

Policies around honour-based violence and LGBTQ+ people.

How do policies around honour-based violence take LGBTQ+ people into account and how does this translate into treatment and support?

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Content

Abstract	4
Introduction	5
Theoretical Framework	10
<i>LGBTQ+ community and violence</i>	<i>10</i>
Minority stress.....	10
Violence and the LGBTQ+ community.....	12
Violence against LHBTQ+ people in the Netherlands.....	13
<i>Honour-based Violence.....</i>	<i>14</i>
Definition.....	14
Dishonourable actions.....	18
Restoring the honour	18
Honour-based violence and violence	19
HBV in the Netherlands.....	20
<i>Comparing the literature</i>	<i>21</i>
Methodology	22
<i>Interviews</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Document analysis.....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Ethics.....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Personal reflection</i>	<i>25</i>
Results	26
<i>Honour-based Violence.....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Survivors</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Predators</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Treatment and support.....</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Prejudice and misconception</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>LGBTQ+ survivors.....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Culturally sensitive.....</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Discretely working</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Limitations</i>	<i>36</i>
Discussion	37
<i>Understanding Honour-based Violence.....</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Treatment and support after honour-based violence.....</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Treatment and support after honour-based violence for LGBTQ+ people.....</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Cultural Sensitivity</i>	<i>41</i>

Conclusion..... 42
Bibliography 44

Abstract

A lot of research has been conducted on honour-based violence and violence against the LGBTQ+ community. However, on the intersection of the two topics, academic research is lacking. Therefore, this thesis will focus on LGBTQ+ people who have encountered honour-based violence because of their sexual and/or gender identity. More specifically, it examines on how LGBTQ+ people are included in Dutch policies on honour-based violence and how this influence the treatment and care they can receive afterwards. Through analyzing two semi-structured interviews with professionals from organizations who offer treatment and support to survivors of honour-based violence, a document analysis of five organizations who also offer treatment and support and a factsheet published on the Dutch government site, I have aimed to answer these questions. I have found that LGBTQ+ people are not specifically included in Dutch policies about honour-based violence, the lack of one definition on honour-based violence might be an explanation for this. Moreover, I have found that the treatment and support organizations offer for LGBTQ+ persons after honour-based violence are not regulated and organizations are therefore free to choose how they would like to fill this in. From the conducted interviews, it became clear that the caregivers focus and talk about topics as sexuality, gender, culture and religion with the survivor to better understand their background.

Introduction

On January 19th 2023, the radio station NPO radio 1 did a piece on honour-based violence.¹ In this fragment, politician Bente Becker and Hanneke Bakker, directeur and board member of the Blijf Groep, an organisation which provides help after violence, also honour-based violence talked about the phenomena. They touch on the news that the National Expertise Centre Honour-Based Violence (LEC EGG) shared, honour-based violence is becoming more common. In 2021 there were 628 cases in which the LEC EGG assisted, that is more than 50 cases per month.² In 2022, the LEC EGG assisted with 594 cases.³

From the numbers above, it is clear that honour-based violence exists in the Netherlands. The number of cases the LEC EGG assists with are not all the cases of this violence happening, sometimes the police is not contacted by the victim or honour is not detected or registered.⁴ Thus, there is honour-based violence happening in the Netherlands which is a problem that needs to be solved. Various organizations are working hard to prevent and stop honour-based violence and to provide support to the victims. Before going in to the work they do, let me explain what honour-based violence entails.

The word honour-based violence exists of two concepts, honour and violence. Explaining these concepts first creates a basis where they can later be connected to explain honour-based violence. Robert Ermers argues that honour is "... synonymous to a reputation of morality."⁵ According to him, this reputation is a condition to be accepted and included within a community.⁶ Following this argument, someone without a reputation of morality is not or can no longer be accepted and included within a community. Campbell et al. follow a similar argument by stating that honour is "... a positive character trait associated with integrity and good moral character, leading individuals with such qualities to be described as honourable."⁷ Thus, honour is a positive aspect of a person

¹ "Steeds meer eer gerelateerd geweld: hoe is dit probleem goed aan te pakken?" De Nieuws BV, *BNNVARA*, January 19, 2023, <https://www.nporadio1.nl/fragmenten/de-nieuws-bv/7191c513-bc88-49bc-aabd-01cd93bee717/2023-01-19-steeds-meer-eergerelateerd-geweld-hoe-is-dit-probleem-goed-aan-te-pakken>

² Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eer Gerelateerd Geweld, *Terugblik op 2022: Jaarverslag van het Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eer Gerelateerd Geweld*. Den Haag, 2023. <https://www.politie.nl/binaries/content/assets/politie/onderwerpen/eergerelateerd-geweld/2022/lec-egg-jaarverslag-2022.pdf>.

³ Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eer Gerelateerd Geweld, *Terugblik op 2022: Jaarverslag van het Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eer Gerelateerd Geweld*, 16.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Robert Ermers, *Honor Related Violence: A New Social Psychological Perspective* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), 68.

⁶ Ermers, *Honor Related Violence: A New Social Psychological Perspective*, 68.

⁷ Gerry Campbell, Karl A. Roberts and Neelam Sarkaria, *Harmful Traditional Practices: Prevention, Protection and Policing* (London: Palgrave Mcmillan, 2022), 13, <https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-53312-8>.

connected to moral actions and choices which ensures inclusion within a community. From these definitions, one can argue that honour can be found in every community, whether this is a family or a self-created group like a sports or motorcycle club. However, some communities are argued to find it more important than others. These are what is called honour cultures. In honour cultures "... the maintenance of personal and family honour is a central organising principle defining the sorts of behaviour that are acceptable and unacceptable."⁸ Here, honour has a big influence on the daily life of the people within this culture. However, this does not mean that honour does not or cannot influence the lives of people outside of such honour cultures. Expectations concerning education, occupation or marriage may very well be connected to family honour and thus influence personal choices.⁹

Violence is, in general, understood as "... aggressive behavior with the intent to cause harm (physical or psychological)."¹⁰ The word intent is important here as acts that cause harm without the intention to do so, are not seen as violence.¹¹ For example, hitting someone with the ball during a soccer game is not seen as violence, while shooting the ball directly at someone with the intent to hurt them is seen as violence.

Now that I have described what honour and violence are, a connection between them can be found in the concept honour-based violence. When honour-based violence occurs, the honour of someone has been damaged and the attempt to save it, violence takes place. When the actions of a person have resulted in a loss of morality, the damaged honour, they can no longer be accepted within the community. The damaged honour has a big influence on the person, as they are now seen as the one without morality but also on the family and/or community of this person, as their honour has also been damaged. In an attempt to save the honour, violent actions are performed against the person by the family and/or community. The violent actions can be physical and psychological and are performed with the intent to harm the person in such a way that they 'must' act in a way that the family or community finds acceptable. If this is unsuccessful, the family or community may choose to disown the person so that they are no longer affected by their dishonourable actions.

In the theoretical framework of this thesis, I explore the phenomena honour-based violence in more detail. In that section, I will focus on what kind of actions result can result in honour-based violence and how various forms of violent acts look like. Moreover, there will be a section on the criticism the phenomena honour-based violence receives. This criticism is focused on the idea that the term

⁸ Campbell, Roberts and Sarkaria, *Harmful Traditional Practices: Prevention, Protection and Policing*, 14.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Elizabeth Kandel Englander, *Understanding Violence* (New York: Psychology Press, 2012), 2.

¹¹ Englander, *Understanding Violence*, 2.

honour-based violence creates and reinforces the prejudice that this violence is connected to a specific culture or religious community.

As said before, various organizations but also the Dutch government are working hard to prevent and stop honour-based violence and to help victims of this violence. They attempt to do this through various means. For example, sharing information about honour-based violence with other professionals like teachers or youth workers in the hope that they can detect honour-based violence¹² or by creating a report code to ensure cases of honour-based violence are reported and treated in the correct manner.¹³ Helping victims of honour-based violence can also be done in multiple ways. Examples are offering support, treatment or a place to stay when someone's house is no longer safe for them. These interventions are available for everyone.

In some cases of honour-based violence, a person becomes a victim of honour-based violence because of their gender and/or sexual identity which is not accepted by their family or community. The interventions and available help which are mentioned above do not distinguish between lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) victims and other victims, they are available for everyone. While this is ideal, no one should be excluded on their gender and/or sexual identity, especially not in cases of care, it does create a gap in the knowledge about how LGBTQ+ victims of honour-based violence are included in Dutch policies on this violence. This thesis aims to fill this gap. With limited knowledge on LGBTQ+ victims of honour-based violence, there is also no data on how this group is supported after the violence takes place, apart from the fact that they can receive the same care as everyone else. Therefore, this thesis will also focus on the treatment and support LGBTQ+ victims can receive after becoming victims of honour-based violence.

The relevance of the research of this thesis exists of two parts, academic and social relevance. The outcome of this research will add more knowledge to the academic field on honour-based violence by specifically focusing on LGBTQ+ victims, something which to this date has not been researched on its own before. This gap in the knowledge is not only deplorable in the case of academic research. Also when providing care, knowledge on how to care for LGBTQ+ victims of honour-based violence is essential. It could be the care that this group requires specific care which is now unknown. On the

¹² "Preventing honour-based violence," Honour-based violence, *Government of the Netherlands*, <https://www.government.nl/topics/honour-based-violence/preventing-honour-based-violence#:~:text=Honour%2Dbased%20violence%20takes%20many,of%20this%20kind%20is%20prosecuted.>

¹³ Hilde Bakker et al., *De Meldcode bij (vermoedens van) eergeerelateerd geweld*, (maart 2022), <https://www.huiselijkgeweld.nl/binaries/huiselijkgeweld/documenten/factsheets/2020/05/18/de-meldcode-bij-vermoedens-van-eergeerelateerd-geweld/De+meldcode+bij+vermoedens+van+eergeerelateerd+geweld+maart+2022.pdf>

social relevance, the number of cases of honour-based violence has been rising the past years.¹⁴ While every case of violence is one too many, the rising number indicates an issue that deserves attention. This research bring attention to the violence taking place while also adding knowledge about a specific group of (possible) victims, the LGBTQ+ people who are already in a vulnerable position within society.

With the research of this thesis, I aim to answer the following research question: *How do policies around honour-based violence take LGBTQ+ people into account and how does this translate into treatment and support of this group?* To answer this question, four sub questions will be considered. The first one is, 'How is honour-based violence understood within different organizations who focus on providing treatment and support for survivors of this violence? The second sub-question is 'How does the treatment and support that the organizations offer after honour-based violence look like?'. By answering these two sub-questions, I get a general idea of the work that the organizations do and how they view honour-based violence. The other sub-questions aim to expand this knowledge by asking about LGBTQ+ victims specifically. The third sub-question is 'How does the treatment and support that the organizations offer look for LGBTQ+ people?'. The last question goes 'How does the organization view and apply culture sensitivity while working with survivors of honour-based violence?'

This thesis will start with a theoretical overview, which is chapter 2. This overview will examine the research conducted about violence against the LGBTQ+ community, its influence on individuals and the community and the experiences of violence and safety of the community in the Netherlands. Furthermore, the overview dives into the topic of honour-based violence by looking at its definition, different understandings, reasons for this violence and the various forms it can take. Moreover, it will discuss honour-based violence in the Netherlands. The theoretical overview is followed by chapter 3, which is focused on methodology which will explain the research methods used in thesis. Additionally, it will explain why this research method was the most appropriate for this research. Chapter 4 will give an overview of the conducted interviews, as well as a comparison of the themes apparent in the interviews. Lastly, chapter 5 will compare the findings in the interviews to the literary knowledge. Moreover, this chapter outlines the limitations of this study. This thesis will end with a conclusion where insights from all chapters will be brought together to answer the research question.

¹⁴ Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eer Gerelateerd Geweld. *Terugblik op 2022: Jaarverslag van het Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eer Gerelateerd Geweld*. 16

Until now, I have used the term victim for someone who has experienced honour-based violence. In the rest of this thesis, I will refer to them as survivors. I do this because research on terminology of women who have experienced sexual assault generally shows that the term victim "... connotes passivity, weakness, and more negative attributes" while the term survivor "connotes strength, coping, and positive attributes ...".¹⁵ Even though this thesis does not focus on sexual assault, I do not wish to create a situation with this thesis where a victim is blamed or seen as weak because of what they have experienced.

¹⁵ Sandra Schwark and Gerd Bohner, "Sexual Violence— "Victim" or "Survivor", News Images Affect Explicit and Implicit Judgments of Blame," *Violence Against Women*, 25 no. 12 (2019): 1494, <https://doi.org.proxy-ub.rug.nl/10.1177/1077801218820202>

Theoretical Framework

This thesis focuses on the intersection of violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI+) people and honour-based violence. This section will explore the literature available on topics connected to the main research question, *How do policies around honour-based violence take LGBTQI+ people into account and how does this translate into treatment and support of survivors?* From this question, multiple topics arise which need to be unpacked before an answer can be formed. Therefore, this chapter will discuss literature on violence against LGBTQI+ people and its impact on the (mental) well-being of people. Moreover, this chapter will explore critical literature on honour-based violence. Together this will act as the basis for the rest of the thesis and its analysis.

LGBTQ+ community and violence

Minority stress

As for everyone, the mental well-being of LGBTQI+ people is strongly connected to their opinion about themselves and the opinion of others about them. Having a sexual and/or gender identity different than the heterosexual and cisgender norm, and thus belonging to a minority group, can be a great source of insecurity and can generate stress for the person experiencing it. The stress of belonging to a minority group is called minority stress. The influence of minority stress on sexual diverse people has been researched on its own first by Ilan Meyer.¹⁶ The mental well-being of minority groups has been researched before his study, but Meyer was the first to delve into the effects minority stress has on the mental health of gay men without comparing this to the majority group, in this case heterosexual cisgender people. Meyer argues that gay men, which is the only group he focuses on in this article, but the arguments are most likely applicable to the LGBTQI+ community as a whole, experience three stressors. First, internalized homophobia which refers to the negative feelings gay men have towards themselves due to negative societal attitudes towards their sexual identity. Second, stigma which "... relates to expectations of rejection and discrimination" (38) and lastly, actual experiences of discrimination and violence.¹⁷ After research, Meyer concludes that the stressors have a negative effect on the psychological well-being of gay men, individually and as a group. Meyer' article is from 1995 but more recent research confirms Meyer' argument. Based on literature research on minority stress from articles published between 2014 and 2018 on minority stress and the mental health of LGBT, Mongelli et al. also argue that

¹⁶ Ilan H. Meyer, "Minority Stress and Mental Health in Gay Men." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 36, no.1 (1995) <https://doi.org/10.2307/2137286>.

¹⁷ Meyer, "Minority Stress and Mental Health in Gay Men," 38.

sexual diversity can have a negative effect on the mental health of a person.¹⁸ This literature research focuses on three topics, depression, suicidality, and substance use. From the research discussed in the paper, it can be concluded that when the sexual diversity of a person has a negative effect on their mental health this is presented through depression, ideas on suicidality and/or substance use. Moreover, Mongelli et al. argue for more LGBT-inclusive policies which, they argue, could have a positive effect on the mental health of the minority group. Apart from these results, this paper also shows how there is a growing body of research on this topic.

As discussed before, Meyer argues that gay men experience three stressors from which two are concerned with the opinions of others, the expectation of non-acceptance and actual experiences of non-acceptance shown through discrimination and violence. This is closely connected with another body of research, those which study the influence of support and acceptance from family about their diverse sexual and/or gender identity. Previous research has shown how the mental health of sexual minority youth is positively influenced by a positive response to sexual and/or gender identity disclosure.¹⁹ However, these studies have focused on how LGBTQ+ youth themselves cope with this, centering what is happening in the individual's mind. Contrary, research by McDermott takes the social component of emotions into account.²⁰ It focusses on "... the ways in which young people embody, negotiate and manage emotions, and the social, economic and cultural familial context in which this takes place."²¹ After analyzing interviews with LGBTQ+ youth, their family members, and their week-long diaries, the following is concluded. First, being sexually and/or gender diverse often created tensions in relation to belonging to the family. Moreover, for some participants having this identity put a secure and safe home at risk and was damaging to their mental health. Second, the attitude of family members towards sexually and/or gender diversity had a direct impact on the mental health of the participants by trying to navigate between wanting to remain in a safe family setting while also living a queer life. Through the research, McDermott concludes that queer youth display certain emotions while navigating this contrast to "... remain housed, fed and safe.", for example withdrawal or masquerade.²² In conclusion, while disclosing one's queer identity to family is of importance, it is "... the emotionality of family relations, and queer youth negotiation of these,

¹⁸ Franesca Mongelli et al. "Minority stress and mental health among LGBT populations: an update on the evidence." *Minerva Psichiatr* 60 no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.23736/S0391-1772.18.01995-7>.

¹⁹ NM Stettler and LF Katz, "Minority stress, emotion regulation, and the parenting of sexual-minority youth," *Journal of LGBT Family Studies* 13 (2017).

²⁰ Elizabeth McDermott et al. "Family trouble: Heteronormativity, emotion work and queer youth mental health," *Health* 25 no. 2 (2021), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1363459319860572>.

²¹ McDermott et al., "Family trouble: Heteronormativity, emotion work and queer youth mental health," 181.

²² *Ibid*, 190.

that is important to recognize when trying to understand why and how family is so influential of queer youth mental health.”²³

The mental well-being of LGBTQI+ people can thus be influenced by the minority stress they experience and the attitude of the people around them. Moreover, actual experiences of violence and/or discrimination also have an influence on this, as they one of the three stressors Meyer has found during his research.²⁴ But how does violence against the LGBTQI+ community look like? And what are the effects of this on the wider community?

Violence and the LGBTQ+ community

Violence against people in the LGBTQI+ community can be divided into two categories; systematic and interpersonal violence. Systematic violence refers to the violence happening at “... the level of social norms and political and public policy” while interpersonal violence occurs at the level of the individual.²⁵ Important to note that violence in this case is not only physical, but it can also take a sexual and/or emotional form. Moreover, systematic violence on the basis of gender and/or sexual identity can be so ingrained in society that it can be hard to detect. Violence against members of the LGBTQI+ community on the basis of their sexual and/or gender identity are considered hate crimes. These are described as crimes motivated by hate, or rather prejudice, against a group or member of this identifiable group which is usually already marginalized within society. Acts of violence against the community fit this description as they are committed by someone who dislikes the survivor on the basis of their gender and/or sexual identity. Experiencing any violence can have a big influence on the survivor but literature suggests that the effect of hate crimes is more impactful as this violence is motivated by prejudice.²⁶ The interchangeability of the survivor, it could have been anyone within the community, and the way the entire community feels intimidated because of the violence against some of its members are two arguments McDevitt et al. provides for this difference²⁷. Moreover, research by Bell and Perry on the impact of hate crimes on the community suggest that it does not only affect the survivor.²⁸ They conclude after organizing focus groups that

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Meyer, “Minority Stress and Mental Health in Gay Men,” 38.

²⁵ Emily M. Lund, Claire Burgess and Andy J. Johnson, “Queer Violence: Confronting Diverse Forms of Violence Against LGBTQ+ Persons and Communities.” In *Violence Against LGBTQ+ Persons: Research, Practice, and Advocacy* (Cham: Springer, 2021).

²⁶ Kathryn Benier, “The harms of hate: Comparing the neighbouring practices and interactions of hate crime victims, non-hate crime victims and non-victims,” *International Review of Victimology* 23, no. 2 (2017): 181.

²⁷ Jack McDevitt et al., “Consequences for Victims: A Comparison of Bias- and Non-Bias-Motivated Assaults,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 45, no. 4 (2001) <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764201045004010>

²⁸ James G. Bell and Barbara Perry, “Outside Looking In: The Community Impacts of Anti-Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Hate Crime,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 62 no. 1 (2015),

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2014.957133>.

the whole community, or at least those who know of the crime, is affected by the hate crime. The perpetrator aims to send a message to the community of the survivor by committing the crime. Those who learn of the crime are influenced by it through, for example, altering the way they dress, act or by stopping to hang out with certain people to reduce the risk of becoming a victim themselves.

Violence against LHBTQ+ people in the Netherlands

Now that I have described how to define violence against the LGBTQ+ community and what the wider effects of hate crimes against the community are, it is fruitful to describe the situation in the Netherlands. To do so, I have used a report from 2022 about the living situation of LGBT people in the Netherlands.²⁹ To date, this is the most up to date report on this topic. The report focuses on the living situation of LGBT people in the Netherlands and if/how much this differs from heterosexual cisgender people. Moreover, it reviews if this situation has changed in the last years. For this thesis, I will focus on feelings of security and violence as they connect to the topics I have been discussing above.

People belonging to the LGBT community have a more vulnerable position within society in general. They are more often victims of instances of violence and/ or disrespectful behaviour than heterosexual cisgender people.³⁰ From the respondents, 11% from the lesbian/homosexual people and 9% of the bisexual people have experienced instances of violence in the past five years while this is 7% for heterosexual people.³¹ Following these number, it is not surprising that lesbian, homosexual and bisexual people have a smaller sense of security compared to heterosexual people. 40% of non-heterosexual people sometimes or often feel unsafe compared to 33% of heterosexual people.³² While victimisation and the feeling of insecurity of lesbian and homosexual people reduced between 2012 and 2019, this reduction is not apparent after 2019.³³ In general, the report states that people in the Netherlands are accepting of LGBT people.³⁴ However, this acceptance is limited as public display of love between same-sex couple is less accepted and the opinions about transgender people

²⁹ Willem Huijnk, Roxy Damen and Lonneke van Kampen, *LHBT-monitor 2022, de leefsituatie van lesbische, homoseksuele, biseksuele en transgender personen in Nederland* (Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, July 2022), <https://www.scp.nl/binaries/scp/documenten/publicaties/2022/07/05/lhbt-monitor-2022/SCP+LHBT+Monitor+2022.pdf>.

³⁰ Huijnk, Damen and van Kampen, *LHBT-monitor 2022, de leefsituatie van lesbische, homoseksuele, biseksuele en transgender personen in Nederland*, 7.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid, 9.

are worse compared to homosexuals and lesbians.³⁵ In conclusion, LGBT people in the Netherlands are not fully accepted and still experience violence.

At the time of writing this thesis, recent (violent) incidents against the LGBTQ+ community confirm the limited acceptance in the Netherlands. For example, in April of 2023 a rainbow flag got stolen in front of the COC³⁶ building in Eindhoven which was later set on fire.³⁷ Another example is the violent assault against an owner of a drag bar that happened in Groningen, also in April of 2023.³⁸

Honour-based Violence

Definition

Although extensively researched and written about, there is no definite definition of violence based on honour. Moreover, various scholars as well as organizations make use of different definitions and even different names for the same concept. In academic research, honour-based violence is the most used term, but honour-related violence and honour-based abuse are also seen.³⁹ In the book *Harmful Traditional Practices*, Campbell et al. makes use of the term honour-based abuse.⁴⁰ They argue that the term honour-related or -based violence is not inclusive enough since not all the actions perpetrated on the bases of honour can be considered violent while most, if not all of them, can be considered abusive with traumatic effects as its consequence. However, others use the term honour-based abuse without going into the reason they choose to use this term in favor over honour-based violence.⁴¹ I agree with the argument mentioned before that not every action perpetrated on the bases to restore the damaged honour is physically violent, e.g. beatings or killing. However, in my opinion, the term violence does not only refer to physical violence but also to the psychological aspect. Moreover, the term honour-related violence does not, in my opinion, grasp the full problem of the violence that is happening. While this violence is indeed related to honour, it is

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ COC is a national organization in the Netherlands which advocates for the rights of LGBT people, both of national and international level.

³⁷ Malini Witlox, "Mishandeling vrijwilliger COC: beelden verbrande regenboogvlag duiken op" *Omroep Brabant*, April 10, 2023, <https://www.omroepbrabant.nl/nieuws/4259097/mishandeling-vrijwilliger-coc-beelden-verbrande-regenboogvlag-duiken-op>

³⁸ "Employees of Groningen drag bar attacked; Police investigating" *NLTimes*, 10 April 2023 <https://nltimes.nl/2023/04/10/employees-groningen-drag-bar-attacked-police-investigating>

³⁹For example: Anne C. Korteweg and Gökçe Yurdakul, "Religion, Culture and the Politicization of Honour-Related Violence: A Critical Analysis of Media and Policy Debates in Western Europe and North America." *Gender and Development Programme Paper*, no. 12 (October 2010)

⁴⁰ Campbell, Roberts and Sarkaria, *Harmful Traditional Practices: Prevention, Protection and Policing*.

⁴¹ For example: Rachael Aplin, "Exploring the role of mothers in 'honour' based abuse perpetration and the impact on the policing response," *Women's Studies International Forum* 60, (2017)

acted on from the basis of restoring the damaged honour. For the reasons mentioned above, I will be using the term honour-based violence in this thesis.

In this thesis I will be using the following definition, “Honour-based violence is every form of psychological or physical violence committed on the basis of a collective mentality as a reaction to the (threat of) violation of the honour of a man or woman and with that the honour of his or her family of which the outside world is aware of or is at risk of becoming aware.”⁴² While this is an older definition, from 2005, it is still used within many policy reports on honour-based violence in the Netherlands.⁴³ This definition discusses all the key components of honour-based violence which, in my opinion, are important to understand and research it. First, the definition makes clear that violence can be both psychological and physical. Second, it emphasizes the importance of honour as a collective phenomenon by discussing collective mentality and linking the honour of the individual to that of the family. Third, and most importantly, this definition discusses how both men and women can damage their honour and become survivors of violence. Most definitions within the academic literature focus on women and how their sexual actions are the reason for honour-based violence. Therefore, I believe that this definition is the most inclusive and all-embracing.

In the introduction of this thesis, I briefly discussed the criticism which the term honour-based violence receives regarding misconceptions about it only existing within certain (religious) communities. In this section, I will be elaborating on this idea. One of the biggest misconceptions about honour-based violence is that it only or mainly occurs in non-Western communities, more specifically Muslim communities. This creates a general idea that they are outsiders, seen as ‘others’, and have backwards ideas and beliefs. This is in line with the more general idea of clash of civilizations, an idea proposed by Samuel Huntington, which argues that cultural or religious differences between civilizations will cause the next big conflict in the world.⁴⁴ In this case, it would be the Western civilizations against the Islamic one, where the Islamic civilization is portrayed as “... rejecting values such as freedom and nonviolence.”⁴⁵

This misconception has been challenged by several authors. In her chapter on honour crimes, Lila Abu-Lughod identifies four issues with the concept.⁴⁶ While they are all important, one of the issues

⁴² Beke, Ministerie van Justitie WODC, *Eerwraak of eer gerelateerd geweld? naar een werkdefinitie*, (2005), 25. Own translation

⁴³ For example: Hilde Bakker et al., *De Meldcode bij (vermoedens van) eengerelateerd geweld*.

⁴⁴ Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (1993), <https://doi.org/10.2307/20045621>.

⁴⁵ Lila Abu-Lughod. “Seduction of the ‘Honor Crime.” In *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*, (Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 2013), 114, <https://doi-org.proxy-ub.rug.nl/10.4159/9780674726338>.

⁴⁶ Abu-Lughod, “Seduction of the ‘Honor Crime’”.

stands out. Abu-Lughod argues that scholars, popular culture and legal campaigns continuously reinforce the idea that honour crimes are specifically a cultural problem. This only maintains the misconception. She argues that rather than viewing honour-based violence as "... timeless cultural practices associated with particular kinds of communities defined by their alien difference from us..."⁴⁷, we should view them as "... the perverse and diverse acts of individuals in different circumstances who sometimes work with a complex of concepts linked to honor."⁴⁸ Abu-Lughod is not the only one critical of the supposed link between honour-based violence and particular religious and/or cultural groups. Among others, Alexandra Hall argues in her chapter on honour crimes that it is important to "... avoid essentialising the abuse or violence and thus subscribing to religious, cultural or racial stereotypes..."⁴⁹.

The supposed link between honour-based violence and religious and/or cultural groups is one way to look at the origin of this violence. In literature, this is called the cultural perspective. As discussed above, this approach is not favorable since it leads to a discriminatory view of certain groups of people. If this is not how we should look at its origin, what are other approaches, and which one is employed in this thesis?

Another way to look at the origin of honour-based violence is by categorizing it as a form of violence against women (VAW). With this approach, it is assumed that survivors of honour-based violence are women who experience this violence on the basis of their gender identity. With their gender identity, certain norms and rules are expected to be followed, mostly related to the (sexual) relationships the woman may, or rather may not, have. If these are broken, the honour of the women, and that of the family and community, is compromised and needs to be restored. How this is (attempted to be) restored will be discussed later in this chapter. A second way is to see it as a form of domestic violence (DV). Although it is not in the name, this approach also considers women to be the main survivors of honour-based violence, while their closely related male relative, most of the time the significant other, is the perpetrators of the violence. While these approaches could seem functional to explain how and why honour-related violence takes place, there are various counter arguments for both to be considered. The main counter argument against viewing honour-based violence as domestic violence focuses on the fact that honour-based violence is not committed by only the significant other. While they can take part in the violence, it is the whole family and the people around them who organize and/or aid in the violence. The collective effort to restore the honour is what differentiates it from domestic violence where the perpetrator is one individual. Moreover, as

⁴⁷ Ibid, 128.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Alexandra Hall, "'Honour' Crimes," in *Invisible Crimes and Social Harms*, ed. Pamela Davies, Peter Francis and Tanya Wyatt (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 83.

also discussed above and which became apparent though the definition of honour-based violence I choose to work with in this thesis, survivors of honour-based violence are not always women. Therefore, viewing honour-based violence as a form of violence against women is not inclusive and not helpful when trying to educate others about this violence. By only highlighting female survivors, others might get overlooked which is problematic. Viewing honour-based violence as another type of violence is thus not ideal. But how can we understand it, on what basis is it committed?

In this thesis, I argue that honour-based violence is, as the name also suggests, executed on the basis of honour. As discussed before, Robert Ermers argues that honour is "... synonymous to a reputation of morality."⁵⁰ Campbell et al. follow a similar argument by stating that honour is "... a positive character trait associated with integrity and good moral character, leading individuals with such qualities to be described as honourable."⁵¹ Thus, honour is a positive aspect of a person connected to moral actions and choices which ensures inclusion within a community. From these descriptions, one can argue that honour can be found in every community, whether this is a family or a self-created group like a sports or motorcycle club. However, some communities are argued to find it more important than others. These are what is called honour cultures. In honour cultures "... the maintenance of personal and family honour is a central organising principle defining the sorts of behaviour that are acceptable and unacceptable."⁵² Here, honour has a big influence on the daily life of the people within this culture. However, this does not mean that honour does not or cannot influence the lives of people outside of such honour cultures. Expectations concerning education, occupation or marriage may very well be connected to family honour and thus influence personal choices.⁵³

In this thesis, I suggest that honour as an important value in the so-called honour cultures could form a basis for honour-based violence. This does not mean that every community who finds honour of importance commits honour-based violence, nor does it mean that each account of violence within this community is honour-based violence. What I do mean is that every act of honour-based violence has an origin in a community that finds restoring the (supposed) damaged honour of great importance. Furthermore, with the word culture I am not referring to a certain group of people, country or region. Rather, culture here refers to the norms and values people have and find important.

⁵⁰ Ermers, *Honor Related Violence: A New Social Psychological Perspective*, 68.

⁵¹ Campbell, Roberts and Sarkaria, *Harmful Traditional Practices: Prevention, Protection and Policing*, 13.

⁵² Ibid, 14.

⁵³ Ibid.

Dishonourable actions

Various actions of a person can result in the family or community believing that their honour is damaged and that it needs to be restored. One of the main reasons is connected to controlling women's sexuality and enforcing she is adhering to the social norms and traditions of the community.⁵⁴ The actions of women are strongly related to the honour of the community and doing something that is not allowed would damage this honour. In some pieces of literature, this is linked to specific cultural and/or religious groups or to a patriarchal society which, as discussed in detail above, is problematic.⁵⁵ However, some actions which lead to honour-based violence are strongly connected to patriarchal ideas which places women in an inferior position compared to men.⁵⁶ In that way, many decisions are made by men and when a woman does not comply with them, could lead to violence. Examples of this are when a woman is not allowed to date anyone, has sex before marriage, gets pregnant before being married or refuses an arranged marriage.⁵⁷ Having a lesbian identity and/or relationship can also be a reason for violence to occur.⁵⁸

It is not only women who can become survivors of honour-based violence, men can also be met with violence. Most of the reasons are similar to the ones listed above. If a man has a relationship or sex with a woman which her family does not allow, it could have a violent response against him and her.⁵⁹ Other examples are having sex or a relationship with a married woman, refusing an arranged marriage or having a homosexual identity and/or relationship.⁶⁰ It is remarkable that men can also become survivors of honour-based violence by refusing to act out violence against someone in their family or community.⁶¹ The actions all listed above are examples and definitely not an exhaustive list. Different communities and families have different views on what damages their honour and how this damage needs to be repaired.

Restoring the honour

While honour-killings might be the most known version of honour-based violence because of the media attention it receives, honour-based violence can take various forms. In his book on honour

⁵⁴ K. Gill, Aisha, Strange, C., and Roberts, K., eds. *'Honour' Killing and Violence: Theory, Policy and Practice*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014.

⁵⁵ Mukkaddes Gorar, *Honour Based Crimes and the Law: Defining the Limits of Honour Based Violence and Abuse* (New York: Routledge, 2021), 17.

⁵⁶ Gorar, *Honour Based Crimes and the Law: Defining the Limits of Honour Based Violence and Abuse*, 15.

⁵⁷ "Eer gerelateerd Geweld," Fier, November 2018, <https://www.huiselijkgeweld.nl/binaries/huiselijkgeweld/documenten/factsheets/2018/11/01/eergerelateerd-geweld/factsheet-eergerelateerd-geweld-2020.pdf>

⁵⁸ Fier, "Eergerelateerd Geweld."

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

violence, Cooney argues that responses to damaged honour can be categorized in six types: toleration, avoidance, compensation, aggression, forced marriage and death.⁶² Some of these categories are straightforward, since they are exactly what the title suggests but other might need more explanation because they can take several forms. For example, avoidance, which refers to deprivation or elimination of contact by the family or community against the person who (supposedly) damaged the honour but it can also be the other way around. The family and/or community might ignore this person or they can be imprisoned in their own home. Other options are sending the person away, either by letting them move away or banishing her from the community. On the other hand, the person who has (supposedly) damaged the family/community honour can also run away, to escape the situation and avoid escalation which means they have to restart their lives. However, trying to escape the situation does not always mean that it is solved, as the honour is not restored. Furthermore, punishment which restores this damaged honour might be even worse after escaping the situation is not successful. The category aggression can also take several forms. Sometimes verbal violence, threatening the person who has damaged the honour with physical violence is enough to change their actions and thus restore the honour. Other times, physical violence, e.g. beatings, take place. Cooney argues that escalating aggression can ultimately result in honour killings.⁶³

In the section above, I have described how violence to restore damaged honour can look like. Who is it that carries out these acts of violence? In cases where someone's actions have damaged their honour, it is not only their honour which is affected. Due to the collective mentality of the family, they all now suffer from a loss of honour or damaged honour which needs to be restored. It is also due to this collective mentality that the whole family is on board to take actions against the person who has damaged their honour. Moreover, the community also expect the family to react since they are also affected by the damaged honour.

Honour-based violence and violence

Now that I have described why honour-based violence takes place and how this violence can look like, it is important to make a distinction between honour-based violence and violence that is not based on honour. How do they differentiate and what are the guidelines in place to establish if an act of violence is based on honour or not? As discussed before, honour-based violence occurs when someone has (supposedly) damaged the honour of the family and/or community and the members are trying to restore this honour. In these cases, it is not only the nuclear family which is involved but

⁶² Mark Cooney, *Execution by Family: A Theory of Honor Violence* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), 105.

⁶³ Cooney, *Execution by Family: A Theory of Honor Violence*, 110.

also the extended family as damaged honour has consequences for everyone associated with the culprit. Moreover, it is important to note that everyone can become a victim of honour-based violence, someone's sex does not matter. The line between honour-based violence or other forms of violence can be thin and grey if it is not clear on what basis a crime is committed, it is therefore important to examine this in detail. A good example of this is forced marriages. A forced marriage can be completed to restore damaged honour, for example to make sure that someone does not marry a partner deemed 'unacceptable' by the community.⁶⁴ However, it can also be completed for another reason, for example to improve family relationships or to obtain a residence permit.⁶⁵ Lastly, forced marriages can be a reason for honour-based violence to occur, for instance if someone refuses to marry the chosen partner or if they suspect a forced marriage will take place and they run away.⁶⁶ Both actions bring shame and damage the honour.

HBV in the Netherlands

In 2008, the National Expertise Centre honour-based violence (Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eergerelateerd Geweld (LEC EGG)) was established. This centre aims to expand knowledge and expertise about honour-based violence by doing research and they educate others.⁶⁷ Moreover, since they are part of the national police force, they assist in cases of (possible) honour-based violence. In 2021, there were 628 cases where the LEC EGG was asked to support.⁶⁸ In 2022, this number was a bit lower, namely 594 cases.⁶⁹ With these numbers, it is important to note that less complex cases are handled by the regional police units.⁷⁰ The before mentioned numbers are therefore not the amount of honour-based violence cases that were handled by police as a whole. Moreover, since not every case of honour-based violence is reported to police, it is unclear how many incidents really happened in 2022.

The Dutch government aims to prevent cases of honour-based violence. One way they try to do so, is by training social workers and other professionals to detect (early) signs of this violence to prevent it from happening or to not let it escalate. Moreover, they have published facts sheets in Dutch and

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ "Huwelijksdwang," Landelijk Knooppunt Huwelijksdwang en Achterlating, August 2022, <https://www.huiselijkgeweld.nl/binaries/huiselijkgeweld/documenten/factsheets/2018/11/01/huwelijksdwang/Huwelijksdwang-februari+2023.pdf>.

⁶⁶ Cooney, *Execution by Family: A Theory of Honor Violence*, 111.

⁶⁷ "Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eer Gerelateerd Geweld," Onderwerpen, Politie <https://www.politie.nl/informatie/landelijk-expertise-centrum-eer-gerelateerd-geweld.html>.

⁶⁸ Janine Janssen, "Geweld uit naar van de familie-eer bij migranten van Syrische komaf: Wat zag de politie in 2021?" *Tijdschrift voor Religie Recht en Beleid* no.3 (December 2022): 21.

⁶⁹ Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eer Gerelateerd Geweld. *Terugblik op 2022: Jaarverslag van het Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eer Gerelateerd Geweld*, 16.

⁷⁰ Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eer Gerelateerd Geweld. *Terugblik op 2022: Jaarverslag van het Landelijk Expertise Centrum Eer Gerelateerd Geweld*, 27.

English where they attempt to put all the information about the violence. Topics as honour, violence, forms of honour-based violence, signs and risk factors are discussed on here. Furthermore, the factsheets have the phone numbers of different organisations which can be contacted for advice, reporting the violence or when searching for a safe place for a (possible) survivor. Lastly, it refers to the reporting code specifically for honour-based violence that was set up to report the violence in an organized manner and to make sure that the (possible) survivor does not risk getting into more danger because the reporter does not know how to handle such cases. The reporting code is only available in Dutch.

From the information on honour-based violence that the Dutch government shares on their website and in the factsheets, multiple conclusions can be made. First, the description that they use is as neutral as possible to avoid prejudice ideas about why the violence takes place and who is a survivor or perpetrator. In the definition that is in the factsheet, both women and men can become survivors of honour-based violence. Moreover, they make sure not to mention any information about religion and/or culture. Thus, everyone can come across honour-based violence according to this information. Second, the factsheet is older as it was created in November 2018.⁷¹ It was reuploaded in September 2020.⁷² As for June 2023, there is no updated version published. From this I conclude that the factsheet is still up to date.

Comparing the literature

In the above sections, I have dived into the topic of violence against the LGBTQ+ community and the phenomena honour-based violence. I have discussed this separately since they are different topics with different implications. However, in this thesis the two topics intersect as I focus on honour-based violence, a specific form of violence against the LGBTQ+ community. I will therefore compare the two topics in this section.

Being part of the LGBTQ+ community can be a reason for people to experience violence, both as a hate crime or as honour-based violence. If one experiences honour-based violence, it is because the family and/or community does not accept their sexual or gender identity. The non-acceptance can have a negative effect on the mental well-being of the person. This is connected to one of the three stressors Ilan Meyer found during his research on minority stress of gay men.⁷³ Actual experiences of discrimination and violence leads to lower mental well-being. Moreover, research by Stettler and Katz has shown how support and acceptance of family members towards a diverse sexual or gender

⁷¹ This date was found on the bottom right of the factsheet.

⁷² This date was found on the website: <https://www.huiselijkgeweld.nl/vormen/eergerelateerd-geweld/publicaties/factsheets/2018/11/15-september-2020/honour-based-violence>

⁷³ Meyer, "Minority Stress and Mental Health in Gay Men."

identity has a positive impact on someone their mental health.⁷⁴ If that is the case, the opposite is also true as a non-supportive reaction has a negative impact. Thus, experiencing violence, as a hate crime or as honour-based violence, as a LGBTQ+ person has a negative effect on their mental well-being.

Experiencing a hate crime has on an individual level a negative impact on the mental health but it also effects the whole LGBTQ+ community. There are two reasons for this. First, anyone from the community could have been the survivor of that crime and second, the entire community feels intimidated by the crime. Experiencing such hate crimes and feeling frightened by them in addition to seeing how family and community members might react to these incidents might make it more difficult for a LGBTQ+ person to accept themselves and to come out.

In conclusion, the topics discussed before are closely related and at some points intertwined. The research on the effects of violence against LGBTQ+ people is partly applicable to LGBTQ+ people who experience honour-based violence. However, there are also differences, e.g. hate crimes do not happen to a person specifically but they are rather used to intimidate the whole community while honour-based violence is directed towards one person specifically. Due to this difference, it is important to further research the experience LGBTQ+ people have with honour-based violence.

Methodology

To answer the research question 'How do policies around honour-based violence take LGBTQ+ people into account and how does this translate into treatment and support of survivors?', this thesis makes use of qualitative research methods, namely interviews and document analysis. In this chapter I will explain why I have chosen these research methods and why they suit my research best. Moreover, I will also explain how I have recruited interviewees and how I have analyzed the data from the interviews and the documents. In this chapter there is a section on the ethical considerations of this research. Lastly, in this chapter I will reflect on my own position within this research.

Interviews

Interviews are used when research requires in-depth information about people's perceptions and beliefs.⁷⁵ Because this research requires an in-depth understanding of how LGBTQ people are

⁷⁴ Stettler and Katz, "Minority stress, emotion regulation, and the parenting of sexual-minority youth."

⁷⁵ Monique Hennink, Inge Hutter and Ajay Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods* (London: Sage Publications, 2011), 110.

included in policies about honour-based violence and how interventions against honour-based violence look like at different organisations, doing interviews is the best research method in comparison to other research methods. By doing interviews, the interviewee is able to talk about these topics in detail. This level of detail is harder to achieve with other research methods, e.g., surveys. I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews which made sure the pre-set questions were answered but it also allowed the interviewees to talk more freely about their answers and made it possible for them to include other topics if they thought it would be beneficial for my research. Moreover, the semi-structured design of the interviews allowed me to objectively compare the answers from the set questions.

After I had decided what research method would be best to answer the research question, I started looking for possible interviewees. Because I have done an internship at an organization called Fier, that has honour-based violence as one of its expertises, this was the first organization I contacted. Thus, Fier was contacted based on selective sampling through existing networks. In the first email from Fier, they told me they were unable to do an interview with me because they receive a big number of requests. However, with the help of my old internship supervisor, I was still able to talk to someone in the end. The interviewee from Fier is a nurse practitioner and member of the expertise group on honour-based violence within Fier. Thus, because of my previous work at the organization, they were willing to do an interview with me. This is important to note because if it had not been for my direct contact within the organization, an interview with Fier would not have been possible. I do not believe this had an influence on the collected data.

After contacting Fier, I looked online for more organizations which focused on supporting people after experiencing honour-based violence and found multiple. Some of them were more focused on provide informative meetings for other professionals while others focused on helping and sheltering survivors. In total, I selected five organizations which either had an expertise in honour-based violence and/or care for survivors. This is called purposive sampling, where the (possible) interviewees are selected through searching for those who are most likely to provide the researcher with useful information.⁷⁶ All organizations were sent an email explaining what my thesis was on and what I wanted to discuss during a possible interview. While finding organizations online who support people after honour-based violence was not difficult, conducting interviews with them proved to be more difficult.

⁷⁶ Steve Campbell et al., "Purposive sampling: complex or simple? Research case examples," *J Res Nurs* 25, no.8 (December 2020): 653-654, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>.

From the five organisations I contacted, two responded. One of these was Fier, which has been discussed above. The other organization which responded was 'Veilige Haven Amsterdam', which focuses on bicultural LGBTQ+ young people from Amsterdam who struggle with their sexual and/or gender identity. The social worker who responded was enthusiastic and happy to talk to me about the topic.

The interviews were held online due to the distance between the interviewees and the interviewer. Both interviews were done via Google Meet and took about 30 minutes to complete. Before the interview started, I first introduced myself and told the interviewee what the topic of this interview was going to be. I asked if the interviewees still wanted to participate in this research to insure informed consent. I further explained that the answers they give would be anonymized and that if something was unclear, I was more than happy to elaborate. After the introduction, consent was asked for a recording of the interview. I made an audio recording of the interviews which were used to make a verbatim transcription.

After conducting the interviews, the audio recordings were used to transcribe them. From the literature research, certain central themes around violence against the LGBTQ+ community, honour-based violence and treatment of support came forward. These are called deductive codes and were used for a first round of analysis.⁷⁷ From the data itself other codes arose which are called inductive codes.⁷⁸ Both types of codes were used to group common topics in the interviews which were then analyzed.

Document analysis

Apart from interviews, this thesis also uses document analysis as one of its research methods. The documents that I have analyzed were websites from different organizations which focus on honour-based violence and the treatment and support of survivors of this family. Specifically, I searched for organization which had information on the treatment and support LGBTQ+ survivors of honour-based violence could receive. To find sources, I have done various google searches in Dutch which resulted in a list of organizations that fit the description. Examples of google searches are 'honour-based violence; honour-based violence shelter; honour-based violence LGBTQ+.' The organizations which websites I have analysed are Veilige Haven, Fier, Blijf groep, and Veilig thuis. Veilig thuis is a Dutch national organization that is split up into regions. Each of these regions has their own website with similar, but not identical, information on honour-based violence. Because of this, I have decided

⁷⁷ Hennink, Hutter and Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 218.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

to use the first three Veilig thuis that came up when I google searched 'veilig thuis honour-based violence' in Dutch.

With document analysis, I was able to get to know how the researched organizations view and understand honour-based violence and if/how they treat (possible) survivors. I have used a thematic analysis to analyze the websites and factsheet. With this analysis, themes that emerged from the documents were used as a basis for further analysis.⁷⁹ Furthermore, I have also used the deductive codes from the literature and inductive codes from the interviews if these were applicable for the document analyzed.

Ethics

For this thesis, I have done interviews and document analysis. For the conducted interviews, it is important to reflect on the ethical side of research to protect the interviewees. Within this research, participation for the interviews was voluntary. Interviewees had the right to withdraw at any moment and interviews were conducted after informed consent was given. In this thesis, I have anonymized the data from the interviews. However, I have used the real names of the organization where the interviewees work.

I have done research on multiple sensitive topics for this thesis. Sexual orientation, gender identity, violence and family relationships can be difficult topics to talk about on their own, let alone when they are combined into one research. While I did not interview survivors of honour-based violence, interviewing employees of organizations who work closely with and support survivors of HBV can be difficult as well. While not intended, I ended up interviewing someone who did have personal experiences with the above-mentioned topics. I believe that this did not have an influence on the collected data nor did it harm the interviewee, as they talk about these topics more often during their work.

Personal reflection

It is important to reflect on my own position within the research field that this thesis is situated in. My own identity as a lesbian woman made me interested in LGBTQ+ survivors of honour-based violence. Even though I personally have not experienced what it is like to not be accepted by my own family, people with who I am close with have been in this situation and have dealt with honour-based violence. I have seen how big the impact of this can be and how it influences someone. Therefore, I hope this thesis can be a start for more awareness and knowledge about honour-based violence against the LGBTQ+ community, a group that already has a vulnerable position within

⁷⁹ Glenn A. Bowen, "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method," *Qualitative Research Journal* 9 No. 2 (2009): 32, <https://doi-org.proxy-ub.rug.nl/10.3316/QRJ0902027>.

society. Apart from my personal interest, I do not believe that my own sexual orientation has had an influence on this thesis. During the interviews, the interviewees were not made aware of my sexuality since this was not needed for the purpose of the interview. Therefore, there is only a small chance that they knew about it and even a smaller change that it influenced their answers during the interview.

Results

In this chapter, I will discuss the data collected through the interviews and document analysis. To recap, I have analyzed the websites of Veilige Haven, Fier, Blijf groep and LEC eengerelateerd geweld, looking at the information published on honour-based violence and violence against LGBTQ+ people. Moreover, I have analyzed the factsheet published on the website of the Dutch government on honour-based violence. Lastly, I have conducted two interviews with professionals working at Veilige Haven and Fier. In total, I have analyzed seven sources. This chapter will discuss the data in a thematic way. All the collected data was written in Dutch. Throughout this chapter, I use quotes from the data to demonstrate my findings which are in English. The translations from Dutch to English are my own.

Honour-based Violence

Through the analysis of the websites of various organizations who work with honour-based violence, the two conducted interviews and the factsheet on the site of the government, it became clear that there are different ways of defining honour-based violence. Moreover, the websites of Fier does not have substantive information on honour-based violence on their website, their site is mainly focused on the care that they provide and the organization itself. While looking at the definitions of honour-based violence through the data, the world culture was used multiple times. In various sources, the word is used when describing where instances of honour-based violence take place and, sometimes indirectly, why they take place. In these explanations, culture is not used to refer to a specific group of people but rather to a way that people live their life and what they find important. The website of Blijf groep states that “[i]n some cultures, everything is done in light of the good name of the family.”⁸⁰ Here, there is no direct reference to a specific group of people. Rather, it is the beginning of the explanation why honour-based violence occurs in the first place, which is because of the good name of a family. Similarly, one of the sites of Veilig Thuis states that the importance of the family

⁸⁰ “Hulp bij eengerelateerd geweld”, Specifieke doelgroepen, Blijf groep Thuis in huiselijk geweld, <https://www.blijfgroep.nl/artikelen/kenniscentrumeer/>.

honour exists in many populations who have a group culture.⁸¹ The word culture also came forward during both interviews with professionals from Veilige Haven (interview 1) and Fier (interview 2). During the first interview, the interviewee explained that being part of a 'we culture', a culture where the group is of great importance, is the basis for honour-based violence. The second interviewee argued that being part of an 'honour culture' is where honour-based violence originates from. All these mentions of the word culture aim to explain who commits honour-based violence and why someone would do so. However, it is noteworthy that culture here never refers to a specific group of people, a religious group or a country of origin. A reason for this could be to combat existing misconceptions and prejudices about honour-based violence, e.g., that the violence only exists in Muslim communities. This topic will be explained further later in this chapter.

Even though all the sources aim to explain what honour-based violence is, minus the website from Fier which does not explain this violence, there is little explanation on what honour entails. Looking at this violence, which is based on honour as the name suggests, it would seem critical to understand honour. Only the factsheet from the government attempts to define honour by stating "Honour has to do with a reputation of integrity and trustworthiness."⁸² After this sentence, the definition stops and the factsheet states how "[i]n some families and communities the moral honour plays an important role."⁸³ According to this factsheet, the moral norms on sexuality determine the way women and men behave around each other and if these unwritten rules are obeyed by someone, they belong in the community.⁸⁴ Consequently, if they are not accepted there is moral misconduct which leads to a bad reputation where someone is viewed as immoral and bad.⁸⁵ A possible consequence is exclusion of this person.⁸⁶ While this is the only source that explicitly tries to define honour, in another sources there is an indirect definition. The information on the Blijf groep website speaks of the "... good name of the family."⁸⁷ Thus, honour has to do with having and/or holding up a good name or a good image of the family. From the two definitions, one can conclude that honour is about being honest and having strong moral principles. Having these qualities creates a good image of a person and its family. This definition is comparable to that of Ermers who argues that honour is "... synonymous to a reputation of morality" which is a requirement for inclusion in a community.⁸⁸

⁸¹ "Eer gerelateerd geweld," Vormen van huiselijk geweld en kindermishandeling, Veilig Thuis Amsterdam Amstelland, <https://www.020veiligthuis.nl/professionals/verschillende-vormen-van-huiselijk-geweld-en-kindermishandeling/eergerelateerd-geweld/>.

⁸² Fier, "Eergerelateerd geweld."

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Blijf groep Thuis in huiselijk geweld, "Hulp bij eergerelateerd geweld."

⁸⁸ Ermers, *Honor Related Violence: A New Social Psychological Perspective*, 68.

However, the damaged honour of a person due to immoral actions damages the family honour which can have exclusion as a consequence.

Family honour is an important concept within honour-based violence. From the analysis of the sources it becomes clear that the honour of the person is connected to that of the family. If someone damages their own honour, they also damage the family honour. The sources differ on when a (violent) reaction from the family takes place which aims to restore the honour. Two different moments appear in the sources, 1) before a person commits immoral actions and 2) after a person commits immoral actions. On the first moment honour-based violence can take place, the site of Veilig Thuis states the following “Violence has to prevent that a family member demonstrates behaviour that could possibly damage the family honour.”⁸⁹ The factsheet states two different reasons violence can occur, either to prevent harmful and immoral behaviour from happening or as a reaction to behaviour that is known by others in the community.⁹⁰ The last reason is also what interviewee 1 argues to be the reason as with this violence, physical and/or emotional, the family hopes to get the person back in line. Thus, honour-based violence committed before a person acts immorally is aimed to prevent the actions from happening which could damage the family honour while honour-based violence after immoral acts have occurred is aimed to restore the damaged family honour. While the different moments of when violence occurs generates a different reason for the violence to occur, the underlying reason is the same, namely that the family wishes to restore their honour.

Survivors

On the topic of survivors of honour-based violence, almost all the sources agree that both women and men can become survivors of this violence. However, they do argue that women or girls become survivors more often than men or boys. The website of Blijf groep states that it is “mostly girls who get punished” for damaging the family name but that boys can also come in contact with honour-based violence, for example when they have a homosexual relationship.⁹¹ The website of LEC eengerelateerd geweld has the same argument, it is mostly women who become survivors of honour-based violence but men and boys can sometimes also be survivors, this is mostly if they do not want to participate in committing honour-based violence on someone else.⁹² In the second interview, the interviewee also states that this is one of the reasons why they see men come in at Fier as victims of

⁸⁹ “Eengerelateerd geweld,” Ik heb hulp nodig, Veilig thuis Gooi en Vechtstreek, <https://www.veiligthuisgv.nl/hulp-nodig/eengerelateerd-geweld/>.

⁹⁰ Fier, “Eengerelateerd Geweld.”

⁹¹ Blijf groep Thuis in huiselijk geweld, “Hulp bij eengerelateerd geweld.”

⁹² “Vrouwen vaak slachtoffer,” LEC eengerelateerd geweld informatie over eer gerelateerd geweld, <http://www.leceengerelateerdgeweld.nl>

honour-based violence. She states “we [at Fier] do often have men who have encountered it [honour-based violence]. And you do indeed meet men who, for example, did not want to cooperate in the honour culture, so shooting someone because they cheated, no that is not something that they wanted to do. But also men who are at Fier because of their own gender identity.” The first interviewee argued that women encounter honour-based violence more often because of the purity rules that exist for women. He continues “[t]he family does a lot for his cause, you can almost say for the virginity. That is actually the basis of honour-based violence, the protection of the purity of a girl.” Thus, interviewee 1 links the occurrence of honour-based violence to the sexual actions of a girl or women. This is also what is argument on the factsheet where they focus on orthodox ideas about the role of men and women and about the sexual and reproductive right of women.⁹³ Furthermore, the factsheet argues that “[t]he honour of the women is linked to her sexuality. And the sexual honour of the women is connected to the family honour.”⁹⁴ With these statements, honour-based violence is fully connected to the sexual activities of a women. This is confirmed further on the factsheet where it states that “[g]irls and women have the responsibility of upholding the family honour while parents, men and boys have to guard this honour and, if needed, restore it.”⁹⁵ The factsheet is the only source which does not state that both men and women can encounter honour-based violence. Instead, due to the phrasing on the sexual actions of women, it seems that only women or girls can become survivors of honour-based violence since they are tasked with upholding the family honour. Nonetheless, in the section on the factsheet on risk factors of honour-based violence, there are two separate lists, one for women and one for men.⁹⁶ From this, I conclude that the authors of the factsheet do agree with the rest of the sources on that women and men can both fall victim to honour-based violence, even if they did not include this explicitly in the section on the definition.

Predators

As discussed above, the family honour is immediately connected with the personal honour of a person. If the family honour is damaged, it is the family who reacts (with violence) to restore the honour or to prevent immoral actions from happening. This is also what is concluded in the sources which discuss predators of honour-based violence. Specifically, as the factsheet states the “... parents and the men and boys have to guard this [family] honour and, if needed, restore it.”⁹⁷ Interviewee 1 argues partly the same when he states “Then [after the family knows about immoral actions that

⁹³ Fier, “Eergerelateerd Geweld.”

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

have taken place] other brothers and sisters get mobilized to restore the honour and to almost hold someone captive.” He continues his argument by stating that in practice, it is often the older brother(s) who are mobilized by the parents because they think that they hold the responsibility to insure the honour. The parents might find it difficult to carry out the actions needed to restore the honour, or it could be easier for the brothers to check on their sibling outside of the house compared to the parents. However, interviewee 1 argues, even though often the (younger) male relatives try to restore the honour, the whole family approves of these actions. If someone, for example the parent of the person who damaged the family honour, would not agree and protest, it would not happen. Moreover, the first interviewee argues that also sisters, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews can have a part in the violence as it is also their honour that is damaged. For interviewee 2, the term predator is difficult, as she argues that someone who carries out honour-based violence is not necessarily a perpetrator since they are also victim of the pressure of honour. Someone who refuses to carry out the violence required to restore the damaged honour also has the risk of being met with violence themselves or getting disowned. The factsheet argues that it is the parents and the men and boys of the family who act out the violence while both interviewees argue that it is the whole family who takes part in the violence, also the female family members. A possible reason for this is the misconception about the fact that men are the predators in cases of honour-based violence and women the ‘victims’.

Treatment and support

From the analyzed data, it becomes clear that the organizations offer treatment and support to those who have experienced honour-based violence in different ways. How a survivor is cared for after such experiences depends on the personal situation. If someone is currently safe in their living situation, there is the option to talk to a social worker about their experiences with violence, for example at Veilige Haven or Blijf groep.⁹⁸ Another option is to receive treatment and therapy at a Fier location while still living at home.⁹⁹ However, this is not something that is usually done for survivors of honour-based violence, states interviewee 2, as they are no longer safe at home. If someone is not safe in their current living situation, there are options to live at a Fier location and receive treatment for the violent experiences there.¹⁰⁰ During the second interview, it became clear that the group the interviewee works with mainly stay at asylum seeker centres, if they are safe at

⁹⁸ “Wat doet Veilige Haven,” Wat biedt Veilige Haven, Veilige Haven, <https://veilighavenamsterdam.nl/wat-doet-veilige-haven/> ; Blijf groep Thuis in huiselijk geweld, “Hulp bij eergelateerd geweld.”

⁹⁹ “Deze hulp bieden we,” Hulpaanbod, Fier Bescherming, Behandeling, Toekomst.

<https://www.fier.nl/hulpaanbod/>

¹⁰⁰ Fier Bescherming, Behandeling, Toekomst, “Deze hulp bieden we.”

this location, the survivor will visit the Fier location. However, if they are not safe or the environment is not beneficial for their healing process, they also have the option of coming to Fier.

Prejudice and misconception

In the academic literature, it is often mentioned that there are prejudices which connects honour-based violence to Muslim communities. This is often followed by statements that it is not true but that one should be aware of its existence. In some of the sources analyzed for this thesis, a similar thing takes place. The website of the LEC eergerelateerd geweld explicitly states that honour-based violence does not originate from religion but from "... cultural and social rules within a community."¹⁰¹ On the same page, this argument continues with "who thinks that honour-based violence is limited to a religion, makes a big mistake. Many people think that honour-based violence is part of the Islam. This is not true."¹⁰² On one of the websites of Veilig Thuis, they argue something similar, stating that there is no religious basis for honour-based violence but that it is connected to specific cultural and social rules within certain groups.¹⁰³ However, on this site certain areas and groups are singled out and it is argued that honour-based violence mainly occurs in these places. While this is not a prejudice strictly speaking, it can create a narrow understanding of honour-based violence where it is viewed with blinkers on. This is also what interviewee 2 discussed in the interview that some people only think about Muslims, forced marriages or female genital mutilation when they hear the term honour-based violence. She does not only see this in society but also with colleagues from other organizations during national meetings. She argues that it is constantly necessary to broaden the scope as other people tend to go back to what interviewee 2 calls 'old fashioned honour', where the focus is on forced marriages and female genital mutilation. However, she believes honour-based violence is more than that. By broadening what one understands as honour-based violence, interviewee 2 says she is also more open to learn about other forms of honour-based violence, ones she had not heard of or thought about before.

LGBTQ+ survivors

As this thesis focuses on LGBTQ+ survivors of honour-based violence, this is a theme that also came up during the analysis of the sources. From the four websites that I have analyzed, two specifically talk about sexual and/or gender identity in relation to honour-based violence. During both interviews, this was also a topic that was discussed due to my questions on the topic itself.

¹⁰¹ "500 meldingen," LEC eergerelateerd geweld informatie over eer gerelateerd geweld, <http://www.leceergerelateerdgeweld.nl>

¹⁰² "Ontkenning," LEC eergerelateerd geweld informatie over eer gerelateerd geweld, <http://www.leceergerelateerdgeweld.nl>

¹⁰³ Veilig Thuis Amsterdam Amstelland, "Eer gerelateerd geweld."

Moreover, on the website pages of the Blijf groep, LEC eengerelateerd geweld and on the factsheet, homosexual and/ or lesbian feelings /relationships are mentioned as examples of why someone could encounter honour-based violence. Even though sexual and/ or gender identity in relation to honour-based violence is not the focus of every organization, most do acknowledge that it is one of the risk factors.

The first website that specifically mentions sexuality or gender identity in relation to honour-based violence is Veilige Haven. Since they are an organization that specifically helps people with an LGBTQ+ identity, this is not surprising. On their website it says that Veilige Haven can help when someone's sexual preference is different than what others expect.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, they can help when the cultural or religious background of the person, their family or friends makes it more difficult to discuss or accept.¹⁰⁵ In the interview with the social worker from Veilige Haven, he explains how the organization helps LGBTQ+ people who are likely to encounter violence because of their identity. By offering supportive conversations between the LGBTQ+ person and the social workers, topics as acceptance, safety, relationship with family and coming out are discussed. In general, especially for LGBTQ+ persons of colour, Veilige Haven advises someone to not come out to their family if they are not (financially) independent because there is a big chance that it will lead to violence. If someone is independent, there is a chance that the rejection or violence has a smaller impact on the person. The second website which mentions LGBTQ+ people specifically is Blijf groep. They do so on a separate page, not the page with information on honour-based violence but the separate page does refer to violent cases related to honour. On this page, the organization argues that they find it important to pay attention to LGBTQ+ people who encounter violence.¹⁰⁶ Blijf groep offers care and shelter for adult LGBTQ+ people who encounter serious threats and do not feel safe in their current environment.¹⁰⁷ With their care, they focus on what is needed to safely live life and enjoy the future.¹⁰⁸ Blijf groep offers two types of care, depending on what the person needs. One can either talk to a social worker, who is trained to work with LGBTQ+ persons and violence or seek shelter, there are no places solely for LGBTQ+ people, and focus on improving and healing from there.¹⁰⁹ This care is for those who are abused, either physical or psychological, or threatened by their (ex) partner or family members.¹¹⁰ Moreover, it is for LGBTQ+ people who are threatened because of honour-

¹⁰⁴ "Veilige Haven," Veilige Haven, <https://veilighavenamsterdam.nl>

¹⁰⁵ Veilige Haven, "Veilige haven."

¹⁰⁶ "LHBTIQ+," Specifieke hulpverlening, Blijf groep Thuis in huiselijk geweld, <https://www.blijfgroep.nl/artikelen/specialismen/>

¹⁰⁷ "Wat houdt onze hulp in" Hulp aan LHBTIQ+-personen, Blijf groep Thuis in huiselijk geweld, <https://www.blijfgroep.nl/artikelen/lhbtig/>

¹⁰⁸ Blijf groep Thuis in huiselijk geweld, "Wat houdt onze hulp in."

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

related issues.¹¹¹ From this, a conclusion can be made that Blijf groep specifically focuses on care for LGBTQ+ people who encounter violence because of their identity. In relation to honour-based violence, Blijf groep acknowledges that LGBTQ+ people risk encountering this violence and can offer specific care for them.

The second interviewee, a nurse practitioner, mainly works with asylum seekers and status holders, the focus of the answer on the question what Fier does for LGBTQ+ people who encounter (honour-based) violence, was on them. She argues that the asylum seekers centres are not always safe for LGBTQ+ people because others who are sheltered there may not always be accepting of those with a diverse gender or sexual identity. However, she states that “[t]here has been a long discussion, do we need a separate asylum seekers centre for people who have another sexuality [than heterosexuality], then the COA¹¹² decided that this was not necessary because it would be stigmatizing.” However, she argues, there is one centre where a lot of LGBTQ+ people live which is in Sint Annaparochie in Friesland. People who did not get accepted at other centres are being transferred to this centre and through the location get treatment at Fier. This is not only for survivors of honour-based violence but for LGBTQ+ persons who have encountered any violence for which they should receive treatment.

In conclusion, from the data analyzed, there is only one organization, Veilige Haven, which exclusively focuses on LGBTQ+ people in relation to honour-based violence. Other organizations recognize that being part of the LGBTQ+ community is a risk factor for encountering honour-based violence but only the Blijf groep has shown through their website that they have specialized care with social workers who are trained to work with LGBTQ+ persons and their experiences of violence.

The experiences of violence can be physical or psychological and differ per case. Almost all the analyzed websites which has information on honour-based violence includes a list of the forms the violence can take. These lists mostly match each other. Examples of how honour-based violence can look are mental and physical abuse, disownment, having a forced or arranged marriage, abandonment in the country of origin, encouraging suicide, forcing conversion therapy, performing incantations and murder.¹¹³ As explained before, it is through these forms of violence that the family either hopes to prevent immoral actions from happening or restore the damaged family honour. From the two conducted interviews, it became clear that the professionals see the same forms of violence with LGBTQ+ survivors of honour-based violence. During the first interview, the interview

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum seekers.

¹¹³ “Vormen van eer gerelateerd geweld,” Vormen, LEC eengerelateerd geweld informatie over eer gerelateerd geweld, <http://www.leceengerelateerdgeweld.nl>; Veilig Thuis Amsterdam Amstelland, “Eer gerelateerd geweld.”; Fier, “Eengerelateerd Geweld.”

states “And we see the same measures used against a LGBTQ+ person. I do not really see a difference there. When the family notices [that someone is part of the LGBTQ+ community], when they suspect it might be the case or when someone confirms that it is true by, for example, looking through someone’s phone or looking at the browser history then we see that they behave in the same way.” However, in the interviews some forms of violence were discussed which are not included in the written data and vice versa. While most websites and the factsheet include conversion therapy and incantations as a form of honour-based violence, these were not proposed nor discussed during the interview, even when asking about LGBTQ+ community and honour-based violence in particular. Moreover, during the first interview, the interviewee mentioned corporal punishments as a form of honour-based violence. This form of violence was also not discussed in any of the written data. In conclusion, there is an overview of form of honour-based violence that is almost the same for every organization. The fact that not every form of violence was mentioned during the interviews can be due to the questions asked during the interview since I never asked the interviewees to provide me with a list of forms of honour-based violence.

At Veilige Haven and Blijf groep there are meetings organized where survivors of honour-based violence can come together and talk about their experiences.¹¹⁴ Blijf groep states this is place for processing experiences, breaking through isolation and promoting recovery.¹¹⁵ Because Blijf groep does not specially focus on LGBTQ+ survivors, this is most likely not a place where they will meet as they are a small section of all honour-based violence. Since Veilige Haven is an organization which specifically focuses on the LGBTQ+ community, people joining the group are likely to be part of this community as well. Even though the meeting is an informal way to meet and talk to others over dinner, it can still be helpful for people and is thus a form of treatment.¹¹⁶

Culturally sensitive

From the interviews, it became clear that working in a culturally sensitive way is crucial while working with (LGBTQ+) survivors of honour-based violence. There are different ways this is completed at the organizations. However, throughout the interviews it also becomes clear that being neutral as a professional can be the opposite of working in a culturally sensitive way. The term neutrality can be difficult, as one can ask if it does exist at all. Is everything not viewed through a personal lens, shaped by someone’s own views and opinions? While I think that is indeed the case, that is not what I am aiming at with this term. In this thesis, I use the term neutrality to refer to a

¹¹⁴ “Wereldcafé,” Wat biedt Veilige Haven, Veilige haven <https://veilighavenamsterdam.nl/wereldcafe/> and “Lotgenotengroep Eervol,” Blijf groep Thuis in huiselijk geweld, <https://www.blijfgroep.nl/artikelen/eervol/>

¹¹⁵ Blijf groep Thuis in huiselijk geweld,” Lotgenotengroep Eervol.”

¹¹⁶ Veilige haven, “Wereldcafé.”

specific way of looking at the intersection of LGBTQ+ identity and honour-based violence. This way disregards the background of the survivor and views the persons sexual and/or gender identity as something that is not part of the reason why this person is experiencing violence.

One way the organizations focus on working in a culturally sensitive way is through talking about what the person has or is experiencing. In the first interview with Veilige haven, the interviewee argues that a person who can possibly encounter honour-based violence is unaware of the risks and danger that they can be in as they are living in the situation which could seem normal for them. Therefore, interviewee argues “I think that as a professional you have the task or the role to provide psychoeducation to summarize what is happening and what the risks are. Without talking about religion or culture but by asking how the person experiences this, what does the culture look like, what are the written and unwritten rules, what someone thinks might happen and how unsafe they think the current situation is.” However, interviewee 1 claims that this is not a neutral way of looking at the situation but that that is also not something which one should aim at since that would not bring him to the core of the problem. Nonetheless, professionals working with this group should be mindful of not using “... discriminating, generalizing or judging comment. So as a professional you are on thin ice, you have to be very careful.” Because social workers at Veilige haven are all part of the LGBTQ+ community and are bicultural, it might be easier for them in comparison to other social workers, interviewee 1 argues, as “we know how difficult it can be sometimes.”

At Fier, they use a similar approach as interviewee 2 tells during the interview. She states that at intakes, she specifically asks about topics as gender and sexuality because for a lot of people they are still difficult to talk about. While she does think that this sometimes scares people as they are not used to talking about these topics, her openness is what causes them to talk about it anyway.

Moreover, interviewee 2 stresses the importance of talking about difficult topics right away, almost without asking people how they feel about it because “if you ask, people are going to think ‘I do not know what the person thinks about these topics so I would rather not’, so I think that especially within intercultural help we should just talk about it. And of course someone has the choice to say that they really do not want to talk about it but you should have an open mind.”

While it is not clear from the website how the Blijf groep approaches working in a culturally sensitive way, it does say on their website that they are working closely with, among others, the police, shelters, other caregivers and cultural experts.¹¹⁷ Especially the last group is interesting here, as it does show that Blijf groep thinks knowledge of culture is important in order to understand honour-based violence and to help survivors after their experiences. Though working with these experts, I

¹¹⁷ Blijf groep This is huiselijk geweld, “Wat houdt onze hulp in.”

believe Blijf groep is aware of the challenges this type of violence may bring which they aim to tackle in a culturally sensitive way.

In conclusion, working in a culturally sensitive way is what is applied in practice among (LGBTQ+) survivors of honour-based violence. Through talking about experiences, background and identity, the professionals I have interviewed aim to show the survivor that their experiences are nothing to be ashamed about, as shame and self-blame are emotions survivors often feel.

Discretely working

Lastly, through the analysing of the websites and the factsheet it became apparent how important it is to work discretely when engaging with honour-based violence. Almost all the website had a 'emergency exit' where the visitor could jump to another site easily if they did not want someone to know they were looking at information about violence. For example, the bottom on the site of Veilige haven takes the visitor to a Dutch news site. This is included on the website because if the family of the person who is at risk of honour-based violence knows the person is seeking information about it, it might escalate the situation. For the same reason, the factsheet includes a paragraph which states "It is important to distinguish between honour-based violence, domestic violence, violence about the individual honour, parenting impotence and child abuse. With honour-based violence there is an explicit honour motive within a collective context which is why there are other interventions applicable." This refers to the reporting code that is set up when someone suspects honour-based violence. In these cases, it is important to not talk to the parents of the child or young adult, even if they are underage, as this might escalate the situation.¹¹⁸

Limitations

The results as discussed above must be seen in light of some limitations. First, the results above are based on two interviews and six document analyses which is an insufficient sample size to achieve a valid conclusion. Second, because the literature on treatment and support in the Netherlands after experiencing honour-based violence is limited, it was difficult to compare the treatment and support LGBTQ+ could receive. On the first limitation, as discussed in the chapter on methodology, the number of organizations who offer treatment and/or support for survivors of honour-based violence is already limited in the Netherlands. I was able to find five organization which met the criteria I had established and I contacted them. Only two organizations responded, luckily both organizations were willing to help and I conducted interviews with them. The six document analyses have shown a lot about how the organizations understand honour-based violence. However, interviews would have

¹¹⁸ Hilde Bakker et al., *De Meldcode bij (vermoedens van) eengerelateerd geweld*, 8.

been an even better way to research how they understand honour-based violence and help (LGBTQ+) survivors after experiencing this violence.

On the second limitation, because it was difficult to compare the treatment and support LGBTQ+ people could receive to that of heterosexual cisgender people since there was no literary information on this, the comparison that I made in this thesis is based on what the interviewees have said. While this does not mean that the comparison that I made is necessarily incorrect, it is important to note since the interviewed caregivers might have different views than the people who have actually received this care. In further studies focusing on the treatment and support of LGBTQ+ people after experiencing honour-based violence, interviews with them would be ideal. While this might be difficult to arrange due to privacy concerns, the results would be more fitting for answering the research question.

Discussion

In this chapter, I wish to discuss the findings of this research. By answering the four sub questions which were introduced at the introduction of this thesis, I will be able to answer my research question *How do policies around honour-based violence take LGBTQ+ people into account and how does this translate into treatment and support of this group?* This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section of this chapter will discuss how the organizations I have interviewed and whose websites I have analyzed view and understand honour-based violence and how this connects to the academic literature on honour-based violence. The second section will explore how treatment and support of survivors of honour-based violence look like. This is closely related to the third section where I will explore the treatment and support options of LGBTQ+ victims of honour-based violence. In the last section of this chapter, I will discuss how the organizations work in a culturally sensitive way and how this relates to what I have previously referred to as neutrality.

Understanding Honour-based Violence

From the analyzed data, multiple things became clear on how the organizations and the interviewees understand honour-based violence. First, they argue that there is not a specific country or region where honour-based violence originates from. In the definitions of honour-based violence, they make use of the word culture which refers to the way norms and values people find important within a group. The concept 'we culture' and honour culture are used to refer to communities who find the honour of the community or family of high importance. Second, in the results there is little to no data about what honour means. Only the factsheet attempts to define what honour is. Third, we have found that the family honour is strongly connected to the honour of the individual and that

damaging the individual honour also damages the family honour. When this happens, the family is forced to restore the honour with violent measures. There are two different times the family can perform the violence, either before immoral acts have taken place to prevent them or afterwards to restore the damaged honour.

Furthermore, from the data can be concluded that the organizations understand honour-based violence as something that can happen to both women and men. Gender does not play a role here. However, there is a difference in how the organizations phrase their definitions of honour-based violence which creates a situation where it seems like men are only sometimes or very rarely victims of this violence. Because the sexual actions and the purity of a girl or women can be so important in communities where honour-based violence exists, it is true that they are more likely to encounter honour-based violence after breaking rules on these topics. Nonetheless, one should not overlook boys or men as (possible) survivors of this violence. On whom carries out the violence, the sources mostly agree that it is the whole family who is responsible for the violent actions. The whole family is affected by the damaged honour which is why they all have interest in restoring the honour. However, some sources argue that it is only the men in the family who actually carry out the violence while another argues that also nieces and aunts who are responsible because they can have a say in how the violence should look like. Moreover, they can take part in the violence as well.

In the literature on honour-based violence, various themes can be found. First, there is a body of literature critical on the term honour-based violence itself. An example of this is Abu-Lughod, who explains why and how the use of the term by certain people creates and reinforces prejudices around the topic.¹¹⁹ Second, there is literature where the researchers examine honour-based violence as a phenomenon in certain contexts, for example looking at gender relations and violence in a certain country. Lastly, there is a body of literature focused on the origin of honour-based violence. By looking at the origin of the violence, the writers aim to contextualize it through which they hope to gain a better understanding of the violence itself and how to best prevent it from happening. In this body of literature, four general themes can be found, which have also been discussed in the literature overview of this thesis. I will shortly repeat them in this section.

The first way to look at honour-based violence is through a cultural perspective. With this perspective culture, and with that religion and heritage, are suggested as a reason for the violence to exist. In this perspective, mostly Muslim communities are blamed for committing the violence. This understanding is not used by organizations as it leads to racism against minority groups. However, it is a big misconception surrounding the term honour-based violence which is still visible in society and

¹¹⁹ Abu-Lughod, "Seduction of the 'Honor Crime'."

is therefore also touched upon in literature. Second, there is a body of research which views honour-based violence as a form of violence against women. Through this understanding, the only survivors of the violence are women which is simply not the case. However, one of the arguments used by people who agree with this understanding is that traditional gender norms, such as the importance of virginity and purity for girls, is the main cause for honour-based violence to exist. While this can be true, breaking certain ideas about how a women should act (sexually) can be a cause of honour-based violence, it does not mean that this is always the case. Therefore, this understanding is not adequate for everyone who has had to experience this type of violence. Another way to look to look at honour-based violence is to view it as a form of domestic violence. With this understanding, the close family is labeled as the perpetrator of violence, which is correct in some cases. However, it is important to note that the whole family and community plays a role with the execution of violence to restore the honour. Therefore, this understanding is not satisfactory in all cases of honour-based violence. The fourth and last perspective focuses on the concept that makes cases of honour-based violence actually take place, which is honour. Through this understanding, the importance of honour in certain communities is what makes honour-based violence an occurrence. If damaged (family) honour or loss of honour is not of importance to a group, why would they try to restore it by using violence and possible getting caught doing so.

By comparing the understandings of honour-based violence as presented in the results section to the understandings found in literature, one can conclude that the organizations and the interviewees focus on the aspect of honour and its importance. This can be seen in the way the word culture is used to describe that honour-based violence exists in cultures who highly value the family honour. Moreover, because the family honour is so important the violence is acted out from a collective mentality, everyone agrees that this violence should take place which means that it cannot be seen as domestic violence because that violence is not connected to a collective mentality but focuses on individuals. Furthermore, the argument that both women and men can be survivors of honour-based violence makes that it cannot be viewed as violence against women. This would overlook a whole group of (possible) survivors who then would not receive the care they deserve.

Thus, even though the ideas about honour-based violence mostly match each other within the different organizations, it is clear that there is not one definition of the concept. This also means that within policies about honour-based violence, there is no equal basis. The organizations aim to help everyone who encounters this type of violence, but there is no explanation how this can be done in the best way possible. Because of this, some organizations have more focus on LGBTQ+ persons who encounter honour-based violence than others. That there is no clear definition of honour-based violence in policy is not surprising as this is also lacking in the academic literature. Through different

ways of understanding honour-based violence in the academic literature, there are different focus points. One understanding focuses solely on women who encounter survivors while another argues that it should be understood as a form of domestic violence. Within academic literature, I argue that it is not necessary to create one understanding of honour-based violence with one definition as it is through different understanding that one can create their own understanding. However, I do argue that one definition within the policies about honour-based violence is necessary because this would be a basis for more inclusive actions in supporting and treating survivors of this violence. If there would be one definition, the focus on who can encounter violence and why could shift to what is the best way to help survivors. With this, there could be more focus on possible non-binary victims who, at this point, are not included in any definitions nor descriptions of honour-based violence as they do not fall within the binary distinctions of men and women. Moreover, there would be more opportunity for specific attention to support and treat LGBTQ+ survivors of honour-based violence who are already a minority within society.

Treatment and support after honour-based violence

If someone is afraid they might become a survivor of honour-based violence or after someone experiences honour-based violence in the Netherlands, there are various organizations which they can contact for support and treatment. These organisations are specialized in caring for people after they have experienced violence. Examples are Veilige Haven, Fier, Veilig thuis and Blijf groep. From the analyzed websites of these organisations and the interviews conducted with two professionals at Veilige Haven and Fier, it became clear what kind of treatment and support options they offer. At Veilige Haven they specialize in the support of young LGBTQ+ people which they help through offering supportive conversations about their gender and sexual identity, especially when someone has not accepted themselves (yet). Because Veilige Haven focuses on treatment and support of LGBTQ+ people, they will be discussed further in the following section. At Fier, it is possible to receive treatment and therapy at a Fier location. For those who are unsafe in their current living situation, they can live at Fier during the time of their treatment.

Treatment and support after honour-based violence for LGBTQ+ people

In the section above, I have discussed how and what kind of treatment and support survivors of honour-based violence can receive. This section will examine whether the treatment and support for LGBTQ+ survivors of honour-based violence is different from this. Through the interviews with professionals from Veilige Haven and Fier, it became clear that there is no difference in terms of the options to talk to a social worker, receiving treatment and therapy and having the ability to live in a shelter if needs be. For the Veilige Haven, this may be because their organization is focused on

people belonging to the LGBTQ+ community. Most of the time, the LGBTQ+ person coming to Veilige Haven is bicultural which makes that cultural or religious rules or opinions could influence the acceptance of the person. In those cases, the social workers at Veilige Haven also offer advice on talking to friends and family about sexual diversity and coming out of the closet. Because Fier does not specifically focus on LGBTQ+ survivors of honour-based violence, their approach in offering treatment to this group does differ from offering care to others. They do so by focusing on the sexual and gender identity of a person and asking questions about these topics. Even though this might be scary for people at first, by doing this the employees at Fier hope to normalize sexual and gender diversity, something that is necessary for the recovery of a person.

Because there is no academic literature available on receiving or providing care after honour-based violence, it is difficult to compare the care for LGBTQ+ people as described above to the care that others receive. Therefore, I have chosen to compare the care that Fier offers to that of Veilige Haven, which only offers care to LGBTQ+ persons. In this comparison, it became clear that there is no difference in the care someone is able to receive. Moreover, both organization emphasize the importance of talking about the sexual and gender identity which they also do when providing care.

Cultural Sensitivity

Even though this thesis argued that honour-based violence is not connected to certain cultural or religious communities, during the interviews it became clear that the professionals do care for many survivors which are either bicultural or non-Dutch. Through this, the importance of working in a culturally sensitive way came forward. During treatment and support of survivors of honour-based violence, Veilige Haven and Fier find it important to have an open conversation about sexuality and gender identity. Furthermore, Veilige Haven adds to this that discussing someone's cultural and religious background is also important to understand the context in which the violence arose. However, as a professional one must be mindful to not use prejudice or generalizing comments within these conversations. Working in a cultural sensitive way is the contrary to neutrality, a term with which I have described the attitude where the cultural and/or religious background nor the sexual and/or gender identity is not discussed during care. Within the treatment and support of survivors of honour-based violence, discussing these topics is important to get to the core of the problem.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have aimed to answer the following research question *How do policies around honour-based violence take LGBTQ+ people into account and how this translate into treatment and support?* To answer the question, I have conducted two semi-structured interviews with caregivers who offer support and/or treatment for people who have or suspect that they will experience honour-based violence. I have interviewed a social worker from the organization Veilige Haven, a place where LGBTQ+ young adults from Amsterdam can have a supportive conversation when they do not accept themselves (yet) or their family might not accept them. I have also interviewed a nurse practitioner who works at Fier, an organization that aims to prevent and stop violence in co-dependent relationships. Moreover, I have done six document analyses on the websites of five different organizations, Veilige Haven, Fier, Veilig Thuis, LEC eengerelateerd geweld and Blijf groep and on a factsheet published by the Dutch government on honour-based violence.

From the information published by the Dutch government, it can be concluded that they view honour-based violence through looking at honour and its importance. This means that when a community finds honour highly important, actions that might damages this honour are punished with violence by those who wish to restore the violence. This naturally forms questions on how honour-based violence is understood. Is it violence from a religion, domestic violence, does it fall under violence against women or is it something else? In this thesis, I have argued that honour-based violence must not be understood as a form of another type of violence to make sure that every possible victim can receive the help they deserve. Rather, it is important to look at the role honour plays within the community, how (un)written rules are understood in the community and how this can possibly influence the actions of people within the community. Moreover, I have argued that there should be one definition on honour-based violence within the organizations that work with (survivors of) this violence. If there is one definition, it could be the basis of more inclusive steps in preventing honour-based violence and caring for the survivors afterwards.

Policies around honour-based violence do not pay special attention to LGBTQ+ people. Because of this, organizations focused on the treatment and support of these people are free to choose how they would like to fill this in. At Veilige Haven and Fier, the organizations interviewed for this research, they choose to be as open as possible with the clients. This means that they discuss every possible topic that can be connected to the experience of honour-based violence, but also that they question issues surrounding sexuality and gender identity. Furthermore, working in a culturally sensitive way and discussing topics as religion and culture are important because without this, it is impossible to get to the core of the problem.

As discussed in the limitation section in chapter on results, the above reached conclusion must be viewed in light of certain limitations. However, the topic of honour-based violence in connection to LGBTQ+ people is of high importance as it has not been researched in detail before. Further research is needed into the treatment and support of LGBTQ+ people after experiencing honour-based violence to make recommendations on how they can be cared for best. Nonetheless, this thesis has shed a light on the intersection of honour-based violence and the LGBTQ+ community, a topic that deserves more attention, both in society as in academic research.

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