK emerges as having become symbolic for becoming a particular type of man, one who had power within the UK and within his home and family networks in Pakistan. This image of British men merged with the expectations of being a man in Pakistan, producing a unique male identity, what I term the transnational patriarch. The transnational patriarch was, as my informants explained, a successful man who had migrated to the UK after marriage, who had economic and financial success in the UK, which enabled him to become economically and financially successful in Pakistan. He was also a loyal family man both in the UK and in Pakistan. Success in these two areas, in both the home country and the country of settlement, resulted in the highest form of respect and honour. This was who the transnational patriarch was; the crux of masculine identity that migrant husbands aspired to before, during, after, and throughout marriage, migration, and settlement. In order to better understand the workings of this particular masculine identity, in the following section of this chapter I aim to interrogate the elements of this identity: businessman, family man, and respected man.

Conclusion

For migrant husbands, the aspiration to migrate is often planted, nurtured, and and/or facilitated by family members, including parents but also siblings, long before the physical migration journey begins. In this chapter I have demonstrated the journey of aspirations that often took long and windy roads navigating politics and power relations among and between families along the way – such as that in Armaan’s case where another family had also asked for his bride-to-be’s hand in marriage –, and the ways that prospective migrant husbands embody aspects of these aspirational journeys through health, grooming, and appearance. More recently, with the expansion of diverse forms of technology, the latter have become manifested and projected in and through social
media. In this way then, we gain an insight into migration as an on-going process (McCormack and Schwaren: 2011, Collins: 2018) with often-long histories, rather than a singular event taking place at a particular point in time. Highlighting the crucial roles played by different family members assists us in contextualizing the experiences of migrant husbands within a social field (Pratt and Yeoh: 2003, Silvey: 2004, Silvey: 2006).

A striking finding from this chapter was the families of migrant husbands and in some cases migrant husbands themselves, as they oriented their aspirations for marriage and migration towards the honour and status they would come to acquire through migration. In order to realise these aspirations, migrant husbands were conditioned and moulded by way of clothing, food, and education to be marketed as suitable candidates for British Pakistani women. For migrant husbands and their families, their aspirations for marriage and migration were connected to social class, which in some ways opposes the conventional view of economic drivers of migration by positing honour and status as an alternative currency. As a result, we arrive at a more nuanced understanding as to the reasons behind continued transnational marriage migration trends between Pakistan and Britain that have continued over the course of seven decades. In other words, while the pioneer generation of migrants may have arrived primarily for economic purposes, over the decades, migration from Pakistan to the UK has come to acquire a symbolic power (Meyer: 2018) associated with upward social mobility and status, that continues to drive migration in this context. For instance, Armaan told me:

*Going to England is the best thing...you are guaranteed to do well, and it is linked to being respected and honoured in the community...*

While in this chapter I have focused on tracing the trajectory of aspirations amidst a wider socio-cultural context that includes various actors such as family members, in the following chapters I narrow the focus to explore the aspirations of migrant husbands. Having seen glimpses of the ways in which men are physically shaped and reshaped – including through food, clothing, and hair-cuts - to fit an ideal masculine identity in order to facilitate successful migration, in subsequent chapters,
I will also highlight the ways in which different facets of masculinities are negotiated over time and place throughout the migratory process.
Chapter 1.2 The Transnational Patriarch: Businessman, Family Man, and Respected Man

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we gained an insight into the important role the family can play in developing aspirations in young Pakistani men to marry a British Pakistani national and migrate to the UK. We traced some of the ways in which these aspirations took an embodied form for migrant husbands through the shaping of physical appearances through food, clothing and hair styles in order to fit an ideal image of a suitable man for a British national bride, which was further tethered to ideas about British Pakistani women’s desires and preferences in future spouses, and how these could be catered for. This ideal image was also laced with the ability to transform into a ‘natural’ British citizen, as migrant husbands talked about how their hair-cuts were identical to those of British men, indicative of adhering to the ‘normative’ masculine identity (Collins: 2005) prevalent in the UK. Migrant husbands – and/or their families – were in effect taking steps to aspire towards a British masculine identity, as they understood it to be, in order to appeal to a British Pakistani woman, marry, and successfully migrate. However, if a certain image of the ideal masculine form is aspired towards in order to appeal to British Pakistani women and their families, the question as to the form of this masculine ideal is evoked. In other words, if planning and preparation is made to condition and young men to appear as suitable candidates for transnational marriage, an idea as to the masculine ideal in which they ought to perform upon marriage and migration must also operate prior to marriage and migration. As a result, in this chapter, I aim to delve further into the image of British masculine identity held by families and migrant husbands, what this means for migrant husbands, and how they weave this into their aspirations of marriage, migration, and masculine performance.

Katie Walsh’s (2011) ethnography on British ex-patriate men and their wives in Dubai provides key insights into the ways in which place and space can impact masculine performances. In her account, we learn that British ex-pat men are working in white-collar jobs, which provide these men a
privileged status in contrast to Emirati men, as their employment is seen as attributed to nationalization policies rather than skill and work ethic. Their ‘trailing’ spouses found life in Dubai difficult, as they were often left at home in isolation unable to go out due to the heat and so were spatially and socially turning towards the realm of the domestic sphere. Yet in the UK, men’s and women’s relationship have been transformed in middle-class households, with men now expected to participate in domestic responsibilities including practices of cleaning and childcare that were previously considered women’s work (2011: 521). In Dubai however, women told Walsh that “it would never have been like this in England, but sometimes he gets into his expat mode and he’ll say stuff like “I think it’s advisable” or he’ll just make the decision without consulting me” (2011: 522). As a result, the wives of British expats were actively resisting the ‘new’ masculinities performed by their spouse particularly in the shared space of the home. Walsh’s ethnographic account demonstrates the way in which a specific social space such as Dubai has an impact on men’s masculine performances to become more conservative, as opposed to developing a masculine ideal that complements more egalitarian relationship dynamics compared to their counterparts in the UK. Walsh’s ethnography therefore encourages the question as to the type of masculine performance migrant husbands and/or potentially their families, may have envisaged prior to marriage and migration.

This chapter will trace the contours of the masculine ideal that is aspired to prior to marriage migration, and which shapes the migrant husbands’ expectations of marriage migration, and the embodiment of marriage migration in their lived social realities. I define this masculine ideal unique to migrant husbands, as the ‘transnational patriarch’, which involves success at the financial, economic, family, and domestic realm, both in the Pakistan and in the UK. The success within these different aspects of life across space and time afford migrant husbands with honour and respect, that performs as a currency in establishing their authority. In this chapter, I outline three overarching components within which success becomes a marker for transnational patriarchal identity: businessman, family man, and respected man, which I now turn to consider in more detail.
**Businessman**

Obtaining financial and economic success as a migrant husband was incredibly crucial, as it would enable them to send remittances to their families in Pakistan as well as look after their wives and children in the UK. Ashraf told me:

> When I came to England I worked very very hard...I worked in the local butcher shop and also worked as a taxi driver when I passed my driving test...I was thinking the more money I had the better it would be for me because I could send it to my family in Pakistan to help them pay the bills for the house and make sure we lived comfortably as a family here too...

Ali told me about his journey from an employee to a business man and what this meant for him:

> When I first came to England, I was working at a sweet centre and then I moved to working in restaurants and takeaways. I worked for many years and sent money to my parents in Pakistan...through the money we were able to plaster the houses because they were just made of bricks before that...and get the house painted too...it made my father very happy...after about eight years of working for others I thought to buy a takeaway business ...I knew what to do and had the experience. When I got this business I sponsored my father to visit the UK immediately after and he stayed here for six months...it was the first time someone had been sponsored from our village to England like this, and the first time someone from our extended family including those that had come to the England before I did, to own their own business. Me and my father got the most respect from our entire family because of this...

Ali’s narrative demonstrates that owning a business becomes a platform from which further social achievements can be acquired, such as that of sponsoring family relatives to visit the UK (see also Mooney.et.al: 2006).

For Rasheed, owning a business transformed the power dynamics with his father-in-law. He told me:
It was when I started my first business that things changed. Before that I was under my father-in-law’s ‘muthi’ [fist]...he controlled what I did and when I did it...but I saved up over the years and so did my wife and started my own local grocery store...my father-in-law was shocked, he thought I was going to work for him and be his slave forever...but I was not going to do that...it made everyone think highly of me, and my parents were very proud too...they held a ‘hatham’ [congregational commemoration prayer] on the day of the opening to pray for success of the business to which they invited the members of the entire village.

Rasheed’s narrative provides an insight into the role of the business aiding his social maturity and coming into his own as a migrant, rather than staying under the shadow of his father-in-law. It was through starting his own business, he was able to ‘create a name for himself’ – as he called it – which brought him honour both along his family network in the UK and Pakistan. This indicates that migration can take place in stages (Scheibelhofer: 2018, 999), which will be explored further in the next chapter.

While these excerpts from migrant husband life history narratives to some extent speak to the conventional view of migration being driven by economic factors (Lee: 1966, Harris and Todaro: 1970), it is important to recognise that economic gains for these migrant husbands were not the sole gain. Rather, economic gains serve as stepping stones to acquiring increased honour and status within their family networks and communities, and a result, achieving the status of a successful transnational patriarch. It is not financial gain or migration per say that migrant husbands and their families aspired to, it is what they signify and the currency they convert into – namely, honour, respect, and status. As a result, migration is not an end but rather, a means to an end (Carling: 2014).

Family Man

Migrant husbands spoke in great detail about their sense of responsibilities to their families both in the UK and in Pakistan. Rasheed for instance told me:
We saved for two years to open our grocery store. I wanted my wife and child to be comfortable first, and my parents in Pakistan to be happy and have everything they needed... If I started a business by borrowing money which was an option at one point in time, I would have been stuck between my family responsibilities and paying off the debt...you know what it’s like when people borrow you money, they don’t care they want it back straight away...then I would have lost sight of my ambition to start a business, and focused on having to pay debt off...

In turn, Ali who had facilitated his father’s migration to England after he opened his own takeaway business told me:

My father was elderly when I left him [to come to England] when I could have been his support...his arms [metaphor]...I sent money back regularly, but it is not the same thing as having your parents with you...when my father came to England I made sure he was treated like a king...he deserved it...he had worked all his life to feed us and made sure we were happy even with the very little he did have...

Ali’s father passed away shortly upon returning to Pakistan after visiting England. Ali recalled how grateful he was for being able to spend precious time with his father but stated that his father’s passing will always be a hole in his heart that can never be filled. Ali told me that his father’s passing meant that his younger siblings were left without a father, which compelled him to step-up to ensure he looked after his mother and his siblings. His youngest sibling was thirteen. He told me how he ensured he enrolled his brother at the best school in the city nearby, and has since funded his college education, and marriage.

I had a lot of pressure to make sure I was there for my siblings and my mother...I spent a lot of money...now my own children have grown up and they say to me ‘what have you done for us’ you have given all your money to your siblings who do not even respect you today...I struggle, I really struggle...maybe I did spend a lot of money on my family and did not save for my children’s futures...maybe I could have made better decisions, but at that time I could not have neglected them, left them alone...I feel very bad that I cannot provide for my
children today...circumstances changed so much because I lost my business...I could not help my daughters when they went to university...

Ali’s life history narrative demonstrated the way in which migrant husbands can be caught between the different sets of responsibilities that arise from being a transnational patriarch, and the ways in which they can often conflict, leaving migrant husbands experiencing relationship difficulties with members of their families on either, and/or both sides of the transnational dynamic. In contrast, Saleem told me:

“It was really important to me that my family in Pakistan were looked after properly. I did not want to be enjoying luxuries like heating and laundry in England while my family experienced the cold and washed clothes by hand...I mean we did that for a long time, but I didn’t want them to suffer anymore. So after a few months of working, I sent money to my father to buy a generator to ensure we always had electricity even when we had electrical cuts, that we had a fridge, laundry, and other basic utilities...my brother came to England after me when he married but he did not have to do this because I had already done it...it’s what the eldest do, the responsibility is on us..."

To successfully care for family in both the UK and in Pakistan, was an important component of the identity of the transnational patriarch. It was a way for migrant husbands to demonstrate their abilities to become, what I term ‘double breadwinners’, across borders. If family members in both geographical locations were well looked after, and cared for, having benefited from migrant husbands’ remittances, it would be a testament to the migrant husbands’ loyalty and thus, would afford increased respect and honour. Ali’s and Saleem’s narratives also provide an insight into the emotional dimension of migration (see also Meyer: 2018, 1037), which offers nuance in better understanding migrant husbands, as Pakistani and/or Muslim men are often perceived as powerful patriarchs.
Respected Man

As noted above, for a migrant husband to become a successful transnational patriarch, my interlocutors argued that it was important for his achievements to translate into respect and honour. For this transfer to take place, it was crucial for his achievements to be seen by actors within the wider family network and community both in the UK and in Pakistan. The narratives presented thus far have indicated towards the building of mansions, opening businesses, purchasing utilities – which would enable a good standard of living as migrant husbands understood it - were some examples of making their achievements ‘seen’.

Having arrived in the UK in 1992 as a 20-year-old Ali told me he felt it was time to build a *khoti* [mansion] in Pakistan:

> I brought land very cheaply in Islamabad in 2009. It’s almost ten years now and the land has gone up in price...I brought it for four thousand pounds but now it is worth forty thousand pounds...I want to build a mansion there...I also have land in Dadyal that is five acres...my business was not doing very well so I sold it and so I do not have enough money at the moment to build the mansion, but I am hoping to be able to build one soon...

After suffering some business losses in recent years, Ali wanted to reinforce his transnational patriarch identity within his family network and community through building a mansion, but he also – in this and other interviews with him throughout my fieldwork - spoke about the importance of moving away from the village in Dadyal, Azad Kashmir, to Islamabad as an indicator of his wealth and social status. Thus, a process of double migration, both from Pakistan to the UK, but also from the village in Pakistan to the city was aspired to by Ali, to demonstrate his upward social mobility in both the UK and Pakistan.

However, Hamza told me:

> A few years ago, my father had a heart attack and was admitted to hospital in Lahore. I had to go back...if I didn’t people would probably spit at me [metaphor] and say that I had abandoned my father and my duties as a son.
Hamza’s retelling of his father’s illness indicated the significance of travelling back to Pakistan to be at his father’s bedside. If he was not seen to do so, Hamza would have been viewed as a disloyal son who had abandoned his father in his time of need, and therefore would not have qualified for the highest form of honour and respect. To avoid this taking place, Hamza went to great lengths to put together funds to purchase a plane ticket to Pakistan, which involved borrowing money from his friends.

During one of my many interviews with Zahid, he recounted his mother’s and sister’s actions, which had upset him greatly.

*I received a phone call from the shop keeper, Talib, in our town who asked me to settle the debt of my mother and sister. I didn’t understand what he was saying at first but then he explained...he told me that my mother and sister were taking household food and groceries from his store and promised they will pay him later because they did not have money...I was furious! I told Talib that I send money to them every month and I’m not sure why they took the food in this way. I told Talib I would pay the debt off immediately...but I am so furious because they have dishonoured me...everyone in our town must think that I do not send money to them, that I leave them to starve!*

Zahid’s retelling of his mother’s and sister’s actions indicated the significance of family members being seen to benefit from the migrant husband’s marriage and migration to qualify for honour and status. This speaks to Collins’ understanding of migration as unable to be disentangled from the wider social and material assemblages, that migrants become part of (2018: 974).

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I explored further the significance of what it meant to migrate to the UK for migrant husbands, and how the meanings associated with migration impacted the shaping of their aspirations and desires. I demonstrated that migration to the UK had become symbolic for becoming a particular type of man, one who had power within the UK as well as within his home and family networks, in Pakistan. This preliminary image of a British man merged with the
expectations of being a man in Pakistan, producing a unique male identity of which I term the *transnational patriarch.* The transnational patriarch was, as my informants explained, a successful man both in the financial and economic realm, and the family and domestic realm, both of which translated into greater respect and honour. These three components – the businessman, family man, and respected man – were not independent from one another but rather, were interconnected. Hamza and Zahid’s narratives were testament to the consequences of being seen to neglect family despite having the finances, for instance. The transnational patriarch speaks directly to Rafael’s argument that desire is realizable only outside the nation, yet recognizable within its borders (1997: 271). Further, it is important to highlight that this particular type of masculine ideal – of the transnational patriarch – is developed only in relation to the UK and transnational nature of the marital dynamic. In other words, space and place are key concepts in the development of the masculine ideal that is the ‘transnational patriarch’ in a similar way to Walsh’s (2011) ethnography, through which it was demonstrated that British ex-pat men exhibited a regressive masculine form when in Dubai, compared to that of their British counterparts in the UK who performed a masculinity that complemented egalitarian marriage.

Khalid’s life-history narrative and many other migrant husbands like him who spoke about the way in which the benefits of being a ‘transnational patriarch’ were visible all around them through elaborate mansions that dominated the skylines of their towns. The success, financial capital, honour and respect migrant husbands who had gone before them had acquired played a significant role in developing their aspirations to also marry and migrate. In this way then, the space of the ‘home land’ was imbued with mobility and migration prior to migrant husbands having set off on their migration journeys. This is a profound finding, as it disrupts our traditional understandings of migration - namely that people migrate -, with my fieldwork demonstrating that places can also ‘migrate’ (be moved and imbued with mobility) through the action of those who have migrated, and subsequently a cycle begins to form where the migration of the space inspires further migration activity. The migration of the space then, also inspires the development of a specific type of embodied experience – that of the transnational patriarch – and therefore of

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21 See also Brah’s (1996) concept of diaspora space.
masculine experience. At this stage of the thesis then, we have an indication of the interrelation of the marriage:migration:masculinity nexus, in that they are deeply embedded (see also Borden: 2001), and cannot be seen as isolated from one another.

The three components to the transnational patriarch – businessman, family man, and respected man – provide an insight into the sheer effort, time, mental planning, and emotional investment that is invested into achieving the masculine ideal that is the transnational patriarch. When treated in isolation, each aspect requires an enormous amount of focus and attention but when treated together, one can begin to piece together the careful management required to maintain each of these identities. This is particularly important to highlight due to Pakistani men often being stereotyped and thus viewed as powerful patriarchs, oppressors of women, wife-beaters, terrorists, and sexual groomers. Instead, through this ethnographic account of Pakistani migrant husbands to the UK, we gain an insight into the work ethic of migrant husbands who wish to create comfortable homes and lifestyles for both their parents and families in their home countries, and their wives and children in the UK. It is also demonstrated - and I certainly witnessed this throughout multiple life-history narratives - that migrant husbands place a significant amount of pressure on themselves to perform as successful husbands, fathers, and sons in this transnational context.

The narratives of migrant husbands also draw attention to the emotional and embodied dynamics of migration (see also Collins: 2018). Through Ashraf’s, Rasheed’s, and Ali’s narratives in particular, we gained an insight into migration occurring in stages (Scheibelhofer: 2018, 999), and what appears to be a dissonance between the aspirations, expectations, and lived realities of migrant husbands. Some migrant husbands for instance, found themselves in conflict between their different sets of responsibilities on either and/or both sides of the transnational dynamic they were part. For Ali, his children often taunted him for not saving for their futures but rather, deciding to send remittances to his family while they were growing up, leaving them disadvantaged in the current socio-economic climate. While the ‘transnational patriarch’ is imagined and aspired towards somewhat romantically, often migrant husbands realise and/or encounter the implications of aspiring to and/or being transnational patriarchs some duration of
time after, which conjures up emotional conflict and, in some cases, can result in strained relationships, particularly amongst wives and children. More broadly, these experiences indicate a dissonance between the aspired ideals prior to marriage and migration and the lived realities post marriage and migration. These dissonance(s) will be given greater attention and teased out in the following chapter.
Chapter 1.3: Becoming British: New Responsibilities, Migrant Labouring, and Citizenship Struggles

Introduction

A significant proportion of the language used within and around the subject of migration such as the types of visas, asylum or refugee statuses, such as ‘illegal’ or ‘legal’, the time limit imposed on certain visas, and the way in which immigration applications are logged or supposed to be logged, is determined by states and/or governments. Such language can determine the way in which discourses acquire meaning (see Whorf: 1957) and for migration this is significant, as our understandings of the field have in large been produced out of a discourse defined by states and/or governments. For example, conventional understandings of migration involve viewing migration as a linear journey between a set of two geographical locations with an expected set of outcomes that can be measured (see Carling et al.: 2018). However, not all migration experiences can be measured as per such frameworks that have produced these discourses. There is variation, unpredictability, instability and precarity involved in migration journeys, which can leave migrants in precarious and vulnerable positions, and which can impact the identities of those migrating. Indeed, more recently migration has been understood as a transformative process in which migrants’ place in the world, their ideas about themselves, and possibilities for the future are reworked (Castles: 2010).

Ethnographic accounts such as that by Gallo (2006) documented the experiences of migrant husbands from the South Indian state of Kerala to Italy who upon migration, took on jobs secured for them by their wives in the cleaning and/or domestic care industry. Gallo found that these husbands experienced low self-esteem and felt their public image had been tarnished as a result of not being able to support themselves. As a result, masculine identity was not only experienced in relation to the way in which these expat husbands entered the geographical space, but also through whom. In other words, acquiring employment and financial stability though their wives as a result of not having any close kin or contacts in Rome, catalyzed the decrease in their self-esteem and public image. In another ethnographic case study, Este and Tachble (2009) trace the
experiences of Somali fathers upon migration and settlement in Canada and found high levels of emasculation as a result of the state replacing their previous capacity as breadwinners through the welfare state, which resulted in reduced respect from their wives and children. Together, these ethnographic insights provide nuances to the different ways in which migrants experience their host societies and the complex emotions and social experiences they come to encounter and embody.

For migrant husbands in the British Pakistani community, the previous two chapters demonstrated that becoming a transnational patriarch through marriage and migration, was aspired to as a masculine identity due to the symbolic meanings attached to migration, which speaks directly to recent understandings about migration entailing a transformative element for migrants (Castles: 2010). The previous two chapters have also provided support for the argument that migration takes place in stages (Scheibelhofer: 2018, 999), since in some instances, the families of migrant husbands aspired for their son to marry a British national and migrate to the UK long before the migration occurred. While these first two chapters focused primarily on the ‘stages’ prior to the migration taking place, their narratives also provided glimpses into diverse ‘stages’ of migration once migrant husbands arrived in the UK. For instance, Rasheed’s narrative demonstrated that starting his own business was a testament to his maturity and coming into his own as a migrant, rather than staying under the shadow of his father-in-law. Both Rasheed’s and Ali’s narratives demonstrated a time lapse between their initial arrival to the UK and starting their own businesses, which speaks to the idea of the transformation process between migrant husbands from their initial arrival, to transnational patriarchs once they become more settled. This time lapse during which migrant husbands can encounter and experience a plethora of social circumstances, can impact migrant husbands’ aspirations in different ways. It would be simplistic to assume a linear transformation process after which migrant husbands arrived at their aspired masculine ideal of the transnational patriarch, as there are many variables such as citizenship, family and household dynamics, employment experiences to name a few, that can affect the ways in which the status of transnational patriarch is achieved. In this chapter I will focus on the experiences of migrant husbands after marriage and migration in order to better understand the migratory route of the aspirations that migrant husbands held prior to marriage and migration.
Becoming British

Prior to marriage and migrating to the UK, the aspirations of migrant husbands’ families and migrant husbands themselves were tethered to finding a suitable marriage proposal, and the implications for one’s honour and status within the extended family network, and community. There seemed to be an expectation that, as a result of marriage and migration, one would become British instantaneously. Khalid told me:

I always thought once I get married that’s it, I would be British because I married a British woman but you realise it is not like that at all. I waited very long to be invited to the UK because of all the paperwork and having to pass my English test and TB test...when I got here there were so many more things to do to become British in terms of the paperwork...

Khalid spoke to me in detail about the preparation required to submit a spousal visa application, which he had not expected prior to marriage. As a result, he entered a period of waithood (Singerman: 2007, Inhorn: 201822) before migrating to the UK and fulfilling his status – and the aspirations tied to this – as a migrant husband.

For Asad, who married his cousin’s daughter in 2015, this insecure waithood period post-marriage but prior to migration, was incredibly stressful. A year after his marriage, tensions were rife between him and his wife, who was at the time working as a waitress in an Indian restaurant in Birmingham so that she could submit the spousal visa application to the Home Office. During our first Skype interview, Asad explained that soon after his wife had acquired a new job at the restaurant, her attitude toward him changed. She would no longer ring him, answer his calls, or take an interest in him. He attempted to speak to her parents, who consoled him by stating that his wife was simply too busy and exhausted to answer his calls, and that he should not worry. During this time, Asad was regularly communicating with his brothers-in-law via WhatsApp messenger, who were younger than his wife. One day, at 11pm UK time (4am Pakistan time) he

asked his brother-in-law whether their sister had returned from work, to which they replied that she had not. His brothers-in-law informed him that a fellow colleague at her workplace would drop her off in his car on most days, and there were also days where she did not return home. When Asad confronted his wife and her parents about the ‘over-involvement’ of a male colleague who would offer lifts at an unsuitable time to his wife, his wife ceased all communication and proceeded to trigger the *khulla* [Islamic divorce issued by the wife].

Many family interventions were held in an attempt to convince Asad’s wife to withdraw the *khulla* application, but these proved unsuccessful. In January 2017, the Pakistani courts rejected the first *khulla* application and ruled in Asad’s favour. He detailed the allegations his wife had made against him, which included domestic violence and psychological torture, which he rebutted in court on the basis that his wife had only spent two weeks with him after their marriage in March 2015, within which no violence or torture took place. He presented photos of sightseeing in Lahore, a city they visited as a married couple soon after marriage, as part of his defense in court. Asad told me that without both his parents’ or her parents’ knowledge, his wife resubmitted the *khulla* application to the courts in March 2017, which was accepted two months later in May 2017. However, his wife did not inform anyone that the *khulla* had been accepted by the courts until the three-month intermission period had passed, during which, Islamically, a husband and wife can resolve their marriage without the divorce actually taking affect, particularly if the wife is pregnant. Asad told me that the divorce has not taken place due to the Islamic process not having been adhered to, as the court issuing the divorce did not notify him to appear in court to defend himself. He told me they should write three times, after which the court can issue a verdict without the presence of the husband. Therefore, in Asad’s view, his marriage was still valid.

In October 2017, Asad learnt that his now ‘ex-wife’ had informed her parents that she intended to marry her colleague from the restaurant she previously worked at, and about whom Asad had initially confronted his ex-wife. During our interview in July 2018, Asad informed me that it had been discovered that his ex-wife had secretly married her colleague with whom she was having an affair with since November 2017. Asad explained that he was ‘a dead person walking’ after experiencing the divorce. He could no longer meet his parents’ gaze and withdrew himself from
family meals as a result of the shame he felt. He told me “it is very shameful for me that my wife cheated on me with another man... I feel worthless...what was I lacking?” He detailed how he was desperate to prove himself: “no matter what I will find a way to get to England and show my wife and her new illegitimate husband that I am still someone, still something...that she made a mistake in divorcing me.” He is adamant to find a British wife to reclaim his identity and status, which can be achieved by marrying and migrating to the UK.

For Armaan – whose narrative was introduced in the previous two chapters – Sarish refused to marry him, despite his parents waiting for her to finish university. After university she refused again, as a result of which Armaan’s parents’ asked for his step-aunt’s daughter’s hand in marriage, who agreed to marry him in 2014.

"My parents were very upset about Sarish’s refusal to marry me, we had waited for her since the day she was born, that’s twenty-two years...we had told everybody that the marriage would happen...my parents gave sweets out and did the dhol [drums] to announce the marriage many years ago. There was so much shame for us...My parents’ tried their best to find me another British girl but it was very hard...luckily my other cousin agreed to marry me which helped us save face because I would still be going to England..."

Armaan arrived in the UK in August 2016 and now has a one-year old son with his wife.

"It shattered me to pieces for a long time when Sarish refused to marry me...I mean for my whole life I was raised thinking and believing I was going to marry her...I loved her. I am now happily married with a son but I do think about Sarish...I see her occasionally at family gatherings. I wonder what life would have been like if we had married..."

Khalid’s, Asad’s and Armaan’s narratives demonstrate that becoming British is not achieved instantaneously after a marriage has been arranged or conducted, but rather, it is a lengthy process that is hallmarked with great levels of insecurity and instability. For Khalid, the visa sponsorship process caused great levels of anxiety and stress. For Asad, the entire post-marriage period was an unstable period of time during which marital tension heightened, leading his wife
to file the divorce and remarry. For Armaan, the woman he thought he would marry for the most part of his life refused to marry him, which resulted in his parent’s arranging a marriage with another cousin [his mother’s step-sister’s daughter] in the UK to save face and facilitate his migration to the UK. These narratives demonstrate that migration is not an easy task to achieve for migrant husbands and their families. Instead, it is riddled with instability and insecurity at the very outset, causing migrant husbands and their families to manage and maneuver many undesirable outcomes and the implications that these can have for their social status, honour, and respect.

The instability and insecurity of migrant husbands during this period of waithood sometimes continued even after migrating to the UK. For instance, Armaan told me:

> When I came to England, I realised that things were very different. I started to work but it was not easy, nothing was easy. My parents said it would be good here...the life would be good...but all I am doing is working to pay off the bills...I cannot save enough to visit my parents either or see my sisters getting married. I am not sure why my parents thought it was a good idea to come to England...it’s a hard life...

In this excerpt, Armaan questions his parent’s decision for him to migrate given the current hardship he was experiencing as a result of working long hours for little pay, constantly pay bills, leaving him with financial deficits that meant he could not ‘enjoy’ time as a ‘transnational patriarch’, as he had once imagined. In what follows, I explore in greater detail the instabilities post migration and settlement in the UK.

**New Responsibilities**

Upon migration and settlement to the UK, migrant husbands found their responsibilities had increased in ways that they had not anticipated prior to marriage and migration. Ali told me:

> My responsibilities were not only my children and my wife, it was also my sister and brother-in-law who we lived with at the time before we got our own home, and it was also my family in Pakistan...it was also the car and the bills and council tax and insurance and
the rent, and working and earning…I did not realise that I would be having to deal with so much…it was a simple life when I was not married, now there is so much to think about...

Suleman told me about the responsibilities he came to inherit:

My wife is the only daughter she has three brothers and is very close to her parents, naturally I suppose because she is the only daughter…but I did not realise this was going to mean that I would be looking after her parents or that she was always going to live with her parents…her mother wanted me to pay towards building the conservatory to their house…it had only been three months that I had come to England, and on my salary I was just about earning enough to send some back to my parents and give the rest to my wife...

Previously we learnt about Ayesha a migrant wife in Birmingham who was trying to arrange a marriage between her brother Jameel and cousin Aminah, a graduate currently working as a teacher. While for Ayesha the benefits included having her brother in close proximity, for number of migrant husbands, the pressure of arranging further marriages for their siblings was an additional source of stress and hardship (see also: Mooney et.al.: 2006). For example, Altaf told me:

I was the eldest of all my brothers and sisters and got married in 1994 and came to the UK soon after...at first I was sending money back every two to three weeks but as my brothers and sisters got older, I was expected to find suitable husbands and wives for them...it was difficult because I needed to respect my father-in-law too...there were some families I could not to ask for the rishta because my father-in-law had problems with them...there were so many sides to consider and it was a big stress for me.

As a result, Altaf was having to manage the expectations of those around him, which was not an easy task for him, as his parents, for instance, would suggest asking for the hand in marriage from a particular family that his father-in-law did not approve of. To achieve the desired outcomes, Altaf was maneuvering and attempting to manage multiple social fields, which added further layers of complexity to the already complex nature of being a migrant husband.
New responsibilities across financial, family, and employment dimensions of life in the UK upon marriage and migration had transnational implications, including in relation to honour and respect. The addition of such responsibilities – sometimes immediately after migrating to the UK – were sources of anxiety and stress for migrant husbands, who were adjusting to a new country, and who had migrated with their own ideas of what they would like to achieve, acquire in and through migration. Additional actors within the social formation in which migrant husbands were situated, applied their own aspirations and desires on to the social complex of migrant husbands that they were required to respect and adhere to. For instance, Suleman’s mother-in-law expected for him to pay for the extension of the conservatory she desired. As a result, we learn that migrant husbands cannot be disentangled from the social formation, which they are simultaneously both a product of, and contribute to continuing its production. These narratives also indicate the lack of absence of a linear structure to migration as well as a steering away from the imagined reality of being a migrant husband, held by migrant husbands and their families, prior to marriage and migration.

**Migrant Labouring**

Often within three days to a week after arriving to the UK, migrant husbands began employment, which their wives’ families had found them. As noted by my interviewees, the nature of the jobs migrant husbands were working was highly unregulated, insecure, and unstable. They involved long-working hours for less than minimum wage, reportedly often one pound an hour, and were devoid of contracts and by extension employment rights, placing migrant husbands in highly vulnerable circumstances. Khalid told me:

> *My first job was in a chip-shop...the ‘gaffa’ [manager] made me work twelve hours a day and gave me two pounds an hour. So in one day I would earn twenty four pounds only. I guess that was a lot compared to what I would get in Pakistan but I heard it was very low...I would work seven days a week as well...if I took a break for tea or to eat he would swear at me and once he even slapped me because he thought I was not working hard enough...*
Nearly all migrant husbands that took part in the research told me of their employment horrors in restaurants, chip shops, as barbers, or butchers, or as supermarket fruit and vegetable stall assistants, which depressed their expectations of becoming transnational patriarch in Britain, and of what life in the UK would be. Faisal told me:

*It was really hard for me to work at the supermarket...the fruit stalls are outside the shop and I have to help the customers if they need anything. In winter it is very hard for me to stand outside all day because of the rain and the snow.*

Zahid had worked for his employer for seven years and yet still experienced hardships. He told me:

*I was making pakoras [fritters] at work and someone was cleaning the cooker fan at the same time...I think he put his weight on the cooker and it made the pan slide and the pan fell on me...all the hot oil fell on the floor and I was wearing sandals because it was a hot summer’s day...I had third degree burns on my feet...they did an operation on me and took skin from the inner parts of my thighs to put on my feet. My manager came to me at home and told me not to do an insurance claim [personal injury claim] because he did not have the business insurance...my wife wanted me to claim but it is hard for me because I have to face him again. In the end he decided he would give me some sick pay which was one hundred pounds a week...we struggled because this was less than half of my weekly salary.*

Such horrifying injuries with little or no compensation were common amongst my migrant husband interviewees, who were in many ways positioned outside of the formal ‘employment system’ rules and regulations in the UK, due to the highly irregular nature of their employment. Businesses and employers set their own rules, pay scales, and working hours, which caused many a suffering to migrant husbands, often alongside unstable housing, citizenship, marital circumstances, and heightened vulnerability.

Often, these harsh working conditions motivated migrant husbands to start their own businesses. Ashraf told me:
After four years working for other people where I was basically a slave, I had saved enough money to start my own business...finally I could be my own manager and not be under anyone’s thumb.

Not every migrant husband, however, could save enough to start their own business, as a result of which, most migrant husbands continued to work in such conditions for long periods of time. Zahid explained:

You know in a way I was lucky because if I had been working there for a few months or was a brand new worker, the gaffa [manager] would not have bothered to even pay me some sick pay. He would have just told me to go and I would not be able to do anything...I suppose after working for him for seven years you do build some respect but that only helps to some extent.

Ali told me:

You know there are men waiting to come to England, they are desperate to come because they think they will have more money and have a better life...but honestly you have more dignity if you stay in Pakistan...these men do not know what life is like here...they think we live here like kings...but actually we are slaves to someone or another, the people we work for, our in-laws, even our wives, and you know what, even to this country we are just slaves because we work in the curry houses that the gorah’s [White people] love so much, but they hate us brown people...so many of us have been spat at in the street...they call us ‘Pakis’ and tell us to go back to ‘Pakiland’...I mean just look at the EDL (English Defence League) marches in Birmingham, they come to our city all the time, which shows they really don’t like us but are happy to eat the currys we make...

Based on these narratives, there seems to be a dissonance between the expectation of life in the UK prior to marriage and/or migration, and upon marriage and migration to the UK. There are also glimpses of resistance and agency in trying to break away from difficult work situations, which will be further explored in section three of the thesis. However, we do gain an insight into the ways in
which migrant husbands may revise their aspirations (see also Scheibelhofer: 2018, 1003). For example, Ashraf told me that difficult working conditions motivated him to open his own business where he would be his own boss. Such narratives demonstrate that the migration process can impact the way in which migrants see themselves and take steps in order to align and/or re-align themselves with their aspirations and goals, while at the same time maintaining a threshold of masculine identity. In Ashraf’s case, not being under anyone’s thumb was a crucial part of this masculine identity.

**Citizenship Struggles**

The process to obtaining citizenship was another area within which migrant husbands experienced unexpected and unforeseen difficulty. For instance, Faisal told me:

> When I came to England, my father-in-law was bad to me...he kept my passport with him...he also took my wages directly from my manager and when he would get angry, he would be violent to me...my wife and I argued a lot...it didn’t work out in the end we divorced...but before we divorced, a family relative convinced my father-in-law that he should make sure I get the citizenship...it took eight years to become British citizen.

Faisal’s narrative will be discussed in more detail in chapter 2.2 however, here it demonstrates that acquiring citizenship can be a site of struggle between the migrant husband and his wife and/or his wife’s family. Migrant husbands spoke in great detail about the power dynamic they became part of upon marriage and migration, including with and between the wife and/or her family. This power dynamic was characterised by a sense of ownership exhibited by the in-laws as a result of having facilitated the migrant husband’s migration to the UK. Faisal told me:

> Because they were British, because they had the red passport and I didn’t and because it was down to them that I came to England, because they gave me their daughter you see, they acted like they brought me and owned me...I was completely under their control.

Many migrant husbands shared similar narratives as Faisal. For instance, Ashraf told me:
My father-in-law threatened he would not make the permanent visa happen. He said he was going to get me deported...all because I refused to stop talking to my parents because he had an argument with my dad.

The threat of deportation was a very real one for a number of migrant husbands, some of whom who were aware of fellow migrant husbands who had been deported by their wives and in-laws due to family issues. As a result, we begin to see that migration is not only an on-going journey (Carling et.al: 2018) that can happen in stages (Scheibelhofer: 2018, 999), but rather, migration can include starts and stops, blockages and diversions (Collins: 2018, 972).

In 2012, the length of the process to obtaining full citizenship was changed from two years to five years, which has since impacted migrant husbands who arrived after 2012, in their experiences of prolonged hardship in relation to obtaining British citizenship. Armaan told me:

_I have been here now for two years but it is going to take another three years before I can apply to become a British citizen...for another three years I will need to be careful because my fate is controlled by my wife and her family, not by me...there have been times when my father-in-law has said things that I have not liked, but I can’t say anything because I worry that it will cause him to make it harder for me to get the citizenship..._

Armaan’s waithood for British citizenship will extend over five years or more, and fold together his past, his present, and his future, within which his identity, aspirations and masculinity are tightly interweaved, and therefore upon which his becoming a transnational patriarch is dependent. For example, he told me that he is currently unable to voice his opinions, in fear of retaliation from his wife’s parents who ultimately are the gatekeepers of his destiny. Armaan is an example of the modification of embodied behaviour and speech in order to overcome the waithood period and achieve his aspirations of becoming British. Ikram, a migrant husband who arrived in the UK in 2004 experienced a volatile relationship with his wife, who was verbally and physically abusive towards him. After an incident that left Ikram hospitalized with a stab wound - which will be discussed in more detail in part two of the thesis – Ikram’s sister, who had arrived in the UK as a
migrant wife some fifteen years prior, announced that this was the final straw and that the marriage was over.

After I regained consciousness the police came and took a statement from me. I told them what had happened...after this the police helped me get my passport quicker...I learnt that my citizenship had been processed but my wife and her family did not tell me...

Ikram’s case is testament that the starts and stops, blockages and diversions (Collins: 2018, 972) that migration can entail, can sometimes have severe consequences and place the migrant husband’s life at risk. Not all migrant husbands however, experienced success after experiencing the vulnerabilities of being a migrant husband. Farhan, a 35-year-old IT technician told me:

My cousin from Pakistan was married here to one of my other cousins. He was treated really badly you know, they were beating him and everything...they told everyone he was mentally unwell and not fit for their daughter and took him back to Pakistan to his parents and just left him there.

Farhan’s cousin was taken back to his parents in Pakistan by his in-laws and thus did not receive British citizenship. However, Farhan told me that his cousin was able to remarry and is now the father of twin boys. In the case of Farhan’s cousin then, the aspirations to become British were brought to an end entirely, but he was able to remarry a Pakistani national and have children, which was a testament to both his health, and masculine identity as he was able to remarry and have children in spite of his aspirations for becoming a transnational patriarch.

Conclusion

The focus of this chapter was to trace the journey of migrant husbands’ aspirations after marriage and migration in order to better understand the workings of migration, the evolution of aspirations, and the impact on masculinity, if any. Prior to marriage and migration, the aspiration of migrant husbands and their families played a significant role in shaping masculine identity both within the social imaginary, and embodied experience. Immediately after marriage however, migrant husbands entered a waithood period (see also: Singerman: 2007, Inhorn: 2018). For Khalid
and others, this waithood came in stages as a result of the preparation for paperwork required to submit the spousal visa application. Aspirations to become British, which would complete and therefore reinforce status and honour associated with being a transnational patriarch therefore, experienced considerable delays. For some migrant husbands such as Asad, this waithood period brought marital anxiety and instability, eventually resulting in divorce, thereby cutting short aspirations of becoming a transnational patriarch.

While Khalid and Asad spoke to me about revising their aspirations given the circumstances they faced, it was perhaps Armaan’s narrative that provided an in-depth insight to the different courses that aspirations can take. When Sarish, who was betrothed to Armaan since she was born, refused to marry him, his family was left facing a great deal of shame, as they had publicly announced the confirmation of the marriage proposal. To save face, they approached Armaan’s mother’s step-sister’s daughter, who agreed to marry Armaan. While Armaan and his family experienced shame due to the marriage with Sarish not taking place, his family were able to save some of their honour by being able to facilitate their son’s marriage and onward migration to the UK. A significant revision of the interim steps taken to achieve their aspiration was then required, demonstrating that migration is not a straightforward linear decision but rather, one that is characterised by a great deal of instability and insecurity at all stages.

The chapter focused particularly on the inheriting of new responsibilities, experiencing hardships in employment, and struggling to acquire citizenship, which featured significantly in the experiences of migrant husbands upon marriage and migration and thereby making ‘becoming British’ a more complex process in comparison to ideas and expectations of marriage and migration by migrant husbands and their families. In each of these areas, additional actors within the social formation within which migrant husbands were part, impacted migrant husbands’ aspirations. For instance, in-laws who demanded migrant husbands to finance home extensions meant that migrant husbands were unable to send money to their parents and thus maintain the image of the transnational patriarch. Employment hardships such as being treated poorly by the manager in some cases, motivated migrant husbands such as Ashraf to start their own business, and ill-treatment by in-laws caused migrant husbands to struggle to secure citizenship and finally
become British, as they had long aspired towards. Together, these narratives demonstrate the rhizomatic (Deluze and Guatarri: 1988) nature of migration journeys.
Conclusion

In this first part of the thesis, I traced the experiences of migrant husbands in the preliminary stages of marriage and migration. Titled *Making the Migrant Husband*, the first chapter demonstrated that the migration journey for the migrant husband begins long before the journey of migration itself, which speaks directly to scholars who have argued that migration is an ongoing process (McCormack and Schwaren: 2011, Collins: 2018). The chapter also demonstrated that individual aspirations of migration cannot always be disentangled from those of kin and community (Carling and Schewel: 2017, 958), as for many migrant husbands, aspirations to migrate are planted by families of migrant husbands. It was also demonstrated that such aspirations took on an embodied form for migrant husbands, as their physical appearances in the form of body weight, height, haircuts, and apparel, were carefully planned to achieve the desired outcome of securing a *rishta* [marriage proposal] in Britain. Social media was found to be an important tool in ‘marketing’ the suitability of a potential migrant husband to potential families of British Pakistani women. Overall, this chapter provided crucial insights into the beginnings of the migration process, which in some cases, began twenty or more years prior to the actual journey of migration having taken place. It also demonstrated the sheer collective investment made on behalf of migrant husbands and their families to achieve the desired outcome of marriage and migration.

Titled “*The Transnational Patriarch: Family man, Businessman, and Respected Man*”, the second chapter explored the manifestation of the trajectory of aspiration from the family and the community, to migrant husbands, and what this meant for them as individuals and for their masculine identity. It was found that migrant husbands aspired towards an ideal masculine form that entailed being a double breadwinner for their families in the UK and in Pakistan. I termed this ideal masculine form the ‘transnational patriarch’, which comprised of three interrelated elements – the business man, the family man, and the respected man. A significant finding that emerged from this chapter was the way in which the space of the homeland had ‘migrated’ in some ways due to pioneer generation of migrants who had returned and/or remitted funds to build lavish
mansions, which dominated the skyline of local towns and cities were powerful symbols and
reminders of the potential status, honour, and respect one could achieve by becoming a migrant
husband. In other words, migration carried a symbolic capital within the homeland and the
meaning attributed to this shaped aspirations which indicated that migration, masculinity, and
marriage are intricately connected. The narratives of migrant husbands in this chapter also
provided a glimpse of the potential dissonance between the aspirations of migrant husbands prior
to marriage and migration and their lived realities of upon marriage and migration, which was
further explored in the final chapter titled “Becoming British: New Responsibilities, Migrant
Labouring, and Citizenship Struggles.” In this final chapter, narratives of migrant husbands
demonstrated a waithood post marriage and before migration, due to immigration rules and
regulations, and unstable and insecure conditions post migration and settlement to the UK vis-à-
vis new responsibilities, employment, and citizenship, that steered away from the initial
aspirations migrant husbands held prior to marriage and migration. Emerging through this chapter
was a recognition of the migration that aspirations also undergo within both the lived social
imaginaries and lived social realities of migrant husbands. In other words, as migrant husbands
migrated, their aspirations also experienced migration, which indicates that migration though time,
place, and space, influences not only a migration of social identity, but also the socially embodied
experience of migrant husbands that very rarely is documented.

Taken together then, the chapters in this part of the thesis present a unique insight that
contributes to migration theory. Firstly, it is shown that migration is an on-going journey for
migrant husbands, which can be further seen to take place in various stages. While the
presentation of the findings perhaps indicate linearity in their temporal positioning as ‘before,
during, and after’ marriage and migration, it is important to recognise that the stages of migration
were in fact unique to each migrant husband, were not necessarily temporally linear. By this, I
mean that migration was in fact both fluid and volatile at the same time, as stages such as the
‘waithood’ period after marriage and prior to migration were highly unstable and insecure, and in
some cases such as that of Asad, led to divorce and therefore aspirations for migration were cut
short. In this way, we see that the process of migration at every stage is in fact heavily determined
and shaped by the social complex in which the migration, the marriage and the migrant husbands are all produced and reproduced.

This leads to the second contribution to migration theory, supporting existing approaches that posit that migration does not follow a linear trajectory (Collins: 2018, 972), which further steers away from the conventional understanding of migration as a linear process. Migrant husbands’ narratives demonstrated that their aspirational journeys and migration journeys were in fact tethered to the aspirations and desires of actors within the social situation they were part, including cross transnational social fields. For instance, in-laws played significant roles in triggering starts, stops, blockages and diversions. In Armaan’s case, we learnt that his betrothed bride refused to marry him, which compelled his family to divert and devote their energies into finding a new British bride for him who could help the family to save face. In Asad’s case, family tensions and marital instability led to divorce prior to migration, while in Faisal’s case, abuse perpetrated by in-laws led to him leaving the marriage. However, one of Faisal’s family members negotiated with his in-laws facilitating his British citizenship in exchange for the divorce. Similarly, Ashraf told of being threatened with deportation by his father-in-law. Together, these narratives demonstrate the lack of control and limited agency that migrant husbands may have over their migration journeys.

The third contribution this part of the thesis makes to migration theory is that for migrant husbands, migration is not solely driven by economic, material or financial gains. Rather, migration is viewed as a stepping stone to acquiring increased status and honour, an alternative currency that regulates kinship and community networks within which migrant husbands are socially situated. Without the aspiration-desire framework, it would be difficult to discern this micro-level analysis of the workings of migration in the context of transnational marriage migration. Underpinning marriage and migration it seemed, was a set of aspirations that were closely linked to a form of masculinity that helped produce and reproduce not only the masculine ideal, but marriage and migration also. While aspirations were indeed planted by families often long before the migration and migration took place, these aspirations took an embodied form by impacting
many migrants’ physical appearance. Height, weight, hair-cuts, accessories such as jewelry and sunglasses were carefully planned to appeal to the desires – and in some cases evoke desires - in British Pakistani women and their families. Social media was a tool which was increasingly being employed by migrant husbands and their families to ‘market’ migrant husbands as eligible husbands. The insights into the ways in which these aspirations manifested after marriage migration demonstrated that aspirations too, had a social history, evolved, transformed and became, in and through migration. We can then begin to the embedded nature of transnational space(s) and the body, which speaks to Borden’s (2001) understanding that space and body are internalised within each other. Migrant husbands, as a result, were engaged in constantly revising their aspirations in line with the changing social environment.

A significant implication of constantly revising their aspirations, was the impact on migrant husbands’ masculinity. The concept of migration and the symbolism attached to it, triggered a mobile masculine identity that was shaped by this symbolism, prior to embarking on the physical journey of migration. For instance, this was evident in the body modification that migrant husbands and their families were practicing. Importantly, this modification continued to take place in other embodied behaviours such as through remaining silent in matters that could infringe the acquisition of British citizenship. Migration, then, creates fluidity for masculinity to be produced and reproduced, which is worked and reworked in through marriage and migration. In the proceeding sections of the thesis, I aim to further study the implication of waithood, insecurity, and instability for migrant husbands’ masculinity. The role of in-laws will also be further examined in further sections of the thesis, particularly in relation to shaping migrant husband’s masculinity. In sum, this first part of the thesis has established the significance of aspirational masculinity in the workings of transnational marriage migration from Pakistan to the UK. The subsequent chapter will focus on the differences between the aspirations and expectations prior to marriage and migration, and after marriage and migration, and consider the implications for migrant husbands’ masculine identity.
Part 2: Liminal Masculinity

Introduction

“What are the experiences of migrants post-migration?”. How do migrants settle into their new country of destination?”. The conventional push-pull model understanding of migration carries an assumption (Collins: 2018, 965) that once migrants arrive at their country of destination, they no longer struggle, or experience hardships, as these experiences were ‘left behind’ in their countries of origin. In addition, social scientists in this field have recognised that due to the analyses of migration having been largely androcentric in the past, there was a need to document and analyse the specificities of women’s’ and girls’ experiences of migration. As a result, social scientists have discovered that there has been a trend towards an increasing proportion of women amongst international migrant workers, which has been termed as the ‘feminisation of migration’ (Piper: 2009). While incredibly important to study, the shift of focus on the increased flow of female migrants has, in my view, muted the gendered experiences of male migrants. There is also an assumption that migrants experience ‘enlightenment’ and ‘freedom’ when they arrive in the West (El-Taleb: 2012), or what is often referred to as migration from the global South to the global North, which can also mute the gendered experiences of male migrants.

Nevertheless, due to the rich and ever-growing body of literature on men and masculinity studies, there are now numerous ethnographies that document the experiences of migrant men in a number of social and cultural settings around the world. This includes the ways in which migrant men inscribed into their new environment memories of their personhood, status, and identity to carve their place within the changed social dynamics of the migrant community within which they no longer felt they belonged (Jansen: 2008), experiencing low self-esteem due to their status as breadwinners and providers for their families being overshadowed by the State through its provision of welfare benefits (Este and Tachable: 2009), and feeling secondary to their wives as a result of acquiring citizenship status, employment, and being seen as hard-working reliable men due to the precedent their wives had set prior to their migration and settlement (Gallo: 2006). Such ethnographies demonstrate that men too, through the immigration and settlement process,
undergo continual processes of renegotiation, exposing them to a range of vulnerabilities, some which are similar to the vulnerabilities experienced by women, and some which may be specific to them precisely because of their gender (Espiritu: 1997, 75, Luu: 1989, 68). Such ethnographies also speak to the broader study of masculinity, within which academics have posited significant theories, including Connell’s (2005) theory of ‘hegemonic masculinity’, which proposed a hierarchy amongst multiple masculinities, and that a hegemonic version at the top of the hierarchy, subordinates both women and marginalized men (Connell: 2016, 303). We know from the previous section of the thesis that migrant men have diverse dreams, hopes, and aspirations, which brings me to question what happens to these hopes, dreams, and aspirations during the continual renegotiation of identity (following Espiritu (1997: 75) and Luu (1989: 68), particularly in relation to men who align with hegemonic forms of masculinity.

One of the most prominent developments in the field has been proposed by Inhorn (2007) who has recognised the ‘emergence’ of masculinities. Inhorn’s concept ‘emerging masculinities’ attempts to capture the essence of new forms of masculinity in its interaction with new forms of technology within the Arab world (2017). The concept speaks to processes of social change, as men navigate and adapt their social worlds, change over their life courses, and changes in social histories (Inhorn: 2012, 60). While ‘emergence’ or ‘multiplicity’ are useful concepts that should continue to be celebrated, it is important to note that the ‘process’ that occurs during and whilst ‘emergence’ or ‘multiplicity’ is occurring is little accounted for. Moreover, ‘emergence’ of masculinity carries overtones of a new masculinity breaking through (and rightly so for some ethnographic cases), including the case of migrant husbands in the British Pakistani community. My ethnographic work with migrant husbands in the British Pakistani community points towards a unique set of social circumstances that gives rise to an ‘in-between’ masculinity, which speaks to multiplicity and hybridity.

We know that migrant husbands aspire towards an ideal masculine form that entails being a double breadwinner for their families in the UK and Pakistan, which I termed as the ‘transnational patriarch’ (chapter 1.2). Based on the narratives presented in the previous section of the thesis, there is some indication as to the existence of a potential dissonance between the aspirations of
migrant husbands prior to marriage and migration, and their lived realities upon marriage and migration. For instance, narratives of migrant husbands demonstrated a process of waithood (see also Singerman: 2007, Honwana: 2012) after marriage but before migration, due to tightened immigration rules and regulations, and also demonstrated experiences of waithood after migrating to and settling in the UK, which gave rise to unstable and insecure conditions vis-à-vis new responsibilities, employment, and citizenship. These experiences of waithood at different stages of the marriage and migration process ultimately steered away from the initial aspirations and expectations of the marriage and migration experience that migrant husbands held. Collectively, these narratives demonstrated that migration is not a linear process, but an ongoing process that includes plans, starts, stops, and interruptions, which leads me to question the implications for the aspirations of migrant husbands and by extension, for their masculinity. In other words, if migration is an on-going process which inherently involves change, are migrants’ aspirations and dreams also subject to change? Furthermore, little is known about migrant husband experiences in transnational marriages where they join their wives’ households, contrary to the virilocal norms of their communities, which involves women joining the husband’s household upon marriage. As a result, in this particular case study of Pakistani migrant husbands, post marriage and migration should also be seen in the context of deviation from the marital norms, and thus, we should also consider the impact(s) of this if any, for their aspirations, masculinity, and the experience of the migration process more broadly.

In this second section of the thesis then, I focus more closely on migrant husband experiences upon marriage and migration to the UK, and consider how during this period, the experience of being a migrant husband unfolds. In doing so, I hope to firstly gain a deeper insight into the dissonance between the experiences of migrant husbands particularly vis-à-vis the imagined before marriage and migration to after marriage and migration. Secondly, I aim to explore the impact of marriage experience in relation to the social and cultural norms within the community. Finally, I aim to trace the workings of the process of aspiration making and masculinity. In other

23 Turner (1979a) discusses virilocal and uxorilocal marriage norms which are prominent in different communities across the world. In South Asia, where marital norms entail virilocal spouse migration, little is known about men who migrate to their wives’ households which conforms to uxorilocal marital trends.
words, by bracketing this particular social time (upon marriage and migration) and social space (upon migration and settlement in the UK) for the migrant husband, we can better explore the social dynamics and mechanisms at play that shape the marriage: the masculinity: migration nexus for migrant husbands.

This section of the thesis is comprised of three key chapters: “Precarious Lives:\(^24\): Waithood, Powerlessness, and Inferiority”, “Barefoot and Bruised: Weak Positions, Domestic Violence and Silent Suffering”, and “Reworking of Gender Power in Marriage: Multiple Patriarchies, Home and Household Structure, and Gender Dynamics.” The first chapter considers the precarious lives that migrant husband can often lead upon marriage and migration to the UK. I argue that three factors contribute to the precarious lives migrant husbands lead: waithood, powerlessness and inferiority. Here, waithood is a concept I borrow from Singerman (2007) who first used the term (see Honwana: 2012, 3), and which has since been developed by social scientists to study experiences of youth in different contexts across the world, making the transition into adulthood (Yousef: 2007, Hage: 2009, Honwana: 2012, Honwana: 2013, McEvoy-Levy: 2014, Inhorn: 2017, Janeja and Bandak: 2018). Singerman (2007) employs the term to describe the experience of ‘stuck’ youth in the Middle East who, due to socio-political-economic circumstances, experience prolonged waiting in order to marry. While there has been investigation into experiences of waiting in camps and detention centres as refugees and asylum seekers (Agier: 2002, Whyte: 2011, Turner: 2012, Gaibazzi: 2012, Andersson: 2014, Rotter: 2016) this has carried the assumption of temporality in the act of waiting. However, it is being increasingly recognised that prolonged waiting is becoming a permanent state gradually replacing conventional adulthood (Honwana: 2012). I therefore want to push the concept of waithood further by applying it in the context of Pakistani migrant husbands in the UK, and in this chapter do so to closely examine the impact of waithood arising as a result of (a) immigration rules and regulations, and (b) upon marriage and migration to the UK as a result of unexpected, and increased instability.

\(^24\) The use of the term ‘precarious lives’ has been inspired by Shahram Khosravi’s book titled “Precarious Lives: Waiting and Hope in Iran” (2017).
The second chapter considers the weak position of many migrant husbands in the household (see also Charsley: 2005), and demonstrates how this can at times lead to different forms of domestic violence against the migrant husband, rendering him silent and invisible in diverse social and political fields. I devise model to frame the experiences of migrant husbands by drawing on theories of domestic violence from Stark (2007, 2010), Mirza (2017), and Walby and Towers (2018). A crucial proportion of this chapter is the interweaving of migrant husbands’ life history narratives within the text to demonstrate the complexities and nuances of the abuse they can experience, and thereby the dynamics of the power complexes they are situated in and navigate in different ways. The final chapter considers the changing nature of gender and family dynamics, bringing into question our understandings of honour and patriarchy. More broadly, this chapter destabilizes our current understandings of gender dynamics within Muslim communities and more specifically the British Pakistani community, as it demonstrates that men can also be victims of oppression and abuse. Drawing on Turner’s work on liminality, the crux of my argument in this section of the thesis is that due to experiences of precarity, waithood, and stuckness, migrant husbands experience a liminal masculinity. This is to say that their masculinity is betwixt and between that of the migrant husband a weak ghar dhamad/ghar jawai\(^{25}\) [house husband] (see Chopra: 2013, Charsley: 2005) and the transnational patriarch. Collectively, these three chapters come together to help us develop a nuanced understanding of the interrelation of marriage: masculinity: migration.

\(^{25}\) Note that interlocuters did not refer to themselves as ghar dhamads or ghar jawais. However, to define the makers or ‘goal posts’ of liminal masculinity, this term is employed to signify the weak household and community position(s) migrant husbands occupy. The second marker or ‘goal post’ is the transnational patriarch. It is between these two variations that migrant husband masculinity is betwixt and between
Chapter 2.1 Precarious Lives: Waithood, Powerlessness, and Inferiority

Introduction

Globally, scholars have discussed the irregular and unstable nature of employment (Amamiya: 2007, Neilson and Rossiter: 2008, Standing: 2010), which many saw as a major factor in inspiring the surge of uprisings in 2011 that spread from Tunisia, to Yemen (Singerman: 2007, Inhorn: 2017, Khosravi: 2017). Recent scholarship in the Middle East considers this irregularity and instability of employment to be a key feature to a significant demographic shift in marital norms, which Singerman (2007) has termed as ‘waithood’. She argues that rising unemployment has lead to precarious financial conditions, making it difficult for young people to acquire socially acceptable forms of bride wealth required for marriage (2007), causing young people to marry later in life (see also Sommers: 2012). While this earlier use of the term carries connotations of hope and perseverance, which may eventually lead to overcoming the period of waithood and triumphing (Hage: 2009), Honwana (2012, 2013) has recognised that waithood is becoming increasingly permanent in nature, replacing conventional forms of adulthood (2012: 6). In the migration literature, social scientists have explored the impacts of waiting in liminal spaces such as detention centres and refugee camps (Agier et.al: 2002, Whyte: 2011, Turner: 2012, Gaibazzi: 2012, Andersson: 2014, Rotter: 2016). There is flourishing literature that demonstrates the tension between different forms of waiting, which is often imposed by states to slow down movement towards Europe and/or keep out refugees and migrants by making them linger and wait decisions (Lucht: 2012, Andersson: 2014b, Janeja and Bandak: 2018). As a result of these structurally and institutionally imposed forms of waiting, displaced people experience precarious conditions (Bayart: 2007, Paret and Gleeson: 2016, 281). Waithood and precarity in migration are thus interconnected.

Similarly to the concept of waithood, precariousness or precarity also has a trajectory within the social sciences. It can be traced back to Bourdieus’s study of Algeria where he used it to differentiate casual workers from permanent workers (Waite: 2009, 414) and has since been
prevalently used to focus on employment and the labour market, linking precarity to economic insecurity. Standing (2011) argued that the ‘precariat’ is a new global class in the making, which is comprised of workers who lack the basic securities such as social mobility employment, union representation, and income security (see also Paret and Gleeon: 2016, 279). Khosravi (2017) developed the notion further through his examination of the experiences of Iranians in a politically charged climate both nationally within Iran, and in relation to international actors such as America, which created conditions of instability and insecurity. As a result, he argued that Iranians were leading precarious lives.

The notion of precarity is especially relevant to the field of migration studies, as migrant populations frequently experience vulnerability particularly vis-a-vis illegality and deportability (De Jenova: 2010, Menjiva and Kanstroom: 2013). Illegal or undocumented migration often go hand-in-hand with precarious employment that can further push workers into grey areas of the economy where wages are low and work-place protections are limited or non-existent (Paret: 2014, 2015). Immigration controls as a result produce precarious migrants (Andersson: 2010), which can be multiplied and multi-faceted if considered through intersectional identity markers (see also: Nielson and Rossiter: 2008). Since immigration controls impact different migrant populations differently, applying the concept of precarity more widely would generate a fruitful analysis of migrant experiences. For instance, transnational marriage migration is also subject to immigration control, which may (or may not) increase precariousness for migrant spouses.

There is a vast literature on transnational marriages among British South-Asians (Werbner: 1990, Shaw: 2000, 2005, Charsley: 2005, Qureshi: 2013). Espiritu (1997: 8) points out that through the immigration and settlement process, patriarchal relations undergo continual renegotiation as women and men build their lives in a new country. As a result, both women’s and men’s sense of independence and wellbeing is under considerable pressure from shifting gender roles, leading to a higher incidence of abuse (Espiritu: 1997: 75; Luu: 1989, 68), and diverse forms of social precarity. While female spouses are generally thought to be better prepared for married life due to the traditional virilocal practice of marriage common to South-Asian communities (Charsley: 2005), it is thought that male spouses may experience greater difficulty in adjusting to married life as the
move to their wives and in-laws house in a transnational marriage renders them weaker (Charsley: 2005, 2012). Within South-Asian communities, men who migrate to their wives or her parent’s household have been described as *ghar dhamads*\(^{26}\). Social scientists have noted that the husband in this marital set-up becomes reduced in his capacity to retain control over his wife (Jeffery, Jeffery & Lyon 1989: 37), which can be a source of unhappiness (Charsley: 2005). In parts of the Middle East such as Iran, the term for a man seen to be under the control of his wife is referred to as *zanzalil*, a social warranty for teasing and humiliation by fellow men (Khosravi: 2017, 41). The unhappiness, weaker position, and possible humiliation may constitute precarious conditions for male migrant spouses. However, when combined with immigration controls which as previously mentioned can create waithood(s), not only does precarity intersect with migration, but both precarity and waithood are useful concepts to examine the experiences of male migrant spouses.

In the case of Muslim migrant husbands from Pakistan whose experiences are at the centre of this thesis, the previous section of the thesis established that a dissonance between the expected and experienced realities upon marriage and migration exists, and that they can experience instability and insecurity at various and multiple stages of the migration process. In this chapter then, I employ the concepts of waithood and precarity as a framework to explore in greater detail, the experiences of migrant husbands upon marriage and migration to the UK. In doing so, I aim to provide a more nuanced account of the ways in which structural and institutional forms of power can shape and define the experiences of migrant men. This will lay the foundation for later chapters, which will consider the experiences of men within the community, the household and within marriage.

**Waithood**

An underlying assumption with the concept of waithood in this context is its confinements to occurring only prior to marriage. However, waithood can also occur after marriage for instance, in the waithood for bearing children when experiencing fertility issues (Inhorn: 2007). In the previous

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\(^{26}\) The term *ghar dhamad* [house son-in-law] carries overtones of humiliation and shame. I refer to *ghar dhamads* simply as migrant husbands, as they do not refer to themselves in this way.
section of the thesis we saw glimpses of waithood experienced by migrant husbands at different stages of the marriage and migration process. For instance, after marriage, migrant husbands entered a waithood period during which their immigration documents were prepared by their wives and in-laws, a process which could last from six months, to five or more years. Hussain a 28-year-old college-educated migrant husband from Azad Kashmir, told me:

Getting married to someone who is British did not make me British, there was so much work involved after that. I mean it was hard to get married, it took a long time to convince the family [of the bride], and we waited three year for them to say yes. But even after marriage there was more waiting because of the paperwork...there were TB tests and English tests and telephone records... sending one another letters to show we were communicating, and also our bank statements to show she was sending me money here in Pakistan...It was all very stressful.

During this time of waithood post-marriage, Hussain told me, his life became insecure and he lost hope.

I did not know whether to work in Pakistan or wait on my wife to send me money. I did not know whether to continue studying either because if the visa was issued at any time, I would have to leave and go to the UK and then the tuition fees for university would be a waste of money. And I did not know when the visa was going to be given...If there was something wrong in the paperwork it would cause arguments between me and my father-in-law or my wife and then my parents would worry and get tension...I just started to lose all hope...

For Asad, who married his cousin’s daughter in 2015, this insecure waithood period post-marriage but prior to migration, was incredibly distressing for him. A year after his marriage, tensions were rife between him and his wife, who was at the time working as a waitress at a Pakistani restaurant in Birmingham.

For Asad, the waithood after marriage proved incredibly precarious and led to his wife submitting a *khulla* [Islamic divorce initiated by the wife] and subsequently entering into marriage with
someone who she met at her place of work. This was a source of great emotional pain and distress for Asad, as well as shame for both him and his family in the wider community. Not only had Asad’s aspirations to become British been ruined, but he had lost his masculinity and social status in the process.

For some migrant husbands, the waithood post-marriage to migrate to the UK is still ongoing eight years after marriage due to the income rule. Sufyan told me:

I got married in 2010 but I am still here in Pakistan eight years later. My wife and two children are in the UK, they come and visit me but then they have to go back because the children have started school. But in the first few years when they did not attend school they lived here in Pakistan for three years...it’s hard for me because I cannot see my children and they can always forget me as their father because of the distance...I never thought that I would be a father like this with my children so far away and I am stuck here...sometimes I feel useless too because I cannot provide them what a father should provide them...I try my best to keep positive but this really might be the way things are for a very very long time...

In Sufyan’s case, the immigration rules and regulations became so burdensome that he believed they were infringing on his right to family life under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act; however, Sufyan had no means to challenge this due to financial difficulties. He also considered the likelihood of the Home Office rejecting his application.

There is no point in submitting the case to say that it’s my human right to live with my family, they will just reject it because they look at the money and the earnings. We are not going to waste almost three thousand pounds to file the case for my visa to not ever get that money back...I would rather we use it on the children.

While Sufyan was working as a cashier at a petrol station in the town near his village, his account highlighted the extent to which being unable to perform his duties as a husband and a father due to the minimum income required to satisfy a successful spousal visa application, which led to Sufyan experiencing emasculation.
Hopefully the children will grow up and want to know me and want to contact me. I worry a lot because they are far away and I’m not with them, that they will not care about me or they might think I don’t care about them...you know children are young they don’t see the details straight away, they just know that their dad is not with them and that really bothers me. It’s hard because my wife is also mainly raising the children by herself and I cannot be there for her as a husband...

Often, having endured the wait in the UK, migrant husbands find they experience further wait in their migration to the UK. As Armaan explained:

When I arrived in England I finally thought this is it, I’m here now, I can start a family, work and live life...you know do all the things I dreamed about...progress and move forward and do well, be successful...but I did not know there would be more difficulties and pains when coming here...my whole life revolved around my father-in-law’s saying and doing. He would say sit and I would sit, he would stay stand and I would have to stand...until I get my citizenship in three years’ time my life will be controlled, and it will probably be controlled even after...because when I get citizenship they [in-laws] will say we got you the citizenship you do as we say, or threaten to deport me...

Often the wait in acquiring citizenship – which is largely invoked by the UK Home Office as per the immigration rules – is employed by wives and in-laws as a form of leverage over migrant husbands, positioning these men as inferior and allowing for the exercise of control and subjugation.

Collectively, these narratives indicate that contrary to the initial concept of wait (Singerman: 2007, Yousef: 2007, see also Hage: 2009) – that wait is experienced prior to marriage -, wait can in fact occur at different stages of both the marriage and migration processes, which Honwana (2012) has pointed to when arguing that wait can take on a more permanent form. In addition, the narratives demonstrate that wait for the migrant husband is like the overflowing river that breaks its banks, changing boundaries, structures, and perceptions of space, place, and time between water and earth; the migrant husband and his social field. Multiple and
intersecting waithoods at different stages of the marriage and migration processes, can expose migrant husbands to increased vulnerability and precarity involving processes of emasculation and subjugation.

**Powerlessness**

Waiting, as Pierre Bourdieu has put it, is a way of experiencing the effects of power (Bourdieu: 2000, 228), generating a feeling of powerlessness and vulnerability amongst the less powerful groups in society (Auyero: 2012, Crapanzano: 1985, 45) such as the state (see also; Agier: 2002, Bayat: 2007, Whyte: 2011, Lucht: 2012, Andersson: 2014b, Rotter: 2016, Janeja and Bandak: 2018). To be kept waiting is to be the subject of an assertion that one’s own time and therefore one’s own social worth is less valuable than the time and worth of the one who imposes the wait (Schwartz: 1974, 856). For migrant husbands, the waithood(s) they are subjected to is two-fold; waiting imposed by the wife and/or in-laws, and waiting imposed by the state through immigration laws. Both sources of waiting, when combined, cause an exacerbated sense of powerlessness, contributing to leading precarious lives (Allison: 2013, Khosravi: 2017).

For Yasin, 32-year-old a migrant husband from Azad Kashmir, the state became a great source of emotional distress.

*They [UK Home Office] want her [wife] to earn more than eighteen thousand pounds a year, she only has a college education and they tell me there are no jobs available in Birmingham where they live...they [in-laws and wife] are trying to show [on the books] she has the income but it is taking time...one employer said he will put her on the books then after six months he did not give the pay slips [evidence of monthly wage] and so we could not send the visa application...now we are waiting again for her to find a way to show the income.*

He further explained:

*It makes me feel they [government] put all these things in the way to stop us from coming to England...I just want to live a happily married life and they don’t even let me do that...it*
has happened to so many people who are waiting because the government does not let us come...I really worry do I have to live married life like this forever...I can’t even sleep at night.

For Sufyan, who has been waiting eight years to be invited to the UK as a spouse and has two children who live in the UK, he has lost all hope.

There is nothing I can do. My father-in-law is useless, he does not get along with my dad at all, and he even asked his daughter to divorces me, but she said no she does not want to. But he is making sure I never get to the UK because of his enemy relationship with my dad. I have lost all hope because my father-in-law is not doing anything and alone, Sofia cannot do anything to prepare the paperwork...she does not have a college education she only went to school...and even if she does work there is nobody to look after the children...

Sufyan’s powerlessness was exacerbated both by the state and his father-in-law, who in Sufyan’s view was pursuing revenge from Sufyan’s father by preventing his son’s migration to the UK. Sufyan told me he is ‘depressed’ as a result of the ‘pressures from all sides’ he has been experiencing for many years. He particularly stressed that ‘nobody cared about his children growing up in the absence of a father’, neither his father-in-law nor the state. Sufyan told me he was working in a petrol station in the town centre in Pakistan, ‘to earn an income, pass time, and keep him occupied’.

Amir who arrived in the UK in 2014 told me how he felt powerless as a result of having no control over his life.

Everything is always decided and I do not have a say in anything. From little things like shall we get curtains or blinds to big things like shall we live across the street to my in-laws, where I get to work, when I can go to Pakistan to see my family, how much money I can send to my family each month, even when I can call my family...

In turn, Armaan told me:
I have no choice but to give all my wages to my wife. She uses it to pay bills, pay debts off that her parents had before we got married...I have only twenty pounds a week that she gives me, which I use for my bus pass and keep the change in case I need to buy a drink or chewing gum or cigarettes when I am really stressed out...I do not know what my life means, I do not have any independence, I cannot decide where to spend my salary, or to save...I am not even able to keep my passport with me...my whole life is in the hands of my wife and her parents. I mean I am not going anywhere, but I still feel so controlled every minute of everyday...I am being suffocated everyday.

This level of powerlessness and lack of control over one’s life was a common feature in the lives of the migrant husbands I interviewed, indicating the precarious nature of their lives. Some migrant husbands attributed this to being ‘migrants’, or the term ‘freshie’ [abbreviation of ‘fresh off the boat’] (Charsley and Bolognani: 2017) which natural born British Pakistanis used to refer to migrants, including migrant husbands, as a result of which there was a sense of inferiority associated with being a migrant husband. The lack of control over one’s life trajectory and direction in both the immediate and long-term caused migrant husbands to experience emotional turbulence, which impacted the way in which they saw themselves. Armaan told me:

Sometimes I wonder what being a human means if you are just controlled by somebody else. Your strings are being pulled by somebody else. Maybe some people can and do get to live freely, but if you are someone like me then that cannot happen.

Armaan’s words resonate with those of many migrants – both forced and voluntary - around the world, who experience ‘stuckness’ (Hage: 2009) and lack of power as a result of the interrelation and complexities that arise from systems, bureaucracies, governments, border control and immigration, anti-immigrant sentiments, racial profiling, racial and religious stereotypes, and more (see Castles and Miller: 2005, Collins and Bilge: 2016).
Migrant husbands spoke about the very real effects of being a migrant, which included being made to feel and treated as inferior at the hands of their wives and in-laws and more broadly by the community. Often this was due to the interrelation between British citizenship, generational difference, and the ‘giving’ of the daughter to the migrant husband, as a result of which the migrant husband’s migration would be facilitated. It is important to note that the direction of power is established through the ‘giving of’ the daughter. Armaan told me:

My in-laws always tell me my place is underneath them. They think that because they have been in England longer and because they gave me their daughter that I am always going to be less than them.

Faisal who arrived in the UK in 2000, told me that his father-in-law and brothers-in-law would humiliate him in front of guests.

I had never done that job before and no one had taught me to do it, they just expected me to know about concrete and cement and all this knowledge about buildings...I couldn’t do the job as quickly and properly as the others and they told everyone I am a ‘nikumma’ [useless] and that my brain was less developed...they started to say I’m ‘pagal’ [mad].

For Faisal, his (in)ability to perform certain skillsets constructed his inferiority increasingly within the framework of ‘a mad man’. This was further exacerbated when he claimed his wife was being unfaithful to him, which will be further discussed in the following chapter.

Haroon told me:

My mother and father-in-law would always say to me ‘we gave you our daughter, we brought you here [to England] and you will do exactly what we say. If we brought you here, we know how to send you back too [referring to deportation].’
The threat of deportation was a very real threat migrant husbands lived with, which heightened their inferiority and submission to those that subjugated them, but also their anxieties relating to marriage and migration. Together, Armaan’s, Faisal’s and Haroon’s narrative speak to Fischer’s argument that izzat [honour] is based upon control, and although the most fundamental form of control is the control of women, control of other men of the biraderi [patrilineage] or even better, outside the biraderi, is the highest form of control (108-109). Fischer also argues if a daughter is married with honour, she is the primary means for her father to increase his izzat (1991: 104). This suggests that daughters are used to facilitate the migration of a male from the biraderi through transnational marriage, in order for his control to become a symbol of the British-Pakistani family’s ‘highest’ level of izzat, further testifying that control, in the form of abuse, may be exercised by some members of British-Pakistani families to assert greater izzat. A number of interlocuters from the community that participated in the research also testified to this. Jamila, a middle-aged woman originally from Pakistan but who migrated to the UK after marriage, told me:

*My sister’s daughter got married and worked two jobs to make up the income on the paperwork for the visa and now that the son is here, his parents say bad things to my sister. I reminded by sister, we did not give our daughter to them, they gave their son to us!*

For Jamila, the purana zamaana [previous times/‘old days’] where the daughter was put into a doli27 and sent to the in-laws home, were over. Times had changed, and now they had put the migrant husband in a doli and brought him home [in England], and therefore had greater authority and power over the son-in-law and his family in Pakistan. In Jamila’s view, this meant that the husband’s parents were not entitled to speak rudely to her sister.

The workplace was another space in which migrant husbands told me about being made to feel inferior, and in which the precarity of their lives played out. Bashir told me how his inferiority as a migrant husband led his employer to take advantage of him.

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27 Palanquin used to transport the bride to her in-laws house after the rukhsati ceremony [bridal departure] at the wedding, has been conducted.
He knew I would work hard because I needed the money and did not want to upset my father-in-law if I lost the job...I washed up till the early hours of the morning, cleaned the tables, swept the floors, and cleaned the bathrooms. I did everything he said, all for two pounds an hour...a British born man would never put up with that so they would not do it to him, they would never treat him in that way.

Migrant husbands such as Bashir emphasised the difference in treatment they were subjected to compared to their British Pakistani counterparts.

We are looked down on and respected less and sometimes treated worse than animals...I mean my father-in-law looks after his budgies and parrots better than he treats me...I will never understand this because they too came from Pakistan once, or their parents did, the only difference is that they have a British passport, and I am waiting for mine...

This difference in treatment in both the home and the workplace speaks to Fischer’s argument that the control of men within the broader patrilineage network or community is the highest form of control (1991: 108-109), and once more underscores the notion that the giving of the daughter establishes the direction of control. In chapter 1.2 of the previous section of the thesis, I demonstrated that migrant husbands aspire to become transnational patriarchs, as an ideal masculine form. The transnational patriarch, I argued, was comprised of the businessman, family man and respected man. This level of control exerted by members of the older generation of men speaks to the notion of the transnational patriarch, which evolves over time to controlling men from the biraaderi as a form of transnational patriarchy, especially amongst senior men and thus serves to increase their izzat [honour].

Conclusion

As indicated in the previous section of the thesis, migrant husbands’ aspirations before marriage and migration differed from the reality they experienced upon marriage and migration. In this chapter, I focused on the experiences of migrant husbands upon marriage and upon migration to the UK, to explore potential differences. For some migrant husbands, the dissonance between
their aspirations and lived experiences began to appear soon after marriage, as men began to experience precarity in relation to waiting for immigration documents to be processed, and a spousal visa application be made. For Asad, he perceived that this waithood period had led to his wife being unfaithful to him, and subsequently seeking a *khulla* divorce [Islamic divorce initiated by the wife] to marry the colleague she had been romantically involved with. In some cases, this waithood period extended to the period after migration to the UK in many forms including waiting for the application for citizenship to be processed, which was in turn tied to waiting to be able to become financially and socially independent (see also: Singerman: 2007, Honwana: 2012). The waithood period(s) that were experienced upon migration exposed migrant husbands to precarity, as they were largely at the mercy and control of those around them, such as their in-laws and employers. This led to the exploration of migrant husbands feeling powerless at the hands of the state, their wives, and wives’ families, and demonstrating the intersection between waithood and precarity both at the macro level of the state, as well as the micro level of the family and household. A third factor that was explored was migrant husbands’ experienced of feeling inferior, which also led to the construction of their lives as precarious. A core underlying factor exposed during this consideration, was the control of migrant husbands as equating to higher forms of honour (Fischer: 1991, 104). This revealed differences between pioneer generation of migrant husbands as having acquired the ideal masculinity of transnational patriarch, compared to recently incoming migrant husbands who were more likely to lead precarious lives as a result.

The difference in experience of migrant husbands before marriage and migration and after marriage and/or migration speaks to Turner’s idea of liminality (1974), as the migration process bracketed here speaks of a transitory period. During this transitory period between the two social positions, betwixt and between (Turner: 1974) structures, the individual’s social status and role in society is socially and structurally ambiguous. In a similar vein, migrant husbands are ‘betwixt and between’ from the outset of transnational marriage, which suspends them from their identity as Pakistani citizens through the migration process, during which they are also suspended between two countries (Pakistan and the UK). During the settlement period, migrant husbands continue to experience ‘in-betweeness’ of citizenship status, marital dynamics, family dynamics (UK and abroad), all of which, I argue, lead to an ‘in-between’ or better put, liminal masculinity. While their
betwixt and inbetweeness is translated in a number of ways, the crux of the ‘betwixt and between’ nature of their experience is concentrated between their status as a migrant husband a weak *ghar dhamad/ghar jawai*\(^{28}\) [house husband] (see Chopra: 2013, Charsley: 2005), and the transnational patriarch. Of course, multiple and complex factors determine the course of events, which result in the progression of liminal masculinity. For instance, some migrant husbands such as Asad experienced divorce prior to migrating to the UK, which has a different set of consequences for the migrant husband. It is for this reason, I believe, that liminal masculinity captures the process that masculine identity undergoes through the migration and settlement process.

The case study of Muslim migrant husbands in the British Pakistani community not only demonstrates that masculinity is more complex than simply a hegemonic masculine ideal that is aspired and therefore supports the notions of multiple and complex masculinities (see also Connell: 2005), but also shows that there are new patterns of masculinity that might be emerging in transnational spaces (see also Connell: 1998). The ethnography of migrant husbands demonstrates through migration and social experiences such as marriage, masculinity becomes more fluid and mobile. It is precisely this continued mobility through space, place, social circumstances, and embodied experience – which can often be characterised as precarious and give rise to waithood during which migrant husbands can experience powerlessness – that can be seen to take on a permanent form. These reflections further support the theory of liminal masculinity that I have proposed in this thesis. A key limitation of liminality theory however, is that it characterizes a ‘transitionary state’ and does not specifically apply to the individual person within the time, space, and place in which they are situated. Furthermore, key questions to consider are when and/or where does liminal masculinity stop and/or start and/or interrupt and/or return for migrant husbands? Subsequent chapters will address these questions and weaknesses in liminality theory in order to better explain the liminal experience of migrant husbands.

\(^{28}\) Note that interlocuters did not refer to themselves as *ghar dhamads* or *ghar jawais*. However, to define the makers or ‘goal posts’ of liminal masculinity, this term is employed to signify the weak household and community position(s) migrant husbands occupy. The second marker or ‘goal post’ is the transnational patriarch. It is between these two variations that migrant husband masculinity is betwixt and between
Chapter 2.2 Barefoot and Bruised: Weak Positions, Domestic Violence, and Silent Suffering

Introduction

In the wider literature, men moving to women’s households upon marriage is known as uxorilocal marriage (Murdock: 1949, Leach: 1955, Maybury-Lewis: 1967, Turner: 1979a). In China, families have sought uxorilocal marriage as a means of solving problems of elderly care, labour demand, and continuity of the male family line in sonless families (Zhang 2008: 114). Since the 1950s, the government has encouraged the practice in an attempt to counter the problem of unbalanced gender ratios caused by female abortion, infanticide and abandonment (Wolf; 1985). Amongst the Nayar community in South India, it has been debated whether uxorilocally married men have rights over their children (Leach; 1955, Gough; 1959). In Amazonian societies the young husband postpones uxorilocal residence as much as he can so he does not have to assume the passive position of the son-in-law and be dominated by his father-in-law (Maybury-Lewis; 1967). In order to successfully dominate the son-in-law, he is ‘integrated’ into his wife’s household and isolated, namely by the severing of his natal family ties (Turner; 1979a).

Wolf (1995) suggests that uxorilocal marriages can be viewed as a continuum between two extremes where, at one extreme, the husband retains all his rights as a father, “…simply agreeing to work for his father-in-law for a number of years” (Wolf 1995: 25), while, at the other, he takes his father-in-law’s surname. There are a variety of arrangements between these two extremes that can be accounted for by specific social, economic, and political circumstances (Kracke; 1976). Uxorilocal marriage is often believed to be advantageous for women as it can ensure women’s property rights, reduce the likelihood and risks involved with adjusting to a less familiar household (Agarwal; 1994), and endow them with being able to easily receive support and protection from their natal families as a result of living in close proximity (Wolf; 1975, Dyson and Moore; 1983, Magrini; 2007, Bossen; 2007, Charsley; 2005).
The studies of uxorilocal marriages mentioned thus far are all rooted in a particular geographical area. There has been growing academic focus on uxorilocal marriages that take place between countries; in other words, transnational uxorilocal marriage (see Chopra: 2009, 2013, Malik: 2016). The migrant husbands at the centre of this thesis are, in my view, involved in transnational uxorilocal marriages, as they move to their wives’ and/or parents-in-laws’ household contrary to the virilocal marital norms (Turner: 1979a) common to South Asian communities. Husbands who take up matrilocal residence through uxorilocal marriage are often referred to as *ghar dhamads* [house husband] (Charsley: 2005, 2012, Chopra: 2013). The framing of this phenomenon as uxorilocal marriages can lend support to the analysis of this form of marriage migration, as the ‘direction of power’ is disrupted in and through marriage migration.


There are a number of theories that attempt to explain domestic violence of which includes Johnson’s (2008) dualism model that distinguishes two types domestic violence: situated couple violence and intimate terrorism. Where intimate terrorism is serious, frequent and controlling violence that can escalate over time and is gendered male violence against women, situated couple violence is less serious, less frequent and is not coercive or controlling (see also Walby and
A second theory that attempts to explain domestic violence is Stark’s coercive-control model (2007, 2010) which stipulates that coercive and controlling behaviour is not always physically violent but is always harmful, and is gendered male control over female intimate partners. A third theory includes Walby and Tower’s (2018) ‘domestic violent crime’ theory, which suggests that domestic violence at all severities and of all frequencies comprises of coercion and control. While Walby and Towers (2018) also argue that domestic violence is gender assymmetrical, importantly, they suggest that the economic resilience of the victim is more important than the gendered motivation of the perpetrator, in determining the frequency of the violence, which resonates with Wolfe’s (1960) resource theory, which suggests that in a marital or intimate relationship the person who is more resourceful in terms of income, occupational status, and education status, may have more say and power in the relationship.

The case of the migrant husband then disrupts these theories and conceptualisations of domestic violence in a number of ways. Firstly, the gender power dynamic is no longer asymmetrical where men are more powerful but rather, men are found to be in weaker and with fewer resources as migrants which creates dependency on wives and in-laws. Secondly, the narratives of migrant husbands thus far demonstrate that women can be involved in either direct or indirect violence and/or control and coercion (see Mirza: 2017) of migrant husbands, suggesting that the discourse on domestic violence may need to reconsider the role of women in domestic abuse (see also Mirza: 2017, Rew et.al: 2013). Third, the social context within which migrant husbands are located including the complex transnational family network is not currently accounted for in the theorisations of domestic violence, thereby limiting domestic violence as an act that can only be perpetrated by partners and not members of the family (see also Mirza 2017, Rew et.al: 2013). Fourth, as a result power can be seen as not linear and one directional, but as located everywhere as per Foucault’s (1991) theorisations, which places a spotlight on the role of the family in perpetrating domestic violence. Finally, given that in the case of migrant husbands British citizenship is a significant currency held by the wife and in-laws, motivations underpinning domestic violence, can be further interrogated.
In this chapter then, I build upon the findings of the previous chapter wherein I demonstrated that migrant husbands experience precarious lives as a result of three factors; the waithood(s) they encounter at different stages of the migration process, powerlessness at the hands of the state, wives, and in-laws, and inferiority in relation to British born Pakistanis and senior men in the family and/or community, who are often pioneer generation of migrant men and/or migrant husbands. In particular, I interrogate these findings against theories of domestic violence. The migrant husband experience is framed in line with Stark’s (2007, 2010) coercive control model and Walby and Towers (2018) domestic violence crime theory, which I argue can be divided into ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’ forms of abuse as per Mirza’s (2017) conceptualisation. This is to say that the while not all acts of abuse against migrant husbands includes physical violence, it is harmful nonetheless, and migrants husbands who had not experienced ‘physical’ forms domestic violence, had experienced coercion and control. In fact, all of my migrant husbands interlocuters had experienced indirect coercion and control in some shape or form, whether in the form of the retention of their passports and/or salary, or the frequency with which they were able to call and/or remitting to their family in Pakistan, the ways in which they could socialize outside of employment and family relations, or their obligations towards their wives and/or in-laws. The way which this chapter distinguishes and furthers the aforementioned theories is that British citizenship determines the direction of control and thereby, the establishing of the coercive control model. Furthermore, that wives, mothers and fathers-in-law can perpetrate coercion and control, and in some cases abuse, pushes the theoretical conceptualisations of domestic violence further by demonstrating that it can be perpetrated by women, including non-intimate partners.

**Weak Positions**

One of the most important steps to acknowledge the experiences of migrant husbands within the literature, was made by Charsley (2005) who reported that migrant husbands have weak positions within the household which they joint upon marriage and migration to the UK. This acknowledgement, in my view, was made within the framework of experiences of British female spouses who in Charsley’s ethnographic account, were left abandoned by migrant husbands after they received indefinite leave to remain in the UK. This spoke to the broader literature on the
British Pakistani diaspora, which portrayed British Pakistani families to be taken advantage of by kin in Pakistan (Ballard: 1994). While the accounts of British Pakistani women who are involved in transnational marriages with migrant husbands are invariably valid, the question remains, as to why and how migrant husbands are weak? What factors causes their weakness? What are the implications, if any, of their weakness on their experiences of marriage, migration, and masculinity? Exploring the inner workings of this position of weakness could also provide insights to the power dynamics involved in transnational marriages, particularly between both parties of families involved in this transnational dynamic, and which can facilitate domestic abuse to take place.

Of the sixty-two migrant husbands that participated in the research, all expressed feeling weak upon marriage and migration to the UK, both within the household and in relation to family dynamics, and in navigating the British system(s), in which they often felt disadvantaged due to their positionality as migrants from Pakistan. It is important to note that the broader perception of Pakistani and/or Muslim men and the ways in which both Muslims in the UK and the Muslim community of Birmingham is viewed in both local and national discourses, is also important in the analysis of migrant husband experiences, particularly vis-à-vis approaching and accessing state support. Pakistani and/or Muslim men are often thought of as powerful patriarchs, wife-beaters, gang members (Alexander: 2000), or terrorists (Abbas: 2012). Further, the Muslim community in Birmingham are often seen as hardline Islamists (see Abbas: 2018) and there is an increasing discussion of Islamophobia in both public and academic circles within the UK (APPG British Muslims: 2018). These intersecting and overlapping social dynamics can intensify the experiences of migrant husbands. While migrant husbands did at times talk about experiences of racism and discrimination, for instance being called ‘Paki Muslims’ or ‘Terrorists’ while working as chefs or waiters at takeaways or as taxi drivers, limited English proficiency and lack of knowledge as to how to navigate the British systems(s) were two significant factors that determined their positionality, from the outset. Faisal, a 29-year-old college-educated migrant husband from Islamabad told me:

“I was not very educated and I cannot speak English in a good way as you can see, so I was treated lower to them [wife and wife’s family]...I was lower class. They were not educated
but they acted and behaved as though they were higher class because they had the British passport and they think they are powerful.”

Faisal’s experience was common amongst migrant husbands that arrived between 1990s-2008. It also demonstrates Wolfe’s (1968) resource theory which he suggested underpins domestic violence, facilitating coercion and control (Stark: 2007, 2010). However, those who arrived within the last five to ten years, had relatively good levels of speaking and reading proficiency of the English language, as they were required to pass English tests as part of their spousal visa applications. Nonetheless, both groups of migrant husbands – those who arrived between 1990s-2008 and those that arrived in the last ten years – experienced abuse, as the structures of silence were maintained by family members as well as the broader community. As a result, much of my fieldwork required me to probe structures of silence.

80% of the migrant husbands that took part in the research had had arranged transnational marriages with a cousin (see also Shaw: 2006), relatives, and even non-relatives who resided in the UK. In about half of cases (45%), my interlocutors informed me that mis-treatment and/or abuse was directly linked with land in Pakistan, which had been tied to the marriage contract and/or verbal agreements between family members. This included the striking occurrence of the manipulation of the *nikah* [Islamic marriage contract] by British families to implicate land as *haq-mahr* [dowry]. Haider, a 26-year-old migrant husband from a village near Islamabad explained his situation:

“Eight months after I arrived here [Birmingham, England] I was desperate to leave the marriage and had told my parents about the situation...I told them I could not put up with the daily taunts and constant putting me down, calling me names, saying I was incompetent and incapable. But my dad told me I cannot divorce because the land my father owns would be transferred to his brother [Haider’s father-in-law] because it was written into the marriage contract...I told my father not to agree to this [at the time of marriage] but he
thought it [divorce] would never happen so he agreed to including it...I am now stuck and there is no way out...”

As demonstrated through Haider’s narrative, the giving of the daughter’s hand in marriage can prove to be a source of power and manipulation channeled and made possible through religious doctrine and items such as the nikaah [marriage contract] documentation. This documentation, that carries religious significance and authority, locked the assets of migrant husbands and/or their families, which were transformed into material gains and/or financial awards for both guaranteeing the migrant husband’s passage to the UK, and/or as a ‘security deposit’ in case of a marital breakup. In this way then, the possibility of coercion and control were sealed within the nikaah document.

Saleem told me:

“During the wedding preparations, my mother in law insisted that we buy a car for my wife...we had no money so my dad sold off his land under the pressure to make them happy.”

Such accounts provide an insight into the ways in which British Pakistani families can also take advantage of the families of migrant husbands (who are often their kin), which is contrary to what is understood in the current literature (see Ballard: 1994, Chopra: 2009, 2013, Malik: 2016).

It became increasingly apparent from my interviews with migrant husbands that they believed that a significant source of their weakness was the kinship bonds upon which these marriages were socially positioned. In-laws of migrant husbands were often the siblings or cousins of parents, which made it difficult to speak against control but which also, in some cases, added to the shock experienced by migrant husbands, as they had believed their marriage and migration would be easier solely due to being ‘married in the family’. Migrant husbands and their families placed a great deal of trust in their family relatives, which later created difficult conditions for migrant husbands.
Joint family household structures, which are common to many South Asian communities in Britain, also played a role in increasing the migrant husbands’ vulnerability, as migrant husbands would usually move into the joint household headed by the wives’ parents. Yassir described in detail the eighteen months he had spent in his in-law’s house when he first arrived to the UK:

“I was sworn at, called names and even slapped in front of my wife’s siblings and sometimes in front of guests. I was made a mockery of, like one of those monkeys they ask to perform in circuses...living together made it harder because there was the abuse and then there was also everyone ‘watching’ me being abused.”

As a result of close proximity, the level of control exerted upon migrant husbands also increased in instances where migrant husbands and their wives were able to eventually move out of the in-law’s household. Asif told me:

“When I was at work, my wife rang me all of a sudden and told me that she and her mother agreed to buy the house opposite her mother’s house. She didn’t ask my permission...it was the root cause of all our problems...my mother-in-law controlled when we ate, when we slept, even what colour curtains we had...”

Migrant husband participants detailed the degree to which they felt the influence of mothers-in-law was a devastating factor for their marriages. Nabeel explained:

“My wife asked for my bank cards...her mum told her she would keep for us. I told her that as my wife, only she had the right to my money, but a third person does not...it was like being married to both the daughter and her mum at the same time. I could not live peacefully with my wife, because her mother was always interfering...we eventually divorced.
In some instances, mothers-in-laws were unhappy with their daughters having married into their husbands’ side of the family and as a result, according to migrant husbands, were actively sabotaging the marriage. Migrant husbands, in their narratives, often described at great lengths how mothers-in-law would “brainwash” or “ear-fill” (see Mirza: 2017) their daughters to think that they were being used by their husbands as ‘baby-making machines’, or as ‘a passport to England’, often transferring their own marital scars and plights in order to turn them against their husbands. Mirza (2017) suggests that this is a form of indirect domestic abuse, perpetrated at high frequency by mothers-in-law. Salma, a 31-year-old married woman with three children and who worked as a receptionist at a GP surgery took part in the research as one of my community member interlocuters. Salma told me about how her next door neighbour’s mother would instruct her grandchildren, who were three and five years old, to abuse their father [the migrant husband] physically by scratching him and/or pulling his hair. Salma told me she had visited her neighbour to share food from the hatam [a form of commemorative prayer] she had held in her home in honour of the third anniversary of her father’s passing. She was horrified that the mother-in-law was ‘training’ her grandchildren to treat their father in such a way. The shock of witnessing such an incident caused Salma to drop the plate of rice she was holding, spilling the rice on the neighbour’s living room floor.

Cultural differences between migrant husbands and their wives were also a determining factor in creating marital instability and exacerbating their weak positions. Such differences were embedded within views about finances, family planning regarding long-term settlement, and between the intimate and private space within a marriage, such as the preference of sexual acts. Rehan shared with me that his wife expected oral sex (husband-to-wife) to be part of their physical relationship:

“I did not want to leave my faith or my principles to meet her demands. It is simply wrong to commit such acts…”
Faiza’s sister, was married to Arshad, her mother’s sister’s son from their village in Azad Kashmir. She explained how her sister’s attitude to sex was a particular source of contention in the marriage.

“Us girls here [in Britain] have different attitudes to sex based on how we have been brought up...he always refused to perform oral sex as he said it was immodest and pollutes the idea of sex...it was something her friends talked about so she wanted to fit in...”

Faiza explained that despite Arshad’s resistance to performing oral sex, he was not in a position to continue to refuse, as Faiza’s sister said she would divorce Arshad. She had been informed by one of her more ‘religiously educated’ friends that sexual dissatisfaction was legitimate grounds for divorce.

A number of intersecting factors, then, create a social complex within which migrant husbands feel weak, or weaker, than they felt prior to marriage and migration, demonstrating a significant dissonance between the aspirations before marriage and migration, and the lived social realities upon marriage and migration. The way in which this weakness translates resonates with Stark’s (2007, 2010) coercive control model, which can often lead to indirect forms of abuse (see Mirza: 2017). The ethnographic insights discussed here also demonstrate that factors such as lower levels of education, transnational marriages with kinship groups, matriarchal power as well as patriarchal power, and cultural differences, can place migrant husbands in weaker positions. It is important to highlight that while I have thus far presented the how and the why behind migrant husbands becoming weak which can be framed in line with Stark’s (2007, 2010) coercive control model and Mirza’s (2017) indirect forms of abuse, it is also necessary to consider any physical manifestations of this weakness for migrant husbands, or as Mirza (2017) refers to it as ‘direct’ forms of abuse.

**Domestic violence**

Of the sixty-two migrant husbands that participated in the research, all sixty-two migrant husbands told me of instances where they had experienced indirect forms of domestic violence at
the hands of their wives and in-laws, and eighteen told me they had experienced direct physical forms of abuse. My interlocuters described a range of violence they were being subjected to which included verbal abuse, physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and financial abuse. Of the community based interlocuters who took part in the research, thirty-eight of forty-three shared cases they were aware of where migrant husbands had experienced domestic violence (both direct and indirect). The total cases of abuse reported per abuse type is tabulated below for both migrant husbands, and the cases of migrant husbands reported by community member interlocuters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of abuse</th>
<th>Migrant husbands (n=62)</th>
<th>Community Member Interlocuters (n=43)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indirect forms of abuse (Mirza: 2017) / coercive control (Stark: 2007, 2010)</td>
<td>Verbal 62 (100%)</td>
<td>43 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological 28 (45%)</td>
<td>38 (88%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial 37 (60%)</td>
<td>27 (63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct forms of abuse (Mirza: 2017) / domestic violence crime (Walby and Towrs: 2018) that is rooted in coercive control (Stark: 2007, 2010)</td>
<td>Physical 18 (29%)</td>
<td>35 (81%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sexual 21 (34%)</td>
<td>13 (30%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Types of abuse experienced by migrant husbands and cases of migrant husbands reported by community member interlocuters.
While the types of abuse had the same meanings for migrant husbands and community member subjects, I noticed a difference in the interpretation of ‘psychological’ abuse. Migrant husbands were more reluctant to identify psychological abuse, as they interpreted this to mean causing a defect to their mind, which they were adamant had not occurred. For instance, Zahid told me:

“Their words hurt, their slaps and punches also hurt but they cannot hurt my mind. I am strong like that, I have to be. I cannot lose my mind.”

Participants who were community based interlocuters on the other hand were more likely to identify migrant husbands as having experienced psychological abuse, often as a result of long-standing abuse and/or the combination of a number of types of abuse.

I collected detailed stories during fieldwork, which provided me an important insight into the experiences of migrant husbands, experiences that were shut out to the world as a result of voluntary silence and invisibility, while what was involuntary silence and invisibility was often created by gendered stereotypes that are still prevalent in society today. In what follows in this chapter, I present the detailed cases of different forms of violence experienced by three migrant husbands who participated in the doctorate research.

**Munir**

Munir arrived in the UK in 2010 after marrying his mother’s brother’s daughter Aisha. He told me the abuse started a few days after he arrived, as outlined in this extended extract from his interview:

*I arrived in February...I remember it was very cold and after I spent a few days at home with family and guests, my Mava [maternal uncle, also his father-in-law] told me that he had found me a job in the local supermarket. I started work a week after I arrived. When I arrived at work with my father-in-law, the manager told my father-in-law that he had decided to put me on the fruit and vegetable stall outside. I was spending long days out in the cold*
stocking the fruit and vegetables, taking heavy items like big chapatti flour bags that weighed ten to fifteen kilograms, to customers’ cars. At the end of my first week, my father-in-law came to collect me and the manager gave my salary to my father-in-law. It was one hundred and forty pounds, so twenty per day of working there. My father-in-law put the bundle of money in his pocket immediately, and I stood there watching. I was really shocked.

The taking of salary by fathers-in-law was a common complaint expressed by migrant husbands during the fieldwork and demonstrates coercive control. As previously stated in chapter 1.2, financial independence was a key marker for becoming a successful transnational patriarch, which is disrupted in instances where they are denied autonomy in relation to their salary. Munir went on to explain:

*I went home that night and when my wife asked me how was work and whether I got my wage, I told her that her father had taken it. She couldn’t understand why this was the case either. She went downstairs and told her mother, who then asked her husband about the salary. The following day before leaving for work, my father-in-law began telling me how I was not a man because I went and told my wife that he had taken my salary rather than ask him directly. He told me that he had every right to take my wage because he had given me his daughter, and that’s why I was able to come to England. He said a lot of things to me that morning, and I went to work with a confused mind. I did not understand how my wife and I were going to buy a house if my father-in-law was taking my wages. I wanted to buy my wife a salwar kameez suit with my first wage too, to tell her how much I loved her.*

The above extract provides an insight into the generational differences in the idea of masculinity and manhood, as the father-in-law perceived Munir’s sharing of information relating to earnings with his wife, as constituting ‘not being a man’. For Munir, it was also important to spend a proportion of his first salary towards expressing gratitude ad love towards his wife, which demonstrates the interconnectedness between the business man and family man components of the transnational patriarch. However, we learn that these expressions of love are not as
straightforward to perform, as the migrant husband is situated within a complex social web in which social actors such as the in-laws have a significant role to play in the choices and decisions migrant husbands can and cannot make. He went on to explain:

A few weeks had passed and I thought I would ask my father-in-law for some money so that I could send to my mother at home who was unwell. He got really angry and hit me in the car. I remember I felt my head bang against the car seat window and everything went black. “You don’t send any money back home, I send the money. Who do you think you are? You’ve been here a month and you want to act big and send money back home do you?” He told me all these things that hurt my feelings. I thought he cared for me because he was my mum’s brother. My mum even told me before I came to England that I would be fine, because her brother would take care of me. He was really controlling and bad to me.

The control over the decisions Munir was able to make extended to preventing him from sending money to his family in Pakistan. This further reduced his ability to establish himself as a transnational patriarch, as remittances enabled taking care of family across borders, which provided honour in respect both in the home country and in the UK. In this way, the father-in-law’s transnational patriarch was reinforced, as Munir’s family remained dependent on his father-in-law despite their son having migrated through marriage to the UK.

Once I remember he asked for water and when I brought the glass to him it was wet because I had rinsed it before filling it with water. He threw the water in my face and the glass on the floor in front of my other uncles. One of my uncles said ‘what are you doing, don’t be so harsh it’s just a little wet’, but my father-in-law told him ‘he needs to know how to serve me properly, he’s ungrateful for what I’ve done for him.’ My wife was aware of her father’s actions and even she was shocked that her dad was behaving in this way. She told me not to worry and that we would eventually move out and he wouldn’t be able to have that control over us. After about four months, my wife placed a deposit down on a house and we moved out. My father-in-law didn’t like the idea of us moving away but she said she
wanted a separate house. Once we moved away, I also changed my job to a takeaway and was paid four hundred pounds weekly, which I used to contribute to the mortgage, save, and also send some money back to my parents. We do visit my father-in-law on the weekend sometimes and sometimes he does start swearing and shouting calling me a ‘nikummah’ [useless] but his words are now just meaningless because everyone knows I work hard at the takeaway and me and my wife have built a home together...we have three children now.

Munir’s story demonstrated how coercive control could transpire into more severe forms of abuse such as physical battering. In Munir’s case, the abuse lasted a relatively short time compared to other migrant husbands, some of whom experience violence at the hand of their in-laws and/or wives for many years. In Munir’s experience, having the support and understanding of his wife played a significant role in mitigating the length of abuse, as she placed a deposit on a house which not only enabled them to move out of her parent’s household, but also in doing so, no longer remaining under their control.

Faisal

I came to England about eighteen years ago in 2000. It was a happy time for me when I first came. From my village only four other men had come to the UK before me. When I got married, my ex-wife, she chose to marry me herself. She said to her mother she wants to marry me. My parents told me I was her choice and they were happy, so I agreed to the marriage. My visa was done within eight months and when I came to England, I lived in my mother and father-in-law’s house with my wife. Things quickly went really bad. My wife was going out and not telling me where she was going. I would ask her and she would just yell at me and call me names. We would argue over the smallest of things that were not an issue for me but somehow became an issue for her. The family would hear her shout at me all the time, it was very embarrassing for me.
Through Faisal’s narrative we gain a glimpse into the way in which living in a joint household came with a lack of privacy especially in instances of marital conflict. This caused Faisal to experience shame as the personal and intimate dynamics of his marital relations could be heard by his in-laws, indicating his weaker position in relation to his wife, and therefore his weaker position within the household. He went on to explain how this became interconnected to his relationship with his in-laws:

"Her father was very bad to me. He had got me a job as a brick and slab layer with one of his friends but the manager kept telling me I was not laying them properly. I had never done the job before but I did try my best. I then started to work at a supermarket stocking shelves for a while. My father-in-law collected my wages and gave me ten pounds from the packet. Things between my wife got worse and worse. I know she was seeing someone but I also knew that no one would believe me. I saw a packet of condoms in her bag one morning as she was getting ready...we had not had sexual relations with each other in over three months. But if I was going to tell someone, who was I going to tell and with what face? The matter was not something any man could say to anyone because of how shameful it was. One morning when we were arguing, my father-in-law came upstairs to our room and started to beat me up. I remember feeling the first punch and kick to my rib area but I cannot remember anything after that. My brother-in-law took me to hospital after and they said I had broken ribs and jaw and I was bruised everywhere. He [father-in-law] thought it was my fault, that I was doing something to make my wife angry and that’s why she was arguing. He thought he could beat whatever it was that was wrong with me, out of me, so that she would stop getting angry. In his eyes, I was harming his precious daughter who could never do wrong. This continued for a long time; arguments with my wife, my brothers-in-law and father-in-law beating me, having a hard time at work.

Faisal’s narrative here demonstrates the degree of physical violence he experienced upon marriage and migration to the UK, which compromised his ability to lead a healthy and happy
lifestyle. He went on to tell me the effects of the abuse on his ability to carry out tasks such as feeding himself:

There were times where I couldn’t even call my parents because I was too bruised and hurt to talk, and I was not working during that time either, so I could not top-up my mobile. I remember I had this little Nokia then. My mother-in-law would give me food and help me sometimes, but when she would hear her daughter’s complaints, she was also rude to me and blamed me for my situation, she told me that I was ‘asking to be beaten up’. I felt depressed and down. I thought to myself, ‘what had I done by agreeing to marry Shabana?’ What had I done. I thought night and day and became so miserable. One day my mother-in-law told me that I needed to move my belongings in the spare room. Shabana had told her mother she didn’t want me in her room any more.

Faisal’s narrative provided powerful insights to the ways in which weak positions for migrant husbands can manifest, and the impacts on embodied experiences such as experiencing depression.

Word had spread about our marital difficulties within the wider-family. We had relatives living across the road too and they had told my family in Pakistan about the way I was constantly being beaten up. There were days I would have no food and I lost a lot of weight. I wouldn’t eat with my father-in-law because he wasn’t talking to me and I wouldn’t eat with my mother-in-law because my wife would eat with her and by the time everyone had eaten, there was nothing left for me. I would lay wake at night thinking how long this would go on for. One evening, I was sitting in my room separating clothes that needed washing and the door pushed wide open. My father-in-law ran up to me so quickly it was like a blink of the eye and started to beat me. I don’t know how long he beat me for, or how long I lay on the floor. I know that I lost control of my bladder and my trousers had soaked in my urine. I think it was the following evening I managed to pick myself up and change my clothes. I remember him shouting words while he was beating me. He was angry because my father
had called from Pakistan and complained to him that he was treating me bad and that if they did not want to keep me as their son-in-law, that they should send me back home.

Details of the poor treatment that Faisal’s in-laws subjected him to, began to be circulated within the community, which proved to be a source of shame for his in-laws. The news reached his parents in Pakistan, prompting a phone call from his father to his father-in-law who asking him to send his son back to Pakistan. This destabalised the direction of power Faisal’s in-laws maintained, as Faisal’s family prioritized his safety over being a British citizen. This removed the ability of his in-laws to capitalize on the aspirations of Faisal’s kin in Pakistan, thereby destabilising ‘the direction of power’.

I packed a bag that evening with a few shirts and trousers and left the house through the garden door that led to the alley way. I slept in the park a few nights. I went in to one of the chip-shops to get some food, I know that one of my relatives worked there. I thought he would give me some food, I was really hungry and hadn’t eaten in four days. I had no money either. He was shocked to see me...I asked if he could offer me some food. He sat me down in his chip-shop and gave me food and drink. We then talked about what happened and I explained the situation. He said he would have a word with my father in Pakistan and my father-in-law here too. He told me that they had crossed all boundaries and had treated me worse than an animal. He took me home and clothed me and gave me a warm bed. He said I could stay with him for as long as I needed.

We gain a glimpse as to the degree of vulnerability, precarity, and instability migrant husbands can experience, as Faisal was homeless during this period. He told me he was unsure as to who to approach within the authorities to seek help, which indicated the way in which migrant husbands can be found at the margins of society during such precarious circumstances. Despite this, the role Uncle Ali played in supporting Faisal was critical. He went on to tell me:
From that point on though, the situation permanently became a public matter in our
community of relatives. My in-laws were furious. My parents and family back home were
in mourning, they felt they had sent their son to hell, not England. My relative Ali, who took
me in, was also like an uncle to me, a distant relative of my father, but in Pakistan our
houses were next to each other in the village. He gave me a job at his chip-shop too and I
began earning money. God had answered my prayers in the form of Uncle Ali, I think I would
have died if it wasn’t for him. Uncle Ali tried to sort the situation out, we had many meetings
between my father-in-law and a number of other senior men in our family. Even in the
family meetings, my in-laws tried to shun me. I explained in these family meetings about
the number of times I had seen condoms in my wife’s bag but we had not had intercourse
in many months. I also explained that she would talk to a man at night, I could hear it was
a man you can tell through the speaker of a phone whether it is a woman or a man. I also
told them that the gold my parents had so painstakingly paid for my wife when we got
married, was missing from the cabinet, and that I thought she had sold it off to help the
man she was seeing. This went on for eighteen months. In the end, Shabana wanted a
divorce, and said she could not take me back after the slanderous comments I had made
about her [sexuality]. I did not want to divorce but Uncle Ali told me that I should, it was for
the best, but he told me that he would make sure that I would receive the indefinite leave
to remain. He bargained with them. In exchange for the divorce, Shabana and her family
would first ensure I was granted British citizenship. Uncle Ali married a British woman too
and came to the UK in 1990. I think because of this he understood my situation.

We learn of the significance that a senior migrant husband who was established as a successful
transnational patriarch can have for a relatively new migrant husband such as Faisal. This also
indicates towards a solidarity amongst migrant husbands, which will be further explored in section
three of the thesis. For Faisal, Uncle Ali’s support extended beyond solidarity and support however:

One afternoon at work, Uncle Ali came into the shop and gave me my British passport. I
was very emotional. I just cried, and Uncle Ali hugged me and told me not to worry.
For Faisal, the support that Uncle Ali provided resulted in successful negotiations that secured his indefinite leave to remain in the UK. In my view, Uncle Ali capitalized on the shame experienced by Faisal’s in-laws as a result of the details of their abuse becoming public knowledge, which Uncle Ali proposed to mitigate by the securing of Faisal’s British citizenship, allowing the in-laws to maintain a degree of honour within the wider community. However, Faisal also something to offer as part of these negotiations:

A week later we had a family meeting with the senior men. Uncle Ali had got the divorce papers prepared. I signed them in front of the witnesses and said talaq [divorce] three times. And we left....I have since visited my family back home a few times and I managed to also get a council house with Uncle Ali’s help. One night though, I woke up to flames all around me. I thought I was dreaming. I heard the sound of the fire brigade and opened the window. I couldn’t see a way out of my bedroom because it was filled with flames. I grabbed a blanket and covered myself. I tried to climb out but the window edges were not wide enough for me to place my foot. The fireman saw me and they quickly got the ladder out and helped me escape. I saw my home in flames and thick black smoke and clouds rising into the sky. The neighbours on the street had come out too. The fireman asked if there was anyone else in the home and I shook my head. I spent a few nights in Uncle Ali’s home where he told me that he had heard my father-in-law had sent one of his sons to my home at night to pour petrol through the letterbox, and set the house on fire...

Despite successful negotiations and an agreement that secured Faisal’s British citizenship in exchange for a divorce, it seemed that the shame experienced by his in-laws far outweighed the terms agreed, resulting in continued forms of extreme abuse.

Asif
I married my mother’s sister’s daughter Amreen and came to England in 2015. We were happy, we would take time out of work on the weekends to sight see and spend time together. We loved each other. She had an admin job at the council and when I came [to England] I worked in the local barber shop as I had some experience of hair cutting when I was in Pakistan. I can make really good patterns that are popular with the young boys here [UK]. There was tension with my in-laws when I first came. My father-in-law kept my passport and my mother-in-law was pressuring my wife to give my weekly salary to my wife. She kept telling my wife that I would go out of control and leave her if she did not receive my salary. My wife was at first easily influenced by her mum and she asked me for my salary, which I was happy to give to her. I told her you are my wife, if you want my salary I am happy to give it to you. I knew what games her mother was playing so I made sure I was keeping my wife happy. One day I even went to the shop and brought my wife a set of bangles. That night I held her hands and placed the bangles around her wrists. She loved them, and she saw how much I loved and appreciated her. It was these little things I think, these little signs of love helped us get through the bad times in our marriage. When giving my wages to her, I told her that I wanted to save up to open my own barber shop. She said she would deposit the wages in a joint bank account that we both held. Her mother however, had other ideas about spending the money. She wanted an extension to their house and said I should pay for it as a way of paying them back for them bringing me to England. I would keep quiet and my wife would just say in a laughing way to her mum ‘what will you do with an extension we have enough space already.’ But she was adamant. She wanted us to pay the bills, which we did. We paid for the food in the house for everyone. My wife and her brothers and sisters started to argue though, because she said we were paying for everything and nobody else was contributing.

In a similar way to Munir’s narrative, Asif’s narrative also demonstrated the different ways in which he was trying to establish himself as a successful transnational patriarch by being a family man, while also having plans to become a business man. These plans however, were compromised as a result of the way in which his mother-in-law envisaged his role as a son-in-law. Asif was not alone
in being subjected to coercive control at the hands of his mother-in-law, as his wife’s ideas of what married life would entail were also being compromised. Asif explained:

My wife’s frustrations grew. She said she wanted to be able to have children soon and that we needed to save in order to do so. I also wanted to open the barber shop. I thought if I had my own business, we would be more comfortable and my wife could then take time off work when we had children, which is what we had planned. We wanted to work together as a team.

The mother-in-law’s ideas took precedence however, and involved the manipulation of her daughter to create marital tensions (see also Mirza: 2017):

If there was a death in the family or a wedding, my mother-in-law would ask me to pay for the petrol to visit the family of the deceased relative or pay for the wedding gift money. She would say ‘what good are you for?’. I felt I was just a money-making machine for my mother-in-law. I even heard her on evening whispering to my wife to make sure we don’t have children yet, as I could leave her with a child after I got my visa. These things upset me a lot. I was not going to betray my wife or leave her stranded. Sometimes when we would argue [Asif and his wife], she would say to me ‘you’re going to leave me anyway after you get the visa.’ My wife became really paranoid and it affected our relationship a lot. I remained patient and told my wife I was not going to leave her. I even told her she could keep my passport when it arrived because I had no intention of going anywhere. My mother-in-law would taunt me a lot. She would say things like I don’t have enough semen to impregnate her daughter and that her daughter could do so much better. I lost my temper once and said, ‘well you should have got her married to whoever was more deserving of her!’ and she slapped me right across my face. I pushed my mother-in-law away from me and my father-in-law and wife had stepped in-between us.
Through Asif’s narrative, we learn about a powerful matriarch who was oppressive towards her daughter and son-in-law. This speaks to Joseph’s (1996) notion that patriarchy can be hierarchized through both gender and age, as in this instance it was a senior woman who was able to exert a significant amount of control and subject younger men and women to oppression. Through this reflection, conventional ideas of the role of women in Muslim societies, particularly within the domestic sphere is also disrupted, as we learn that women can also be powerful heads of households (see also Rew et. al: 2013, Mirza: 2017).

My wife grabbed our coats from the coat hook and we left the house immediately. My wife was then five months pregnant. We sat in the car for a long time in silence. She said she was sorry for what her mum did. I said we needed a home of our own. Instead of the barber shop we prioritised buying our own home and eventually we moved in to our new home, which was a ten-minute drive away from my in-laws house before our son was born. I worked in the barber shop during the day and did taxi in the evening to make ends meet...and I’m still saving up to open my barber shop.

These in-depth narratives of three migrant husbands – Munir, Faisal and Asif – show that domestic violence (both direct and indirect forms of coercive control and/or abuse) against migrant husbands can occur, and can also be severe. Since the academic field in this area is heavily oriented towards domestic violence against women, such narratives are powerful insights into the workings of marriage and power dynamics within a transnational setting that can create heightened levels of vulnerability for migrant husbands. They also show that not all Pakistani men are powerful patriarchs as conventionally understood and/or portrayed by within popular media and academic understandings.

**Silent Suffering**

In the broader literature, silent suffering has been shown to manifest in a number of ways. For instance, Turner (1990) documented the experience of male refugees in Burundian refugee camps who experienced their social roles as breadwinners taken up by the UNHCR. This resulted in
women saying that the UNHCR is a better husband (Turner, 1990: 2), subjecting male refugees in the camp to humiliation. Este and Tachble (2009) demonstrate that Sudanese refugee men in Canada experience difficulty in performing in their role as fathers, as a result of unemployment, social isolation, and changing roles within the family. There were internal factors that led to their emasculation such as the drop in social status by performing in jobs they were over qualified for, and external factors such as disciplining their children for which they became visible in the eyes of the law. For migrant husbands then, the dissonance between their pre-marriage and migration social worlds and lives social realities upon marriage and migration constructs precarious lives for migrant husbands, in which they experience heightened levels of vulnerability, and even domestic violence.

Contrary to some of the narratives, such as that of Faisal’s, whose story was public knowledge within the community, many migrant husbands however, spoke about their suffering as silent and invisible29, which directly speaks to Turner’s theory of liminality, as he also referred to liminal individuals as invisible (1969: 108). In interviews, migrant husbands often described their silent sufferings through terms such as “I remained patient”, “I would keep quiet”, “I felt depressed and down”, “I did not want to say anything”, “there was no point in telling anyone”. The dominant masculine ideal of the transnational patriarch (chapter 1.2) operating in the Pakistani community created the ideal conditions wherein any masculine experience deviating from the ideal was a source of humiliation and shame. Faisal told me:

For many years I could not tell anyone about the abuse. What kind of a man would I be? What would people say? I did not want to bring shame on my father and my family for raising a weak son.

Faisal believed that if he were to voice his suffering, which included physical abuse, it would bring about shame for his family on both sides of the transnational dynamic. He told me that had his uncle Ali not helped him, he would have been ostracized and shamed. Having the support of a

29 Chapters 3.1 and 3.3 will consider this further.
pioneer migrant husband enabled the shaping of Faisal’s narrative when his marital situation became a public matter within the community, as someone who was mistreated. Without this support, Faisal was certain he would have been seen as the culprit, as his father would have utilized his authority and position in the community, to ensure his version of the ‘story’ was the dominant narrative.

The broader narrative of gender dynamics present in British society, particularly those that portray Pakistani men as powerful patriarchs that oppress women, as violent gang members (Alexander: 2000), as home-grown terrorists (Abbas: 2017), or as sexual exploiters of white girls, also work to silence the suffering of migrant husbands. For instance, Kamraan told me:

*My brother had been in a motorbike accident in Pakistan and was admitted in the hospital in Lahore. My family wanted me to send money to pay the hospital fees, so I immediately sent them the money. I did not want anyone to suffer during an already difficult time, but when I told my wife we started to argue. She was unhappy that I had sent them my wages...the argument got really bad and she called the police to remove me from our home...when the police came in the house I was sitting in the living room, and she was in the hallway...she began crying and screaming and told them I had beat her when I had done no such thing. I promise you, I did not lay a finger on her. The police began to take pictures of her in the hallway. When I came out of the living room to see what was happening, I saw that her kameez [dress] was torn, her hair was loose and messy, and she had scratches on her...I was so shocked. While waiting for the police she did that herself and I had no idea what game she was playing...they took me to the station and then two days later I was charged with domestic violence. I explained everything to the solicitor they [government] gave me, but he said her case was too strong...I was sentenced to three months in prison.*

Kamraan told me that he was not believed because the law in this country supported women, not men. As a result, Kamraan felt his experience was not seen as being real or true because “the police were trained to see only abuse that men perpetrate towards women.” In this way then,
government agencies such as the police and social services, in the ways they operated, were also silencing the experiences of migrant husbands.

Silent suffering also carried connotations of virtue and nobility (see also Khosravi: 2017, 79), which I will further explore in section three of the thesis. For instance, Asad told me:

*I have to do sabr [patience] now and hope that Allah sees my suffering and answers my prayers.*

For migrant husbands, waithood(s) were sometimes transformed into spiritual and/or religious waiting (*sabr*), hoping for their silent sufferings to be at least visible to God despite being invisible to those around them. In this way, during precarious times during which they also experienced domestic abuse, migrant husbands began to conceptualise their masculine identity as requiring patience and forbearance, which they hoped would be recognised and rewarded in both this world and the hereafter, in line with Islamic teachings. During this time in which migrant husbands led precarious lives and experienced heightened levels of vulnerability and abuse, the spiritual and/or religious space became a solace, a mental and emotional strategy from which migrant husbands drew strength, which will be focused on in section three of the thesis and particularly in chapter 3.2.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I took the opportunity to further explore the themes examined in chapter 2.1 – that migrant husbands led precarious lives as a result of waithood(s), powerlessness, and inferiority. I devised a model using Stark’s (2007, 2010) coercive control model, Walby and Towers’ (2018) ‘domestic violence crime’ theory, and Mirza’s (2017) direct and indirect forms of abuse model, to frame the experience migrant husbands. The first part of the chapter focused on weak positions and demonstrated that factors such as lower levels of education, consanguineous or close kin marriages, and cultural differences were trigger factors of heightened vulnerability for migrant husbands, which created conditions for coercive control and indirect forms of abuse to
be perpetrated. The second part of the chapter then focused on instances where migrant husbands had been subjected to direct forms of abuse which can be classed as ‘domestic violence crime’ (Walby and Towers: 2018) which is always rooted in coercive control (Stark: 2007, 2010).

Of a total of sixty-two migrant husbands who participated in the research, I found that all had experienced indirect coercive control forms of abuse on one or more occasions after migrating to the UK, and eighteen experienced direct physical abuse, that amounted to domestic violence crime at the hands of their wives and/or in-laws and/or employers (see figure 2). Migrant husbands subjection to varying forms of domestic abuse pushes conceptualisations of domestic violence further in number of ways. For instance, it demonstrates that both men and women can perpetrate abuse, and that intimate partners and wider members of family can perpetrate abuse. Further, it is demonstrated that the potential for British citizenship determined the direction of coercive control, which is sealed in the form of the nikaah document. This suggests that power is everywhere (Foucault: 1991) and is not one directional and linear.

The final part of the chapter discussed the silent and invisible suffering of migrant husbands, which spoke to Turner’s theory of liminality and literature on sabr. A key aspect of the silence and invisibility of migrant husband experiences was caused by the broader narrative wherein Pakistani men are often depicted as powerful patriarchs that government agencies are well versed in. As a result, this chapter has provided further evidence demonstrating that men can occupy weak positions, can be victims of domestic violence, and can suffer in silence, experiences that are conventionally associated with women. In this way then, the findings presented in this chapter contribute to and further our understandings of multiple and complex masculinities as proposed by Connell (2005). More specifically, the ethnographic case study of migrant husbands in the British Pakistani community demonstrates masculinity can involve invisible and silent components. To my knowledge, these findings of domestic violence against migrant husbands are the only and the most comprehensive that uncover domestic violence against migrant men, and so I have consciously made attempts to position the voices of migrant husbands as a central part of the thesis.
In the previous chapter, I proposed the theory of liminal masculinity, which denoted the impact of being ‘betwixt and between’ the weak migrant husband and the powerful transnational patriarch through the marriage and migration experience. As a result, liminal masculinity also captured the dissonance between the aspirations held by migrant husbands prior to marriage and migration, compared to the social lived realities upon marriage and migration to the UK, particularly pertaining to the notion of the transnational patriarch that I proposed in chapter 1.2. The original anthropological work that I have taken inspiration from for the theory of liminal masculinity, is Turner’s theory of liminality, which defined the transitory period between two social statuses, which can often be resolved in and through a ritual ceremony. Turner’s theory however, carries overtones of a linear journey from one state to another. As I have shown, the experiences of migrant husbands as victims can prolong waithood(s) and therefore, liminal masculinities are hallmarked by silent sufferings, which leads me to suggest that liminality in the context of migrant husbands is not a linear process, but one marked with stops, starts, restarts, pauses, and can go in different directions. The ‘betwixt and between’ that migrant husbands are caught up in can be better seen to resemble a rhizomatic format (Deluze and Guattari: 1980). Furthermore, the liminality in its original inception assumes the status from which one emerges or begins from is complete and no longer has an impact once the transitionary period is complete. However, the case of migrant husbands demonstrates that the events and experiences that unfold during the liminal masculinity stage can extend over long periods of time, can shape the desired outcome or state in a different way to the way in which it was anticipated, and the experiences (such as domestic violence) can have secondary effects for migrant husbands beyond the ‘achieved status’ that the liminality period (in its initial conceptualisation) is moving towards. In this way then, liminality can be seen to be more fluid and multi-dimensional. This echoes the notion of multiple masculinities and thereby, the multiple outcomes that migrant husbands can experience upon marriage and migration. Further, what consequences if any, does this conceptualisation of liminality have for recent migration theory that has argued that migration is experienced as starts, stops, interruptions, pauses, restarts (Collins: 2018), as opposed to more conventional theories such as that migration is experienced in a single moment in time, by way of a single decision (De
Haas: 2010). For instance, would it mean that migration is therefore a series of liminal (or waithood) periods, or one extended liminal (waithood) period?

My research demonstrates that migrant husbands’ experiences of domestic violence can result in their being liminal persons, as their experiences transcend the conventional understanding of liminality as a transitioning and/or transformative period. Instead, migrant husbands can experience an extended ‘state’ of liminal masculinity, which I argue in some cases fails to cease. For instance, the case of Sufyan who was left stuck in a limbo for more than eight years and was neither in the UK nor fully in Pakistan, as he was constantly thinking of his family. This extended liminality would then resemble ‘stuckness’ (Hage: 2009). Further, in the absence of his family, he was also unable to socially occupy and perform in the role of husband or a father. While migrant husbands may benefit from the life history trajectory, as age brings with it certain honour(s) within Muslim communities (Joseph: 1996) including the Pakistani community, their masculinity inherently remains liminal. The reason for this is that migrant husbands are unable to fully negotiate every aspect of their ‘liminal masculinity’ to an absolute, new state of masculinity that is wholly divorced from its ‘liminal’ history. Secondly, for some migrant husbands, their ‘liminal’ experience does not simply end but rather, continues to manifest in other areas of social life. For instance, it can translate into custody battle in the courts, which further reifies liminality through the waiting of court hearing dates, and the final court verdict. In this way then, liminality moves from being temporary and being solely a state, to being permanent negotiated, and embodied. In the process then, and within this bracketed social, spatial, and temporal context, migrant husbands’ aspirations are suspended, which further demonstrates that migration through marriage can create mobility and fluidity in masculine experience of migrant husbands. As a result, migration, marriage, and masculinity cannot be disconnected and/or seen as isolated from one another. Specifically, being subjected to domestic violence furthers this mobility and fluidity in embodied migrant experience, as aspirations can become suspended. Section three of the thesis considers in greater detail the ways in which aspirations are revisited and revised during this disruption in the linearity of migrant husbands’ socially imagined journeys of marriage and migration. In the final chapter of this section, I aim to consider the implications of liminal masculinity vis-à-vis domestic violence for gender dynamics, patriarchy, and family structure. I will
therefore be broadening the academic focus by viewing the migrant husband as socially situated within the wider Pakistani community.
Chapter 2.3 Reworking of Gender Power in Marriage: Multiple Patriarchies, Home and Household Structure, and Gender Dynamics

Introduction

The study of the subordination of women by men can often mute other forms of subordination, such as the control of women by women, the control of men by men, and the control of men by women. For instance, within the Indian household Wadley (1994; 63) reports that young daughters-in-law are expected to touch the feet of senior women as a way of paying their respect, and seek their permission and counsel in everything they do. The mother-in-law’s role can even extend to assigning sleeping places on a nightly basis, giving her immense control over the sexuality of her sons and their wives (Wadley 1994; 60, Mirza: 2017). However, while there is some research in India that explores women’s roles in the household with greater nuance, there is little if any research conducted with South Asian communities in the UK diaspora (Rew, Gangoli and Gill: 2013, Mirza: 2017: 394). However, there are indications in the literature that suggest that South Asian women are not always subjected to abuse by male perpetrators but can also be powerful matriarchs during the later stages of their life cycles (Shaw: 2006, Kumar: 2012, Rew et.al: 2013, Mirza: 2017).

Raheja and Gold (1994) demonstrate how women have been found to perform hidden acts of resistance and subversion through the singing of songs within the patriarchal structure, and there is a wide body of literature that acknowledges this more broadly (Abu-Lughod: 1990, Mahmood: 2001, Jaschok: 2003, Bano: 2012, Obermeyer: 1995, Alexander: 2013). One of the ways through which women may be able to exercise greater agency is migration (Espiritu 1997: 75, Luu 1989: 68). In particular, Shaw (2006: 336) reported that, since the pioneer generation of British Pakistani women constructed their household dynamics in the absence of a dominating mother-in-law, younger generations of women now have different views on household power relations in comparison to their husbands (Shaw: 2000). In addition, Charsley (2013) reports how some
families reserve their rights to delay the *rukhsati* [sending off the bride] until the groom joins his wife in the UK, and some brides felt that it should be the husbands that ought to cry as it was they who would be leaving their families behind (Charsley; 2013). More recently, Qureshi (2013: 13) has reported how middle-aged women use the notion of *sabr* [patience] to invoke guilt in husbands and children. Collectively, such ethnographic insights demonstrate that transmigration has widened the spaces in which women can assert themselves, particularly within marriage (see also Qureshi et. al: 2012, Mooney: 2006), even at early stages of the life-cycle. Furthermore, there is also evidence to suggest that changing dynamics of the host society can also permeate the migrant community and further exacerbate the shift in gender roles and the widening of the spaces in which women can assert themselves (see also Alexander: 2013, 342), such as developments in family planning and technological innovations in the home (Greenwood et.al: 2005, Propenoe: 1993).

Within the broader literature there is some indication that transnational marriages among South-Asians can cause continual renegotiations of patriarchal relations for both men and women during the immigration and settlement process (Espiritu: 1997, 8). As a result, both women’s and men’s sense of independence and wellbeing can be subjected to considerable pressure from shifting gender roles, translating into higher incidence of abuse (Espiritu 1997: 75; Luu 1989: 68). The previous chapters demonstrated that migrant husbands can lead precarious lives due to waithood(s) at different stages of the marriage and migration process, powerlessness, and inferiority in relation to wives, in-laws, and the state, and that their weak positions can translate into different forms of domestic violence.

Since the family has a significant role in shaping and even orchestrating the experiences of the migrant husbands, it is important to consider the implications of the case of migrant husbands for gender dynamics, household structure, and for marriage as an institution. In other words, if migrant husbands’ weakness is defined in relation to the power exercised by wives and in-laws, we must interrogate the implications entailed for the British Pakistani family, and for wives who are usually portrayed as victims. In the previous chapter, I demonstrated that it was the control of men generated the highest form of honour (see also: Fischer: 1991), which disrupts our traditional
understandings of honour as associated with the control of women’s bodies, and also contributes to theories of masculinity that have framed masculinities as multiple and complex (see Connell: 2005, Donaldson and Howson: 2009). In this chapter, I push this previous finding further to be able to understand how migrant husband masculinity is shaped and determined in this context, by focusing on the changing nature of gender dynamics, patriarchy and household structure. This will allow for insights into the micro-level processes involved in the construction of masculinity.

Multiple Patriarchies

The sociologist Sylvia Walby defines patriarchy as "a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women" (Giddens: 2006, 403-404, Gordon: 1996), but also as involving men and older women who oppress women and younger men (Joseph: 1996). Within this traditional understanding of patriarchy, the masculine and feminine are defined in opposition to one another by assigning provider roles in public spaces to men, while constraining women to nurturing roles confined to private spaces (Brittan: 1989, Hoang & Yeoh: 2011). Patriarchy as per this definition has been observed in most societies (Joseph: 1996, Meager: 2011, Hennessey: 2012), including Muslim societies common to the Middle East and South Asian countries such as Pakistan, where it is assumed that Islamic doctrine and culture are oppressive towards women (Nagra: 2018, 266). Some scholars however, have argued that patriarchy invokes an essentialist, ahistoric analysis which is insensitive to the range of experiences of women of different cultures, classes and ethnicities (Barrett: 1980, Rowbotham: 1981). Within academic fields that intersect with feminism and masculinity studies, there has been a growing wave of scholars who have taken a contextual approach, primarily through an intersectional framework (Crenshaw: 1989), and demonstrated that there are a range of experiences that men and women from different socio-geographic and historical trajectories, can have (Collins: 2005, Mahmood: 2001). However, patriarchy has remained a relatively static concept over time, creating a one-dimensional and homogenous image of men and women in most societies around the world (see also Frias: 2010). The case study of migrant husbands in the Pakistani community can, in my view, provide new insights relevant to the way in which patriarchy is traditionally understood.
Pakistani society is widely understood to be patriarchal (Ali et.al: 2011), a social norm that has been maintained by the Pakistani diaspora in the UK (Ballard: 1994, Shaw: 2000), and evident in the community’s settlement practices (Werbner: 1990, Shaw: 2000, Ballard: 1994). Honour killings and forced marriages have in particular demonstrated the patriarchy within the British Pakistani community (Gill: 2009, Werbner: 2005, Afshar: 1994). However, as discussed previously, ethnographic glimpses point towards a degree of fluidity in patriarchy triggered by the transmigration process; an indication as to the agency of British Pakistani women in what appears to be a changing society.

The previous chapters demonstrated the ways in which migrant husbands who married British Pakistani women came to occupy weak positions, lead precarious lives, and experience heightened levels of vulnerability, which could translate into domestic violence perpetrated against them by wives and/or in-laws. The findings disrupt the traditional understanding of patriarchy, as we come to learn that migrant husbands are not always powerful and do not always (or only) subordinate women. Instead, it is senior men and women of pioneer generations and sometimes wives, that can play a role in subjugating migrant husbands. Taking an intersectional approach then, age, seniority, and in some ways citizenship status, determine migrant husband’s experiences, including weakness, vulnerability, and domestic violence. My ethnographic research demonstrates that there can be “multiple patriarchies” that occur in different contexts, but also within the same context. The former has been demonstrated through the presentation of the case study of the Pakistani migrant husbands to the UK. The latter however, requires further explanation.

Migrant husbands become subjected to patriarchy at the hands of their in-laws, particularly their fathers-in-law. However, in their narratives, migrant husbands often indicated that their wives are also being subjected to patriarchy, as some had been forced into marriage to save the family’s honour (see also Joseph: 1996). Furthermore, in some cases where migrant husbands had married a relative, there were indications of obligations that parents felt towards their siblings, thereby reinforcing transnational kin relations through transnational marriage (see also Shaw et.al. 2000). Common relationships were characterised by the obligations a man felt towards his sister, or sisters felt towards their brothers, which suggested that current practices of transnational
marriages were a manifestation of kin relations forged within a patriarchal society reevoked by diasporic memory for instance. Migrant husbands were often married to the children of their parents’ siblings who had migrated and settled in the UK. In some cases where migrant husbands were married to their father’s brother’s daughter or mother’s brother’s daughter, wives of their parents’ brother were unhappy due to the forging of their children’s marriage alliance within the patrilineage. Migrant husbands told me they felt their mothers-in-law were sabotaging their marriages as a result. There were also cases of migrant husbands who experienced difficulty in attaining passage to England, such as that of Sufyan mentioned in chapter 2.1, due to on-going family feuds between his father and his wife’s father. In this way, multiple and multi-sited patriarchies constantly unfold simultaneously, alongside the unfolding of migrant husbands’ social lives.

**Home and Household Structure**

The migrant husband’s taking up of matrilocal residency (see Turner: 1979) post-marriage and upon migration to the UK, demonstrates an unconventional family arrangement both for the norms of British society and British Pakistani society, from which we can interrogate the notion of home. For the notion of home in particular, the migrant husband’s experience of matrilocal residence helps us reconceptualise home as fluid. It is common in the British Pakistani community for the parents and extended family to help a newly-married couple by providing them accommodation in the form of an extended family household residency arrangement and/or providing them with a property (albeit in virilocal marriage), which is usually in close proximity to the parents’ household – a familial hub over the course of married life and life stages. The joining of the migrant husband to the household in matrilocal form is indicative of the home not serving the community as a destination for their cultural practices, but a vehicle for the in-laws to achieve broader goals that transcend the confines of the home (see Turner: 1979), such as additional income, and controlling land in Pakistan.
Secondly, in both the Pakistani community and mainstream British society, there are particular notions of home and family, wherein the husband and/or father is the main breadwinner (Daivdoff and Hall 1987: 229, Collier 1995). However, as I demonstrated in the previous chapter, the migrant husband is not only physically, verbally, and mentally abused, he can also be denied fatherhood and breadwinner status. As a result, I argue that we can begin to reconceptualise home as detached and independent of gender roles and ascriptions. Moreover, since some women (including wives and mothers-in-law) also perpetrated violence towards migrant husbands, the ‘private’ sphere of the home can serve to conceal such behaviour performed by women, and therefore maintain the often one-dimensional grand narrative that women – especially in the British Pakistani and/or Muslim community – are oppressed.

In addition, the home has been viewed as a place that has been inscribed into social imaginations and socio-cultural codes of practice as a ‘safe’ place, a site of security (Capers, 2011: 999), a place liberated from fear and anxiety, and a place supposedly untouched by political and natural processes (Kaika: 2004, Brickell: 2011). It has been argued, however that the home has become a turbulent sea of constant negotiation rather than simply some haven for the self (Miller: 2001, 4), which is evident through the function of the home as a place that enables abuse of many forms perpetrated by cohabitants (husbands, wives, and in-laws) and therefore, acquiring the properties of both refuge and prison (Kaika: 2004). The social and gender inequalities, power relations and violence that were meant to be kept outside the modern home, are (re)produced within the ideological prison (Millet: 1977) of this private space (Brickell: 2011) of the home. For the migrant husband then, this space of the home, which was viewed as a safe haven prior to marriage and migration, becomes a place where migrant husbands struggle to achieve respect, masculine identity, rights, and citizenship.

Thirdly, since the British Government stipulate a number of conditions as part of the migration process and successful application for the indefinite leave to remain, of which include remaining with the wife for a minimum duration of two years in the UK, the home becomes a site for the struggle of citizenship; a concept vital for public life, which for the migrant husband is located in
the private sphere. As a result of this struggle for citizenship, the migrant husband is more vulnerable to experiencing domestic violence, as I demonstrated in the previous chapter. The broader political contours of power on a national state level flowing through the home in the form of immigrations laws, is evidence of some of the most intricate invasions (Bhabha: 1994, 3, Brickell: 2011, 5), underscoring the notion that hegemonic masculinity (Connell: 2005) may be better understood as exhibited by states and/or governments, as previously articulated in section one of the thesis. This helps us to reconceptualise home and the household, as permeable and porous (see also Kaika, 2004: 273). Further, the violence occurring within the home has introduced the emergence of the policing of families (Donzelot: 1980). What happens between a husband and wife within the space of the home is not a private matter, but also a matter for the state, which suggests that the boundary between the public and private is permeable (Capers, 2011: 980). The policing and surveillance of violence in this way (Capers, 2011: 989) causes the home to be imbued with public sphere characteristics – an arena in which the public sphere stages the play of citizenship, morality, and law by controlling intimate relationships. Many migrant husbands told me of incidences where members of the police had entered their homes and arrested them when, they asserted, they had not abused their wives; however the police would ‘side with’ wives who had, my interlocutors stressed, wrongly claimed being victims of abuse to further control the husband and “teach them a lesson”, as Asif told me. The permeability, porosity, and the opening up of the home as a site of struggle in many aspects, is a blurring of spaces (Milligan: 2000, 54), as a result of which the application of liminality theory (Turner: ) can be applied, but not in the way it was originally proposed, as the liminality of space(s), extends beyond a ‘state’. It is within this liminal space of household, that migrant husbands experience liminal masculinity, and since space and body are intertwined (Borden: 2001, 11), the migrant husband, I argue, becomes liminal himself.

**Gender Dynamics**

Honour and shame have been defined as the need to guard female sexuality (Werbner: 2005). Present in often extreme forms in Muslim societies, Muslim women are expected to veil before
ghair mahram [strange/not-kin men. Pakistani women have been known to wear light chiffon scarves or chadors (a heavy shawl) which is draped around the head and the upper part of the body (Khan: 1976, Werbner: 2005), which is a symbol of modesty, and thus the maintenance of honour and shame. However, this way of veiling is more characteristic of pioneer generation of Pakistani women, as younger generations of British Pakistani women have increasingly donned the hijab, which is firmly pinned to the head and (usually) does not show any hair. This form of veiling is no longer seen as part of an ethnic identity, but rather as part of a global Muslim identity\textsuperscript{30}. Veiling has broadly been considered to be a symbol of protection of chastity of women (Abu-Lughod: 1990, Mahmood: 2005, Werbner: 2005). Scholars have reported however, that the Pakistani community hold conservative views towards female dress and behaviour, which are inextricably linked to concepts of honour and shame (Afshar: 1994, Kassam: 1997) and have been dubbed as ‘policing women’. In their extreme forms, such views can translate into so-called honour-based violence in the form of forced marriages and honour-based murders (Gill: 2008). Honour and shame are therefore excessively associated with the control of women’s bodies in the UK, or at least this has been the conventional scholarly position since minority communities have been studied.

Honour and shame in the British Pakistani community are also deeply embedded in the politics of marriage and the (extended) family [biraaderi], and in the politics of the community (Werbner: 2005, Shaw: 2000). Reputation and loss of face have been shown to be important factors for the parental generation when considering marriage proposals for their sons and daughters (Shaw: 2000, Shaw: 2006, Charsley et.al: 2006, Werbner: 2005), and, as a result, transnational marriages continue to be seen as desirable options to maintain, and also increase, familial honour amongst the wider community and kin network (Charsley. et. al: 2006). A daughter married with honour is seen is the primary means for her father to increase his honour (Fischer: 1991: 104), reinforcing the narrative that women are seen as exchange material at the disposal of men. However, Fischer

\textsuperscript{30} There are many different ways in which the hijab is now worn by British Muslim women (of all ethnicities) including the draped, the pinned back, the turban style etc. In my view, the hijab is no longer part of an ‘ethnic’ identity amongst British Pakistani women but has been incorporated as part of the ‘global’ Muslim identity.
also notes that the ‘highest form’ of honour is the control of men, which has not featured in the debates and discussions of honor and shame within the British Pakistani community to date.

The way in which the migrant husband in the British Pakistani community is subjected to extreme forms of control and can also be subjected to domestic violence demonstrates that the control of men generates the highest form of honour. In particular, it is the older generation of transnational patriarchs that benefit from the control of the migrant husband, as he is able to withhold family wealth in the form of land in Pakistan for example and demonstrate to the wider community in Britain, that he withholds another family’s breadwinner. The symbolism of controlling another family’s breadwinner, heir, is a sign of wealth, strength, respect, and honour. Therefore, the traditional notion of honour and shame as associated with women’s bodies is ruptured through the case of the migrant husband, as we see that honour and shame in its highest form, is associated with the male body.

Conclusion

The case study of the migrant husband demonstrates that contrary to conventional understandings, the British Pakistani community is not strictly patriarchal in that all women are at the mercy of all men in the community but rather, there are ‘multiple patriarchies’ in which men and women of different ages and socio-cultural capitals experience, exercise, and engage in differently. In other words, experiences within the community are not defined along one-dimensional gender lines. Secondly, while the household and the home are usually seen as the women’s domain where household chores, cooking, raising children, and domestic abuse can occur, the case of the migrant husband shows that both migrant husbands and their fathers-in-law engage in cooking and cleaning, and women can also perpetrate abuse in this sphere. In this way then, there is greater fluidity and dynamism in men’s and women’s performances in the private sphere within the British Pakistani community.

It was also demonstrated that while izzat [honor] is usually seen to be associated with the female body in British Pakistani community, it is in fact associated in the highest forms, with men’s bodies
(Fischer: 1991, 103-104). This finding in particular destabilizes current understandings of women’s oppression in Muslim communities around the world, as being rooted in honour and shame. Since migrant husbands are also controlled, subjugated, and experience vulnerability including domestic abuse as a direct result of the honour of transnational patriarchs who are the fathers-in-law of migrant husbands, and/or pioneer generation migrant family honour in both the UK and Pakistan.

As part of the broader spectrum of inverse gender performances, the fieldwork demonstrated glimpses of increased choice exercised by women. For instance, Sarish who was betrothed to migrant husband Armaan, refused to marry him, which meant that Armaan and his family’s aspirations were truncated as a result of which their aspirations experienced severe revision, as Armaan’s family sought another marriage proposal from Britain for him. Migrant husband narratives such as those from Rehan and Arshad also detailed wives’ demands for oral sex, which, while causing considerable personal and marital stress and internal conflict of moral and religious values for migrant husbands, indicated a marked shift in our understandings of the sexual attitudes and preferences of British Pakistani Muslim women. Furthermore, we learn that Asad’s wife was able to file an Islamic divorce independent of her family’s wishes and support. Not all migrant husbands experienced abuse by their wives, and some did experience love, support and companionship in their marriages. For instance, Asif told the way in which his wife supported him when her parents abused him and helped realise his dream of becoming independent from his father-in-law by opening his own barber shop. Asif’s wife then supported her husband against the wishes of her parents, who were keen for the newlywed couple to remain under their control.

Together, these cases demonstrate a widening of the agency that women can exercise within marriage. Transnational uxorialocal marriages in particular, can endow women with greater autonomy and power, suggesting that there is a reworking of gender power in marriage as a result of migration. For theories of masculinity (Connell: 2005), this reworking of gender power in marriage demonstrates that masculinities are diverse, multiple and complex, and are not only challenged by competing masculinities such as that of senior men who have greater authority and power, but can also be up against increasing female autonomy. More specifically, the migration process in this particular context causes the interaction of intersecting social factors such as
greater female authority, age, and generational differences, which create a unique space in which migrant husbands struggle to define and by extension, achieve their aspired masculinity.
Conclusion

The life history narratives presented in this chapter allow us to explore vulnerabilities of migrant husbands, which are concealed within the dominant policy discourses surrounding marriage migration in which Pakistani men are portrayed as powerful, and often threatening, figures. The research has found that migrant husbands are often vulnerable incomers, which while is a narrative more often applied to migrant wives speaks to the broader literature on men and masculinity studies, which argues that there are diverse masculinities (Connell: 1985, 2005, 2016). The ethnography does however disrupt traditional views within society regarding Pakistani men, who are often portrayed as powerful patriarchs, violent gang members, groomers of white girls, or terrorists. Our understandings of the British Pakistani community is also ruptured, as a key finding of the research was that izzat is not only associated with the control of the female body, but also with the control of the male body. Furthermore, I demonstrated that British Pakistani women can experience greater levels of autonomy within marriage due to the direction of control established by the matrilineal migration of the migrant husband. As a result, I have argued that the gender power within marriage has been reworked, as migration has widened the space within marriage for some women to exercise greater autonomy.

As a result of these nuanced insights of gender, marital, community, and household dynamics, I have argued that the experiences of migrant husbands can be described as ‘betwixt and between’ (Turner: 1967). Turner coined this phrase to capture the essence of his theory of ‘liminality’, which he used to analyse rites of passage. Turner argued that during the liminal phase, initiands are separated from a previous status or social state and secluded, to undergo a transformative process from one state or social position to another with the help of seniors or elders (Turner: 1981: 154). The state of the ‘initiand’ during this transformative period is ‘ambiguous’, neither here, nor there, betwixt and between all fixed points of classification (1974: 232), neither what he was, nor what he will become. My ethnographic research speaks to Turner’s idea further, as he stated that the behaviour of liminal persons is normally passive and humble, as they must obey their instructors and accept arbitrary punishment without complaint (Beech: 2011, 288, see also Stark: 2007, 2010), which we have seen demonstrated in the behaviour of migrant husbands who are subjected to
varying forms of abuse upon migrating to the UK (see chapter 2.2). For the migrant husbands who took part in my research, this involves the impact of physical, emotional and verbal abuse, and changing gender and family dynamics, which suspended ‘male identity’ as they knew it, or thought they would know it upon migrating and settling in the UK. Some participants for instance had set ideas about the role of men and women, religion, and culture, all of which were in flux, upon their arrival in the UK, and for some migrant husbands, since the wedding preparations began, as land was signed off to their wives - and therefore their families - through the *nikaah* [Islamic marriage] contract. For other migrant husbands such as Sufyan, he was unable to migrate to the UK and join his wife due to tightened immigration rules and regulation which required his wife to earn more than eighteen thousand pounds per year as income. He experienced liminal masculinity as he was not able to occupy and perform in his role as husband and a father, due to his family being in the UK.

Life history narratives such as that of Sufyan’s bring to surface a key limitation of liminality theory - that it serves as a ‘state’ and does not specifically apply to the individual person in the space and place they are situated, which invites advancement to the theory. Sufyan’s life history narrative and those of migrant husbands like him however, demonstrate that the migrant husband himself begins to embody liminality, as he is no longer only between the identity of a migrant husband and the transnational patriarch, but his betwixt and between and suspended status affects his embodied experience of social life. The concept of ‘liminal masculinity’ as I have proposed demonstrates that masculinity – like migration – is not linear, and can experience starts, stops, instability, and can be temporarily or permanently in limbo based on the social set of circumstances men are located (see also Connell: 2005). In this way then, it can be seen to better resemble a rhizomatic format (Deluze and Guattari: 1980), giving rise to multiplicity and complexity in migrant and masculine experiences. The ethnography demonstrates that mobility through migration and social experiences such as marriage create mobility and fluidity within the masculine experience of migrant husbands, as a result of which we ought to consider masculinity, marriage, and migration interconnected. It is precisely this continued mobility through space,
place, social circumstances and embodied experience that further supports the theory of liminal masculinity.

The second chapter in this section of the thesis highlighted the significant role of silence and invisibility, as migrant husbands were subjected to considerable levels of verbal, emotional, and physical abuse. These findings provide nuance to current understandings of gendered experiences, such as the grand narrative of women being oppressed by men. Our understanding of masculinity is also pushed further, as the fieldwork demonstrates migrant masculinity as involving invisible and silent components, and therefore adding to the breadth of studies that have shown diverse masculinities. In the third chapter of this section, the reworking of gender power in marriage further demonstrates that masculinity is not only challenged by competing masculinities such as that of senior men who have greater authority and power, such as the transnational patriarchs, but it is also up against increasing female autonomy (see also Joseph: 1996). The case of migrant husbands shows that within a single social context such as that of the migrant husband in Britain’s Pakistani community, there are multiple masculinities at different levels and strengths, struggling and co-existing at times, with not only other masculinities, but upcoming and new feminine ideals that British Pakistani women are exhibiting. By implication then, this suggests that masculinities in this context can be defined and are subject to the changing ways of gender dynamics and gender power in marriage.

In this way then, notions of both lived and imagined masculine identity – such as that of the transnational patriarch – that migrant husbands adopted prior to marriage and migration, were disrupted as a result of entering a transformative period of masculinity that was hallmarkd by heightened vulnerability and instability. This further supports the idea that migration is better seen as a process (Van Hear et. al: 2018) rather than a one-off life event taken in a single decision, in a short time-frame before departure (De Haas: 2010). In addition, migrant husbands’ aspirations held before marriage and migration also become suspended as a result of the different ways in which migrant husbands lead precarious lives. Taken together, these findings collectively point towards the significance of the interrelation between migration, marriage, and masculinity; that
each impacts the other, and cannot be seen in isolation. This section of the thesis then, has contributed to the literature on aspirations in migration (see Carling.et.al: 2018), as it demonstrates that aspirations in migration can become suspended. So far, the thesis has focused on the construction of aspirations in migrant husbands in section one, and the suspension of aspirations in section two. In section three, the thesis proceeds to exploring re-assertive masculinity, which further assists the development of the ‘rhizomatic’ (Deluze and Guattari: 1988) format of liminal masculinity, and which migrant husbands can employ in exercising resistance to counter the subjugation they experience. This part of the thesis does not denote a positive outcome for migrant husbands’ experiences (although in some cases migrant husbands are successful at (re)negotiating their masculine identities) but rather, aims to demonstrate the multiplicity and complexity of navigating and (re)negotiating liminal masculinity.
Part 3: Re-assertive Masculinity

Introduction

A central problem in the social sciences is the relationship of resistance to power (Abu-Lughod: 1990). Foucault argued “where there is power there is resistance” (1978: 95-96). He demonstrated that power not only works negatively by repressing, restricting, denying, but can also work positively by producing forms of pleasure (Abu-Lughod: 1990: 42). Global migration, particularly from the global south to the global north has long been known to produce social dynamics oppressive towards migrants. For instance, refugees experiencing hardship and subject to state controls upon migration (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh: 2016 Inhorn: 2018), the care industry which oppresses migrants such as female domestic workers (Yeoh: 1999, Cheah: 2009) to name a few. As a result, it can be argued that migration is an act of resistance exercised by migrants (Lopez: 2017).

While migration may be seen as an act of resistance in and of itself (see Lopez: 2017), it is important to consider whether and how different forms of resistance is enacted throughout the migration process. In other words, upon migration do migrants continue to find themselves in circumstances that require a continuous exercise of resistance? Some commentators have argued that migration is a single action and a linear journey (see Van Hear et. al: 2018), while others have argued that migration is entangled in myriad social, cultural, and emotional laden power relations (Pratt and Yeoh: 2003, Silvey: 2004, Silvey: 2006), and is multiplex in nature in the way in which it is situated in geographies, emotional valences, social relations and obligations, and political and power relations (Carling: 2018, 911). As a result, one could envision that migrants’ circumstances upon arrival create conditions for the continual exercise of agency and resistance. This is especially pertinent as for many governments and nations, the focus on migration has intensified as a high-priority policy issue (IOM: 2018).
A wealth of ethnographic case studies provide insight into the different ways in which migrants practice agency upon arriving into the host country. For instance, Friberg (2018) documented migration for begging and informal street work in Western Europe (particularly in Scandanavia), amongst the Roma Romanian community. He argues that migration for begging is an economic adaptation as a result of a lack of alternative options available for the Roma community, and for which oppositional Roma identities are occupied to engage in begging, which is viewed as shameful by the host community. Many of the ethnographic case studies of resistance in and through migration are gendered, inter alia due to the increase focus on the ‘feminisation of migration’ (Piper: 2009). Emerging from this body of literature are deep insights into female experiences of migration and resistance such as Yeoh (1999) who carefully documented the migratory trajectories of migrant domestic workers (MDWs) to Singapore. Despite the state regulations which included bi-annual pregnancy tests and imposing heavy levies on the employers of MDWs (Yeoh: 1999) to prevent their settlement in Singapore, MDWs were finding innovative ways to see men and experience love and relationships. Killias (2010) explored MDW experiences in Malaysia and showed that the legitimized migration scheme there has much in common with colonial indentured labour, operating as an instrument of subordination. Through the counter-narrative of MDW Arum, the author shows that she is performing her work illegally in Malaysia as an act of resistance against a coercive system.

Within the transnational marriage field of study, there are numerous studies that have documented agency amongst migrant women (Mooney.et.al: 2006, Shaw: 2006, Charsley: 2012, Qureshi: 2013). There is a growing scholarly effort to document the experiences of migrant men in the British Pakistani Community in the UK (see Charsley: 2005, 2012, 2015, Chopra: 2009, 2013, Malik: 2016). This is supplemented by case studies in other parts of the worlds where academics are contributing rich and detailed studies to the field that provide insights to the experiences of men in and through migration, and the ways in which they practice resistance (see Jansen: 2008, 2010, Walsh: 2011, Inhorn: 2018). Following on from this recent but thriving body of literature exploring men’s resistance and agency in and through migration, in this section of the thesis, I will explore the ways in which migrant husbands exercise agency and resistance in circumstances
where they can experience heightened vulnerability and abuse, upon marriage and migration to
the U.K. As a result, I will contribute to the migration and masculinity literatures, as this is currently
a gap that has not been addressed. The aim of this section is to demonstrate the different ways in
which migrant husbands can navigate and (re)negotiate their liminal masculinity amidst the
rhizomatic development of their marriage and migration experience.

The first arena of resistance this section takes to explore is that of Songs of Sorrow that migrant
husbands listened to in times of hardship and distress. In this chapter, I translate and analyse three
Songs of Sorrow that were popular amongst my interlocuters, demonstrating how migrant
husbands engaged with them. I argue that the Songs of Sorrow are a public acknowledgement of
the plight of migrant husbands as a result of which migrant husbands can express their emotions,
experience solidarity, and create a new sense of community. I also show that Songs of Sorrow can
be employed to (re)establish social truths in an attempt to realign women’s behaviour(s) according
to traditional understandings of the female role in the household. The second arena of resistance
migrant husbands engaged in was through engaging in the Sufi-scape31 of Birmingham, which
takes centre stage in the second chapter. I demonstrate that migrant husbands remembered
stories from the lives of the Prophets and various saints during times of distress and hardship,
attended Sufi gatherings at zawiyas (see Grewal: 2014), even visited holy men for talismans to
alleviate their marital tensions and struggles, and practiced sabr [patience]. I argue that this
particular form of religiosity not only operates as a form of social capital providing migrant
husbands with social acceptance within their new family units and communities, but also
demonstrates the existence of a distinctive type of masculinity: prophetic masculinity.

In the final chapter, I return to the concept of the transnational patriarch – which was introduced
in part one of the thesis – re-examining it as an ideal masculine form that migrant husbands aspire
to, and for which financial capital is required to achieve. I show how migrant husbands can go to
great lengths to maintain the appearance that they are financially well-off in order to continue to
subscribe to the ‘transnational patriarch.’ Further, I show that wives and sisters of migrant
husbands assist during times of financial hardship. The maintenance of the image of the

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31 The use of ‘scape’ has been inspired by Appadurai’s (1990) work on ‘-scapes’.
‘transnational patriarch’ enables wives and sisters to maintain their honour and respect within the wider community. As a result, I show that gender dynamics in the British Pakistani community do not necessarily comply with the grand narrative that men are oppressive and women are oppressed but rather, they are much more complex. In the conclusion, I draw on Carling’s (2018) notion of the revision of aspiration to argue that the reassertion of masculinity for migrant husbands, is possible through the acknowledgement that their aspirations were often misaligned prior to marriage and migration to the UK. This is followed by the revision of their aspirations, which proves as a catalyst for performing Islam (in various ways) and performing finance. Together, these three ways in which migrant husbands practice resistance and agency help create alternative social currencies, in which they can re-orient and redefine ways to either resist the masculine ideal of the transnational patriarch, and/or carve alternative routes to becoming transnational patriarchs.
Chapter 3.1: Songs of Sorrow: Expressing Emotion, Solidarity, and Makings of a Community

Introduction

For decades, the field of migration has been studied through neoclassic and macroeconomic theories, where migrants are perceived as rational individuals whose decision to migrate were based on cost-benefit analysis, divorced from emotions at both the pre and post-migration stages (Montes: 2013). While initial explorations of emotion in migration studies focused on stay-at-home women and the psycho-emotional implications that their husbands migrating for labour opportunities had on them – including anguish, anxiety, guilt, and sometimes suicidal ideations – more recently, women have been focused on as migrants due to the increased feminisation of migration catalyzed by the demand in the global care industry (Parreñas: 2001, Piper: 2009). By becoming transnational wives, mothers, and breadwinners, studies demonstrated the ways in which male self-esteem has been jeopardized (Gamburd: 2002, 190, Parreñas: 2005, Gallo: 2006, Hoang and Yeoh: 2011). However, the male experiences and the consequential changes of their masculine practices and identities have received little attention.

In recent years ethnographies such as Hung Cam Thai’s (2009), who documented the experiences of Vietnamese migrant men in the US and Vietnam, vis-à-vis the global competitive marriage market. It was demonstrated that while in Vietnam these men were able to enhance their social capital as they migrated, in the US their ordering within the racial hierarchy positioned them at the bottom of the employment ladder. Similarly, Broughton (2008) examined the experiences of Mexican rural migrants and found that they negotiated their masculine ideals and gender practices in line with the economic, social, and cultural changes that have taken place over the last two and a half decades as a result of neo-liberal policies. Walsh (2011) also found the negotiation of masculine practices amongst British expats in Dubai who began to conform to hegemonic masculine ideals especially in relation to their wives within the domestic space. Similarly, Kleist
(2010) explores the masculinity of Somali fathers in Canada and finds that they feel the state has taken over their roles as fathers due to being able to offer welfare payments to their wives and families. While emasculation is discussed in Kleist’s paper, the emotionality underpinning emasculation is not explored. In the case of South Indian men travelling to Italy as migrant husbands and securing employment through their wives’ status and credibility (Gallo: 2006), the emotions that underpin emasculation are also little explored. In both ethnographic case studies inferences can be made as to the men’s emotions. The men who took part in Gallo’s (2006) study expressed feeling lower than their wives due to having citizenship and jobs guaranteed to them through their wives’ credibility. They were also subjected to taunts from extended family members in India who often made claims about the sexual promiscuity of their wives in instances when they would return to Italy, prior to securing their husbands’ visas. While these ethnographic accounts focus on the interplay between transnational migration and gender relations in regard to masculine identities, the role of emotions is yet to be examined in greater detail and could enrich the study of men and masculinities further.

More broadly within migration studies, despite being a reality, the emotional costs of migration are poorly acknowledged and scarcely documented. In masculinity studies the prevailing explanation for men’s emotional inexpressiveness has been attributed to the gender-role socialization paradigm, which asserts that boys and men internalise cultural messages about what it means to be a male (Wong and Rochelin: 2005, Montes: 2013, 478). Montes (2013) demonstrated more recently amongst Guatemalan migrant men, that the emotional cost of migration was devastating due to the separation from children and families. The often-multiple emotional attachments of migrants to their homelands and new places of residence and the emotional interactions between migrants and members of local communities (Savesk: 2010, 867) is crucial to understanding experiences of migration. Writings of migration by migrants expressing their emotions about journeys, arrivals, departures, have also been beautifully captured by prose and poetry for centuries (Skrbis: 2008, 241). The experiences of Black and Afro-Caribbean migrants on slave ships gave rise to Blues and Jazz music for instance (Gilroy: 1991).
Further illuminating the study of emotions have been emotions evoked and invoked in indigenous poetry (Abu-Lughod: 1986, Wyrtzen: 2015), song, music, sound symbolism (Field: 1982, Schieffelin: 1976), and dance (Hannah: 1983). Migration and diaspora communities across the world have in many instances employed music in identity making practices (Back: 1988, 1995, Anwar: 1998, Baily: 1990, Banerjea: 2000, Cooper: 2004, Frith: 1996, Gilroy: 1991, Oliver: 1990). Of particular significance is the agency afforded to consumers of music that can be viewed as an extension of personhood and/or gendered identity. In the case of a Palestinian hip-hop crew from the Shu’afat Refugee Camp in Jerusalem, Greenberg (2009) documents the ways in which marginalised youth are actively borrowing and adapting from African-American hip-hop culture to their socio-political contexts. Hip-hop then, becomes a tool through which expression of their opposition to the Israeli occupation can be made while also reclaiming their masculinity, as the occupation has led to widespread emasculation of Palestinian men. In a similar way, Schade-Poulsen (1999) shows that for Algerian men, the lyrics of Rai songs in which male-female relationships, inter-generational differences, the problems of youthhood, and the struggle experienced by Algerian men to find a place in a conflicted society are addressed, hold significance in navigating adulthood.

Similarly, for Pakistani men, Sufi poetry expressed through Qawwali or Sufiana Kalam (Grover: 2015) - the latter is typically sung solo with instrumental accompaniment in regional languages especially Punjabi, Sindhi, Kashmiri and Gujarati (Burney and Abbas: 2007) - is a way for men to become involved in emotional expression. Often, emotional expression occurs in collective mehfil gatherings (Marsden: 2005, Grewal: 2014) during which men become overwhelmed with spiritual connection. Historically, Sufiana Kalam and Qawwali have been produced and performed as forms of political and social resistance (Burney and Abbas: 2007), indicating that masculine emotion for Pakistani men is embedded within musical forms that may not appear as forms of resistance at first sight. For the Pakistani migrant husband who we know to experience increased vulnerability, precarity, and even abuse, it is a fruitful endeavor to explore possible forms of emotional expression and/or resistance.
This chapter therefore provides a microscopic analysis of ‘Songs of Sorrow’ that migrant husbands shared during fieldwork, as a tool to demonstrate the emotional expression migrant husband are involved in. These songs were shared in video form, which were entirely edited by migrant husband(s), performed by men who were migrant husbands and/or sympathisers of migrant husbands. Section one of the chapter explores the ways in which emotional expression is possible through songs of sorrow. Section two focuses on the solidarity experienced as a result of the emotional expression, and section three takes this further by investigating the new community formation that are made possible for migrant husbands. The chapter illuminates our understanding of emotion in masculine formation through music and resistance in new ways, and enriches the field of minority language and music. More broadly, the chapter also provides insights into the ways in which aspirations of migrant husbands can be revised in and through migration.

**Expressing Emotion**

It is conventionally understood both in academic fields and within public perceptions that men do not express emotion, or at least, find it more difficult to express emotion (Wong and Rochelin: 2005, Montes: 2013). During fieldwork, migrant husbands expressed their emotions during interviews by telling me how they felt inferior and taken advantage of by their wives and/or in-laws. However, it was only when I was introduced to songs of sorrow that I began to better understand the significant presence of emotions for migrant husbands’ social worlds. In other words, songs of sorrow became a medium through which migrant husbands were able to express themselves without having to lose their masculinity or male status, as the style and format of the songs – albeit not exclusively on the topic of migrant husbands – had been sung for generations.

The lyrics of the songs were profoundly telling of the role of emotions in migrant husbands’ experiences, and thereby the emotional power that songs held, especially with regards to operating as an opening for migrant husbands to channel personal emotions. It is important to note that Songs of Sorrow are not sung by the migrant husbands themselves, but by singers sympathetic to the cause of migrant husbands. A particular song, which is available on YouTube, is titled “Mungaitra da Haal” [State of Migrant Husbands]. Although no subtitles are available for
the song, the words are complemented with images. It is important to note that the song was uploaded to YouTube under the comedy category and titled ‘funny song’, which suggests that the Pakistani community deals with the complex situation of the migrant husband through humour. The song is punctuated with a melodious narrative followed by the main couplet.

I have translated the song of sorrow as follows:

Don’t ask about the state of migrant husband when they arrive to England.

It’s true, isn’t it?

For the sake of coming to England, animal sacrifices are offered at Durbaars [Holy Shrines].

“Baba [Holy man] please give us the visa. Please help us acquire the visa.”

A repeated prayer.

When the visa is granted they laugh. They laugh as they run back “Uncle, Uncle, my visa has been granted! Uncle, Uncle, my visa has been granted!”

When his family sat him on the airplane and he arrives to the UK, they hire a limousine to collect him from the airport.

They say “Our son’s arrived! Our son-in-law has arrived! Our beloved is here, our cousin is here!”

One day as a guest, two days as a guest, three days as a guest, four days. The things he has to endure on day five, only he and his God is aware.

The song can be found via the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EilujGczoIl
Then, for two years he will have to stay in service. When he receives his indefinite leave to remain after two years, then there is a lot of conflict between them [the family].

It’s a true story. If it’s wrong then your hands around my neck [figure of speech].

So then friends...

When they go to work, life is really busy for them.

How so?

Early in the morning they set off for work and return after midnight. X2 Only to find the wife has made lentils. Please don’t ask about the plight of migrant husbands. It’s a terrible state to be in.

In secret and alone, they sit and cry, they wash all the dishes in the kitchen. X2 Tired, they crash into bed. Please don’t ask about the plight of migrant husbands. It’s a terrible state to be in.

The wife goes to work and gets into shape [by going to the gym] and still has 100 criticisms to say X2 And tell us to look after the kids too. Please don’t ask about the plight of migrant husbands. It’s a terrible state to be in.

They tell me to get breakfast for them in the morning, I’ll have to, to keep the peace X2
Then I have to deal with my father-in-law’s demands
Please don’t ask about the plight of migrant husbands.
It’s a terrible state to be in.

There’s one more trouble. Which one you ask?
Don’t ask me about troubles. We sleep on troubles, we endure and tolerate troubles.

If I come back late from work for the sake of earning more money. It’s only worth it if its 4 or 5 or 6 pounds an hour. But that’s rare.

Then the wife does not let me in. She doesn’t open the door.

“Beloved son of your mother, stay outside today”, she says

You came back late from work today, in anger she says X2
Now I’m going to kick you out of the house.
Please don’t ask about the plight of migrant husbands.
It’s a terrible state to be in.

This particular song tells of the temporal and spatial changes the migrant husband experiences, before, during, and after marriage and migration to the UK, which have social implications. This is crucial for later stages of this chapter, as it forms the crux of my argument – namely that migrant husbands revise aspirations in and though migration, which speaks to Carling’s (2018) argument.

It is these temporal and spatial shifts that cause migrant husbands’ emotional landscapes to also shift. For instance, the song lyrics indicate feelings of hope during the visa application process, which led to the families of migrant husbands sacrificing animals at holy shrines of Sufi saints. The excitement experienced when the visa was granted is described through laughter, joy, and sharing the news with uncles and aunts. However, the excitement quickly shifts to family conflict between wives and in-laws upon arrival to the UK, which is further characterised by long hard days at work
and completing domestic chores at home, such as childcare and dishwashing while the wife enjoys
visits to the gym, in order to maintain her fitness. In this section of the song, the lyrics point
towards negative emotions due to the shift in household and gender dynamics, mainly associated
with men having to complete tasks that are traditionally seen, within the Pakistani community, as
falling within women’s remit. Low paid work and demands from the father-in-law are also cited as
sources of hardship. While the song outlines the typical unfolding of events for migrant husbands
upon marriage and migration, the stark difference between the before and after marriage and
migration stage, is demonstrated in this song as not only the site of the emotion but also as the
source of emotional instability.

Heavily laden with emotion, a second song titled “Mangetar” [Migrants] I have translated as
follows:

Migrant husbands, have lost everything
For the sake of England
They have endured many hits

Because of the harshness [from wives and in-laws], they have become weak
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Because of the harshness [from wives and in-laws], they have become weak
Migrant husbands have lost their minds

In London and America there’s noise of their coming
In London and America there’s noise of their coming
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Migrant husbands have lost their minds

May the beautiful lord shower blessing on the migrant husband
May his offspring be good
May the beautiful lord shower blessing on the migrant husband
May his offspring be good
They don’t ask for their desires
They don’t ask for their desires
They don’t ask

**Migrant husbands have lost their minds**

Because of the harshness [from wives and in-laws], they have become weak
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Because of the harshness [from wives and in-laws], they have become weak
Migrant husbands have lost their minds

First they [wives] call them to England
Then for the rest of their lives they make them carry burdens
First they [wives] call them to England
Then for the rest of their lives they make them carry burdens
Then they forget their homeland
Then they forget
Then they forget their homeland

**Migrant husbands have lost their minds**

Because of the harshness [from wives and in-laws], they have become weak
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Because of the harshness [from wives and in-laws], they have become weak
Migrant husbands have lost their minds

They [wives] put a leash around the man’s neck
They themselves enjoy life
When they get them to carry out kitchen duties
When they get them to
When they get them to carry out kitchen duties

Migrant husbands have lost their minds

Because of the harshness [from wives and in-laws], they have become weak
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Because of the harshness [from wives and in-laws], they have become weak
Migrant husbands have lost their minds

In London and America there is noise of their coming
In London and America there is noise of their coming

Migrant husbands have lost their minds

Because of the harshness [from wives and in-laws], they have become weak
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Because of the harshness [from wives and in-laws], they have become weak
Migrant husbands have lost their minds

Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Migrant husbands have lost their minds
Migrant husbands have lost their minds

The chorus (highlighted in bold) employs the term ‘daadiya’, which can be translated as harshness/strictness/hardness, referred to that which is inflicted on the migrant husbands by the wives and
in-laws. Furthermore, this portion of the verse is followed by ‘they have become weak’, which is insightful as it demonstrates that the migrant husband would otherwise be strong if it were not for the way he is treated by his wife and in-laws. The second verse in the chorus refers to the migrant husband losing his mind, referring to the migrant husband losing his mind as a result of the treatment he is subjected to. These powerful indicators of the impact of the treatment that migrant husbands are subjected to, allow for the expression of emotion, as they acknowledge the situation of the migrant husband.

One of my informants, Saleem, explained how the songs created a space for him to grieve without having to appear weak:

“They give me permission to be sad. I listen to them on my own so that I am allowed to be sad and grieve my divorce...if you are upset in public it shows you are a weak man. But the songs allow me to let these feelings out in my own time and place without being seen as weak.”

Saleem’s narrative indicated that songs of sorrow create a space for him in which his emotions were acknowledged and enable him in turn, to address these emotions, through grief, as he defined it. Furthermore, the songs of sorrow for Saleem and other migrant husbands proved to be a medium through which emotion could be expressed. Therefore, songs of sorrow held a dialectical effect for migrant husbands: while on the one hand they allowed for acknowledgement of the migrant husband’ plight, they also provided comfort. Together, songs of sorrow not only enabled the expression of emotion but also provided acknowledgement and comfort in times of sorrow.

**Solidarity**

Songs of sorrow songs expressed the difficulties and hardships migrant husbands experience upon marriage, migration and settlement. Migrant husbands explained how listening to Songs of Sorrow helped them feel better by knowing that they were not alone. Shoaib told me:

“One day I was at work and this man who is a regularly customer showed me and my
colleague a song about men like me. He knew what we were going through without me having to tell him. It is common knowledge that men like us [migrant husbands] suffer but it is not spoken about so people try to talk about it through the song. They like to send a message to you that they understand, and they support you by showing you the song and listening to it.

Shoaib told me the songs would be shared through WhatsApp with fellow migrant husbands. He also told me he would attend monthly ‘mehfils’ [gatherings] at a friend’s house, which involved migrant husbands sharing food, listening to ‘songs of pain and sorrow’, reciting poetry and talking about their difficulties.

“We listen to them together in a group and play the songs as well as sing our own. We get together and discuss our struggles and try and help each other. It’s a nice way. Music helps us communicate our struggle and express our emotions.”

Omar’s narrative provides a deeper insight to the significance of the ‘mehfils’:

“It is a really nice evening. We make tea and serve it during the gathering. Most of us don’t eat well so that one night is like Eid for us. We have good company, good food, and good music, and we feel love and support. It is the only thing we have to look forward to and for most of us, it is the only good thing in our lives.”

Participants’ narratives around songs carried overtones of their expectations before and after marriage and migration. Shoaib told me:

“The songs allow us to talk about how our dreams have crashed and we are treated badly. We did not expect this treatment before we came to this country because we thought we would have a good life here, but we are treated badly...we have to wash the dishes and look after the kids and we have no money, even though we work long hours...”

However, the expectations were channeled through the storytelling of the Songs of Sorrow, which suggested the songs act as a tool for communicating hardship and representing the migrant husband experience. There is also an indication that the songs form a type of protective armour
for participants, who often relied on and felt comforted by the distance between the songs and their personal positionality, which protect their masculine identity. There were also subtle tones of the temporal aspect of the hardship as the migrant husbands aspired to overcome their difficulties and become the men they were ‘supposed to be’. This point will be expanded upon in later sections of this chapter.

It is important to highlight the evocations of the images used in constructing the videography of the songs to complement the poetic verses of the songs, as they provide an insight into the nature of expectations before and after marriage and migration in its own right. For instance, the videography begins with the migrant husband elated to have received his visa; however, as the song proceeds, we see a repeated image of a migrant husband in tears. The lyrics, together with the images, tell a powerful and evocative narrative of the migrant husband’s circumstance, creating a sense of solidarity between migrant husbands who can relate to one another.

Figure 2: A still image used in the videography of the Song of Sorrow depicting an emotional migrant husband as he makes a call to kin in Pakistan.

While the first song of sorrow contains still images that complement the lyrics, the second song of sorrow consists of rolling filmed footage, which has been recorded specifically for the song. The footage alone tells the story of the migrant husband in a powerful visual format.
Figures 3 and 4 (left to right): Still images used in the videography of the Song of Sorrow depicting the arrival of the migrant husband at Birmingham International Airport and being received by his -in-laws.

In the opening scenes the migrant husband is shown to arrive at Birmingham airport. He is then shown to arrive at the home where his father-in-law greets him first, who places a garland around his neck.

The scenes that follow show the migrant husband working in multiple jobs. First he is shown to be chopping meet in a butcher’s shop where he wipes the sweat on his forehead.

Figures 5 and 6 (left to right): Still images used in the videography of the Song of Sorrow depicting the migrant husband working in a butchers shop and as a tailor.
He is then shown to be working a second job as a Pakistani tailor, sewing traditional clothing (Salwar Kameez). In the scenes that follow, the migrant husband is shown to be also working a third job at a Pakistani supermarket where he is seen to be stocking onion bags on to the outdoor vegetable display. When customers present him with a receipt to prove payment for a bag of onions, he is seen to transport the bag of onions to the customer’s car.

Figures 7 and 8 (left to right): Still images used in the videography of the Song of Sorrow depicting the migrant husband working in a supermarket collecting a bag of onions and loading a bag of onions into a customer’s car.

The migrant husband is then shown to arrive and hand over his wages to his wife, who keeps the cash and returns the change, with which the migrant husband purchases a few cigarettes from the local shop.

Figures 9 and 10 (left to right): Still images used in the videography of the Song of Sorrow depicting the migrant husband handing over his salary to his wife, and the wife returning the pennies.
Figures 11 and 12 (left to right): Still images used in the videography of the Song of Sorrow depicting the migrant husband purchasing a single cigarette from a shop keeper as this is all he can afford, and the migrant husband washing dishes at home in the kitchen.

After smoking cigarettes, he returns home to prepare dinner. In these scenes, the migrant husband is shown to knead the dough, make chapattis, and cook curry, all while the wife is applying lipstick.

Figures 13 and 14 (left to right): Still images used in the videography of the Song of Sorrow depicting the wife applying lipstick while the migrant husband cooks dinner.

The migrant husband is then shown to serve his wife and her parents’ dinner. As he pours a glass of water, which he offers his father-in-law, but the glass slips and the water spills. The father-in-law reacts by raising his hand towards the migrant husband. While the music video does not specifically show the migrant husband being physically abused, the scenes that follow show the migrant husband crying while he washes the dishes, from which we can infer that the migrant husband was physically abused by the father-in-law.
Figures 15 and 16 (left to right): Still images used in the videography of the Song of Sorrow depicting the migrant husband pouring a glass of water for his father-in-law which he accidentally drops, causing his father-in-law to raise his hand against him.

Figures 17 and 18 (left to right): Still images used in the videography of the Song of Sorrow depicting an emotional migrant husband after being physically abused by his father-in-law, and continuing to complete chores such as dishwashing.

The final scenes of the music video show the migrant husband tip-toeing down the stairs carrying luggage and wearing the traditional Pakistani attire of Salwar Kameez. He is then shown to be running towards the entrance of the departures gate at Birmingham Airport, which indicates the migrant husband returning to Pakistan after experiencing hardship in the UK.
Figures 19 and 20 (left to right): Still images used in the videography of the Song of Sorrow depicting the migrant husband escaping his in-laws’ home with a small bag containing essential belongings, and entering the departures gate at Birmingham International Airport.

The depiction of the role of the father-in-law in this music video is an important one to highlight. The father-in-law is the first to greet the migrant husband at the airport and places a garland around his neck. Scenes of the father-in-law relaxing and enjoying life by eating sweets and smoking *hukka* punctuate the scenes where the migrant husband is shown to be working multiple jobs. It is also the father-in-law that the migrant husband pours water for at the dinner table and finally, it is the father-in-law that raises his hand to slap the migrant husband. The father-in-law is shown wearing a formal blazer, shirt and tie, which is representative of higher class and accomplishment compared to that of the migrant husband and can also be seen as imitating the colonial legacy set out by the British in their rule of India (see Dumont: 1980). This portrayal of a stark juxtaposition between the migrant husband and his father-in-law - in activities, employment, level of authority, attire, and emotionality through visible portrayals such as crying - is indicative of generational and age differences in masculine experiences in the British Pakistani community. Further, it supports the concept of the ‘transnational patriarch’ that I introduced in section one of the thesis and built on section two of the thesis, whereby the transnational patriarch retires to leisure activities while controlling kin and/as assets.
Figures 21 and 22 (left to right): Still images used in the videography of the Song of Sorrow depicting the father-in-law satisfying addictions of ‘naswar’ [smokeless tobacco (see Khan: 2017)] and smoking hookah.

As per interviews with migrant husbands, the reenactment of the plight of the migrant husband in this second Song of Sorrow was particularly powerful in establishing solidarity with migrant husband viewers. Once more, as in the previous section of this chapter, such visual tools provide acknowledgement and comfort for migrant husbands who often are isolated from sources of support (human, systematic, and governmental).

**Makings of a Community**

A third song available on YouTube is titled “Pothwari Sher Mangaytaran Na Hal Pardesiya” [Pothwari Song about the State of Migrant Husbands Abroad]. This song is 10 minutes and 20 seconds in duration and unlike the previous two songs, a static image of a rose appears throughout the song. Also unlike the first two songs, this song makes specific reference to the genre of the song as ‘Pothwari Sher’. As previously mentioned in the introduction, ‘Pothwari Sher’ have previously not received academic attention. They can be viewed as a having stemmed from the musical genre Qawwali, as similar musical instruments such as a sitar, and a main singer are present. However, there are also key differences, such as there are usually three people involved; the singer, the sitar player, and the drummer who uses a clay water pot to produce drum beats similar to the table. Qawwali on the other hand, is produced by a large team of musicians – often more than ten men. Further, while Qawwali originates from central Pakistan and has a reach both nationally across the Indian sub-continent and globally, across the sub-continent as well as globally, ‘Pothwari Sher’ originate in the northern areas of Azad Kashmir where Pothwari [a dialect of...
Mirpuri and also known as Pahari is spoken (see also Lothers and Lothers: 2010, 2012, Hussain: 2015, Rosowsky: 2015, 2016, 2017)

This third song is 10 minutes and 20 seconds in duration and can be accessed via this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HJQjCY8xjQ&t=0s&list=PLJzvG5S5k1jBUb5_MCy0xpeiGT1k r4LdL&index=4

I have translated the song as follows:

Have it, the life and the conditions of England
Friends, based on the request of many friends, I am recording this cassette.
Life in England is such that you get married and leave Pakistan.
But when life passes, it passes with great difficulty.
My friends I am presenting a joint song by poet Jahangir Afzal, some are my own and some by Wahid Qasim, and we present it in a timely fashion:
The whites have made a new law  
Caused us young to be wasted away  
With great difficulty we found a British marriage proposal  
That too the evil people [relatives] convinced to reject  
I was sat with such immense hope  
I had already made my passport  
My white complexion was not enough to convince the beauty [wife]  
Our white complexion was not enough to convince the beauty [wife]  
They [in-laws] considered me their own and called me [to England] as a son-in-law  
She kept her parent’s honour and shame  
And married in Pakistan  
My horror, my horror  
My horror, my horror  
God, God,  
God, my horror.

I thought I was doing a good deed  
But it was actually my harm  
By marrying into my relatives it was saving their honour  
My horror, my horror  
My horror, my horror  
God, God,  
God, my horror

Tall and handsome they want, I too was young and handsome  
What atrocity have the Whites leashed upon us  
The English say from their homes “come”  
“Our Queen states”  
Make sure you are 21 years of age
Don’t you dare be any younger
Oh we don’t know what to do, we don’t understand Jhangir
Oh what shall I do, I don’t understand
This law will cause me my death
I didn’t look at intelligence, beauty, nor the height [of the wife]
My horror, my horror
My horror, my horror
God, God,
God, my horror

They say don’t go out, don’t meet anyone
I am such an idiot, they act like the king
My horror, my horror
My horror, my horror
God, God,
God, my horror

This my friends was the voice of the man who they come and marry and the girl says he is uneducated and how she is troubled as a result. But my friends when a man leaves to go to England, he forgets how his door looked. My fiends, he forgets the voice of his mother and father. He calls. How does he call? He says:

When I arrived in England, friends I changed
That fair faced, innocent looking woman
What awfulness was sent to me
From afar she looked very simple minded
Then she made me startle and I jumped in shock
I broke my back, I couldn’t deny two hundred pounds
She made me work two shifts back to back
I couldn’t drink cigarettes or tea
My madam takes all my wages
She who wouldn’t say a word in Pakistan only yesterday
Today she owns me
May God give her good manners and show her the right way

My sisters and mothers listening may you be blessed for the sake of God and his Messenger [Muhammad], remember your motherland, remember your religion. Whoever does, does not go without nor will he be betrayed. May God give you good manners. He said, that is the voice of the young man:

I had not yet completed the washing of the clothes
That she came from upstairs
“I wanted to tour the UK” she said
“But now I’ve lost my sparkle”
Before she used to shout at me and taunt me
But today she showed me her two hands [she slapped him]
She already had my passport
But now she also threatened me with the police

There [in England], when you say something wrong, 9. 9. 9. They dial number nine three times and within nine minutes they come and take us away. My friends, may God give them good manners and may God drive our troubles away. He says:

She had my passport from before
Now she topped that with the threat of the police.
But what is the real issue? [the police ask]
“England, England Jhangir cries” [she says]
“England, England Jhangir cries” [she says]
She has even got my father to repent his sins

“He wants me to wear the Burka, not trousers and a shirt” [the wife’s narrative]
“He doesn’t want to follow me, what can I do?” [the wife’s narrative]
My horror, my horror
My horror, my horror
God, God,
God, my horror

“Nor does he know how to drive or cook” [the wife’s narrative]
“He can’t even speak English” [the wife’s narrative]
My horror, my horror
My horror, my horror
God, God,
God, my horror

There are a number of significant aspects of this song that provide further insight and nuance to the experience of migrant husbands. Firstly, the inclusion of various positions and voices in the narrative add a theatrical aspect to the song. From the outset of the song, we are introduced to the narrative of the lead singer who declares that the song is a compilation of his verses along with the verses of two friends Jhangir Afzal, and Qasism Wahid. Throughout the song, the narrator (lead singer) – whom we have no name for – regularly punctuates the song with narration against slow mellow music. In his narration, he is supportive of the plight of migrant husbands and reverts to communal prayer, calling on God to bless the wives of the migrant husbands with ‘good manners’.

The second voice we hear is that of Jhangir, the main protagonist. We are first introduced to Jhangir in the fourth stanza when his friends respond to his troubles as not knowing what to do. This indicates that Jhangir, who also co-authored some of the verses of the song, may have been a migrant husband and turned to his friends for advice. The second time we meet Jhangir is in the
eleventh stanza through the narrative of the wife, which is sung by the male singer. Here the male singer includes the wife’s narrative and she is requoted as complaining that her husband Jhanghir is only concerned about his passage to England. Jhangir is therefore shown to recite “England, England” like a prayer he has memorized.

We learn a great deal about Jhangir’s position throughout the song. For instance, we learn of his expectations before marriage and migration, namely that he would be treated well because he married in the family and kept the honour of his parents and family members. He expected this to work as a ‘good deed’, however, he finds that he has actually ‘brought harm’ to himself. The immigration laws are referred to as being passed by the Queen herself and so the migrant husband is juxtaposed against not only his wife, but also the head of state who is also a woman. This has a profound impact, as the migrant husband says ‘this law will be the death of me’ but also refers to the wife ‘owning’ him when he arrived in England, whereas in Pakistan she did not speak a word and ‘appeared to be innocent’. This dichotomy between women of the East and women of the West seems deeply embedded in migrant husband views. It is further supported by the multiple references of the migrant husband having ‘fair skin’ and describing his wife to also be a ‘fair skinned’, which is another feature of the colonial legacy amongst the British Pakistani community that is rooted in British colonial rule of India during which the British established hierarchy amongst different groups (see Dumont: 1980). Much of these hierarchies interweaved physical attributes such as fair skin, which was common amongst higher castes/classes, as their exposure to the sun was minimal due to roles involving farming being assigned to and performed by the lower castes/classes (Dumont: 1980). Through migration and the settlement of diaspora communities, such ideas that are deeply entrenched in the colonial legacy have travelled (see also Clifford: 2001) as part of the cultural migration, continuing to thrive amongst third and fourth generations of the British Pakistani diaspora. The reference to being slapped by his wife does not include mention of being protected by the law, which corroborates with the views expressed by many migrant husbands during interviews, that women are protected by the law in comparison to men. This is further highlighted in stanza ten in which the wife calls the police over trivial matters such as not taking a liking to the migrant husband’s ability to converse. The chorus also provides
an insight into the migrant husband’s situation as he repeatedly refers to the marriage and migrant experience as a ‘horror’, and calls on God to alleviate his situation.

The third voice we are introduced to in the song is that of the wife, who is quoted in the song by the male singers, and who we first meet in the ninth stanza in which she is presented as an unsatisfied wife who had ‘lost her sparkle’ and wanted to ‘tour the UK’. The sentence structure implies the wife blames the husband for losing her sparkle and not being able to travel. We then meet the wife once again in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth stanzas, which describe the wife having called the police and the police enquiring as to the cause of the marital breakdown. She tells the police he cries “England, England”, as though he is an obsessed man, which provides the impression to the police that the migrant husband is only interested in acquiring citizenship. She is then quoted as identifying the issue of underpinning the marital breakdown to not wanting to wear the burka as per her husband’s wishes. The migrant husband at this point of the song is a bystander and is stripped of his voice, indicating that the arrival of the police leaves them with no rights and in no position to fight an already lost battle. The wife is therefore presented as employing tropes and ideas around the ‘oppressed Muslim woman’, who is forced to wear the burka by the husband. In highlighting the wife’s ability to use tropes to her advantage, we come to learn in the following stanza that the migrant husband (Jhangir) did not ask her to wear the burka. She is then presented as complaining that her husband does not know how to cook or drive, or speak English, which is a cause of great distress to her. This underscores the cultural differences highlighted in the second chapter. The song ends with the presentation of the wife’s position, which is symbolic of her voice being the only one that matters to the law and the police. In this way the migrant husband’s ‘horror’ and distress are muted as a result of the wife’s ability to use tropes on the oppression of women to her advantage.

The second important aspect to highlight is the way in which God is called upon to bless women with good manners. This speaks to the wealth of studies that have documented the extent to which men can employ religion to control women, especially within Islam. However, it is crucial to remember that songs of sorrow are a safe space within which men express their feelings. Similar
to Indian women talking about skinning their husbands alive as a punishment for cheating on them in Raheja and Gold’s (1994) documentation of songs sung by women, these songs should also be interpreted in the same way; as a space in which men can express their feelings and exercise resistive agency (see Holland and Skinner: 1995). The third aspect to highlight is the way in which the song demonstrates the communal dimension of marital life. We hear the migrant husband asking his friends for advice, the involvement of parental honour and shame, the transnational dynamic of the marriage as being subjected to the norms of Pakistan and the UK, and the involvement of the British law, its Queen as symbol of sovereignty, the role of the police, and female power. This aspect is indicative of the sheer range of stakeholders involved in the marriage and husband’s migration experience, which provides an in-depth nuance to the feeling of entrapment migrant husbands have shared with me during fieldwork. In this way then, we learn about the different spaces in which migrant husbands can feel subjected and/or feel inferior, and how these intersect and affect the masculinity of migrant husbands. The ‘mehfil’ [gathering] for one is a safe space, whereas the space of the home is a hostile space in which the wife is abusive and the state can intervene if the emergency services are called.

Together, in a single song, these aspects form a powerful narrative that outlines different characters in a migrant husband’s life. In this way, the migrant husband’s lived reality is recreated in this song, as per the migrant husband’s truth. In doing so, migrant husbands’ community of support is further underscored, as the oppressive roles that in-laws and wives can play in the private sphere, are brought out into the public sphere. In other words, the behaviours of wives and in-laws, which are often concealed in the domestic sphere, are revealed through song to be made public knowledge. The impact of this is twofold; migrant husbands come together as a collective in public reclaiming their presence, and secondly they are juxtaposed against the ‘oppressors’, which is described as in-laws, wives, and the state. The latter (the state), is referred to as the ‘White’s law’ and later the ‘Queen’s law’, which is difficult to meet the requirements for in order to obtain citizenship. Once more, this positioning of the migrant husband in contrast to the ‘Whites’ or the ‘Queen’, carries overtones of us and them, ‘other’ (Said: 1990), and a feeling of not fitting in and/or being accepted. This is further telling of the way in which migrant husbands
view themselves as a community marked by ‘othering’ through identity markers such as ethnicity and citizenship status.

While the vast majority of the Songs of Sorrow that I was introduced to focused on the experiences of migrant husbands in the UK, Shoai and Saleem also introduced me to a number of songs on YouTube that were sung by migrant men in the Middle East and Italy. For instance, one of the songs is titled ‘Yara Saudia na Aave Itthe Burreh Hai Siyape’ [Don’t Come to Saudi There are Many Hardships Here]. Shoai explained:

“They too are migrants and so understand the difficulties we experience. In Dubai and Saudi their bosses treat them very badly and it is very hot there. They originally migrated to earn money so they could have better lives, but they find themselves in bad conditions when they get there, just like us.”

Migrant husbands’ ability to relate to the experiences of migrant men in other countries is also indicative of new family and/or community making practices (Inhorn: 2017) through technology and social media. This is a poignant insight, as migrant husband’s wives and wives’ families emerge as having the capacity to make life difficult for migrant husbands in different ways, a result of which they feel isolated. Music and songs created by migrant men in Italy and the UAE then become a common language imbued with the poetry of pain, which enables migrant husbands in the UK to feel a sense of belonging to a community in which they are understood socially and emotionally. It is precisely these new approaches to family and community making practices afforded by the widespread ‘individualised’ technological revolution that provide migrant husbands with coping mechanisms. Ali told me:

“Sometimes I think about it all, the situation I am in, and realise that blood is not thicker than water...that strangers can feel your pain better than your own blood.”

As Ali explained, songs of sorrow disrupted the very notion of the meaning of family and blood relations. The experience of marriage and migration then placed the construction of masculinity largely outside of immediate kin relations. In other words, negotiating masculinity and masculine
emotion are exercises that at times, took place outside of the immediate male kin relations. The implication for the space of home - a pre-determined space for marriage in the social imaginary of migrant husbands - no longer becomes the metaphorical space of emotion and belonging. Rather, emotion and belonging can be seen to transcend the space of the home and be ‘safely’ expressed in ‘songs of sorrow’ along with migrant men from around the world (see also Abu-Lughod: 1986, Raheja and Gold: 1994).

**Reassertive Space(s)**

Collectively, Songs of Sorrow, combined with the narratives of migrant husbands I interviewed during my fieldwork, provide an insight into the importance of song and music for migrant husbands. Songs of Sorrow are not only employed as a tool to carve out a social space for migrant husbands to discuss their difficulties and support one another, but they are also used to maintain ideas of hegemonic masculinity that exist as part of the patriarchal cultural notions in the Pakistani community. I now discuss this in further detail, keeping in mind the question: ‘To what extent, and how do these songs enable migrant husbands to negotiate and reassert their masculinity?’ I have previously suggested that songs of sorrow provide acknowledgement of the plight of migrant husbands and comfort, which in turn allows for the expression of emotions. It is this process of acknowledgement and comfort, as well as the provision of a space in which emotions can be both expressed, experienced, and shared, which facilitate the negotiation and/or reassertion of masculinity. The singers who also exercise the role of the narrator of the plight of migrant husbands, are crucial mediators in providing acknowledgement and comfort to migrant husbands. Singers affirm that this is a reality for migrant husbands, and that if there was any suspicion relating to the plight of migrant husbands, that, as in the first song, he would be happy to accommodate the hands of those who suspect the genuineness of the story, around his neck. While this is a figure of speech, it is important to note that the narrator/singer opens himself to violence to be able to tell the story of the migrant husband. Furthermore, it is also important to note that the narrator specifically evokes an image of being strangled, which is where, physically, the voice box and vocal chords are situated. Here, the narrator is thus also saying that one would have to physically destroy the source of his voice to prevent him from speaking out the truth of migrant husbands. Such a
commitment to speaking the truth of migrant husbands, particularly in public, allows migrant husbands to feel support and solidarity.

It is also important to highlight that in these particular but popular songs, the acknowledgement of the plight of migrant husbands simultaneously pertains to the abuse they experience, and to a rigid set of masculine ideals, which can view women as home makers situated in the private sphere. Thus, a large part of the acknowledgement and comfort that songs of sorrow provide for migrant husbands, is directed towards the shift in gender power dynamics, and the emotional instability that arises from this. In chapter 2.3, I argued that it was this change in gender power dynamics due to the migration process that has led to the feminisation of marriage within the British Pakistani community. In the first song of sorrow I translated earlier in this chapter, the first stanza describes a migrant husband going to work early in the morning and returning from work to find that the wife has cooked lentils for dinner. This is an eye-opening stanza as it illustrates the dissatisfaction of the migrant husband at lentils for dinner, which is seen as a basic food type in the Pakistani community, especially by British Pakistani standards. As a result we gain an insight into the expectations of migrant husbands, which include having a dinner cooked for them by their wives for when they return from a long day at work, expecting a luxurious dinner (which would include meat), and that lentils are not an acceptable dish for the migrant husband to be consuming after a long day at work. Due references to the expectation of the wife cooking dinner and being in the kitchen, this stanza reinforces patriarchal views of men and women’s roles, and as a result, it informs us of the nature of the grounds of emotional instability for migrant husbands.

The patriarchal and traditional views of the role of men and women are carried forward in the second stanza, where the migrant husband describes sitting and crying alone, washing the dishes and then crashing into bed. It is important to note that the lyrics are complemented with images. One could also argue that this stanza is reflective of migrant husbands being overworked, as they return home after a long day’s work to wash the dishes. However, egalitarian couples of the 21st century will work and share household duties (Walsh: 2011), which relegates this stanza to lean more towards carrying patriarchal overtones. The third stanza describes the nature of young, Pakistan women who work and attend the gym to get into shape/stay fit, as a result of which child
care responsibilities fall on to the husband for this time period. Once more, it appears that the source of the migrant husband’s distress is the progression of women’s independence and autonomy, and the husband having to care for his children inside the home, while the wife performs outside of the house. The fourth stanza also follows on such overtones, as migrant husbands are referred to as having to make breakfast for their wives.

The melodious chorus is then followed by a storytelling narration with a soft beat, which details the nature of the low paid jobs, and being prevented from entering the home after work by the wife, if the migrant husband is late. The wife’s ‘voice’ is included in this section - “Beloved son of your mother, stay outside today” - which places the wife in direct contrast to the migrant husband’s mother, as well as carrying overtones of the conflict between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law common to Pakistani communities. There is also a reminiscent aspect to this line in the song, where migrant husbands have left the comfort and care of their mother, to experience ‘harsh treatment’ by their wives. The music peaks again, and the final stanza reifies migrant husbands not being allowed home due to coming back late from work.

In the second song titled “Mangetar” [migrants], the sixth stanza refers to migrant husbands called to England and being made to carry burdens, as a result of which they forget about their homeland. In these verses, there is a subtle attempt to give the impression that the migrant husband migrated as a result of the wife’s wishes. For example, stanza seven begins with “first wives call them to England, then for the rest of their lives they make them carry burdens.” However, it is important to note that in transnational marriages involving migrant husbands, there is in fact involvement of the family of both the wife and the migrant husband, as well as the migrant husband’s own desire to migrate. The construction of this verse in stanza seven to suggest that the migrant husband is imported by the wife, is however telling of the direct relationship of trust and dependency in the marriage, as a result of which the migrant husband embarks on the migratory journey to the UK. Furthermore, this verse is also indicative of the intimate relations and conversations between a husband and wife. A husband speaking in this way demonstrates that the wife provided assurances to the husband, easing his anxieties about migration and settlement to the UK after marriage, and
during the visa application process. This also resonates with many migrant husbands who told me about the conversations they had had with their wives to be before the marriage.

In the eighth stanza of the second song, wives are also described as putting a “leash around the migrant husband’s neck.” Here, the migrant husband is likened by the singer (narrator) to a dog under the control of its owner, thereby illustrating the migrant husband’s social and emotional position. In this way, this is closely reflective of the migrant husband’s view and self-description of being treated like a dog; a vulgar description. In interviews, migrant husbands often described their experiences in such a way. Another common trope and term that was employed during interviews was that of the ‘slave’. In a similar way to the first song, both the second and third songs carried overtones of traditional patriarchal views about gender roles, with the third song also prominently making such references to wives. For example, in stanza seven the wife is referred to as the ‘simple minded’ ‘innocent looking woman’ who was in fact a ‘madam who took all my wages’ and who ‘owns me’. Stanza eight is a prayer to calling on ‘God and his messenger Muhammad to bless women with good manners.’ In stanza ten and eleven, the wife is referred to as strategically playing on stereotypes of the oppressed wife in order to have the migrant husband arrested by the police.

A close textual analysis of these songs of sorrow thus provides deeper insights and understanding of migrant husbands’ sources of distress, from which we can begin to analyse the roots of the reassertion of masculinity. While on an individual level the migrant husband may have experienced distress as a result of changing gender dynamics and, at times, different forms of abuse, securing collective and public acknowledgement of their feelings helps establish their plight as a social truth: the truth that their situation does indeed warrant distress, but also, and perhaps most importantly, the truth that the shifting and changing gender dynamics that emerge from marriage and migration, are possibly not warranted33. The establishment of plight of migrant husband as a social

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33 From my personal position as a feminist, researcher and British Muslim woman with Pakistani/Kashmiri heritage, some of the references to women in these songs of sorrow are unsettling for me.
truth sets the course for the ways in which migrant husbands reassert their masculinity, which will be discussed in the following two chapters.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have analysed a number of songs of sorrow for migrant husbands, which have further shed light on the experience of marriage and migration for migrant husbands prior to marriage, during marriage, and after marriage. These songs also shed light on the viewpoints of some migrant husbands. It is important to note that these songs of sorrow are listened to upon marriage and migration to the U.K, and particularly when the unfolding of events become unfavorable towards migrant husbands. As a result, these songs of sorrow hold significance for migrant husbands during what is otherwise a vulnerable and unstable point in time and life stage. I thematically analysed the songs of sorrow through a focus on expressing emotion, solidarity, and making a community. The crux of my argument has been that songs of sorrow, in their public and outward affirmation and declaration of support towards the plight of migrant husbands, provide acknowledgement and comfort, which have enabled migrant husbands to express their emotions and experience solidarity, which together enable the makings of a new community that is simultaneously other, othered, and self-othering. In other words, markers such as citizenship status made difficult by immigration laws have socially positioned migrant husbands in juxtaposition to UK citizens, including their wives and families. As a result, migrant husbands engage in self-othering (othering themselves) by way of engaging in solidarity and community making practices with fellow migrant husbands. In other words, they are identifying themselves as a community of migrant husbands through their common experiences of hardship and struggle. In this way, then, Songs of Sorrow function as an alternative social currency to the notion of the transnational patriarch, within which migrant husbands find ways to reassert their masculinities. These songs are also a testament to the ways in which migration can have a significant emotional cost for migrant husbands, and demonstrate, contrary to some of the negative traits of hegemonic masculinity, that there are spaces in which migrant husbands have opportunity to express, manage, and maneuver their emotions.
Further, these videos were entirely edited by migrant husband(s), and the music was performed by men who were migrant husbands and/or sympathisers of migrant husbands. The social position from which these music videos emerge is important to acknowledge. Turner (1992, 10) argues that the Kayapo viewed video documentation as a means of establishing social facts, and Banks (2011) further stresses that the power of photography is to legitimise social facts. The role of being a camera operator or video editor also has a social power associated with it (Turner: 1992, Burrum: 1991, Banks: 2001), and can be used to establish views or ‘social truths’. This is particularly salient in the context of the Songs of Sorrow as women are not involved in the lyrical composure of songs or in video editing process, and thus their voices are eliminated from the experiences of migrant husbands. However, while the social truths of the migrant husbands’ plight through songs of sorrow is a unique way in which to reassert masculinity from a disadvantaged position, we cannot ignore the fact that women are referred to in these songs within a patriarchal social framework. It is important to be aware of this juxtaposition of a multitude of socio-cultural matrixes at play; gender power dynamics, gendered religious expectations and ideals, migration aspirations, masculine ideals, and marriage expectations.

An important reoccurring theme through the Songs of Sorrow was religious symbols, which are the focus of the following chapter in this section. Indeed, religious symbols were particularly embedded within the stories and narratives (Riis and Woodhead: 2010, 91) of migrant husbands in Songs of Sorrow. Although perhaps not immediately apparent on first sight and/or hearing of Songs of Sorrow, a multivocality (Banks: 2001) is present, which when read at its deeper levels, demonstrates that the images employed in the videography serve as determined compact symbols (Ortner: 1973) that not only communicate emotional dispositions approved by a religious regime – namely conservative Islam - but also become entwined in autobiographies and anchor personal emotional mood and memories (Hoskins: 1998). Obeyeskere’s studies (1981: 46) reveal how symbols are appropriated and creatively reinterpreted by individuals who use them not only to make sense of their own situations, but to negotiate complex social relations and very often to attain some leverage within them, thereby effecting the changes in personal standing and circumstance that would otherwise be impossible (Riis and Woodhead: 2010, 68). Similarly,
‘multivocal’ (Banks: 2001) symbols used in the Songs of Sorrow are creatively employed by migrant husbands to negotiate the complexity of the migrant husband experience, and to attain leverage in the British Pakistani community context. Examples of such multivocal symbols include physical markers of religiosity (such as turbans) that transform into a socio-religious capital that migrant husbands employ in establishing authority. These multivocal symbols are considered in more detail in the following chapter.
Chapter 3.2: Prophetic Masculinity: Sufi-Scapes, *Sabr*, and Religiosocial Capital

Introduction

Migrant husbands who took part in my research often talked about their religious practices upon marriage and migration, particularly with Sufis, saints, and scholars (see also Keddie: 1972) within the Sufi-scape (following Appadurai: 1990) of Birmingham. As Arkoun puts it, Sufism is Islam’s ‘mystic strain’, the ‘ultimate purpose’ of which is the ‘unifying encounter between believer and his or her personal God’ (Arkoun: 1994, 81). Sufi Islamic traditions have often been associated with ‘shrine-centred worship’ and affiliation with Sufi ‘brotherhoods’ [tariqa] and ‘lodges’ [zawiya] (Marsden: 2005, Grewal: 2014). The role of mediating Sufis, saints, and scholars are critical in the practicing of Sufi Islam, as they guide and teach their followers. Examples of Sufi brotherhoods include the Tabligh-e-Jamat and Naqshbandiyya (Marsden: 2005, Metcalf: 2004, 11, Grewal: 2014).

In South Asia, Sufi-oriented Islamic traditions have experienced severe criticism from Muslim reformers for the past two centuries. Muslim ‘purists’ have labeled Sufi Islam ‘illegal’ and as having been derived from Hinduism; as a result, it has been argued to be a distortion of the ‘correct’ form of Islamic doctrine and practice, which is seen to be based entirely on the Qur’an and the Hadith [sayings of the Prophet Muhammad] (Marsden: 2005). Any practice outside of the parameters of the Qur’an and Hadith is deemed to be *bid’ah* [innovation] in and to the religion (Birt: 2005). Nonetheless, Sufi Islam thrives in Pakistan and other areas of South Asia and the world (Ewing: 1983, Hoffman: 1995, Subhan: 1999, Howell: 2001, Marsden: 2005, Cornell: 2010). Pakistani Muslims The Pakistani community in Britain have not only been Sufi followers but have also established mosques and sought tolerance for their religious identity, beliefs, and practices in Britain (Werbner: 1992, Ballard: 1994).

Today in the city of Birmingham, UK, where the fieldwork took place, there are over 167 mosques.
With over 167 mosques in Birmingham, a recent addition to the city’s religious landscape is the rise of Sufi zawiyas (lodges) and halaqas (see also Grewal: 2014) in the last five to ten years through the influence of international religious leaders such as Shaykh Muhammad Al-Yaqoubi, a Syrian Islamic scholar and direct descendent of the Prophet Muhammad, and the leader of the Shadhilli tareeqa [Sufi religious order] (Shikhaliev: 2009). Migrant husbands who participated in my research spoke in great detail about their engagement with Sufi brotherhoods, as a result of which I was able to start mapping the broader Sufi-scape of Birmingham.\(^\text{34}\)

\(^{34}\) The mapping was conducted based on the information provided to me by my participants. There may of course be additional Sufi-spaces in Birmingham that I m unaware of as a result of my narrow research focus on migrant husbands.
Each Sufi brotherhood had a unique colour that dominated their uniform, setting them apart from other Sufi brotherhoods. Members of Faizan-e-Madina, founded in 1980 by Dawat-e-Islami, is a Sunni Islamic organisation based in Pakistan, donned green turbans and white thobes, whereas the followers of Jamiah Mohy-Ul-Islam Siddiquia founded by the Pir Siddiqui, donned white hats that were laced with a thin green strip. Followers of Kanzul-Huda who were founded and led by Pir Saqib Shaami wore orange scarves to signify their allegiance with the Chistiyyah Sufi tradition.

Map 2: A map of Birmingham on which I have indicated the Sufi brotherhoods that migrant husbands engaged with, in an aqua coloured location spot with black rings around.
Figure 24: The Faizan-e-Madina uniform, image source Google.

Figure 25: The Kanzul-Huda uniform, image source Google.
Two additional spaces included the zawiya [Sufi lodge] in the Ward End area of Birmingham that hosted both the Naqshbandiyah (Weismann: 2007) and Shadhili (Shikhaliev: 2009) tareeqas, and Ghamkol Sharif Mosque, which hosted mainly joint events between the many Sufi brotherhoods in Birmingham. I also learnt that these spaces were not restricted to men, as women had their own gatherings, mawlids [celebration of Prophet Muhammad’s birth] and tajweed [term for the pronunciation of Quranic Arabic] lessons. As my research focus is the masculinity of migrant husbands, women will only feature either as the patients of the spiritual healers or the wives of migrant husbands. I ought to point out however, that there has in the past five years been a rapid increase in female Islamic scholarship (see also Grewal: 2014) within Birmingham, with a number of Ustadhas [female Muslim scholars] pioneering the way forward. More broadly, mawlids [celebration of the Prophet Muhammad’s birthday] have long been celebrated by some Muslim women in Birmingham and female religious engagement and experience is seen to be acceptable and encouraged within the community.

Following on from the previous chapter in which Songs of Sorrow were found to be a medium through which migrant husbands revised aspirations by establishing their plight as a social truth,
and within which religious references were featured, in this chapter I explore religiosity as another method to revise aspirations, and to ultimately reassert masculinity. I consider the experiences of migrant husbands upon marriage and migration to the UK within this Sufi-scape. The first section of the chapter considers how migrant husbands employ stories of hardships experienced by prophets and Sufi saints of the past and the present in reasserting their masculinity, which leads me to argue that a form of ‘prophetic masculinity’ exists within Birmingham’s Sufi-scape. ‘Prophetic masculinity’ is an alternative social currency which competes with the social currencies demonstrated and exhibited by hegemonic masculinities, such as that of the transnational patriarch. The second section of the chapter focuses on the practicing of sabr [patience] to reassert masculinity. In doing so, it provides an insight into the deeply embodied experiences of migrant husbands. In particular, it is shown that migrant husbands express emotion that within the broader literature on resistance, is usually associated with femininity. The third section of the chapter demonstrates the importance of this sufi-scape for the building of support systems for migrant husbands, which is followed by a section on examining how performance within the Sufi-scape of Birmingham becomes a source of religiosocial capital for some migrant husbands. This chapter then, focuses on the micro-processes at play in the shaping of migrant husbands’ experiences of religion and religiosity, while they experience liminality that can be hallmarked by vulnerability and instability. The chapter also provides an ethnographically rich insight into the nexus that lies at the heart of marriage:migration:masculinity.

Prophetic Masculinity

A common theme that surfaced during my life history interviews with migrant husbands was the experience of religion as a way to reassert masculinity. Amongst the different ways that religion

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35 At an event by the International Institute of Islamic Thought, which I attended in Washington D.C in February 2019, the Malaysian Prime Minister in waiting, Dato Anwar Ibrahim was invited to speak on the issue of conscious governance. ‘Prophetic masculinity’ was a term employed to introduce him. Specifically, the Prime Minister in waiting’s hardships were likened to Prophet Yusuf’s life experience. This spoke to the concept of ‘prophetic masculinity’ I was developing at the time while writing my PhD, as I saw resemblances between migrant husbands in the field who felt subjugated, weak, oppressed, and misunderstood, and the Malaysian Prime Minister in waiting whose political experiences were described in the same way. Both sets of men, whilst differed in ethnicity and life experiences, juxtaposed themselves in proximity to Prophets, which in my view is telling of this type of masculinity and its prominence amongst Muslim men across the globe.
was experienced, imagined and reimagined, stories of hardships experienced by prophets\textsuperscript{36} and saints - both past and present - featured heavily as techniques to reassert masculinity, as they provided an alternative masculine currency to that of the transnational patriarch.

\textit{Past}

After many years of abuse from his father-in-law and in a marriage rife with tensions, Imran had separated from his wife three years prior to our interview, and had found permanent employment at a Pakistani confectionary and sweet store. Imran and other migrant husbands in similar situations as him, dealt with their pain by constructing a space in which they practiced spirituality in order to become closer to God, become stronger, and \textit{“not fall into the traps of the dunya [world]”}. The construction of this space involves the remembering of prophets such as Muhammad, Musa (Moses), and Yusuf (Joseph), and Sufis and saints such as Miah Muhammad Baksh. In particular, the remembering of their hardships, trials, and tribulations was employed to strengthen their relationship with God and as a result, these spaces became a way for migrant husbands to weather the precarious and vulnerable circumstances they often found themselves in.

Imran talked about the role of Sufi poetry from a saint who lived in the early 1800s:

\begin{quote}
When you feel pain you feel unspoken things...Miah Muhammad Baksh understands pain and suffering and the way of the world. These people [Sufi saints] knew that the world is full of betrayal and disappointment and it makes me feel better by listening to his words. One of the things he says is: “If you do good to pious men they will never forget for generations. If you do good to mean people, they will return it by injuring your feelings.”
\end{quote}

During our telephone interview, Imran sent me the quote from Mia Muhammad Buksh, a Sufi saint from Azad Kashmir who had lived between 1830 and 1907, via WhatsApp messenger.

\textsuperscript{36} See also Hoque (2019: 80) who notes that the Muslim diaspora are captivated by the notion of a ‘glorious Islamic past’. I argue that the retelling of the hardships experienced by prophets and saints enables this glorious view of the Islamic past, which contributes to the construction of ‘prophetic masculinity’.
Figure 27: Imran showed me a picture of the Sufi saint’s quote he was referring to. I asked Imran if he could send me this image through WhatsApp so that I could include it in my paper.

Imran also talked about drawing strength from other prominent figures in Islam:

*Imam Ali’s life example and sayings have made me stronger... The Prophet Yusuf’s story also provides me strength and comfort. The difficulties they experienced from their own family because his brothers sold him off and he was then sold into slavery and also was kept in jail for many years. These stories give me strength and teach me patience... They are a perfect example of what it means to be a man... they show me what kind of man I should be...*

Ahmed also spoke about the trials of the Prophet Muhammad that he constantly remembered:

*We know from reading about the life of the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him that he experienced so many trials, he had children who died, he had people who wanted to murder him, people who would throw stones at him when he walked past their house and he would not utter a word. The life of our Prophet is an example for us. I remember his trials...*
when my mother-in-law swears at me and when she fills my wife’s ears with hate for me, when she causes me and my wife to argue, it helps me stay patient and remember that Allah is with me.

Faris told me about the hardships of men who migrated in the past and how their trials helped him deal with his difficulties:

We often forget about those men hundreds of years before us who migrated on foot to different countries. The great migration that Musa [Moses] Alay Hi Slaam [form of respect after mentioning a prophet’s name] took with his people, when he had enemies chasing him. Allah split the sea for him and his people to pass safely and escape the enemies. If Allah can do that for Musa, Allah is with us too. Sallahudin also took a great migration for the Muslims world. Migration for a bigger cause is never easy, but Allah makes it easy.

It was evident that for Imran, Ahmed, Faris, and other migrant husbands in similar situations that I spoke to, drew on the past experiences of Muslim men to stand strong in the face of their own hardships. This use of historical narrations detailing the life trajectories of prominent figures in Islamic history to construct a current space of agency in a transnational, diaspora context is unique. Migrant husbands find themselves placed in difficult positions that they could transcend as a result of, and in which they exercise solidarity and spirituality. In their accounts, it transpired that this sense of solidarity and spirituality, through the remembrance of key Muslim male figures and the trials they faced, provided an arena in which they could experience an internal feeling of sukoon [peace], and through which they could experience a momentary break from their day-to-day anxieties. In this way then, ‘prophetic masculinity’ comprises an important part of the masculine ideal that migrant husbands aspired to during such difficult times where they experienced a sense of increased vulnerability. At the same time, the remembrance of these life histories of men in Islam was telling of the ‘hope’ that migrant husbands possessed and cherished, that they would soon see better days, and at the very least, be recognised in the eyes of God as a reward, both of which became a technique used to reassert their masculinity internally, within themselves.

Present
The current-day Islamic context of Birmingham became a resource for some migrant husbands to employ as a technique to reassert their masculinity. A number of migrant husbands told me about taking bayah [religious affiliation] (see Grewal: 2014) with Sunni Islamic brotherhoods in Birmingham. For instance, Asif, shared his experience taking bayah [spiritual affiliation] with Pir Siddiqui, leader of Noor TV. Followers of this particular group don white clothing with hats that are decorated with a single green strip. He told me how the group’s TV channel would be viewed by his wife’s family and extended family relatives, which exposed him to participating in collective forms of prayer such as zikr and wurd [supplications] that he subsequently wanted to take part. He therefore took the decision to take bayah with the pir [Sufi leader] of the group. Upon being asked how he had felt taking bayah, Asif said:

“I was happy. I had something other than my wife’s family. A group of men that I could join and be friends with but also remember Allah...I felt supported and I felt safe.”

Similarly, Zaid took bayah with the Dawat-e-Islami [literal translation: Invitation to Islam] group who have a mosque in Birmingham called Faizan-e-Madina. Dawat-e-Islami is a Sunni Islamic organisation based in Pakistan and was founded in the 1980s. Followers of this particular group don white clothing with green turbans. Zaid told me:

We would read namaaz [prayer] in Pakistan 5 times a day at the village mosque but here people do not read their prayers, they don’t care as much. I would go to the Madani channel mosque [Faizan-e-Madina]...They gave Friday sermons in Urdu which was nice. I found a family outside of my wife’s family who supported me...these people spoke my language and shared my values and beliefs.

Zaid explained that his affiliation with the mosque in this way earned him respect (see also Redclift and Rajina: 2017, 2) among his wife’s family, as it was suggestive of his loyalty towards his wife.

The British born sons don’t go to the mosque usually but I do and I’m from Pakistan, so I am now more important to them than their British sons... I think I would have been respected less and treated badly if I was not religious except if I had money and was rich...
His insight demonstrates that religiosity was a source of social-cultural capital (Bourdieu: 1986, Bi: 2019) employed by migrant husbands in a strategic way, a point that will be expanded on further at a later stage of this chapter.

Migrant husbands spoke fondly of the uniforms they wore as part of their Sufi tareeqas [groups], as it helped them feel they belonged somewhere, especially as they often experienced negativity and bad treatment at the hands of their wives and in-laws and had limited support networks.

Faisal told me:

_ Wearing the green turban and white thobe was a great honour for me. It made me happy and full of pride that I was part of something, part of a group of men who were going to be there for me and support me in my religious journey. It was really precious for me._

The various forms of external markers that indicated affiliation with certain Sufi brotherhoods resonated with earlier forms external appearances such as haircuts, apparel, sunglasses and jewelry. The experiencing of hardships upon marriage and migration meant that the techniques employed in _becoming_ a migrant husband were no longer relevant in _remaining_ a migrant husband.

Yassir told me:

_ Coming from Pakistan is not easy. It’s a new country, new way of doing things here. It seems that our ‘apne’ [own kin] have also forgotten their ways. They only care about what someone is going to give them and how they can be of use to them. I found peace and solace when I found Pir Siddiqi and his followers...we all wear the same hat, we are one, we are unified, and this gives me peace also because everything else in my life is shattered._

The brotherhoods in Birmingham were a space in which migrant husbands could experience belonging, community, and oneness, outside the family units they had joined upon marriage migration, and in the country that they had long envisioned to settle in.
Haider explained that he had taken bayah with the Chishti group in Birmingham, who don orange scarves as their distinct uniform. He told me:

_Having a Pir gave me guidance not only religiously and spiritually, but also in terms of the difficult times I experience. When he gives talks, it is captivating, it is like a medicine...I have also spoken to Pir Saqib Shami in person. He has given me good advice, I know I must keep patience and faith and things will get better._

Haider’s insight indicated experiences of gaining a sense of peace and support, internally and also the ways that membership of these brotherhoods can lead to external forms of support.

Shafique, told me about a holy man he had visited during a time of great distress in his marriage:

_When my wife wanted to divorce me, one of my friends advised me to visit a holy man in Birmingham. I went to him and told him the situation. He gave me some wazifas [prayer supplications] to read everyday to solve my problem. He also gave me some talismans to burn every two days in the evenings for two months...He also looked in ink and found out if someone had done black magic on us [the husband and wife]...He said that people had done black magic on me and my wife so that we divorce. He told me that he saw in the ink my mother-in-law brainwashing my wife and wanting to destroy our marriage. A week after following his instructions, my wife no longer wanted a divorce and things improved. She [wife] then said she wanted to move out of her parent’s house and get a separate house...we are currently renting._
Shafiq attributed the progress in his marriage to the help provided to him by the holy man he had visited. Shafiq was happy to provide for the research, an image of the talismans he continues to burn. He told me the holy man instructed him to light the talisman at the pointed tip, and to circulate it in anti-clockwise motions (see also Marsden: 2005).

The unseen world was something that Shafiq explained in more detail:

There are some people who Allah blesses with ‘roohani taqat’ [spiritual power], which helps them to help people with problems. They see jinn, they see angels, they see what is causing problems for who. You and I, we see the ‘seen’ world, we see everything that can be seen but there is a whole world that cannot be seen, and in that world so much happens like ‘kaala jaadoo’ [black magic] that affects our seen world....and only some people that are
The importance of such external forms of intervention by shaykhs and pirs, including through talisman and supplications, was great, in the eyes of many migrant husbands I interviewed, as they told me that they believed that black magic had been performed on them. It was as a result of this black magic that they believed they experienced ill-health, marital issues, and problems with their visas upon migration, and the support of shaykhs and pirs was an important way to help them overcome the black magic. They often believed that jealous relatives in their home countries who were unhappy that they had been lucky enough to marry a British girl who sponsored their visas to England, performed the black magic. Sometimes, these were relatives who had wanted the migrant husband’s wife to marry their own son and as a result, the migrant husbands believed they were the targets of black magic. Some migrant husbands felt that both their in-laws in England and relatives in Pakistan were performing black magic on them for various reasons, including historical issues with the father-in-law or the mother-in-law, or jealousy for the shared wealth the migrant husbands brought to his wife’s family. The imagery and stories of prophets, Sufis, saints, and scholars, played a key role in understanding the problems at hand, and providing a ‘roohani’ [spiritual] solution for them. In this way then, visiting a man who possessed unseen knowledge who could solve problems was at times also an exercise of reasserting masculinity, as it would enable the migrant husband to take specific actions to solve the issues at hand. In other words, roohani taqat was employed to alleviate them from their disadvantaged, inferior, and vulnerable positions within this particular social matrix.

Collectively, these narratives provide an insight into the importance of prophets, Sufis, saints, and scholars, of both the past and present, to which migrant husbands could either relate to in times of hardship and/or turn to for advice. While some turned to holy men for religious knowledge of the unseen (Marsden: 2005) to make amulets that manufactured circumstances in favour of migrant husbands, others turned to them for the provision of alternative spaces, which were used as coping mechanisms to deal with the struggles they are faced with. All of these were tethered together with an overarching framework of prophetic masculinity, which was shared by and between the men that governed and created these spaces and those that performed within them.
Three common themes that emerged through these narratives was the practice of *sabr* (patience), the building of support systems, and acquiring social capital, which all helped migrant husbands to reassert their masculinity. These themes will each in turn be explored further in the remainder of this chapter.

**Practicing Sabr**

Migrant husbands told me in detail about the ways in which they remembered prominent prophets, Sufis, saints, and scholars, took religious affiliation with religious brotherhoods, asked for independent advice regarding their personal marital and familial situations, and on some occasions, acquired talismans and supplications that they could utilise to manufacture situations in their favour, through utilising ‘unseen spiritual knowledge’. Suspended in time and space as a result of their liminal status, by engaging with these religious resources migrant husbands can be seen to be practicing agency and *sabr* (patience) (see also Qureshi: 2013), both distinct social phenomenon that I found to be interlinked.

Sabr means patience and can colloquially denote an existential engagement with suffering that has particular resonance for women (Qureshi: 2013). Sabr can be conceptualised as both an inner strength that is directed towards God as well as a capacity that is granted by God (Qureshi: 2013). Within the British Pakistani community and Pakistani society more broadly, it has traditionally been seen as a feminine capacity entangled with notions of self-sacrifice and silent suffering (Qureshi: 2013, Wilson: 2006). Sabr has also been described as a passive form of agency in situations such as the Partition of India, where patient acceptance and endurance was seen to be a form of agency (Das: 1997). Women in Das’ (1997) study talked about how they ‘drank their pain’ so that it disappeared from the surface to the depths of their bodies, which sheds light as to how agency can be manifested in how people take pain inside themselves, and actively hide and embody it.

Perhaps the most notable work on *sabr* is that of Saba Mahmood (2005) who analyses moral practices of submission as a form of agency. The women Mahmood spoke to as part of the women’s mosque movement in Cairo urged her to consider suffering in bad marriages as a trial in
which they actively practiced *sabr*. Mahmood argues that by exercising *sabr*, the women in the mosque movement are exercising agency. However, she stresses that this agency is rooted not in the women but in the discourse that subjugates them. The case of migrant husbands is then important in two ways; firstly it challenges the notion that *sabr* is confined to the feminine domain, and secondly it challenges the notion of agency being rooted in the dynamics that subjugates migrant husbands. Put differently, the source of agency is constructed and exercised outside the remit of the transnational and uxorilocal household dynamic, in Sufi Scapes which have a unique transnational dynamic of different to that of the migrant husband’s household. Agency is then constructed outside of the remit of the space within which the migrant husband’s oppression takes place, and is then brought into this space to alter his position in the household, and ultimately his masculinity.

*Drawing inner strength*

Migrant husbands often spoke about making themselves ‘*mazboot*’ [strong] to deal with their trials and tribulation. Their inner strength would be drawn by the remembrance of Allah, recalling the inspirational stories of prominent men in Islamic history who had defeated their enemies and remained steadfast in their faith. Yassir told me:

“I am going to be honest, the words and behaviour of those we thought were our loved ones is painful to experience…they [in-laws] want to break me but I am strong…the strengthen comes from knowing that I am on the path of Allah, the path of ‘*haq*’ [truth] and do not harm even an ant, but they harm those that they promised to look after…”

Inner strength was a key strand of *sabr*, which was built over time, however, for some migrant husbands, inner strength was drawn on after feeling betrayed and hurt by those they trusted. For example, Yassir told me:

*I trusted my wife, I trusted her parents. My parents trusted her parents. We are family you know. My father-in-law is my mother’s brother. How could they treat me like this. When that belief and trust is shattered, overnight you become strong, you have to become strong. You don’t have a choice.*
Migrant husbands described inner strength in different ways. Saleem for instance told me:

*You have to make your heart as strong as iron if you want to make it in this country. Your wife treats you badly, your in-laws treat you like a criminal, you’re so far away from your family, and your kids they answer you back and do not understand your pain.*

For Naeem, inner strength was:

*My heart has turned to ice. You have to turn it to ice to stay strong inside and deal with all the hardships, otherwise I would have maybe died a long time ago.*

In this way then, inner strength was drawn and built from practicing Islam in new and creative ways, was seen to solidify the heart through images of iron, ice, concrete, and stone, to prevent migrant husbands from feeling pain. *Sabr* for the migrant husbands was thus a way to numb, mute, and silence the pain inside of them, in order to be able to continue their day-to-day lives. Inner strength was a way to transcend the pain of the body, into a space where migrant husbands could address what was causing their pain. Mahmood’s (2005) contention that agency is rooted in that which subjugates is partially echoed here, and yet to begin to address what was causing the pain, I found that migrant husbands firstly numbed that pain. This employment of *sabr* is not too dissimilar to the techniques Pakistani women employ in Qureshi’s study (2013), or to Egyptian women who were documented as ‘swallowing’, ‘embodying’ and ‘ingesting’ pain (Mahmood: 2001).

*Silent suffering*

While some migrant husbands found different mechanisms such as taking *bayah* with religious brotherhoods in Birmingham to reassert their masculinity, many initially started out as suffering in silence. At the same time, migrant husbands who took *bayah* discovered a sense of community and yet continued to suffer in silence, as they were unable to speak about their issues for fear of being ridiculed and/or misunderstood as a result of the social stigma perpetuated by the wife and the wife’s family, about ‘disloyal’ migrant husbands who abandon their wives. Silent suffering seemed to be the virtuous strand of *sabr* that migrant husbands practiced. The silence of the
suffering at the same time demanded to be recognised at the very least in the religious realm through reward by God. Shafiq, the migrant husband who previously told me about using a talisman to ease his marital tensions explained:

“Suffering in silence was something I chose to do because sometimes there is no other option. My wife knew what I was feeling, and I think my suffering did make her think about what her parents were doing. Sometimes you speak, and sometimes you don’t speak, but the outcome is better when you don’t speak, people realise the truth.”

Here, Shafiq was employing his silent suffering in a strategic way in the hope that his wife would realise the qualities of her husband – loyal, patient, did not complain – and see the wrongdoing of her parents towards her husband. Shafiq’s silent suffering demanded to be heard, seen and felt by those around him and went a long way in shaping his marital tensions, as his wife eventually moved out with him from her parent’s house, to a separate home. Silent suffering was thus a way to suppress the pain one felt, however, some migrant husbands seemed be able to control how much of the silent suffering came to the surface as a resource in and of itself to influence those around them to treat them better. In this way then, migrant husbands such as Shafiq reasserted their masculinity through this silent suffering, including through sabr, as they helped built an alternative social currency in which they could perform masculinity.

*Drinking poison*

Migrant husbands described their trials as zehar peena [drinking poison], or thuthaa kut dudh na peena [swallowing a sip of hot milk], which indicated a significant use of the body to internalise, process, and store hardships (see also Mahmood: 2001, Qureshi: 2013). The effect of poison would be debilitating and potentially life threatening, and likewise the metaphor of swallowing hot milk – although less severe compared to drinking poison - connotes suffering burns to the mouth and the throat. Such descriptions then pave a way to consider what agency and sabr mean and their relationship to one another. Further, to voluntarily ingest poison and allow it to affect the body is, in the metaphorical sense, a choice the migrant husbands is making. Embedded within this choice is the hope that things will get better. Sabr and agency are then tied together intricately
through the concept of *umeed* [hope] that things will get better.

Faisal told me:

> *umeed kadhi vi na choro* [never leave hope].

The hope that their situations will improve was, I found, tied to the aspirations and visions of what life as a transnational patriarch would entail. The act of *sabr* then through drawing inner strength, silent suffering, and drinking poison was an attempt to mould circumstances to fit the social imaginary of the envisioned migrant life that some migrant husbands had carried as socially shaping narratives for many years. As a result, then, practicing *sabr* led back to reasserting of masculinity for migrant husbands, as it provided an alternative entry point into becoming a transnational patriarch or transcending this masculine ideal completely.

**Building Support Systems**

Haider, who took *bayah* with the Chishti Sufi brotherhood led by Pir Saqib Shaami shared with me how he had been able to make friends outside of his family network. This was of particular importance to Haider, as he felt the majority of his family network were supportive of his father-in-law due to his status in the community and thus, building a support system for himself – or as he called it ‘his own people’ – was important to Haider. The Sufi brotherhood then became an integral part of Haider’s experience as a migrant husband:

*When I first came to England, I had many visitors from my wider family come to visit but after a few days everybody went to their own homes. In Pakistan the houses are quite open whereas in England the houses are closed and you have to seek permission before you come and go. It became quite lonely after a few weeks. When work started, I was only working and coming home to sleep and then going back to work. The tareeqa [brotherhood] was a way for me to make new friends and made me happy.*

Akbar told me his experience of making friends as a migrant husband:

*There are a lot of bad ideas the community has about us [migrant husbands], that we only*
came for the passport, and as soon as we get the full stay [citizenship] we will run away. I had to be careful about going out to see friends because bad things would have been said about me. Sometimes if I went to the local grocery store and started talking to the men at the butcher shop, my father-in-law would say I was going to fall in bad company and run away...but when I joined the tareeqa, it was ok. My father-in-law didn’t shout or say anything bad to me. He knew it was religious gathering. He didn’t come with me, but some relatives would attend and send the message back to my father-in-law that I was not doing anything wrong.

Making friends within the religious arena was seen to be more acceptable by some migrant husbands’ families and thus, they were able to navigate social stigmas attached to being a migration husband.

Faisal told me about his experience:

“When I went to the Pir to explain the problems I was having, he gave me wazifas and taweez to help me...I felt someone finally understood what I was going through. He was able to see the truth with his powers...I speak to him regularly and even see him and have a cup of tea...

Some current-day Sufis, saints and scholars played a paternal and pastoral role in the lives of migrant husbands, who were not only missing their families in Pakistan, but also experiencing vulnerable and unstable situations upon marriage and migration in the UK. Faisal elaborated further:

“Many things my Pir says remind me of my father’s words and wisdom. I cannot always speak to my father, but I see my Pir often, and it makes me feel better because I feel I have seen my father.”

Asif took bayah [spiritual affiliation] with Pir Siddiqi, and spoke about the way in which his spiritual affiliation paved a way for him to develop a support network at the mosque with other migrant husbands and second and third generation British Pakistanis. He explained that he felt more
supported and was able to approach his network of co-spiritual affiliates with problems he was experiencing. When I asked him if he could provide an example of a problem he had approached his affiliates with, he told me about speaking to two affiliates regarding the mistreatment he was being subjected to by his wife.

My friend [from the halaqa] organised for his wife to meet my wife and they now meet regularly. My wife has become more understanding because she knows her role as a mother and a wife in Islam and she wants to do the right thing...she advised my wife that pleasing the husband is pleasing Allah and if a woman shouts at her husband and treats him badly, it calls for severe punishment in the hereafter.

In this way, Asif’s co-spiritual affiliates became a source of marital counseling, which reinforced ideas of masculinity entrenched in patriarchy and conservatism, and gendered notions of the home and marital relations. In this way then, reasserting masculinity can entail the reinscribing of forms of control over women.

Support systems acquired through the religiosocial landscape in Birmingham was an important way in which migrant husbands were able to experience belonging in a new community after migrating with many aspirations, many of which had not been realised due to often unimagined situations upon arriving into the UK, and in often vulnerable and unstable situations. It is also interesting to note that this is a second form of community building following the community building and shared solidarity in and through Songs of Sorrow (previous chapter).

**Acquiring socio-religious capital**

In Zaid’s experience, the perception of his increased religiosity with the followers of *Faizan-e-Madina*, provided him with social-cultural capital, that included trust and respect from his wife’s family. The trust and respect acquired in this way acted as stepping-stones for Zaid to achieve the aspired masculinity, at least within the parameters of what the migrant husband’s wife’s family deemed acceptable (see also Redcliff and Rajina: 2017, 2)9. Zaid explained that his affiliation with the Sufi brotherhood and the mosque in this way earned him respect among his wife’s family, as it was suggestive of his loyalty towards his wife.
Men [migrant husbands] usually come here and their wives treat them badly and then they go away and leave them. But people are saying good things about me to my father-in-law that I have behaved myself. The British born sons do not usually go to the mosque but I do and I’m from Pakistan, so I am now more important to them than their British sons...

His insight demonstrates that, as mentioned previously, religiosity can become a form of social-cultural capital (Bourdieu: 1986) that migrant husbands can employ in a strategic way to reassert and recreate their masculinity in new ways.

As part of my fieldwork, Shafiq put me in touch with his spiritual healer, Hanif, who provided him with amulets and  

\textit{wazifas} to perform in order to alleviate the marital tensions he was experiencing (see also Marsden: 2005, Hoque: 2019, 82). I learnt that Hanif himself was also a migrant husband who had arrived in the UK in 1990 after marrying his father’s younger brother’s daughter.

\textit{Times were simpler then. The immigration laws were not as strict as they are today, and family situations were not as bad as they are today. As more people came to England, more ‘rishtas’ [relationships/marriage proposals] were fixed between the children from here and the children in Pakistan and this has caused a lot of problems for many families...then there is also the issue of land and ‘khotiya’ [mansions]...the richer people get in England, the more problems they have in Pakistan...}

In this section of the chapter, I will focus on Hanif’s experiences in more detail as he exemplifies the ways in which he navigated life as a migrant husband, leveraging his Islamic knowledge to create an alternative space in which he could reassert his masculinity. When Hanif first arrived in the UK he worked in various jobs, including as a butcher, as an assistant to his Uncle who had his own construction company, and as a taxi driver. Hanif had received an extensive Islamic education in Pakistan, including memorizing the Qur’an and hadith [sayings of the Prophet Muhammad], which he wished to retain. He told me his jobs would make it difficult to pray, but he had managed to find a balance while working with his Uncle, as his Uncle would allow him to take a break to pray. Due to Hanif’s religiosity in keeping up with his prayers and it widely being known that he was a  

\textit{hafiz} [person who had memorized the Qur’an], family members, friends of his family,
neighbours, and community members began to approach him for spiritual guidance for their problems. Over time, he began to be seen as the local spiritual healer. Today, he told me, people with afflictions and problems visit him from cities as far north as Bradford and Glasgow, and as far South as London and Southampton for solutions to their problems.

Men and women from far and close visit me for help with their problems. Sometimes the husbands are drinking and gambling and wives want to bring them back on the right path, sometimes mothers-in-law are treating daughters-in-law badly, sometimes young men from Pakistan are being treated badly by their in-laws and wives, or dushmanee [enmities] happens between families over land issues in Pakistan, or jealous sisters-in-law are doing kaala jadoo [black magic] on the other sister-in-law so she doesn’t have children, or daughters have run away with a man…there are so many issues people come to me with.

When asked about the different solutions he provides to his ‘patients’, Hanif told me:

I provide wazifas [supplications] for people to read on a daily basis to help ease the difficulties they are going through…I provide taweez [talismans] to people to keep on them by wearing it around their neck, or by soaking the talisman in water and giving it to the troubled person, or sprinkle the water around the house where problems are happening…sometimes I give taweez to burn on regular basis for a length of time…the more difficult the problem, the longer they should burn the taweez…

There was a particular method that Hanif often employed in his healing sessions to understand the problem his patients were suffering:

I pour into the ink pot’s lid and I begin to read some wazifas [supplications]. I call on my spiritual elders who have passed this ruhaani taqat [spiritual power] to me. Through the ink, they allow me to see why someone is experiencing difficulty. Sometimes in the ink it even shows me the face of the person and the name of who is performing ‘kaala jadoo’ [black magic] on the people but I do not tell my patients because they go back and accuse the people and say I told them because of what I saw, and it causes me problems, so I do not tell anymore no matter how much my patients plead with me.
I asked Hanif if I was able to sit in on one of his spiritual healing sessions, and he agreed. I was given strict instructions to follow to ensure I was not negatively affected by bad spirits through the removal of black magic which patients were potentially afflicted with. These instructions included, not to be menstruating, to wear a clean clothing, and to perform *wudu* [ablution] before attending the healing session.

When I arrived at Hanif’s house, I stood outside his front door. A lady opened the door - his wife I was later told – and she told me that I needed to enter the side door. I knocked on the side door of an added onto section of the house, possibly what may have previously been a garage or driveway. A young boy opened the door for me, and I saw a man in the corner, sitting on a cushion, with prayer beads in his hands, who seemed to be engaged in reciting something to himself. He nodded to acknowledge my arrival and indicated that I should come in and take a seat on the right-hand side of the room. I removed my shoes and took a seat on the cushion on the right-hand side of the room. A healing session was currently in progress. Three women, a middle-aged woman, her two daughters and her grandson were seated across me on the left-hand side. The room was a small space, perhaps three meters in width and five meters in length. Islamic scriptures and motifs hung on the walls, and straw weaved mats carpeted the floor. Hanif was leaning against a wooden chest of draws, which I later saw him access for talismans and supplications, which he had printed in bulk to dispense to his patients.

The healing session I had been able to observe was focused on issuing spiritual healing for the better health of the middle-aged woman’s husband, who had suffered a stroke a few days prior. During the two hours spent in the healing session, I also witnessed a migrant husband who came with his older brother to seek a remedy for his wife’s lack of love towards him. Hanif informed him that his wife had a boyfriend prior to the marrying him, and whom she continued seeing after the marriage. Hanif provided the migrant husband talismans to burn every day for a month, and a supplication to read every morning to break the relationship between the wife and her boyfriend. I also witnessed a woman who attended with her sister who had been unable to conceive for five years. Hanif saw in the ink that there were a number of family members who had performed black magic on her so that she does not bear children to her husband, who is the only son and therefore
inheritor of his father’s wealth and land. She was instructed to read a number of supplications at different times (between now and her next ovulation cycle and before intercourse with her husband), and to burn talismans for fourteen days to break the ‘āsr’ [effect] of the black magic that had been performed on her.

Through these observations, it became apparent that Hanif had access to the most intimate arenas of his patient’s lives, and had space annexed to his home that was dedicated to these spiritual healing sessions, and that he was a trusted healer within the Pakistani Muslim community in Birmingham, and the UK more widely. From March 2018 to August 2018, I observed five spiritual healing sessions. I asked Hanif how being a spiritual healer impacted his life as a migrant husband:

“As you have seen, there are many men who migrate to the UK after marrying a British girl who come to me about their problems. Thankfully I did not have some of the issues they have because the time I came in was much simpler.

[Me:] “If you were not a spiritual healer, do you think your experience would be different?”

“I think helping people, guiding people, and having people come to me [for help] makes me someone who is respected in the community. People know who I am and they know that my spiritual power is real because their problems are solved or at least they are reduced. I think if I was not doing this, maybe I would have less respect, and maybe because of that people would treat me differently.”

[Me:] “Do you think your in-laws would treat you differently?”

“My father-in-law is elderly now, but when I first arrived he was strict towards me. I remember that when people started to seek spiritual advice from me, he did become less harsh towards me and slowly, slowly he stopped being harsh to me. I think if I wasn’t this well respected in the community, and I didn’t have the spiritual power from God, then my in-laws would have treated me very differently.”

This insight from Hanif, together with insights from migrant husbands such as Zaid and Yassir whose in-laws approved of the religious social space as an acceptable space which they could visit
and participate in, demonstrates that religious participation in Sufi-scapes within Birmingham is a form of social capital employed by migrant husbands in a number of multiple and creative ways. For Hanif in particular, religion or religiosity (as I better describe it as it encompasses the degree of religious practice demonstrated) was associated with ‘positive’ characteristics such as loyalty, that enabled him to build a network that depended on him. This dependence enabled him to administer his skills and expertise, which generate a continuous currency of respect and honour, both within the community and his family.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I focused on the activities of migrant husbands; their ability to draw on religion within the Sufi-scape of Birmingham as a resource to reassert masculinity. I posited that the reassertion of masculinity involved creating alternative social currencies which competed with the social currencies demonstrated and exhibited by hegemonic masculinities, such as that of the transnational patriarch. Through engaging with and recalling the stories of prophets, Sufis, saints, and scholars of both the past and present, migrant husbands were able to practice sabr, build support systems, and acquire social capital, which enabled them to exercise agency in different ways. In particular, I demonstrated the micro-processes that can be missed at first glance of the ways migrant husbands navigated often vulnerable and unstable social circumstances. Often, migrant husbands found new ways to be migrant husbands, discovering avenues such as joining Sufi brotherhoods and visiting Muslim spiritual healers to (re)assert their masculinity, and in some cases maintain their masculinity. Masculinity then, for some migrant husbands, was worked and re-worked in and through religious spaces such as that of the weekly Sufi gatherings, spiritual healing sessions, and solitary remembrance of Allah and key prominent male figures in Islam that they weaved into their (re)makings of their masculinity. As a result, prophetic masculinity was a significant way in which migrant husbands could make sense of an navigate their situation in the UK and thus, the past, present, and the future became amalgamated and employed as a tool to exercise agency, to realise the ideal migrant husband experience, which I have coined as the ‘transnational patriarch’.

This chapter has presented evidence contrary to the conventional understandings that sabr
[patience] is a feminine practice, that women are practitioners of silent suffering, and the broader assumption that men are lesser emotional beings (Masee and Montes: 2013). I have demonstrated here, however, that at the nexus of migration, marriage and masculinity, migrant husbands practice sabr, that they suffer in silence which can in turn be strategically and creatively cultivated to achieve a desired outcome in the assertion of masculinity, and that migrant husbands express emotion. I have also demonstrated that agency for migrant husbands is not rooted in that which subjugates them (Mahmood: 2005) but rather, is rooted first and foremost in themselves through the delicate control and conceptualisation of their bodies, particularly in relation to emotional pain. This chapter also challenges assumptions that migration is a single action rather than a process. Rather, migrants can have changing motivations and altered circumstances that require modified decision making (De Haas: 2011). As a result, the chapter speaks to the aspiration framework (Carling et. al: 2018) in particular, as migrant husbands are seen to seek out creative approaches in their aspirations to become respected men and husbands, which is embodied by the ‘transnational patriarchal’ ideal.

The life-histories of migrant husbands also point to new possibilities and innovative routes for “escape” from certain subjectivities, but they ought not be over-romanticized (see also Constable 2003: 176), as these routes of escape can play-out within hegemonic masculinity and patriarchal discourses. We do however learn that migrant husbands are creatively maneuvering across transnational terrains in order to realise and reclaim a ‘respectable’ marital, migrant and masculine status, and in doing so point to migrant husbands being able to exercise agency. However, some cases are punctuated with a tendency to gravitate towards acquiring ‘respectable’ forms of marriage, migration and masculinity that lean towards traditional forms of masculinity that resonate with patriarchy. Overall though, the case of migrant husbands in the British Pakistani community demonstrates that transmigration can rupture traditional structures that uphold societal ideals of gender performances, and lead men to experience heavy emotional costs of migration that they navigate through diverse social tools, including some conventionally associated with femininity. The case of migrant husbands thus demonstrates that there is a plurality of masculinities and that silence, invisibility, and suffering can invoke traits such as patience and prayer in men. Furthermore, it was shown that different migrant husbands find
different ways of securing a ‘good life’ or ‘better life’ in the UK, including through accruing socio-religious capital though membership of Sufi brotherhoods, helped create spaces in which they could re-orient and redefine the ways in which masculinity could be performed. However, as the subsequent chapter demonstrates, financial security was also a significant way through which migrant husbands built a better-quality life and, in some instances, afforded migrant husbands with alternative entry points to becoming successful transnational patriarchs.
Chapter 3.3 Performing Finance: The Economy of Appearances, Micropolitics of Money, and Purchase Power.

Introduction

The social landscape carved out by transnational relations is significant in defining the aspirations and expectations of migrant husbands prior to becoming married and migrating to the UK. The migrant men of pioneer generations hold a unique capital, which provides them social status and power both in their communities in the UK and their villages in Pakistan—a transnational patriarch—which is an esteemed way of being a man and therefore, highly appealing for the young migrant husband who has before him, an ideal masculine type to emulate. It is important to stress at this point that this transnational patriarch’s status is built upon his finances, which is enacted through providing for his family in the UK and Pakistan, sustaining residential homes in both the UK and Pakistan, owning land in Pakistan, visiting Pakistan regularly, conducting successful marriages between his offspring and members of close kin in Pakistan, which involves a great deal of both symbolic and actual wealth. As a result, for the migrant husband, financial stability is a significant crux around which masculinity is built, and which enables the performance of masculinity in this context.

My ethnographic fieldwork demonstrated that migrant husbands often assumed that wealth and status and by extension access to this type of transnational patriarch, is inherited at the outset of marriage and migration. The migrant husbands quickly learnt that they were in fact “a pawn in their fathers-in-law empire” [as one participant described], who gained increased status by way of controlling other men (Fischer: 1991). To escape these forms of control required great deal of perseverance on many social levels in the lives of migrant husbands; often on marital, fatherhood and citizenship fronts. Upon migration and marriage, migrant husbands entered a gendered geography of power (Mehlar and Pessar: 2001) within which age, generational, and socio-cultural capital became hallmarks of their fathers-in-law dominance over them, and the wife’s gatekeeper role to citizenship status became an ear-mark of the unequal power relations within the marriage.
One of the key ways in which migrant husbands were able to (re)assert their masculinity after a period of subjugation at the hands of their wives and in-laws was accruing financial capital of their own, which was not an easy feat given that the wages of migrant husbands were placed directly into the hands of their wives and/or their fathers-in-law. As a result, migrant husbands became creative in their approach to bettering their financial status, which they envisioned would help them break free from the vicious cycle of subjugation, which often included different forms of violence and abuse.

In this chapter I explore some of the ways in which migrant husbands employed creative approaches to finances in order to construct alternative spaces in which they could reassert their masculinity, thereby gaining ownership of their narrative as they had once envisioned it to be. In particular I focus in detail on three key narratives in this chapter: Altaf’s use of kitty funds while also receiving Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) from the state and working two jobs; Naeem’s business venture; and Saleem’s disability allowance application post-bankruptcy and his growing dependency on female kin. Each of these narratives demonstrates the intricate ways in which masculinity is tied to finances, which is in turn linked to the status of a man. In this way then, this chapter builds upon the previous two chapters in which it was demonstrated the extent to which tools such as Songs of Sorrow and the imagery and remembrance of prophets, Sufis, saints, and scholars, play a key role in the (re)configuration of migrant husbands’ experiences.

**Narratives**

*Altaf*

Altaf is the second eldest of fourteen siblings. He was brought up in a village outside the town of Dadyal in Azad Kashmir. He married his maternal uncle’s daughter from the UK in 1994 after which he migrated to join her in England. He has seven children of his own of which two are married; one has recently given birth to a son, making Altaf a proud grandfather, especially because his daughter honoured him by marrying someone he had picked for her in Pakistan. His son, on the other hand, married his childhood sweetheart from secondary school. Altaf talked at great length as to how his life was when he first arrived in the UK, the demands of his father-in-law to provide
his wages to him, while simultaneously dealing with the demands of his parents and siblings in Pakistan, who expected him to send money for them, since after all, “this is why they had sent him to England.”

Altaf explained how he coped with a large family he had to provide for by participating in kumeti [rotating kitty fund] (see Werbner: 1990), which provided large sums of money in one instance. This allowed him to keep afloat financially. Throughout his time in England, he had participated in a number of kitty funds, which over the years he had used to finance legal fees for immigration cases, his siblings’ weddings, house renovations in both the UK and in Pakistan, family maintenance both in the UK and in Pakistan, and trips to Pakistan. Altaf had also registered as a job seeker at the job centre, through which he qualified for social welfare (Job Seeker’s Allowance [JSA]), although he was working two jobs at the same time (at a takeaway and as a concrete slab layer for exterior gardens). Altaf and his wife listed their marital status as ‘separated’ on all forms of formal documentation, so that his wife would receive increased benefits as a ‘single parent’ and by extension, their joint household income would be maximised. Altaf’s settlement trajectory, as a result is coloured with multiple and simultaneous creative approaches to finances:

*By doing this [maximizing household income], I could make sure that everything was ok with my family here, and for my parents and brothers and sisters in Pakistan... it has not been easy, but I have needed to be clever, and also careful, with the system here, so that I can make sure I can provide for everyone.*

Altaf told me how he needed to be ‘clever’ and ‘careful’ in navigating the system. For example, in order to ensure he could qualify for job seekers allowance, his wages would be cash in hand, which was also beneficial to his employers, as employers often tailored their accounts to show a yearly income of five thousand pounds or less, in order to stay below the threshold to be exempt from paying taxes as a business. Therefore, paying cash-in-hand helped them to navigate state regulations. Similarly, registering as ‘separated’ from his wife ensured that his wife would receive additional social welfare funds for being a single mother, funds that helped cover the cost of child and household maintenance. Although Altaf continued to live with his wife at their residential home (her residential home according to formal documents), Altaf registered his address
elsewhere, which he did at a friend’s house, who had a spare room.

We have to be clever you see because if we do not we come here and get poorer, and it becomes more difficult people will say why did you go there then? To make it worth it, you have to have something to show for it.

This arrangement enabled Altaf to perform the ideal masculine image of the transnational patriarch: a loyal son who was able to provide for his parents and siblings in Pakistan. He was, therefore, positioned as a man worthy of inheriting and continuing the family name, a loyal son-in-law who honoured his father-in-law’s reputation by maintaining his code of conduct, rules and regulations, a strong husband whose wife honoured him, and a father whose offspring obeyed him, and through which he was able to further build strategic alliances and kin relations through arranging their marriages. Altaf described how the ability to earn money, provided not only financial security but also the authority and power to organise his family, and maintain this authority and power over time within his family unit and community. However, he stated that when he first arrived in the UK, he worked hard to break away from his father-in-law’s control.

When I first came to England, my wife’s father was bad to me. He kept my passport and kept my wages. One day I was putting slabs in a neighbour’s garden and was on a break for five minutes to smoke a cigarette. I used to smoke a lot then because of stress. Suddenly my father-in-law appeared from nowhere and started to beat me. He thought I had stolen his money. I was in really bad shape afterwards with a broken nose and broken ribs. This incident helped my wife to realise that her father was not always right. Slowly, I began to see my wife change in her behaviour…she began to pay more attention to me.

Altarf told me that this change in his wife’s behaviour was a pivotal moment for him, as he was able to capitalize on it in order to separate their life as a nuclear family from his wife’s parents. “We became independent then, as a husband and wife…my wife became my wife first, not my father-in-law’s daughter first.” The financial arrangement that Altaf had constructed was therefore evermore important to prove to his wife that he could be the breadwinner, and to his in-laws that he did not need their support. “It was obviously much more pressure for me, but I did not want to
be under my father-in-law’s thumb anymore.” In this way then, Altaf felt immense pressure to (re)assert his masculinity through being able to financially support his family in both the UK and in Pakistan.

In order to further reduce the burden of being the single breadwinner for his large family, Altaf played the role of matchmaker and marriage broker for his younger brothers. He eventually convinced his father-in-law to give the hands of marriage of his remaining daughters (also his sister-in-laws) to his brothers. While Altaf was joined by his brothers in the UK after marriage, he faced multiple pressures during the wedding preparations:

I have had to do a lot in terms of marrying my brothers off because when you bring a daughter in the house you need to spend, especially if she’s from England.

Once in the UK, Altaf’s brothers became settled and also began to contribute to their parent’s living costs and household maintenance in Pakistan. Altaf stressed that it took a great deal of effort to successfully arrange and conduct the marriages, and subsequently have successful immigration case outcomes for his brothers’ spousal applications, requiring significant financial resources. To navigate this process, Altaf delved into further creative approaches that enabled proof of employment for his uneducated and unemployed sisters-in-law, who were sponsoring the spousal visa applications for his brothers. This included requesting friends and family members who were business owners to offer short-term employment to his sisters-in-law to assist in meeting the financial requirement for the visa application process. As a result, successfully maneuvering around the government’s ever-increasing tighter immigration rules and regulations, was significant part of the ‘transnational patriarch’ identity, as it demonstrated the state was on the side of the migrant husband.

More recently, Altaf’s creative approaches to finances have extended to securing the visa for his eighteen-year-old daughter’s husband. Using a ‘kumeti’ [rotating committee fund (see Werbner 1990). Altaf’s friend was able to place his daughter on the payroll to generate evidence of a monthly wage to meet the spousal visa application requirements. In this way, Altaf’s daughter was able to meet the immigration policies required to submit a spousal visa application, and acquire a
visa for her husband. Altaf’s daughter and her husband have a son and live in their own household in Birmingham, which is a ten-minute drive from Altaf’s home.

Altad’s ability to appear financially secure enabled him to fulfil key roles associated with the image of a successful migrant husband, qua transnational patriarch. In combination, these representations highlight the various ways in which migrant husbands maneuver migration, marriage, and masculinity within a gendered geography of power (Mehlar and Pessar: 2001) framed by diverse expectations and regulations on different scales.

Naeem

Naeem arrived in the UK in 2005 after marrying his paternal uncle’s daughter, whose hand in marriage his family had not specifically asked for. However, on one of the trips that his now wife took to Pakistan, she had made her parents aware that she was happy to marry Naeem after they had encountered one another on a handful of occasions. A few months later, in the Spring of 2004, Naeem and his wife Ayesha were married in Pakistan. Soon after, Ayesha left for the UK and prepared the immigration application for Naeem’s spousal visa. A year later, Naeem was successful in his visa application and he left to settle with his wife and her family in England. Naeem told me that he grew to love his wife after marriage and that the couple had a pleasant relationship, which continued to develop during the ‘waithood’ period whilst Ayesha was in the UK and Naeem in Pakistan.

In spite of this burgeoning relationship with his wife, Naeem shared with me details of the extreme forms of control he was subjected to by his father-in-law: this included only being allowed to communicate over the telephone with his family in Pakistan in the presence of his father-in-law; and his father-in-law keeping his passport and collecting his wages directly from his employer. Naeem explained that he had not expected to be subjected to the control of his father-in-law. In contrast, he had expected marital tensions with his wife, as this was “something that every couple experienced.” However, Naeem’s relationship with his wife Ayesha had in fact been pleasant, but he had not anticipated that his life would unfold to a great degree outside the confines of his marriage. As a result, the almost immediate control that his father-in-law exerted came as a shock.
“I was very shocked that my father-in-law was behaving this way. I thought he would respect me and look after me because I am his daughter’s husband and also the son of his much-loved older brother.”

Naeem expected that the birth order between his father and his father-in-law would create a loving relationship, by extension of his father-in-law’s love and respect for his father. However, Naeem told me that upon arrival in the UK, he realised that the love and respect his father-in-law showed towards his father was in fact inferior to the citizenship status of his father-in-law, which took precedence. Naeem told me “my eyes were slowly opening to the real ways of the world and of kin relations.” He felt that British citizenship was worth more than any relationship and took precedence over symbolic currencies such as honour and respect upon which communities functioned in Pakistan.

In 2008, Naeem desperately wanted to meet with his parents and siblings after three years of being in the UK, but his father-in-law would not permit him to do so. When Naeem’s work-friend, who also lived in close proximity to his father’s house in Pakistan, told Naeem that he was due to travel to Pakistan, Naeem addressed a letter to his father and enclosed twenty pounds that he borrowed from his friend, vowing to pay him back as soon as he could. The contents of the letter included informing his father of the strict nature his younger brother (Naeem’s father-in-law) had adopted with Naeem. Naeem told me he knew that his father-in-law would not turn down a request from his older brother, at least to keep up appearances, and therefore told his father to raise the topic of Naeem visiting him in Pakistan, in the next telephone conversation. In the winter of 2008, Naeem was finally able to visit his father and while there, he was successful in the sale of a proportion of his father’s land, the profits of which, he invested in starting a car exportation business. Naeem explained the reasons behind the business venture:

I was thinking a lot. I wanted to be able to return to Pakistan and visit whenever I wanted to. I did not want to be under my father-in-law’s control anymore, I had had enough. I knew that to achieve this, I needed to do something on my own two feet so that my father-in-law
could no longer control me. I need to separate my life from him and from his fist. So I asked my dad if we could sell some land and used the money to start the business...my wife and I have moved out from her parent’s house now, as we bought our own home from the profits of the business. She recognises that her parents were her past family, and although they are still her parents, her current family and her future is with her husband and children. Before my financial independence, my wife was very much my father-in-law’s daughter first, and my wife last. She is now my wife first, and their daughter last...

Naeem’s approach to building a business in order to become financially independent, was one that required a great deal of creativity, determination, and perseverance. He explained how he haggled at every stage to receive the lowest price for the cars he would purchase in the UK and kept firm with his asking price for those he would sell in Pakistan. Through this venture, Naeem was able to perform the role of ‘transnational patriarch’; however, he went beyond this by way of brokering British capital (cars) to Pakistani citizens, who increased in status through ownership of a car from Britain. This unique business venture both captured and created an ideal masculine type that was linked to the ownership of British items. In fact, in trying to reassert his masculinity, Naeem capitalized on others’ aspirations and visions of masculine performance in Pakistan. Thereby, Naeem’s masculinity and status as a British citizen (at least in the eyes of his clients), became a symbol of ideal masculine type for other Pakistani men that could be realised without having to migrate. In this way then, through Naeem’s case study, we see a chain effect or a ripple effect in the development of the aspirations and masculinity of Pakistani men: successful entrepreneurs, British citizens, authoritative, family men with wives and children who honour them. This masculine type filters out through Naeem’s clients, family members, local residents in Pakistan, reinforcing the notion that migration to Britain remains the best possible way to attain social mobility in its primary form.

Naeem talked to me in depth about his father-in-law’s change in behaviour, who, upon realising that Naeem was becoming successful, made every effort to take ownership of his success.

Some family friends and relatives told me that my father-in-law had told them that he was the one who invested the initial funds to start my business up. He also told them that if it
wasn’t for him giving his daughter to me, I would not have been successful.

Naeem told me that he corrected his family friends and relatives on the matter of his father-in-law providing the start-up capital to start the business. However, Naeem stated that he did feel that in some part his father-in-law was correct in saying that, had he not given his daughter’s hand in marriage to him, he would not have been successful, as he would not have had the access to the British cars in such a direct way. Nonetheless, Naeem was proud of his achievements, and told me of his additional business ventures since his first start-up, which included a growing property portfolio and establishing a takeaway chain.

Yes I went through a very hard and bad time when I first came to England, but that time taught me a lot and it made me work hard and fight for myself. Today I am more respected than my father-in-law. Now, he has respect and is known because of me and my success so the tables have turned...

Through his financial success, Naeem has been able to out-maneuver his father-in-law in respect and status as a transnational patriarch. His father-in-law is now seen as a dependent of Naeem’s, and someone who comes within Naeem’s remit of provision of care. This is indicative of the way in which the creation of alternative social currencies in which migrant husbands can perform masculinity, are able to outweigh existing currencies such as that of the transnational patriarch. As a result, we can gain an insight into the way in which the changing positionalities of men and masculinities, which are relational.

I will look after my father-in-law as he is my uncle and my wife’s father. Even though he was bad to me, I am now successful and he was not able to control me for my whole life...if I didn’t provide for him now, I would risk people respecting me. He is elder and in our community you look after the elders no matter what.

Naeem recognised that his father-in-law had entered old age both in real terms and symbolic terms. As his business became more successful, he stated that he was expected to take on more responsibility for the wider family. For instance, when his father’s cousin in Pakistan passed away, relatives in the UK called Naeem to express their condolences and ask about the nature of the
death instead of calling Naeem’s father-in-law. This transition was crucial, and something quite uncommon to the Pakistani community more broadly, as age and generational factors placed elders as the heads of the household. However, in this case, Naeem’s business success catalysed his position as the ‘head of the family’, and accelerated his father-in-law’s status as an elderly person: someone who is respected, but no longer the primary head of the family. This also interrupts the assumption held in some studies that patriarchy involves elders (both male and female) subjugating younger men and women as in this instance, the younger male comes of age as an adult, displacing the father-in-law through his multivariant authority.

_Saleem_

Saleem arrived in the UK in 1992 after marrying his cousin Tasneem. Saleem told me that he was in love with a woman from another village that he had met on his frequent trips to visit his sister who had been married to someone from that village. Tasneem’s father had arranged her marriage with a much older man in the village, which Tasneem was unhappy with. Tasneem put pressure on her father to agree to the marriage between her and Saleem, who was her father’s younger brother’s son. The two brothers’ (Saleem’s father and Tasneem’s father) had not been on talking terms for two decades prior to the marriage agreement between Tasneem and Saleem. When Saleem’s father received a letter from his estranged brother in which he detailed a proposal for his son Saleem, his parents told him he must marry Tasneem and go to England for a better life.

_We were very poor in Pakistan. My father owned a small grocery store, which he ran from our veranda, however, we were poor. They were tough times. My father scraped together the little he could to send me to school; however my sisters did not receive an education._

The marriage took place in March 1990 after which Tasneem stayed with Saleem and his family. Tasneem’s father left for the UK and two weeks later passed away, which was shocking for the whole family, especially Tasneem. Saleem told me that shortly after the passing of her father, Tasneem left for the UK to prepare for the immigration spousal visa application, which was granted in October 1992. By this time Saleem and Tasneem had had their first-born child, who was a year old when Saleem arrived into the UK.
I started working at an Asian sweet centre. I then moved into the takeaway business and trained as a chef. After six years working in the takeaway business, I opened my first takeaway. It was a big achievement for me...I was the only one who had become that successful from all of my relatives...

During the six years in employment, Saleem sent remittances to his family in Azad Kashmir on a monthly basis. He was able to clear his father’s debt as well as pay towards the plastering and decorating of his parents’ home. He was also able to fund his sister’s wedding to his wife’s younger brother in 1994 and purchased his first home through a mortgage for twenty-three thousand pounds. He told me that house prices were incredibly low during the 1990s compared to today.

During the first year of his takeaway business, which he opened in 1999, Saleem was able to sponsor his father to visit the UK on a six months visitors’ visa. This was a momentous occasion for Saleem and his family, as he was the first members of his family to sponsor someone after arriving to the UK. Albeit his tender age of twenty-eight, Saleem’s reputation in the community in Birmingham, and his village in Azad Kashmir catapulted. His father had two older brothers each of whom had two sons who were in the UK. However, Saleem was the only one who was successful to such an extent. He had become what I have previously referred to as the transnational patriarch: a successful businessman, a loyal son and brother, an honoured husband, and a respected head of the family.

Two months after Saleem’s father departed from the UK to return to Azad Kashmir, his father sadly passed away. With great emotion, Saleem told me how to this day, he grieves for the loss of his father.

I was nineteen when I got married. When I came to an age to start to give back to my father, I left for England where I became so busy with day-to-day life...I spent my twenties away from my father, and when I became capable of giving back, my father left this world. His loss is still a huge hole in my heart...I miss him so much, every day...

Shortly after the passing of his father, Saleem sold his takeaway business and bought a newspaper shop in North Birmingham, a thirty-minute drive away from his then residential home. At the same
time, Birmingham city council informed Saleem that they would be demolishing all of the houses on the side of the road where he lived, including his home. Saleem was adamant that he would not move and was in fact one of the last residents to accept a settlement of seventy-five thousand pounds and a two bedroom council house within the area.

I felt this was really unfair. I did not understand, and I still do not understand why they were forcing us to move. I put my blood, sweat, and tears into buying that house. It was also very special to me, as my father had visited me there so his last memories were tied to that house. They told us that underneath our homes, there was a flood of water, which was causing our homes to sink by a few centimeters every year...I still don’t believe them.

Saleem explained how he had lost his father, which was followed by the loss of his home. He eventually invested the seventy-five thousand pounds received as compensation in a second takeaway business in 2004. At this time, Saleem had a news agency and a takeaway business.

I tried to leave my businesses in the hands of workers so that they would run the shop by themselves without me being in the country...I just wanted to relax and enjoy life. I also decorated my parent’s home to a high standard, brought land, and also built a home for my wife’s brothers on my father-in-law’s land so that they had an ancestral home to return to.

It was during this point that Saleem’s businesses started to suffer in his absence, as employees’ performance decreased in quality. Saleem returned to the UK as a result, where he was forced to close one of his businesses due to not being able to pay the monthly rent. He was also hit with large tax bills from the government. To keep afloat and to also maintain his appearance as a transnational patriarch, Saleem set-up a kumeti [rotating kitty fund (see Werbner: 1990)], which he was the head of. Saleem used these kitty funds to keep afloat and pay his large gas and electricity bills. He had envisioned selling the takeaway business and using the profits to make-up for the funds he extracted from the kitty fund that he managed. However, when the kitty time frame was coming to an end and members began asking for their share, Saleem was unable to meet the demands. In 2012, Saleem’s business closed down, and he was in fifty thousand pounds
debt. He wrote off twenty thousand pounds debt by declaring bankruptcy. However, he owed thirty-five thousand pounds to members of the kitty, many of whom were also members of his wider kinship network. Salem explained that this was an incredibly low moment for him as he had not only lost his business, but also his honour and respect, and his family status as the family breadwinner. As a result, he was no longer a successful transnational patriarch.

Throughout this time, Saleem’s wife Tasneem had been running the household on state welfare funds she received in child benefit and child tax, and it had been over eight years since Saleem had contributed to the household shopping. Saleem was also no longer able to contribute to the household maintenance and living costs of his family in Pakistan, who began to request Saleem’s sisters – who were also in the UK – for remittances instead. In 2013, Saleem’s younger brother decided to marry a woman he had fallen in love with in Azad Kashmir. Saleem did not have the finances to fund the wedding and so Saleem’s younger sister, who was married to his wife’s younger brother funded their brother’s wedding in Azad Kashmir. Saleem’s younger sister also had taken out two bank loans for Saleem to alleviate his debt, and Saleem’s older sister had sold her gold bangles to assist in the clearance of his debt. Saleem’s wife Tasneem was also using her funds from the welfare state to cover clear Saleem’s debt.

I was in a very bad place in life and I’m glad that my sisters and wife were able to help me.
I am their brother after all, my honour and respect is their honour and respect.

As a former ‘transnational patriarch’, Saleem was now dependent on the women within his immediate family.

Saleem told me how his health began to deteriorate after his business collapsed. He began to suffer from non-epileptic seizures, which at first presented as a mystery to medical consultants, as brain scans did not show signs to make a diagnosis of epilepsy. However, Saleem’s symptoms and side effects were consistent with epilepsy and eventually, a stroke. Doctors ruled that he suffered from non-epileptic attacks, a functional stroke, and a mental health condition. Saleem however, was adamant that he was not mentally unwell.

I continued to tell them I was mentally fine. I am mentally fine. But they sent people to ask
me questions and they told the main doctors that I am mentally fine. The doctors these
days, they don’t know what is going on. I was in a very bad place and they do not want to
understand either. They want to free the hospital bed so that they can give it to the other
patients.

During this time, Saleem also underwent operations for a damaged Achilles heel, which had been
a consistent source of pain over the many years of stand-up work in the restaurant industry. As a
result of his operations, non-epileptic attacks, and functional stroke, Saleem’s daughter applied
for disability allowance (formally known as Personal Independence Payment), which Saleem was
granted. Saleem continues to also rely on his wife and his daughters’ incomes to meet household
maintenance costs, as well as personal and educational costs incurred by his daughters.

The narratives outlined above demonstrate the building blocks of (re)asserting masculinity in and
through financial means. In the remainder of this chapter, I will explore three key factors that
reoccur through Saleem’s Altaf’s and Naeem’s narratives: economy of appearances, micropolitics
of money, and purchase identity. In doing so, I aim to show the significance of performing finance
to reassert masculinity.

**Economy of Appearances**

A common theme emerging from the narratives of migrant husbands as described through the
narratives, was the importance of maintaining appearances. I use the term appearances here to
denote the way in which masculinity is reasserted by being able to ‘look’ and ‘appear’ stable and
secure, even at times when migrant husbands were experiencing hardship. For example, from
Saleem’s narrative we learn a great deal about how desperately he tried to hold on to the
‘appearance’ of being a successful business man, while, internally, his business was failing and he
had used funds from a *kumeti* he was in charge of - without the *kumeti* members knowing - in
order to rescue the business. Eventually, he was forced to close down the business and declared
bankruptcy. After bankruptcy, Saleem’s wife and sisters helped him (and continue to help him)
pay off the debt he acquired as a result of his decision to ‘temporarily’ use the funds from the

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37 ‘Economy of appearance’ is a term used by Tsing (2000).
he was managing at the time. The financial assistance he receives extend beyond relieving debt however, as they are crucial in Saleem’s reputation as a transnational patriarch more broadly. The funds also assist Saleem to maintain his appearance as the ‘man of the family’ and as the representative of his father (deceased as of the year 2000), both of which are important to maintaining authority both in the UK and in Pakistan.

Another aspect of this careful management of his appearance as a man, was the way in which Saleem carved out a new narrative to underplay his ‘failure’. Saleem told me that when he is asked about his business, he informs people that he was not making profit due to the recession and as a result, he decided to sell the business. If pushed with further questions, he explains that the profits of the business went towards clearing the debt that had been incurred by the under-performing business due-to-the-recession. At the same time, health complications such as the long-standing Achilles heel pain, has become part of Saleem’s narrative to explain why he no longer works. In this way then, Saleem carefully manages his appearance in order to maintain his identity as a transnational patriarch, albeit he feels this has suffered in the past decade.

Saleem also told me about becoming involved in Pakistani politics in the UK, with a particular Pakistani political party\(^{38}\) whose followers within the diaspora in Birmingham hold regular *jalsas* [large gatherings/meetings].

*I have met a lot of people through the political meetings, and I am now more senior in the party branch in Birmingham. We organise meals and meetings and when the overseas politicians of the party come to England, we receive them at the airport and organise parties for them. It makes me very happy that I have got this new role, it makes people respect me and I have a name...my own identity...*

The growing engagement with Pakistani politics provided Saleem with a new opportunity to reassert his identity as a transnational patriarch, outside of having a business. Saleem, at least in the account he presented to me, gave the impression that he had retired from his hard-working job for a life in politics, albeit his engagement in politics was entirely voluntary. Saleem’s increasing

\(^{38}\) I have refrained from mentioning the political party in order to ensure the anonymity of the participant.
political activity and therefore reputation amongst the diaspora, strikes resemblance with the participation of some migrant husbands in Sufi brotherhoods, which were the focus of previous chapters. I asked Saleem to provide me greater detail about his new endeavor into politics and how members of his family had received his participation:

_I think the men in my family are very jealous that I was asked to take on this responsibility to represent the party here in the UK. It’s a very big role being an overseas representative for the party. Some of my older cousins rang me and started to ‘advise’ me about not spending my own money on the dinners we hosted...I had to explain that we have a pot of money for activities...I have a lot of Facebook friends now, I started with one hundred and eighty, and in a few days I had more than two thousand friends. Even my relatives in Pakistan all know and are asking if I am the overseas official for the party, and I am really very respected._

Saleem was excited to be able to talk about the way in which being formally affiliated with a Pakistani political party had shaped a new identity for him. Political affiliation in this way was a source of respect and honour, which he was able to employ in reclaiming his reputation, and thereby reasserting his masculinity.

Altāf’s narrative demonstrated that “to make it worth it [the migration], you have to show something for it”, which was recurring theme in interviews. Altāf told me in detail of his efforts to appear financially secure in order to hold on to the way in which he was perceived by his family, and wider kin relations both in the UK and in Pakistan. His ability to perform the ideal masculine image of the transnational patriarch involved being a loyal son, brother, son-in-law, husband, and a father, all of which was determined by his financial resources.

Altāf’s case also demonstrated the way in which the ‘economy of appearances’ (see also Tsing: 2000) transpired and extended beyond the migrant husband, as accountants often facilitated the ‘appearance’ of individuals satisfying immigration regulations by placing them on the payrolls of their business clients and seeking reimbursements for monthly salary payments [or what ‘appear’ to be], in cash. Similarly, Naeem’s case demonstrated the way in which the economy of
appearance inspired masculine ideals in other men, entrenching the transnational patriarch model of masculinity further in the social imaginations of men in Pakistan. In trying to reassert his masculinity by way of establishing a car import/export business between the UK and Pakistan, Naeem capitalized on others’ aspirations and visions of masculine performance in Pakistan through the selling of a British car, which helped his clients realise this masculine ideal. Thereby, the clients were not only purchasing a British car from Naeem, but also the masculine ideal that Naeem embodied. It is therefore the economy of appearance upon which Naeem’s business is successful, and which contributed to his own economy of appearance within his family both in the UK, and in Pakistan.

**Micropolitics of Money**

A second theme that emerged from the narratives of migrant husbands in section one of this chapter was the formal and informal power that migrant husbands exercised through the pursuit and acquisition of finances, which assisted in the reassertion of their masculinity. For instance, Altaf exercised informal power to help his sisters-in-law put forward the best possible spousal visa applications for his brothers. The possession of finances and networks in which ‘favours’ were also a currency, were employed to meet the various fees at different stages of the immigration process, and thereby to navigate immigration rules and regulations set out by the state. In other words, to achieve macro-level aims and ambitions (such as British citizenship), micro-level strategies involving finances, were crucial.

Naeem on the other hand was seen to use formal strategies of power that involved his father – as the elder brother – requesting that his younger brother (also Naeem’s father-in-law) allow Naeem to visit him in Pakistan, a request that Naeem’s father could not refuse. His position as the elder brother who was taking care of his younger brother’s land, property, and wealth in Pakistan, as well as being the head of the household, formed the molecular make up of relationships and family structure, which were drawn on by Naeem as a resource upon which he exercised informal power.

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39 See also North (1999).
to achieve his goals. Similarly, throughout the course of his life, Saleem exercised informal power to (re)assert his identity as a transnational patriarch and more recently, when being supported by his wife and sisters in clearing the debt. An informal power dynamic existed between Saleem and the female members of his immediate family, which – in Saleem’s view - intricately tied Saleem’s wife and sisters’ respect and honour with Saleem’s respect. This indicated that the honour of men and women are in many ways interwoven and co-dependent, as women benefited (but perhaps lose out in other ways) from the presence of powerful patriarchal husbands and brothers.

However, Saleem also exercised formal power in relation to finances such as declaring bankruptcy, which enabled his business-related debt with the gas, electricity, water and other such companies, to be cleared. He also applied for Personal Independence Payment to claim for his disabilities (namely complications arising from his Achilles heel surgery). These formal financial strategies were intertwined with informal exercise of power that Saleem exerted, which was linked with his ‘appearance’ as a transnational patriarch.

‘Purchase’ Identity

A third theme that emerged from the narratives of migrant husbands outlined earlier in this chapter was the notion of the identity of the migrant husband as a transnational patriarch, which was developed through purchasing practices. For instance, in trying to reassert his masculinity by way of establishing a car import/export business between the UK and Pakistan, Naeem capitalized on others’ aspirations and visions of masculine performance in Pakistan through the selling of a British car, which helped his clients realise this masculine ideal. Thereby, the clients were not only purchasing a British car from Naeem, but also the masculine ideal that Naeem embodied. As a result, a series of purchases between Naeem and his clients reinforces Naeem’s identity as a transnational patriarch, without which Naeem would not be able to maintain his identity and masculinity. Thus, exchanges and purchases are crucial to the reassertion and/or continued assertion of masculinity for migrant husbands.

Altaf’s narrative was particularly heavily imbued with purchases, which enabled him to reinforce

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40 See also Osella and Osella (2003) on money, migration and masculinity, which my findings resonate with.
and continue to maintain the masculine identity of the transnational patriarch. For instance, the arrangement made with accountants to enable the appearance of his sisters-in-law and daughter as working women who satisfied the state financial income criteria in order to sponsor a spouse. Altaf’s brothers and son-in-law were provided with spousal visas to enter the UK; an identity which, both in the view of the Pakistani community and Altaf’s wider family network, carries the meaning of having become British, which is deeply rooted in purchasing power, the micropolitics of money, and the economy of appearance.

In Saleem’s case, the continued operation of his business, which involved the selling of takeaway food, would have maintained his identity as a transnational patriarch. However, after the business collapsed and Saleem filed for bankruptcy, the narrative he chose to present to the community and his family network was that he sold the business because it was making a loss, thereby concealing what Saleem viewed to be failure. This narrative enabled Saleem to protect himself from entirely losing his honour and reputation, as the reality that he had failed as a businessman would have had an unrecoverable impact on his masculine identity. Furthermore, the support of his wife and sisters in helping him clear his debt were also based on purchasing power, which involved Saleem’s wife and sisters protecting their honour and reputation by maintaining the honour and reputation of the head of the family. I asked Saleem to elaborate:

_The women of our family are also representatives of our family name. It is not the case that they just sit at home and do nothing. While the men are at work, it is the women who do the shopping on their cars, who take the kids to school, who attend funerals and offer condolences on behalf of everyone. When doing all this on a daily basis, they meet many other members of the family network and the community. They have to also answer questions relating to our family honour and reputation and they must be able to defend it. If they cannot then the women go back and tell everyone in their family unit what has happened and before you know it word spreads here [in the UK] and in Pakistan. What then happens is that gossip in the wider community makes us less in the eyes of the community,

41 See also Marsden, 2005, page 60.
From Saleem’s narrative I learnt that the women also have purchase identity which was demonstrated through protecting the reputation and honour of their husbands and brothers. It is this purchase identity at the micro level that helps Saleem and his family to maintain honour and reputation in the wider community, able to “hold their head up high”, and not be “taken advantage of”, “excluded” or “thought of as unworthy to be associated with”. Saleem told me that this is important for example when they wish to borrow money from someone in an emergency, or when it is time to marry their children, which require them to be of good standing in the community.

**Conclusion**

A number of academics have discussed the anthropology of performance (Turner: 1987, Korom: 2013), wherein life is seen as a stage upon which actors perform themselves, structuring individual and group identities (Ben-Amos: 1972, Kapchan, 1995: 479). Throughout this chapter, the narratives of three migrant husbands have demonstrated that the reassertion of masculinity – particularly the masculine identity of the transnational patriarch – was made possible by three intersecting factors: the economy of appearances, micropolitics of money, and purchase identities. Together, these three factors created alternative spaces within which migrant husbands were able to achieve the identity of the transnational patriarch, and therefore reassert their masculinity. Maintaining the appearance of secure and stable financial status emerged as being crucial in maintaining the appearance, if not actual role, of being a successful transnational patriarch; furthermore, migrant husbands exercised informal and formal power vis-à-vis finances in order to maintain and reinforce masculine identity, and, in turn, the masculine identity of migrant husbands was very much made in and through purchase power. A common theme that ties these fundamental building blocks of reasserting masculinity through finances is thus the *performance* of finance. This is to say that masculinity for the migrant husband can be reasserted and reinforced by way of performing finances, enacting them on the social stage where kin and community are the audience.

It is this performance of finances through the acquisition of British citizenship, or at least the action
of migration to the UK post-marriage, that begins the journey of association to wealth and power and social mobility, a form of symbolic capital in the view of the community and family that the migrant husband is situated in. Thereafter, the family, community, and state dynamics that the migrant husband is situated in forms a complex social web, a web which he has to carefully navigate. The family structure that the migrant husband is part of exerts a particular type of power upon him, usually one that places the migrant husband in a weak position (see also Charsley: 2012). The community and wider family network also exert power over the migrant husband due to the way in which they view the family unit he belongs to. The state also exerts its own power on the migrant husband by way of immigration and citizenship rules and regulations. In order to navigate these structures, the migrant husband employs the performance of finance in the construction of his identity as the transnational patriarch (which is further comprised of roles such as husband, a son-in-law, a family man, a businessman and/or a worker, and a good law-abiding citizen), to maintain his masculine identity despite the pressures of several social and institutional actors.

The performance of finance is rarely an instantaneous activity that migrant husbands engage in as soon as they migrate to the UK, post-marriage. In fact, it can take time for migrant husbands to realise that performing finance can be a source of agency. In Naeem’s case, setting up an import/export car business enabled him to escape the subjugation of his father-in-law, who at one stage would not allow Naeem to visit his father in Pakistan and took possession of his passport and wages. The business enabled Naeem to develop the identity of a transnational patriarch, reinforcing a higher form of masculinity, one that surpassed that of his father-in-law and positioned Naeem as the new head of the family. Altaf also told me that it took him some time to establish himself independently from his father-in-law, who was also controlling. Financial independence was a crucial factor in breaking away from his father-in-law’s power, and thus no longer requiring the help of and depending on his father-in-law. Financial independence in this instance can also be viewed to mark the end of a waithood (see also Honwana: 2012), while waithood(s) in other ways (i.e. citizenship status) may continue. Due to Altaf’s large family in Pakistan, caring for his siblings and parents was a push factor in Altaf’s continued performance of finance. In turn, Saleem’s multiple business ventures enabled him to perform finance in a way that provided him with honour and respect in his wider family network, both in the UK and in
Pakistan. However, when the business ventures collapsed, it was the engagement in transnational political activities with politicians in Pakistan that enabled Saleem to perform ‘finance once again, albeit in a different social setting, one that associated Saleem with a ‘higher society’ that ‘controlled’ governmental finances, and therefore the finances of the masses.

It is also important to note that performing finance in the ways demonstrated in this chapter confirm that migration is not a linear process carried out in a single action, but rather migrant aspirations can be revised in diverse ways during migration (Carling: 2018). In fact, migrant husband narratives indicate a continued migration of the social self. The narratives also demonstrate the carving out of agency for migrants in order to realise their aspirations. For migrant husbands, the performance of finances is a fundamental building block that allows for migrant husbands to construct the masculine identity of the transnational patriarch, which in itself acts as social capital to catalysing social mobility. Performing finance then, ultimately becomes a source of agency that the migrant husband is able to employ – once acquired and developed - in different situations, in order to navigate the structures and contours of the complex social web, that is the transnational context.

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42 I argue that migrant husbands’ as ‘social selves’ migrated as a result of the mobility experienced by their masculine ideals. This is particularly demonstrated through the differences in migrant husbands conceptualisations and practices of masculinity prior to marriage migration (i.e. hair-cuts, clothing, sunglasses), and upon marriage migration (i.e. religious markers of identity within Sufi-scapes). The social self of the migrant husband can be seen as having experiencing migration in and through masculinity:marriage: migration.
Conclusion

As established in earlier parts of the thesis, migrant husbands and their families often hold different ideas of what the marriage and migration experience will be (section one). However, upon marriage and migration, their experiences can significantly vary from their expected and/or imagined ideas of the experience and instead, can experience heightened levels of vulnerability and abuse at the hands of their wives and in-laws (section two). Due to the difference in experience upon marriage and migration which led to migrant husbands experiencing liminal masculinity (section two), it was crucial to explore how if in any way did migrant husbands make attempts to achieve the ideal masculinity of ‘transnational patriarch’ (chapter 1.2). The focus of this section of the thesis was the ways in which migrant husbands (re)asserted their masculinity, if any. I argued that migrant husbands engaged with songs of sorrow, prophetic masculinity within the Sufi-scape of Birmingham, and performing finances, as ways of (re)assert their masculinity in diverse contexts of insecurity.

The first chapter explored the significance of songs of sorrow for migrant husbands. Songs of sorrow have not been identified in the literature prior to this research project. In fact, music as a form of resistance is traditionally associated with women in patriarchal societies (see Abu-Lughod: 1990, Raheja and Gold: 1994). However, detailed migrant husband life history narratives demonstrated that songs of sorrow were in fact a powerful medium through which migrant husbands were able to express emotion due to the very public way in which their plight was recognised, which in turn created space for solidarity and new community forming practices. This further demonstrated the high emotional costs of migration for men, the way in which men created safe spaces in which they had the opportunity to vent emotions in a way that offsets some of the negative traits associated with hegemonic masculinity (Connell: 2005), such as being unemotional, unnurturing, aggressive, and dispassionate. A close inspection of the lyrics of songs of sorrow revealed that women were viewed through a traditional patriarchal lens common to the British Pakistani community, and, as a result, songs of sorrow were in some ways a social truth establishing medium, which often referenced conservative ideas of Islam to prescribe ‘traditional’ roles, responsibilities, and mannerisms for women (wives and mothers-in-law). However, it is...
crucial to note that the spaces created in and through songs of sorrow referenced women within patriarchal terms, indicating that distressed and vulnerable men find alternative ways in which to reassert their masculinity, as opposed to the conventional understanding of domestic violence as per hegemonic masculine ideals (see Connell: 2005).

Titled “Prophetic Masculinity: Sufi-Scapes, Sabr, and Religiosocial Capital”, the second chapter demonstrated that migrant husbands recalled key figures within Islam such as the Prophet Muhammad, Prophet Yusuf (Joseph), Prophet Musa (Moses), and local saints in parts of Pakistan from which they drew strength and were inspired to practice patience, during times of hardship. As a result, I argued a ‘prophetic masculinity’ was in operation, which carved out an acceptable form of hardship and emotional distress as part of the meta masculine narrative of the ‘transnational patriarch’. The chapter also demonstrated that migrant husbands engaged in religious circles that have become more popular over the past ten to fifteen years, as part of the broader Sufi-scape within Birmingham. Life history narratives provided intricate insights to the ways in which religiosity was employed as a form of social capital, suggesting that migrant husbands possess a rich form of piety that testified to the good character of migrant husbands, affording them trust and likability amongst the older generation. Some migrant husbands visited local ‘holy men’ to acquire talismans in order to alleviate them from their marital tensions. During fieldwork, I spent time with one local spiritual healer called Hanif, whose sessions I also observed. Hanif’s experience as a migrant husband who possessed ‘unseen’ religious knowledge of the ‘secret world’ enabled him to exercise leverage within the community, and thereby side-stepping abuse or mistreatment at the hands of his in-laws due to the level of izzat (respect) he gained. Hanif’s life history narrative particularly testified to the significance of social capital for migrant husbands, which they could employ as a currency to prevent themselves from experiencing abuse.

In the third chapter, performing finance was shown to be a significant way in which to (re)assert masculinity and included inter-relating techniques such as keeping up the appearance that they were successful transnational patriarchs, exercising informal and formal power vis-à-vis finances in order to maintain and reinforce masculine identity, and employing ‘purchase power’ which afforded both material gains and a soft power that enabled migrant husbands to gain leverage
within the social structure they were part. In performing finance to reassert masculinity, migrant husbands displayed softer forms of masculinity, as they acknowledged the purchase power of women (wives, sisters and daughters), and relied on them to maintain their masculine identity. Masculine identity is, thus a social terrain, a vehicle which can be adapted and modified depending on the social terrain of the migrant husband experience. A female interviewee told me that she helped her brother my loaning him money, as if he was seen to be a weak head of the family, she would also lose respect and face within the community. In this way, the gender dynamic between men and women in the British Pakistani community is not as clear cut as the meta but simplistic narrative of “men are oppressive, and women oppressed”. Rather, gender dynamics are much more complex, and ever more complicated by migration trajectories, individual family dynamics, and personal and/or collective aspirations, amongst other factors.

Together, these chapters indicate that the experiences of migrant husbands continue to change and shift after marriage and migration, as a result of which revising aspirations becomes a staple of the migration process. Further, this section of the thesis demonstrates that migrant husbands can bear significant emotional costs of migration, which they counter in and through the creation of spaces in which they reassert their masculinity, and which involve exhibiting traits conventionally associated with women. Masculinity then, is multiple and complex, and context-based (Connell: 2005).
7. Conclusion

This thesis has explored marriage and masculinities in motion amongst migrant husbands in Birmingham’s British Pakistani community, positing three overarching questions. The first question explored the ways that migrant husbands have experienced marriage migration to the UK. In order to answer this question, sub-questions focused on tracing the potential shifts in the expected versus the lived social reality upon marriage and migration to the UK, how these compared to the expected shifts prior to marriage and migration, and how migrant husbands experienced these shifts based on intersectional identity markers. The second research question aimed to explore the ways in which migrant husbands perceived the relationship between marriage, migration and masculinity, which was further broken down into sub-questions that focused on perceptions of how marriage migration should be experienced, perceptions of being a man, perceptions of changes in gender dynamics, and perceptions of their relationship with the state. The third research question asked, “How do migrant husbands perceive and negotiate their positions in their wives’ and/or in-laws’ households?” This also comprised of sub-questions including, how do migrant husbands think they should experience the wives’ and/or in-laws household, how do they negotiate their relationship with members of the household, how do they perceive the relationship in relation to the household, do they develop any relations outside of their wives’ and/or in-laws’ household and if so how, and what forms of support are available to migrant husbands?

7.1 Findings

My thesis has traced three overarching forms of masculinity – aspirational masculinity, liminal masculinity, and (re)assertive masculinity – each of which demonstrated different dimensions of the interconnectedness between marriage, migration and masculinity. At times, migrant husbands and their families aspired to migrate many years before the migration journey itself. This aspiration translated itself into embodied features such as the modification of the body and appearance of migrant husbands, in order to fit perceived ‘British’ masculine ideals and to secure a ‘British’ rishta. In recent years these micro-processes of attracting and securing a rishta involved social media
such as Facebook and WhatsApp, where profile pictures of migrant husbands were uploaded by migrant husbands and/or their families wherein migrant husbands had ‘British’ haircuts and were ‘British’ apparel. In this way then, migration had become deeply rooted in the shaping of migrant husbands’ life experiences before marriage and migration.

During this time, the benefits of migration had become part of the physical geography of towns and villages in Pakistan. For instance, lavish and elaborate mansions built by migrant husbands who had already migrated and settled in Britain, dominated the skylines and acted as constant reminders of ‘another life’: that of a successful ‘transnational patriarch’. The ‘transnational patriarch’ is a figure I have developed to highlight the forces at play in the making of migrant husbands and the social currency (such as izzat) that is associated with being a migrant husband in a transnational context. In other words, the process of becoming a migrant husband did not merely stop at migration to and settlement in Britain but rather, the social mobility achieved through marriage and migration was displayed and thereby attributed social meaning, in Pakistan.

The transnational patriarch I argued, emerges as a figure comprised of dimensions of the successful ‘business man’, ‘family man’ and ‘respected man’, all three of which enable the migrant husband to maintain honour and authority amongst his family and community, both in the UK and in Pakistan. However, upon marriage and migration (and sometimes prior to the actual marriage migration journey), the aspirations of migrant husbands (and their families) faced turbulence, threatening the likelihood of achieving the masculine ideal of the ‘transnational patriarch’. Migrant husbands found themselves inheriting new responsibilities such as facilitating kin members’ migration to the UK from Pakistan, and obligations towards their wives’ families in the UK (which often came into conflict with the former). They also experienced issues with employment, as they entered what I characterised as a grey area of employment in the community, in which they were subjected to long working hours, low pay, and lack of rights. Another source of struggle was the process of acquiring citizenship, which orchestrated power dynamics within the household, and between migrant husbands and their wives and in-laws. Contrary to the aspired expectations of marriage and migration, which constructed the ‘transnational patriarch’ ideal, these sources of struggle positioned migrant husbands in weaker rather than stronger positions.
The dissonance between expected and lived social realities upon marriage and migration to the UK, gave rise to precarity, powerlessness, and inferiority, factors which lay the foundations for the second form of masculinity - liminal masculinity - as they came together to increase waithood(s) for migrant husband(s). While conventionally waithood is understood as occurring prior to marriage or the period leading up to adulthood, I argued that waithood can be experienced at any and/or multiple stages of the marriage migration process, and thereby can become a permanent experience, replacing expected aspirations of life as a transnational patriarch. My fieldwork also uncovered migrant husbands’ experiences of different forms of domestic violence at the hands of wives and in-laws, as well as violence inflicted by employers.

Crucial in the power dynamics underpinning these different forms of violence was the ‘direction of power’ established through the giving of a ‘British’ Pakistani bride to a ‘non-British’ Pakistani national groom. The violence that migrant husbands were subjected to demonstrated that contrary to the understanding that the control for women’s bodies results in honour, it was in fact the control of male bodies that generated the highest form of honour. At the same time, women’s bodies were also being controlled in different ways however, it was through the control of men in this context, that senior men and women were able to control the families and assets of migrant husbands in Pakistan. It was specifically this control of the migrant husbands that provided an entry to the control of assets, kin, and community in a transnational context, which translated into social capital. While an identical dynamic was not present for the control of female bodies, the ‘giving of the bride’ to the migrant husband played a significant role in establishing the direction of power and control. As a result, female bodies were required and necessary to allow for this particular type of control to take place, and therefore honour to be generated. The control of assets and wealth was at times weaved into the nikaah [Islamic marriage contract] documents, which made it impossible for migrant husbands to escape abusive marital and household circumstances.

While at the macro level of the household these marriages provided senior Pakistani men and women with greater power, at the micro level of the individual marriage, there were shifts in gender power dynamics that provided wives with greater autonomy and power. These shifts
inspired the theorisation of the feminisation of marriage, which argues that marriage as an institution has become more favourable to women in the British Pakistani community. The theorising of this particular feminisation acknowledges that in some contexts, women continue to be oppressed and is therefore in no way an attempt to overlook the ongoing oppression(s) that women are subjected to. It merely attempts to capture the increased autonomy experienced by women in this particular context involving a transnational marriage dynamic where migrant men experience weaker positions, vulnerability, and precariousness.

Together these three findings – increased waithood(s) and/or migration being experienced as a series of waithoods, domestic violence against migrant husbands, and shifts in gender power dynamics – led to the conceptualisation of migrant husband masculinity as liminal. I argued that due to the ongoing nature of vulnerable and unpredictable circumstances migrant husbands were subjected to through marriage and migration, that they became liminal subjects, which pushed the concept of liminality beyond characterising social transitions, to an embodied state that can be experienced over extended periods of time, and across multiple and intersecting spaces.

The third form of masculinity the fieldwork pointed towards was (re)assertive masculinity, through which migrant husbands exercised agency and resistance to the various forms of oppression they experienced. An important mechanism through which masculinity was reasserted was that of Songs of Sorrow, which were sung, shared and experienced with other migrant husbands, creating a space for solidarity and a community feeling, and for the expression of emotion. I analysed and translated four Songs of Sorrow, which were shared widely amongst migrant husbands through social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp Messenger and were publicly available on YouTube. The lyrics established the plight of migrant husbands as a social truth, detailing the abuse they experience from wives, in-laws, and employers. They also detailed the differences in the aspirations of migrant husbands before marriage and migration, and after marriage migration, depicting some migrant husbands returning to Pakistan due to the dissonance in expected versus lived experience. These songs however, (re)asserted masculinity along patriarchal lines and via hegemonic masculine forms, which positioned women in the household performing roles as homemakers, housewives and mothers. Piety and religiosity were sometimes employed to justify
women’s respect for their husbands. In Bedouin and Indian societies, anthropologists have documented women’s practice of resistance through songs, which have included the expression of fantasies relating to physically abusing their husbands (see Lughod: 1990, Raheja and Gold: 1994). In such documentations, the respective anthropologists have argued that these songs are in fact safe spaces for women to express their emotions, and do not necessarily mean that such fantasies and expressions will be carried out. In the same way, I argue that for migrant husbands, Songs of Sorrow provide a safe space from the various forms of structural oppressions they were subject to.

A second way in which some migrant husbands exercised agency and resistance was through what I termed the ‘Sufi-scape’ of Birmingham. Migrant husbands practiced sabr through the remembrance of the hardships experienced by prophets, saints, and Sufi mystics, which led me to argue that a ‘prophetic masculinity’ was being developed in instances where the transnational patriarch masculine ideal did not materialise. Within this space, religious scholars provided guidance and moral support, and some migrant husbands took religious affiliation with the leaders of the Sufi order they were engaging with. Fellow affiliates of the Sufi order also provided migrant husbands with moral support, which in some cases functioned as informal marriage counselling. Affiliation with a particular Sufi order was marked by different coloured clothing items, which helped build solidarity with men who were part of the same Sufi order, while setting them apart from those who had sworn allegiance with other Sufi orders. Green coloured turbans, white hats, and orange scarves were some examples of the different markers of identity. Such physical markers struck similarity with pre-marriage and migration physical markers such as ‘British’ haircuts and apparel, which increased migrant husbands’ appeal as attractive potential spouses. These markers also symbolise religious piety, which translated into a form of religiosocial capital that migrant husbands employed in negotiating their positions in their wives’ and in-laws’ houses, as well as within the broader community. In this way, then, the reassertion of masculinity involved creating alternative social currencies which competed with the social currencies demonstrated and exhibited by hegemonic masculinities, such as that of the transnational patriarch. For some migrant husbands, increasing engagement in Pakistani political parties with transnational
branches in the UK provided social capital, which provide an alternative entry point to achieving the position of the transnational patriarch.

Not all modes of reasserting masculinity were involved in creating alternative social currencies however. Some migrant husbands were actively ‘performing finance’ to keep up the appearance of the transnational patriarch of which an important aspect was the successful navigation of the state’s immigration policies, for which finances were required. As a result, migrant husbands approached finances in new and creative ways, thereby reasserting their masculinity within the already existing framework of the transnational patriarch. A combination of rotating committee funds, receipt of welfare state funds, engaging in often multiple employments, and owning and running businesses, were some of the financial techniques employed to keep up the appearance of a transnational patriarch. In some instances where migrant husbands had experienced setbacks, female kin exercised their own ‘purchasing power’, as they were in receipt of welfare state benefits independent from their husbands, to help their male kin who were migrant husbands. In these cases, many of my female interlocuters felt it was important to ensure that their male kin maintained their power and authority within the extended family and community, to ensure their honour and respect was maintained. In other words, their honour was linked to that of their male kin, and the weakness shown by male kin was their weakness. It is important to note however, that the financial support provided by female kin in this way was common between older men and/or migrant husbands (as opposed to younger and more dependant migrant husbands) and women (their wives, sisters, daughters). Together, these point to multiple and complex ways through which migrant husbands negotiated and reasserted their masculinities amidst the fluctuations of a social terrain, which they had expected to function and perform for them in a certain way(s). This demonstrates that the resilience of Muslim migrant husbands as social actors, and the fluid nature of their masculinity can adapt and manoeuvre around various forms of oppression. This leads me to discuss the theoretical contributions made by my thesis to the field of migration, men and masculinity studies, and the anthropology of Islam and Muslim societies.
7.2 Contributions

My ethnography has aimed to contribute to migration theory in a number of ways. Firstly, building upon debates pertaining to aspirations and migration (Honwana: 2012, Carling et. al: 2018), in conceptualising ‘aspirational masculinity’, the research demonstrates that aspirations to migrate involve, engage, and directly implicate the masculine identity of migrant husbands in multiple ways at various and multiple stages of the migration process. In particular, the migration journey can begin, at least at the level of the social imaginary, long before the physical journey of migration begins, which suggests that migration is more than the physically moving through geographic terrains (see also Connell: 2007, de Sousa Santos: 2014, Patel: 2019, Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Tafira: 2019, David and Boehmer: 2019). Rather, migration includes the development of social aspirations and social techniques, which enable migrants to socially migrate to a position in which they can undertake the physical aspect of migratory journeys. This aspect of migration is also made possible through the migration of ideas and perceptions of spaces and places to the current social environments of migrants (Werbner: 1994, Brah: 1996, Gardener: 2005), which was demonstrated in the way in which elaborate mansions dominated the skylines of towns and villages in Pakistan, serving as powerful reminders of the benefits of becoming a migrant husband.

This leads me to posit the theory of ‘social migration’ as a contribution to migration theory. Unlike social mobility, which I view as the migration of people in and though the labour market and/or their becoming of less or more profitable and profited bodies within a capitalist system, social migration involves: (a) the migration of spaces and places as well as people, (b) the migration of people and the ways in which they affect space and place throughout different stages of the migratory journey, and (c) the ways in which the former two interact to create new sub-spaces such as Sufi Scapes. Social migration also captures the way in which intersectional markers such as gender and generation experiences impact and are impacted in and through transnational migration, as they too experience social migration. While the field of migration primarily focuses on the migration of people, social migration theory can enable a more and a nuanced understanding of the drivers of people-based migration and the ways in which space and place,
and embodied experiences can also experience migration. A pertinent example from the ethnography which demonstrates social migration theory is the lavish mansions which were built by the sending of remittances by successful pioneer generations of migrant husbands. This example demonstrates that the space and place of the UK migrates to and settles in Pakistan as part of its geographical landscapes, and thereby also in the landscapes of social imaginaries of Pakistani citizens, wherein the aspirations and desire to migrate are invoked.

The second contribution to migration theory pertains to the way in which migration can involve starts, stops, interruptions, and restarts at multiple and various stages during migration process. Migrant husbands’ experiences before marriage migration continued to transform throughout the process, as they were subject to macro-level structures such as the state – often oppressive in nature through immigration policies – that directly impacted the way in which they experienced migration. As a result, the rhythm of migration determined by structures at the macro level of the state for example, determined the embodied processes at the micro level of the body.

A second area in which the ethnography makes significant contributions is that of men and masculinity studies. The research demonstrates that masculinity is multiple and complex as theorists such as Connell (2005) have established. Through exploring the experiences of Pakistani migrant men in the city of Birmingham in the UK, the study contributes an in-depth ethnographic case study to the expanding field of men and masculinity studies by developing an intersectionalist analysis, attentive to gender, religion, class and age. Going beyond this however, the research develops three forms of masculinity - aspirational, liminal, and reassertive - which demonstrate the ways in which processes of marriage and migration construct masculinity and vice versa. Furthermore, the masculinity of migrant husbands emerges as in light of the oppression perpetuated by the state, through immigration policies for instance. As a result, I argue that the state embodies the ultimate hegemonic masculine ideal that migrant husbands are in different ways, and in at different times and often in multiple and intersecting spaces attempting to navigate and manoeuvre. This is supported by the sentiments expressed by migrant husbands, including the way in which the state provides women with welfare benefits and more rights (see also Jansen:}
2008, Este and Tachble: 2009, Al-Sharmani: 2010, Kleist: 2010), and their feeling constantly belittled and powerless to the state’s immigration rules and regulations. The construction of alternative social currencies such as through Songs of Sorrow, Sufi-scapes, and performing finances, interweaved creative ways through which migrant husbands could transcend the state’s policies, and therefore compete with the masculinity of the state.

Another area in which the research contributed was that of anthropological theory of liminality. I have shown that migrant husbands’ masculinity was framed by processes of liminality, which pushed the concept further than its original application to transitional social periods. Liminality I argued, could be applied to social experiences such as migration, as well as persons such as migrant husbands, who could embody the liminality as a state due to their precarious and vulnerable situations. Such embodiment of liminality then helped conceive migration as not only a process, but also as a series of waithoods or liminal phases. Further, aspirational and reassertive masculinities together with liminal masculinities are a novel contribution to both migration and masculinity studies.

The research also contributes to the anthropology of Islam and Muslim societies, as it shows that religiosity of the Islamic faith can be practiced in varying shades, depending on the context. It also echoes the arguments made by Joseph (1996) that patriarchy in Muslim societies can subjugate males as well as females. Leading on from this, the research also makes a contribution to feminist anthropology, as it demonstrates nuances in female autonomy in a transnational context. From a feminist ethnographic perspective, as a researcher I weaved together intersectionality, positionality, and personal feminism. In doing so, I have demonstrated that to practice feminist ethnography, we must distance ourselves from the prejudices embedded within and inherent in and to our positionalties that can prevent us from viewing invisible and/or vulnerable and/or oppressed communities. This will be elaborated in more detail in the following section.
Decolonising Muslim Men

The ‘personal feminism’ approach that I developed through this research, was defined in chapter three as, “to exercise and practice it as a form of speaking truth to power, in spite of current or popular understanding of vulnerable groups and/or any personal negative experiences with individuals that self-identify within these groups.” As a British Muslim woman of Kashmiri heritage, exploring subjectivity and hardship amongst Pakistani Muslim migrant men who are at times viewed as powerful masculine authorities in patriarchal societies is perhaps unconventional. In doing so, I have interrogated and disrupted the power of patriarchy that can oppress both men and women, at times by positioning men and women against one another, which can cloak common experiences such as practicing sabr, as explored in this thesis.

My positionality also extends to being born and raised in the poorest constituency in the UK (Hodge Hill, Birmingham), and being subjected to intersectional, multiple, and complex forces of oppression at different stages of my life. A recent report by the United Nations confirmed that parts of the UK in fact resembled developing countries due to the abject poverty (UN: 2018), and disadvantage people are experiencing. In line with Connell, who ‘notes that there are multiple souths in the world, including ‘souths’ (and southern voices) within powerful metropoles, as well as multiple souths within multiple peripheries’ (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley, 2018: 3), my background positions me not only as a woman of borders and margins (Dikotomis: 2004, 7) but also a woman who embodies the “South” (as conventionally understood) in the “North” (as conventionally understood) (see Connell: 2014). While Connell and others have admirably and rightly, made the case for a world-centred rather than a metropole centred approach to the study of men and masculinity studies (2014: 227), I push for the advancement of this through my positionality. In other words, the thesis furthers what is conventionally understood as ‘North-South’ research in which the North and its academic institutions are privileged, as it embodies a form of ‘South-South’ research in the North. This is to say that my positionality as a woman of colour born and raised in a disadvantaged, socioeconomically deprived area that resembles countries of the global South (as documented recently by the United Nations, 2018), researching
the vulnerabilities of migrant husbands is an example of “South-South” research in the “North”. By implication then, this also interrogates and unhinges spatial geography (i.e. North versus South) from experienced geography (i.e. inequality and oppression of various and multiple forms) (see also Connell: 2007, Conraff and Conraff: 2012, 45-49, de Sousa Santos: 2014, Davis and Boehmer: 2019, Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Tafira: 2019).

Both my positionality and the positionality of my interlocuters is further demonstrated in the institutional structures of the academy (see also Murrey: 2019), as this research had not been funded through a UK Research Council or my institution, University College London. The structures of the academy, which are rooted in coloniality (Murrey: 2019, Patel 2019) determine which research is important, who decides it is important, and how the researcher, the research, and the researched are supported (see Smith: 1999, also cited by Patel: 2019). My research proposed to explore alternative and diverse set of Muslim men’s experiences, which disrupted the white gaze (Patel: 2019, 62) inherent in the academy, within which Muslim men are researched and read in a particular way. It is my view that had my proposed research aimed to explore terrorism amongst Pakistani men, or research that spoke to the already established grand narratives surrounding Muslim men, the doctorate study would have received funding. The conventional grand narratives maintained and perpetuated by the academy in the way it conducts itself, together with my researcher positionality and the broader literature on Muslim men that largely vilifies them, has generated a particular reflection: this doctorate thesis has decolonised the experiences of Muslim men, who even in the ‘metropole’ are subjected to multiple, intersectional, and overlapping gazes that determine their position in society, and which go on to shaping their social experiences more broadly. At an earlier point in this thesis I argued that the decolonisation of Muslim men had been made possible as a result of (a) the embodiment of the ‘South’ by both the researcher and the researched, and (b) the resistance to the multiple and overlapping structural forms of oppression the researcher and the research (and thereby the researched) have been subjected to in and through the academy. This has not only resulted in the incorporation of the voices of subaltern and marginalised communities, but also demonstrated the ‘doing’ of decolonial thought’ in practice and embodiment, while simultaneously subverting the gaze (see also: Said: 1978) toward
the academy. In doing so, the research has re-orientated Muslim men’s experiences within the academic spaces of knowledge production.

Future research initiatives should contribute to and continue to develop the line of inquiry of decolonising Muslim men. An example of such research may include the exploration of Muslim men’s mental health experiences and access to services such as through the NHS or the police, who often viewed migrant husbands as perpetrators and not victims of domestic violence. In recent years, men’s mental health has received greater coverage and has been increasingly discussed through social media, news media, and in popular culture. I have noted however, that these conversations exclude Black and Ethnic Minority men, affording White men the representation and support. For instance, in March 2019, a leading mental health charity in the UK, Samaritans, tweeted “Suicide is the biggest killer of men under 50, with men aged 20-59 at the biggest risk of suicide. Our new campaign shares real stories from men who’ve been through tough times, encouraging other men to seek help when they need it.” The campaign video embedded within this tweet however, only featured White Caucasian men talking about their mental health struggles. There were no Black and/or Ethnic Minority men included in this campaign video. Similarly, in May 2019, the Guardian tweeted an article about two radio DJs (White Caucasian) claiming that they were changing the way men were talking about mental health.

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43 I tweeted in response to the campaign highlighting the lack of diversity in the campaign, which could result in further reinforcing racial and ethnic divides in access to mental health amongst men.
However, as we know from social science research, positionality matters. In their tweeting of mental health amongst men and only featuring White Caucasian men in doing so, these organisations with a large twitter following, have in my view, created hierarchies in and between men along racial and ethnic lines, as to which men can and cannot talk about mental health, and access mental health services. This further polarise men’s experiences, which will eventually manifest in varying – and hierarchical – societal behaviours and patterns in masculine performance.

A similar approach is undertaken in Counter Extremism narratives, which intensify and fixate the gaze of the state on Muslim men, creating a one-dynamic and unnuanced narrative of Muslim men’s engagement with religion. As I explored in Chapter 3.2, the Sufi-scape of Birmingham however, suggests that Muslim men engage in Islamic religious practice in new and creative ways, which gives rise to new masculinities amongst Muslim men. The implications of these new masculinities for marriage and family formation trends amongst British Muslims is currently
unexplored but holds valuable insights for demographic trends. Therefore, complementing my study on Muslim migrant men’s experiences in/through Britain, a study exploring aspirational, liminal, and reassertive masculinity amongst British-born Muslim men is necessary. Throughout my research, I encountered and spoke with a number of British born Muslim men and found that not only were there parallels in their experiences with migrant husbands, but also in the spaces they occupy. For instance, the Sufi-scape that many migrant husbands navigated was dominated by young British Muslim men. Although such encounters through my ethnographic fieldwork provide perhaps anecdotal evidence, my expertise within the field lead me to identify a positive correlation between low levels of educational attainment, disadvantaged residential area, high rates of unemployment, poverty, media representations of Muslim men, and crisis in masculinity on the one hand, and the high numbers of young (18-30) British Muslim who had taken bayah with a Sufi brotherhood and attended weekly Sufi gatherings at one of the local zawiyas on the other. Since these spaces are crucial in the construction of masculinity as demonstrated for Muslim migrant husbands, it is important to explore the way in which masculinity is constructed amongst British born Muslim men in and through Sufi-scapes, and, furthermore, to explore the relationality of these British-born Muslim men with Muslim men born and raised elsewhere. A feminist ethnographic approach in which compassion is integral is crucial for this research; but equally as important, is for this compassionate feminist ethnographic approach to be penalty free within the structures of the academy for the researchers involved.
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9. Appendices

9.1 Information Sheet for Study Participants (English)

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[Document content]

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Details of the Study:
I am a researcher working with a research project led by Dr. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh at University College London in the United Kingdom. I am here to conduct a study that will look at the ways migrant husbands experience masculinity, marriage, and migration. This project, financed by the Gift of Knowledge (GoK) and The Aziz Foundation remains an independent academic project, which University College London is responsible for.

You have been invited to participate because you are a migrant husband from Pakistan, or you are a community member of Birmingham aware of migrant husbands who have migrated to the city after their marriage to a British national.

This project aims to explore the ways in which migrant husbands negotiate their masculinity in a situation through which they can gain British Citizenship but can also experience heightened feelings of vulnerability. This research examines masculinities in motion through the experiences of migrant husbands in relation to three interrelated factors: migration, marriage and masculinity.

I will be interviewing 15 migrant husbands from Birmingham 30 members of the local community. In total, the research project will interview about 45-50 migrant husbands and local community members in Birmingham.

The collected information will be used in published research as well as in academic presentations. I will share the information from my interviews in an anonymised way with my PhD supervisor, at University College London. I will look at the information to find answers to the main research questions.

Participation in the interview should take about 45-60 minutes. Participation is on an entirely voluntary basis. This means that you don't have to participate if you don't want to,
and you can tell me at any time if you don’t want to answer a question I ask, or if you want to leave the interview.

Anything you tell me in the interview is confidential, which means that no-one will know that you have shared that information with me, unless you explicitly want me to use your name or your personal information when I analyse the information, offer presentations or publish reports. The information that I will share with the other researchers will not include your name or any personal information that they could use to know who you are. Any notes that I take during or after the interview will be kept safely on my computer that only I can access – this is because I will use a password that only I know to be able to turn the computer on and to be able to open the document on the computer. If you allow me to record the interview, I will destroy the recording as soon as I have written up the notes on my computer, so that no-one apart from me can listen to the recording.

If at any time and for any reason you would rather not answer a question, please let me know. If at any time you would like the interview to stop, please let me know and we will stop. We can take a break, stop and continue later or on another day, or stop altogether. If you decide to stop at any time, that is fine.

Participation in the research project is entirely separate from the provision of public or governmental services, and that there will be no material benefit from participating in the research.

The research aims to improve our knowledge of the experiences of migrant husbands and inform the future development of policies and practices that will hopefully enhance the wellbeing of migrant husbands. However, individuals participating in the project will not receive enhanced access to assistance, opportunities or the fast-tracking of legal procedures. By participating in the project, we will be able to include your and other opinions about the experiences of migrant husbands.

If you would like me to share my research findings with you, I will be happy to do so through a form a communication that suits you best (i.e. email, discuss findings through a telephone call, or a face-to-face meeting). If the research is published, I will share any articles with you.

It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. If you do decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

If you do agree to take part, I would like to record this interview to make sure that I remember everything that you tell me correctly. I will listen to the recording again this evening/tomorrow and will write some notes on my computer; after I have written the notes, I will destroy the recording so that no-one else can listen to it. If you don’t want me to record the interview, that is fine. We can still go ahead with the interview even if you don’t want to be taped. After I have written up the notes on the computer, I will transfer the
notes – which will not include your name – to UCL for the purposes of data analysis. All
data will be collected and stored in accordance with the UK’s Data Protection Act 1998.

In summary:
- A decision to withdraw at any time, or decision not to take part, will not affect the
services you receive.
- You will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent
form or provide verbal consent if you do not wish to sign.
- 48 hours after receiving this information sheet, you can let me know whether you
would like to go ahead with participating in the research.
- As participation is anonymous it will not be possible for us to withdraw your data
after we have completed the transcription of the interview this evening/tomorrow.
- Recorded interviews will be transcribed (written up) and the tape will then be wiped
clear.

If you have any questions, you are free to ask me now. Please take this information sheet
and the attached consent form to read through them again and decide if you would like to
participate in the project. Please contact me after 48 hours to let me know if you want to
participate. If you have any questions at any stage, you can contact me on 07572294378.

You can also contact the person who is leading the project by emailing Dr. Elena Fiddian-
Qasmiyeh on e.fiddian-qasmiyeh@ucl.ac.uk.

If you like, you can also see more information about the project here:

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant, or if you would like to make a
complaint about any part of the research process, you can contact the following office:
- The Chair of the UCL Research Ethics Committee, University College London,
  Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT
- ethics@ucl.ac.uk

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering take part in this research.
9.2 Information Sheet for Study Participants (Urdu)
المستوى الكوميليكي 30 برنج ومجموعي طور انترويو كرون. مجموعي طور انترويو كرون.

جمع هذه المعلومات على عملية تطعيم البيشكترون بأن جميع كرده معلومات كاستفاده كبرية. هي كبرياتا في سابعة. حيث يكون سبب نقص في انترويوس

هذا، هو اختياري سيراليون كيجي جواب ثلاث كرده. تم معلومات كروكن با. كرس أو

نتيجة جهودنا جانبنا بين.

اکثر آپ این اتفاقات نتایج کو آپ کی سکه اشترک کردن کی لئے چاہتے ہیں، تو مایوس اس شکل سے ایک
اپنا میعاد بھی کی ذرتی خوش بیوں گا آپ کو بہترین (بیانی ایم گیل کی) ایک ثیلی فون کال کے ذریعے
سے متعلق نتائج یا ایک چھارے کا سامنا اہلی (پر یدیانے خیال کرنا چیز اگر تحقیق شائع ہو گی تو،
مایوس آپ کے ساتھ کوئی مضامین شریک کرنا گا)

یہ آپ کی پانی ہے کی فصل. کرنا جانی چاہتا ہے آپ اک صفحہ لینے یا نہیں، حسید نہ لینے یا انتخاب آپ کو کسی
یہ آپ خصوصا نیک بھیجانے گا اگر آپ احترام لینے یا فصل کرے ہیں تو اب آپ کسی بھی وقت کسی
یہ آپ جو سے کسی بھی وقت والے لینے یا ازداد نہیں بنیں.

اگر آپ خصوصا نیک بھیجانے گا اگر آپ کو انترویو کو ریکارڈ کرنا چاہتا گا کہ یہ حقیقی
بنیاں کے میں کچھ سے ہے جو آپ مجبور صحیح طریقے سے بتانا میں آپ کا کوئی میں دوبارہ
ریکارڈنگ سونو گا اگر آپ کی کمیوں پر کچھ نہ دو نہ کچھ دو نہ ہی کے بعد میں
میں ریکارڈنگ کو بیاہ کرنا گا تاکہ کسی اور گا کو نہ سکتا گا اگر آپ انترویو ریکارڈ نہ
کرنا چاہتا ہے تو یہ کہہ سکتا ہے بنیاں کے بہت کہ آپ اب اپنے پریپ کرنا چاہتا
ہیں. کمیوں پر نہیں لکھیے کے بعد میں نہوں کو منتقل کرنا گا جس میں آپ کا کام - ڈنیا پر کی
تجزیہ. کی مقتضیات کی لئے میں شامل نہیں ہوگا. تمام اعداد و شمار برطانیہ کے ڈنیا پر ہیک
کی UCL 1998 کے مقصد کی لئے میں شامل نہیں ہوگا. تمام اعداد و شمار برطانیہ کے ڈنیا پر ہیک

ایکلایش:

- کسی بھی وقت واسطہ لینے ایک فصلہ. یا فصلہ لینے یا فصلہ نہیں، آپ کی خدمات حاصل کرنا ہے پر آپ
اگر آپ سالانہ این کرنا پہلے تو آپ کو اس معلومات کا شیوہ دور دیا گا اور آپ رضاکاران کا ہے پر
دستخط کرنا یا زیارتی رضاکارن کا ہے پر آپ کے لئے کرنا گا.
- 48 گھنٹے اس معلومات کا شیوہ دور حاصل کرنا ہے کے بعد آپ مجبور ہے جان سکتا ہے کہ آپ تحقیق
میں جدید کرنا گا لئے ایک نیا جوابی ہے.
جن بھی کشمکش کھالی ہے میں اس شمار / کل کہ انترویو کی نقل و حمل مکمل ہونے کے بعد میں آپ کی ڈنیا کو
واسطہ لینے کی لئے مکمل نہیں ہوگا.
ریکارڈنگ انترویو کو تراشیش ہے کا جواب گا (تحریرو) اور ثبوت پھر صاف بھی جوابی گا.

اگر آپ کی پانی کو سوال ہے، تو آپ اب مجبور ہے بھوج گی. بینیاں مہربانی اس معلومات کا شیوہ لین
اور منشی رضاکارن کا پر آپ کے ذرتی ذرتی دوبارہ پر یعنی کہ لئے فصل. کرنا اور فصل. کرنا کہ آپ اب
اس منشیوں میں شرکت کرنا چاہتا گا 48 گھنٹے کے بعد مجبور رضوی. کرنا تو مجبور ہونا کے لئے
اگر آپ شرکت کرنا چاہتا ہیں آپ آپ کے پانی کو مرحلہ پر کوئی سوال نہ ہو، آپ مجبور سے رضوی
کر سکتا ہیں.

آپ اس شخص سے بھی رضوی کر سکتے ہیں جو ذاکر آپ کو فیودریکس، اسمائیل فلٹن ہیں.
اگر آپ چاپیں تو، اب بھی اس منصوبہ کے بارے میں مزید معلومات بھی دیکھ سکتے ہیں:

اگر آپ کے شرکاء کے طور پر آپ کے حقوق کے بارے میں کوئی سوال ہے، پا اگر آپ تحقیق کے عمل کے کسی بھی حصے کے بارے میں شکایت کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو آپ مندرجہ ذیل دفتر سے رابطہ کریں:

ریسرچ اخلاقی کمیٹی، چارنیمین کالج کالج، گار، اسکریٹ، لندن، کے جنرل WC1E 6BT

ethics@ucl.ac.uk

اس معلومات کی شرکت کو پڑھنے اور اس تحقیق میں حصہ لینے پر غور کرنے کے لئے آپ کا شکرہ ہے۔
Informed Consent Form:

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this research. Before you agree to take part, the person organising the research must explain the project to you.

If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you to decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

Project contact details for further information:
Researcher: Suriyah Bi (PhD Candidate, University College London)
Contact details: suriyah.bi.15@ucl.ac.uk
Supervisor: Dr. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh
Consent Form For:

Research Title: "Marriage and Masculinities in Motion: Examining Migrant Husbands' Experiences in Birmingham's British Pakistani Community."

Purpose of Study: "To explore marriage and masculinities in motion by examining migrant husbands' experiences in the British Pakistani community."

This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee (Project ID: )

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please tick the appropriate boxes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have read and understood the project information sheet dated:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and have received satisfactory answers to questions, and any other additional details requested.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I agree to take part in the project by agreeing to be interviewed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I agree for the interview to be audio recorded.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand that I do not have to provide answers to questions if I do not wish to.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand that my taking part is voluntary and I can withdraw from the study at any time, and I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the UCL Research Ethics Committee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand who will have access to personal data provided, how the data will be stored; and what will happen to the data at the end of the project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where the research will be written up as a student's thesis, I understand how personal data included in that thesis will be published and stored.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been given 48 hours to be sure of my decision to participate. I have also been given a few moments to decide whether I want to go ahead with the interview today.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand that I have a 48 hour period after this interview, during which I can withdraw my interview from the research.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I agree to participate in this study.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

__________________________________________  ____________________________  ________
Name of Researcher [printed]                     Signature                      Date
9.4 Informed Consent Form (Urdu)
9.5 Information guidance for Religious/Community leaders (i.e. Imam for Jummah Khutbah) (English and Urdu)

Information guidance for Religious/Community leaders (i.e. Imam for Jummah Khutbah)

A PhD researcher from University College London would like to interview migrant husbands to find out more about their experiences. This includes what it was like moving from Pakistan to the UK, what married life in the UK is like, how they have adjusted, whether they have experienced or continue to experience any difficulties. Do you have any ideas of how the immigration system could be improved or do you have advice you would give to(bachelors in Pakistan about marrying someone in the UK? If so, contact Suriyah Bi from University College London. There are some flyers and information sheets at the front here that you can collect.
9.6 Unintended Findings Protocol
9.7 Interview Guide

Interview Guide

[Once the 48 hour withdrawal period has been completed and the participant wishes to proceed]

Structure:

• Introduce myself as the researcher
• Offer background to the research
• Ask if they have any questions or concerns
• Ask for their consent to participate in the interviews and let them know they can stop the interview at any point if they wish, with no repercussions for withdrawing at any stage
• Ask for permission to audio-record the conversation and/or take notes

Interview Questions:

Can you tell me a little bit about yourself? (Education, family background, family size, village/city in Pakistan etc. year/date of migration/settlement to the UK)

What was your experience of living in Pakistan?

How did you feel about marriage? What were your expectations prior to getting married?

How did you feel about having a British wife?

How did you feel about going to Britain after marriage? Did you have any views?

How did you feel as a man migrating to the UK?

What was it like when you arrived into the UK?

How did you get on with your wife’s family? Did you live with them?

Did the experience of migration and settlement match up to you views before migration?

How has your experience of marriage been? What was it like when you first arrived? What is it like now?

How has it changed?

What about your relationship with your wife’s family? How has this matched up to your expectations and view of being a son-in-law to a British family?
How has this affected you as a husband? How has this affected you as a man?

What do you think of the role of men and women in a marriage? Has this changed since you have married?

How do you think of the government in relation to you migrating to the UK?

How do you think of the government in relation to your marriage?

How do you think of the government in how you feel as a man/husband/father?

Do you have many friends in the UK? How do you keep in touch with them? Do you meet them often?

In times of trouble how have you sought support? Who has helped you/who has not helped you?

What support mechanisms do you rely on?

What has been the best thing about marriage and migrating to the UK? Have you learnt anything new?

Are there any positive memories?
List of Helpful Organisations

- **DVmen.co.uk**
  Provides information on domestic violence against men
  http://www.dvmen.co.uk/
  admin@dvmen.co.uk

- **Mankind Initiative**
  Has a confidential helpline for male victims of domestic violence and domestic abuse
  http://www.mankind.org.uk/
  Tel: 01823 334244

- **Men’s Advice Line**
  A confidential helpline for all men experiencing domestic violence
  http://www.respect.uk.net/mens_advice.php
  Tel: 0808 801 0327
  Email: info@mensadviceonline.org.uk

- **AMEN**
  Provides a confidential helpline and support service for male victims of domestic violence in Ireland
  http://www.amen.ie/
  Amen Helpline: 046 9023 718
  Email: info@amen.ie

- **Women’s Aid Berkshire East and South Bucks**
  Run a specialist service for male victims of domestic abuse
  http://www.ebwomensaid.org.uk/our-services/help-for-male-victims/
  Tel: 0800 0852 654
  Email: info@ebwomensaid.org.uk

- **National police domestic abuse helpline**
  0802 2000 247
  http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk/

- **AMIS**
  Abused Men in Scotland provide a help line for men experiencing domestic abuse
  http://www.abusedmeninscotland.org/
  0808 800 0024

- **Samaritans**
  Provide 24 hour confidential support for people experiencing distress or despair
  Tel: 08457 90 90 90
  Email: jo@samaritans.org
  http://www.samaritans.org/

- **Karma Nirvana**
  Supports victims and survivors of forced marriage and honour based violence
  http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk/
  08005999247
9.9 List of Helpful Organisations (Urdu)

- **DVmen.co.uk**
  مردوں کے خلاف گھریلو تشدد کے بارے میں معلومات فراہم کرتا ہے.
  [http://www.dvmen.co.uk/](http://www.dvmen.co.uk/)
  Email: [admin@dvmen.co.uk](mailto:admin@dvmen.co.uk)

- **Mankind Initiative**
  Tel: 01823 334244

- **Men’s Advice Line**
  [http://www.respect.uk.net/mens_advice.php](http://www.respect.uk.net/mens_advice.php)
  Tel: 0808 801 0327
  Email: [info@mensadviceline.org.uk](mailto:info@mensadviceline.org.uk)

- **AMEN**
  [http://www.amen.ie/](http://www.amen.ie/)
  Amen Helpline: 046 9023 718
  Email: [info@amen.ie](mailto:info@amen.ie)

- **Women’s Aid Berkshire East and South Bucks**
  Tel: 0800 0852 654
  Email: [info@ebwomensaid.org.uk](mailto:info@ebwomensaid.org.uk)

- **National police domestic abuse helpline**

- **AMIS**
  0808 800 0024

- **Samaritans**
  Tel: 08457 90 90 90
  Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

- **Karma Nirvana**
  08005999247
Are you a Migrant Husband from Pakistan?

Are you:
• Living in Birmingham, UK?
• Aged 18+
• Married to a British citizen?
• Migrated from Pakistan to the UK after marriage?

We want to hear about your experiences of marriage, migration and masculinity as a migrant husband.

Contact me in complete confidence:

Name: Suriyah Bi
Contact number: [redacted]
Email: suriyah.bi.15@ucl.ac.uk
کیا آپ پاکستان سے ایک مهاجر شورہ دین؟

کیا آپ:
- برمنگھم میں رہتے ہیں؟
- 18 سال سے زائد عمر کی ہیں؟
- برطانوی برادری سے شادی کی ہے؟
- شادی کی بعد برطانیہ میں منتقل ہوئے ہیں؟

ہم آپ کے تجربات کے بارے میں سننا چاہتا ہوں کہہ شادی، منتقلی اور مذکورہ مکان ایک مهاجر خاوند کے طور پر مکمل اعتماد میں مچھ سے رابطہ کریں:

نام: سوریہ بی
موبائل فون: کافی
ایمیل: suriyah.bi.15@ucl.ac.uk