

# **Black Motherhood and Child to Parent Violence and Abuse: Exploring Experiences and Perceptions**

**Anuluwapo Oladapo-Adebogun**

Brasenose College

Centre for Criminology, University of Oxford

2025

Word Count: 85,171

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,  
University of Oxford



## ABSTRACT

Though historically understudied, Child-to-Parent Violence and Abuse (CPVA) is now recognised as a grave and complex social issue among policymakers, practitioners, and academics within Global North countries (Simmons et al. 2018). While the overrepresentation of mothers as victims of this phenomenon is duly observed in research (Fawzi et al. 2013; Condry and Miles, 2014; Calvete et al. 2015), there is little empirical exploration on how CPVA manifests within families of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. As the first in-depth academic work to explore how CPVA is perceived, experienced and navigated by Black mothers in England, this thesis addresses this gap by advancing an intersectional disaggregation of parental experiences. It draws upon a mixed qualitative approach of interviews, focus groups and victim questionnaires with 19 Black African and Caribbean mothers and 26 professionals to provide insight into the multi-layered and complex nature of Black maternal identity, its idealisations and inherent tensions. By foregrounding race and ethnicity in the ‘social institution of motherhood’ (Rich, 1976), this thesis finds that CPVA compounds with the social identities of Black mothers to frame their perception, experience and navigation of the phenomenon.

Though the criminalisation of Black childhood and the pathologisation of Black motherhood are considered separate issues, this thesis found that the participation of mother and child in the shared struggle against systemic racism implicates the navigation of CPVA, as the racialised systems inherent in schools, social care, mental health services, and the criminal legal system affect Black maternal coping and help-seeking efforts. Theoretically and conceptually, this thesis uses intersectionality and a Black epistemological reworking of ‘Stigma’ to explore the racialised undertones of maternal blame and stigmatisation (Tyler, 2018; 2022). It highlights how the intersecting gendered and racialised disadvantages marking Black womanhood manifest through racial tropes like the ‘Strong Black Woman’ and the ‘Baby mama’, which not only perpetuate a myth of deficiency in Black motherhood but contribute to the misidentification of CPVA and form barriers to formal and informal support pathways. Through the adultification of Black children and their false labelling as ‘violent and aggressive’ (Davis, 2022), Black mothers are placed in a quandary where they must balance the tripartite role of ‘mother-victim-advocate’ as they navigate CPVA.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the participation and support of many individuals. Firstly, I am deeply grateful to the mothers who participated in this research for their willingness to share deeply personal experiences. Your vulnerability and bravery have left an irreversible impression on me. I would also like to thank the community leaders, professionals and organisations who offered their time to this thesis. Rather, than be gatekeepers, you were instrumental gateways facilitating my access to Black mothers. Your knowledge has greatly enriched this work.

I am thankful to Brasenose College, the Centre for Criminology and the Faculty of Law for funding this thesis through the provision of the DPhil BAME Scholarship. I would like to especially thank Professor Mary Bosworth, the pioneer behind this inclusive initiative, established to address the underrepresentation of Black and Minority Ethnic students in doctoral programmes. In many ways, the story of my time at Oxford cannot be told without your invaluable support. From the early days of the MSc programme until now, you have been a beacon of inspiration and hope.

I would like to thank the Centre for Criminology for providing a welcoming and academically stimulating environment. To my supervisor, Professor Rachel Condry, thank you for believing in the vision of this thesis. Your valuable insight, and guidance on this journey is greatly appreciated. I extend gratitude to Dr Leila Ulrich, for agreeing to serve as my academic mentor, and sharing practical wisdom on navigating the Academy. I would like to thank Professor Carolyn Hoyle (my examiner at transfer and confirmation), particularly for your instrumental role in ensuring I had maternity leave support during the DPhil. I am also thankful to my fellow DPhil colleagues, notably Dr Nisha Waller and Dr Boluwajo Kolawole-Bello. Your friendship, solidarity and encouragement lightened the more demanding parts of this process.

On a personal note, I want to express gratitude to my community at Lighthouse Family Church, particularly Pastor Abraham and Pastor Funmi Adegoke. Thank you so very much for the prayers, love and generous childcare support. A special mention to my long-time mentors, Chindah and Chimzi Chindah, for journeying with me and celebrating every new milestone over the years. With respect to my family, this journey would not have been

possible without the unreserved support of my parents. I am forever grateful to my mother, Mrs Tejumade Oladapo, for her love, wisdom, prayers and substantial childcare support throughout this intensive process. I would like to thank my father, Mr Olajuyitan Oladapo, for teaching my brothers and I to have audacious dreams and to never relent in our pursuit of them. I would like to thank my phenomenal brothers, Timothy and Emmanuel Oladapo. I will always hold dear your words of encouragement, inspiration and love.

I wish to thank my husband, Dr. Gbemi, for his love and unwavering support. You have been a constant reassuring presence, navigating with me the highs and lows of the doctorate. You never once doubted that this thesis would be done, thank you for supporting me every step of the way. To my precious daughter, Esmé Araoluwa, who made her grand appearance three years into the DPhil. You have changed me in the most profound ways. Thank you for your smiles, laughter, patience and being my greatest inspiration.

For the gift of life, good health, a supportive community and the privilege of doctoral education - Abba, I am deeply grateful. 'Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.'  
- Ephesians 3: 20 (Bible, New Living Translation).

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Table of Contents

<b>ONE: INTRODUCING CHILD-TO-PARENT VIOLENCE AND ABUSE.....</b>	<b>7</b>
RESEARCH RATIONALE.....	8
RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	9
TERMINOLOGY.....	9
RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN.....	12
THESIS OVERVIEW.....	13
<b>TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>17</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	17
PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF CPVA.....	21
DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS.....	23
GENDER AND MOTHERHOOD.....	26
THE CENTRALITY OF RACE IN MATERNAL IDENTITY AND PRACTICE.....	33
INFORMAL AND FORMAL SUPPORT FOLLOWING CPVA.....	42
CONCLUSION.....	53
<b>THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND ANALYTICAL APPROACH.....</b>	<b>55</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	55
BLACK FEMINIST THOUGHT ON MOTHERHOOD.....	57
INTERSECTIONALITY: AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK.....	60
LIMITATIONS OF INTERSECTIONALITY.....	62
THE POWER OF STIGMA.....	68
THE RACIALISATION OF BLACK MOTHERHOOD.....	73
CONCLUSION.....	83
<b>FOUR: METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>86</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	86
JUSTIFICATION OF QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY.....	87
EXPLORATORY MAPPING STAGE.....	89
PARTICIPANTS.....	89
DATA COLLECTION.....	99
DATA ANALYSIS.....	106
ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	110
REFLEXIVITY AND THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER.....	111
IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.....	119
CONCLUSION.....	121
<b>FIVE: THE MAKING OF THE BLACK MOTHER: MAPPING TENSIONS WITHIN BLACK MATERNAL IDENTITY.....</b>	<b>123</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	123
BLACK MATERNAL IDENTITIES.....	127
TENSIONS BETWEEN IDEALISED MOTHERHOOD AND CHALLENGING REALITIES.....	142
NAVIGATING AND RESISTING RACISM AND OPPRESSIVE STRUCTURES.....	154
CONCLUSION.....	163
<b>SIX: THE DECONSTRUCTIVE PROCESS OF MOTHERING THROUGH ABUSE.....</b>	<b>166</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	166
NON-PHYSICAL ABUSE.....	168
PHYSICAL ABUSE.....	170
FINANCIAL HARM.....	179
THE DISMANTLING OF HOMEPLACE.....	187
CONCLUSION.....	198

<b>SEVEN: FAILED MOTHERHOOD: DISCOURSES ON MATERNAL GUILT, MOTHER-BLAME AND RESPONSIBILITY TRANSFERENCE .....</b>	<b>201</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	201
DEFINING MATERNAL GUILT .....	203
MOTHER-BLAMING: A RESPONSE TO YOUTH OFFENDING AND CPVA .....	204
PRIVATISED MOTHERING .....	206
PATHOLOGISING BLACK SINGLE MOTHERHOOD .....	223
CONCLUSION .....	236
<b>EIGHT: BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS TO ACCESSING FORMAL AND INFORMAL SUPPORT PATHWAYS .....</b>	<b>238</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	238
COLLECTIVE COPING PRACTICES WITHIN INFORMAL SUPPORT PATHWAYS .....	240
BARRIERS TO COLLECTIVE AND SPIRITUALLY-CENTRED SUPPORT .....	253
ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS, SOCIAL SERVICES AND CRIMINAL LEGAL INSTITUTIONS .....	260
BALANCING MOTHERHOOD, VICTIMHOOD AND ADVOCACY .....	265
INSTITUTIONAL DISTRUST AND BARRIERS TO FORMAL SUPPORT PATHWAYS .....	272
CONCLUSION .....	283
<b>NINE: CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS.....</b>	<b>285</b>
DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS .....	286
LIMITATIONS.....	293
BLACK MOTHERHOOD, FEMINISM AND INTERSECTIONALITY.....	294
THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF MOTHERHOOD: MAPPING BLACK MATERNAL IDENTITIES.....	296
DIALECTIC TENSIONS WITHIN IDEALISED MOTHERHOOD.....	298
RACIAL TROPES, STIGMATISED MOTHERHOOD AND DEVIANCY DISCOURSES.....	301
MOTHERWORK: NAVIGATING THE PARALLELS OF POWER, SURVIVAL AND VICTIMHOOD .....	305
POLICY IMPLICATIONS .....	308
FUTURE RESEARCH .....	309
CONCLUDING REMARKS .....	310
<b>APPENDIX: VIGNETTE .....</b>	<b>312</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>313</b>

## **ONE: INTRODUCING CHILD-TO-PARENT VIOLENCE AND ABUSE**

Compared to the more developed research on other forms of family violence, such as intimate partner violence and child abuse, Child-to-Parent Violence and Abuse (CPVA) remains highly stigmatised, under-researched, and misunderstood. Within existing studies, the role of race and ethnicity in shaping parental experiences of CPVA is rarely considered. While one older study suggested no significant difference in commission rates between ethnic groups (Cornell and Gelles, 1982), contemporary studies suggest that White and northern European youth are more likely to instigate harm towards their parents than youth of other ethnic backgrounds (Lyons et al. 2015; Simmons et al. 2018:39; Walsh and Krienert, 2009). However, as these studies rely on police data, instead of reflecting the prevalence of CPVA, they may reflect the reporting practices of White parents. As ethnic groups may be less likely to engage with justice agencies, their representation within police data sets cannot be upheld as an accurate account of prevalence. Although victim demographics are increasingly gendered, with mothers being five times more likely to be assaulted than fathers (Fawzi et al. 2013; Calvete et al. 2015; Condry and Miles, 2014; Edenborough et al. 2008), there is limited academic engagement with how motherhood as an institution and maternal identity may facilitate CPVA or frame coping strategies and the decision to seek help.

This thesis aims to contribute to scholarly understanding of CPVA by disaggregating Black mothers' experiences of victimisation. It advances that an intersectional examination of the phenomenon is required in order to understand its impact on the self-concept of Black mothers and investigate the barriers they face to disclosing their abuse experiences. By centring Black maternal accounts, this study highlights the subtleties of the phenomenon, and how its presentation can be shaped by family dynamics and individual identities relating

to gender, racial, class, religion and migration. For example, as I will show, the multi-layered and complex nature of Black motherhood is such that the intersecting gendered and racialised disadvantages that mark their daily lives may also impede victim identification, e.g. racial tropes like ‘the strong Black woman’. Moreover, while the role of nurturer and protector is a common experience in motherhood, regardless of race, ethnicity or class, for Black women the realities of raising racialised children in Western societies largely positions their ‘motherwork’ and ‘reproductive labour’ as an act of survival, empowerment, advocacy and maternal activism (Hill-Collins, 1994; Elliot and Reid, 2019; Surrency, 2021). Though the criminalisation of Black childhood and the pathologisation of Black motherhood are often considered separate issues, this thesis shows that the participation of mother and child in the shared struggles against systemic racism can implicate help-seeking following CPVA. As Black children are routinely pathologised and labelled violent and aggressive across various services (YMCA, 2020; Cooke and Halberstadt, 2021; Davis, 2022), it may feel counterintuitive to Black mothers to disclose their abuse experiences (a theme explored in chapter eight).

## **Research Rationale**

The overarching aim of this study is to investigate how CPVA is defined, experienced, and navigated by Black African and Caribbean mothers in England and Wales. The study is exploratory in nature, being the first to empirically consider how the phenomenon intersects with race and motherhood in the experiences of Black women. My doctoral research developed from my participation in a rapid research project investigating the impact of the Covid-19 lockdowns on CPVA (Condry et al. 2020; Miles et al. 2024). During our knowledge exchange conversations with experts, it was highlighted that the role of differential family structures was not sufficiently explored in research around this form of

violence. Little was known about how culture, ethnicity or race shape the manifestation of CPVA or frame its navigation by parents. The questions emerging from these conversations contributed to this present investigation of CPVA from a distinctively Black and maternal perspective. This thesis investigates what can occur when a highly stigmatised form of family violence is experienced by Black mothers, a population racialised and marginalised in Western society. It aims to enhance our understanding of how parents with varying cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds experience and navigate family violence.

## **Research Questions**

- 1) How is the experience of CPVA shaped by Black maternal identity and practice?
- 2) How is CPVA defined, understood and experienced by Black mothers?
- 3) How does CPVA intersect with Black motherhood to exacerbate narratives of maternal guilt and mother-blame?
- 4) How do Black mothers experiencing CPVA seek help and support, and what influences their decisions?

## **Terminology**

Child-Parent Violence and Abuse (CPVA) encompasses a range of harmful behaviours caused by children or adolescents within the home setting. Initially conceptualised as ‘Battered Parent Syndrome’ (Harbin and Madden, 1979), the phenomenon was located in the field of clinical psychology where the focus was developing typologies of children who used physical violence towards their parents. Research has since developed to consider other forms of non-physical abuse including control and ‘emotional terrorism’ (Cottrell, 2001). The scope of behaviours that constitute CPVA range from physical assault (Berezina, 1999; Agnew and Huguley, 1989; Nock and Kazdin, 2002; McCloskey and Lichter, 2003) to

include property damage, financial, verbal and psychological abuse (Margolin and Baucom, 2014). Studies have found elements of coercive control specific to parent-child relations and tactics of undermining parental authority by making false claims of abuse to services or the police (Simmons et al. 2019: 1489; Gallagher, 2004; Holt, 2013; Cottrell, 2001 Selwyn and Meakings, 2016). There are cases of a child practicing self-destructive behaviours including self-harm as a means of controlling parental behaviour (Calvete et al, 2014).

There is a wide range of terminology used to describe when a child instigates violence and abuse towards their parent. The phenomenon can be referred to as ‘parent abuse’ (Wilcox, 2012), ‘adolescent-to-parent violence’ (Condry and Miles, 2012; 2015), ‘child-to-parent violence’ (Calvete et al. 2015; Cottrell and Monk, 2004), ‘mother abuse’ (Hunter et al. 2010; Edenborough, 2008), ‘parental aggression or adolescent-initiated parent abuse’ (Hong et al. 2012). Accurately labelling and defining the phenomenon remains a challenge as a wide range of different terms are used across academic literature and in practice. The varying scope of terminology used to describe the phenomenon has contributed to the absence of a universally recognised label or definition, and incidents are defined, measured, recorded, and investigated in varied and inconsistent ways (O’Hara et al. 2017; Holt, 2012).

In this thesis, the combined term ‘Child-to-Parent Violence and Abuse’ is used for the following reasons. By using both violence and abuse, I create a room within my enquiry to consider a breadth of behaviours, ranging from physical and injurious acts of violence to verbal, financial, and emotional abuse. Using both terms helps situate my work within the broader field of domestic abuse thus enhancing its visibility (Wilcox, 2012). The word ‘parent’ is not limited to biological parents, but extend to any woman, who by virtue of her caregiving role is placed in proximity with abuse and violence from a child. This includes

stepmothers, non-biological mothers and older women engaged in ‘grandmothering’. The use of ‘child’ is not strictly confined to age-based notions of individuals below 18, but rather the relationship between the victim and perpetrator (Simmons et al. 2018: 32). Existing research largely centres on adolescents aged 12 and 17 and does not sufficiently account for abuse instigated by much younger children or those between 16 and 24 (Ibid, Holt and Shon, 2018). As my study concerns Black families, understanding ‘child’ as a relational rather than numerical category is pertinent as young people within these households are likely to stay with parents above age 18 and for longer than their White counterparts (Lei and South, 2016). Moreover, in 2020 an estimated 42% of young adults between 15 and 34 lived with parents in the UK (ONS, 2021). This suggests that mothers who experience extended periods of abuse from older children should not be excluded from future enquiry. This study will consider violence and abuse caused by young people between 10 and 25 years, among other selection criteria detailed in the methodology chapter (Chapter 4).

In this study the category of *Black mothers* includes any woman with caregiving responsibilities who identifies as having African or Caribbean ancestral lineage. This includes women who describe themselves as ‘Black British’, without choosing to specify their ethnicity. As stated above, the title *mother* is not limited by biological connotations, but extends to any woman placed in proximity with abuse and violence from a child by virtue of her caregiving role. The term *Black mother-victim* applies to Black women with lived experience of CPVA. There is much discussion around whether the label victim or survivor should be used to describe individuals with abuse experiences (Mittal and Singh, 2018; O’Shea et al. 2024; Warner, 2024). It is also unlikely that mothers will describe or perceive themselves to be ‘victims’ or ‘survivors’ of their child’s abusive conduct. With these critiques duly noted, the term ‘mother-victim’ is used in this thesis for several reasons.

First, to emphasise the intertwining of victimhood and maternity in the experiences of women affected by CPVA. Secondly, by using the term ‘victim’, this study acknowledges the extensive harms that children can cause their mothers. It resists the tendency, particularly among mothers to euphemistically dismiss CPVA as a child merely ‘misbehaving’ and deny the harms caused. Finally, on a pragmatic approach, because this study engages Black mothers (who are not victims) in focus group discussion, using the term ‘mother-victim’ helps to easily distinguish their voices from mothers with lived experience.

## **Research Methods and Design**

This study focused on interpreting and understanding the world from the view of Black mothers who had experienced CPVA (Sparkes and Smith, 2014:10). Thus, using methodologies that centred the narratives of Black mothers and positioned them as experts of their own experiences and co-producers of knowledge was crucial. This thesis utilised a mixed qualitative methodological approach, drawing upon focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and an online qualitative survey to engage mothers and practitioners. By using a three-pronged qualitative approach, data was gathered on the lived experience of Black mothers to capture the ways their maternal identity, priorities, and practices compound with existing racial and systemic barriers to frame their disclosure and helpseeking behaviours following CPVA. Semi-structured interviews were arranged with Black mother-victims and professionals with experience offering direct support to Black women affected by CPVA. A victim questionnaire was created for Black mother-victims who wanted to anonymously contribute to the study.

Focus groups were held with Black mothers (non-victims) for collective knowledge creation around the realities, practices and priorities of mothering while Black in the UK. The project gathered data from the following resources. Eight Black mother-victims participated through combination of semi-structured interviews and anonymous survey responses. Eleven Black mothers (non-victims) participated in two moderated focus group discussions. Twenty-six practitioners with direct experience supporting Black mother-victims were interviewed. Although in-person meetings were always offered, following the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, mothers and practitioners opted for interviews and focus groups to be conducted remotely through video conferencing platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom. In the case of one mother, a telephone interview was requested and granted.

## **Thesis Overview**

The thesis is structured as follows. In Chapter 2, I examine existing literature on CPVA, the research origins of the phenomenon and the persistent challenges around terminology among researchers, practitioners and parents. By highlighting the limitations of existing research, particularly the insufficient focus on disaggregating parental experiences of the phenomenon, I establish a foundation for this study. Moreover, as this thesis is centred on Black maternal experiences of CPVA, I critically review the birth of maternal scholarship and challenge the universality of motherhood as a social institution by illustrating how and why Black mothering differs from Western feminist conceptualisations of maternity.

Chapter 3 introduces concepts and theories, grounded in Black feminist epistemologies of motherhood, that will be used in analysing and interpreting the data emerging from this study. It considers a Black epistemological reworking of stigma as a sociological concept as essential to understanding the racialised undertones of maternal stigmatisation (Tyler, 2018;

2020). Here, racial tropes such as the ‘Baby Mama’, ‘Strong Black Woman’ and ‘Angry Black woman’ are theorised as perpetuating a myth of deficiency in Black motherhood and forming barriers to their access to formal and informal support following CPVA. A justification is provided for why this study focuses on ‘Black’ motherhood despite the manifold intra-ethnic differences, diverse regions, countries and islands encapsulated in the African and Caribbean experience.

In Chapter 4, I outline the mixed qualitative approach used to conduct research on Black maternal experiences of CPVA. A biography is provided of the eight Black mother-victims who participated in this study to give some contextual insight into the background, social realities and individual stories of the mothers. Though inherently incomplete, the biographies are written to acknowledge the mothers’ personhood and aspects of their identity that exist outside of their abuse experiences. This chapter justifies the methodological decisions to utilise a victim questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. It also reflects on the impact of conducting sensitive research during the COVID-19 pandemic, challenges with access, participant recruitment and the importance of researcher reflexivity.

Chapters 5 to 8 present the empirical findings of my study. In Chapter 5, I outline six critical concepts that offer insight into the cultural, racial and religious scripts (narratives and expectations) that frame Black maternal identity and practice. It illustrates the intertwining of Black mothering with the resistance of racism and the navigation of oppressive structures in Euro-American nations. Acting as a foundation for subsequent chapters, Chapter 5 highlights the tensions that arise when the realities of Black mothering conflict with idealised expectations. This includes the complicated and contradictory choices Black

women living in western societies are compelled to make, whether to teach their children to assimilate dominant White cultures (in order to survive) or resist systems of racial oppression and domination (Reynolds, 2005).

Leading on from this, Chapter 6 illustrates how the act of ‘mothering through CPVA’ subjects the Black maternal identity to a deconstructive process. Though commonalities may be present in the type of abuse experienced by parents, there is little knowledge on how the realities of race can differentiate maternal accounts of harm. This chapter considers the non-physical assault Black mothers endure from their children, the weaponization of words, cultural slurs and language to cause shock, humiliate, harm their self-esteem, and erase their idealised role as disciplinarians. In addition to also considering the impact of physical abuse, the chapter highlights the myriad ways CPVA affects the resources, earning power and vocational experiences of Black women, undermining their role as matriarchal providers. Finally, it examines how the significance of ‘homeplace’ is radically altered by CPVA. Shifting from being a refuge from racism, Black women are subject to carceral-like conditions in their own homes.

Chapter 7 explores the interrelated concepts of maternal guilt, mother-blame and self-blame. It critiques Western notions of ‘good motherhood’ as being defined by intensive mothering ideologies that herald a ‘child-centered’, ‘self-sacrificing’ and ‘all-absorbing’ maternal practice (Arendell, 1999; Hays, 1996). It highlights how the practice of mother-blame is underpinned by the myth of perfect motherhood, an idealised standard that leads to self-blame once internalized by women (Toews et al. 2019; Jackson and Mannix, 2004). It argues that Black motherhood is perceived as deficient because it deviates from intensive mothering ideologies that are practiced by White, middle-class, married and unemployed mothers

(Collins, 2021; Arendell, 1999; Hays, 1996). It highlights that the privatisation of Black mothering occurs across six sites, where they are considered to practice a ‘failed motherhood’ supposedly evidenced through the immorality that is CPVA.

Chapter 8 is the last to present my empirical findings. It explores the barriers and facilitators to Black mothers accessing formal and informal support following CPVA. Three collective coping strategies emerge from the data: (a) finding solidarity with ‘sisters-in-sorrow’ (b) relying on Black community networks to find ‘othermothers’ and community fathers; and (c) utilising transnational family connections. The chapter also considers spiritually-centred coping practices as a formative part of the personal and cultural identity of minoritised women (Thiara and Harrison, 2021; Femi-Ajao, 2018). Beyond the family and community level, the chapter considers the formal support pathways available to Black mother-victims across schools, health and social care services and justice institutions. It also identifies the risks and challenges inherent in such levels of intervention. While Chapter 9 concludes this thesis by compiling key findings from the study and evaluating them with consideration of the overarching research questions of the thesis. It reflects on the contributions the study makes to scholarship, proposes policy recommendations and identify avenues for future research opportunities.

## **TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

Child-to-Parent Violence and Abuse (CPVA) is a form of family violence known to intersect fields that work with children and families, from education and health to youth justice, domestic violence, and child protection. The phenomenon first emerged in American clinical psychology studies in the late 1970s to 80s (Harbin and Madden, 1979; Straus et al. 1980; Cornell and Gelles, 1982a;1982b). A landmark National Family Violence Survey conducted in 1975 and replicated in 1985, portrayed a comprehensive picture of family violence among US families. The former study engaged 2,143 families, and the latter a total of 3,520. Both highlighted various forms of family violence including child abuse, sibling violence, child-to-parent and parent-to-child violence (Straus et al. 1980). Harbin and Madden first described the phenomenon as ‘parent battering’ (1979: 1288). The conceptualisations and psychopathological explanations they offered for the phenomenon were based on their clinical observations of parents being assaulted by adolescents, as opposed to scientific research. Nonetheless, throughout the 80s, their concept of ‘parent battering’ was adopted by other scholars and became a formative component of our understanding of CPVA (Agnew and Huguley, 1989; Charles, 1986; Peek et al. 1985).

Compared to other forms of family violence, including intimate partner violence and child abuse, the field of CPVA was long under-researched. Though historically understudied and under-theorised, the phenomenon is now recognised as a grave and complex social issue among policymakers, practitioners, and academics within Global North countries (Simmons et al. 2018; Shankar, 2011; Wilcox, 2012; Hunter et al. 2010; Miles and Condry, 2015: 1076; Holt, 2015: 490). A body of international scholarship has mostly developed since the 2010s and onwards. In 2014, Condry and Miles pioneered the first UK-based study analysing cases

of CPVA reported to the police. They found 1,892 reported cases of children aged between 13 and 19 using violence against a parent in a single force in one year (Condry and Miles, 2014). Their findings provided official documentation of incidents and were used by the government in the following year to produce guidance for practitioners responding to CPVA (Home Office, 2015).

In 2015 a European Union-funded action research project investigated good practice responses to CPVA in England, Ireland, Sweden, Spain, and Bulgaria. Since then, group programmes such as Non-Violent Resistance, Who's in Charge?, Break4Change, and other models are being used to support families in Britain, whilst specialist frontline services (Respect, PEGS) have also been established. Despite these advancements, existing studies are mainly exploratory in nature and due to small sample size, there are issues of validity and reliability. Mapping the prevalence of CPVA nationally and globally has been hindered for several reasons. There are disparities in the labels and definitions used by parents, practitioners, politicians, and academics to describe the phenomenon (Holt, 2013; 2016; Clarke, 2016; Baker and Bonnick, 2021). This is linked to challenges around conceptualising this sub-type of family violence within legislative and policy frameworks (Miles and Condry, 2015) and the subjectivities around how harms are perceived, measured and impact families (Rutter, 2022: 6).

Though commonalities may be present in the type of abuse experienced by parents, there is little knowledge on how the challenges and realities of race can differentiate maternal accounts of harm. While attention is gradually being brought to the existence of CPVA within non-traditional family structures such as adoptive families (Adoption legal Centre, 2020; Adoption UK, 2018), this is yet to be explored systematically. Nor has there been any

empirical exploration of CPVA within families of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. To deepen our understanding of the phenomenon, it is important to disaggregate data on parental experiences. This requires factoring into empirical enquiry how social identities can intersect and shape the experience of this phenomenon. Commissioned by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner to undertake a literature review on CPVA, Victoria Baker and Helen Bonnick highlighted a blind spot in existing research which fails to explore the ‘diversity of experiences and perspectives of those impacted by parental abuse’ (2021: 66). Specifically, they called for future research to examine how social identities including race and ethnicity, may intersect to shape the presentation and experience of CPVA (Ibid).

This chapter opens by outlining parental perceptions of CPVA and how this can be guided by sociocultural norms and constructions around normative child/adolescent behaviour. The persistent challenges around terminology among researchers, practitioners and parents are also considered. Next, the chapter overviews research on the sociodemographic factors associated to the phenomenon including age, socioeconomic status, family structure (female-headed households) and experiences of violence within families. The third section explores gender and motherhood. It critically reviews literature on the gendered dynamics of CPVA, drawing from feminist literature on the institution of motherhood and mother-blaming discourses to explain why mothers are overrepresented as victims. Though acknowledging the contributions of maternal literature, it advances that motherhood is not a universal experience and gender power dynamics are not the only structural force that frame family relationships (Arendell, 2000). As this thesis concerns Black maternal experiences of CPVA, there is the need to engage with how race, ethnicity and culture shape their motherhood. Thus, the fourth section reviews the centrality of race in the maternal identity and practices of Black women and how motherhood is reconceived within Black

communities through collective nurturing. It also highlights the realities and tensions inherent in ‘mothering as a Black woman’ and the contradictory choices Black women make around whether to teach their children to assimilate dominant White cultures or resist systems of racial oppression (Reynolds, 2005; Higginbotham, 2000; Hill-Collins, 1994, Charlton, 2014).

The fifth and final section reviews literature on the formal and informal support pathways available to Black mothers affected by CPVA. The maternal role itself represents a ‘micro and macro barrier’ to disclosing abuse experiences and seeking external support (Smith, 2020; Nguyen Phan, 2024:32). Mothers, regardless of racial identity, may struggle with the impracticality of ‘divorcing from one’s child’ (Holt, 2012: 95) and the possible implications of child abandonment should the relationship be severed following disclosure of CPVA (Wilcox, 2012; Miles and Condry, 2015). There may be concerns around the devaluing of their experiences by family and friends (Holt, 2011; Jackson and Mannix, 2004) and the risks of mother-blaming discourses that are rife in services (Clarke et al. 2017; Nguyen Phan, 2024: 147). However, in addition to these existing concerns, Black mothers must also navigate the racial inequality, discrimination and pathologisation of their children across health, social care, education and justice services (Wallace and Joseph-Salisbury, 2022; Davis, 2022; Lammy, 2017). Beyond formal support pathways, the section concludes by reviewing literature on the collective and spiritually-centred coping strategies Black women deploy to navigate life challenges and familial adversity. Inference will be drawn from this literature on their possible navigation of CPVA.

## Parental Perceptions of CPVA

Victim perception of crime is known to have significant implications on their responses, coping mechanisms, disclosure, and seeking support (Wilcox, 2012; 2015). However, few studies have queried how parents define abuse and interrogate the distinctions between everyday difficulties expected between parent and child and non-normative, abusive behaviour. Sociocultural norms and expectations play a role in which conduct is deemed good or bad (Ofoha et al. 2019: 455; Simmons et al. 2019). One study suggests that parental perception of CPVA is guided by social and cultural constructions of normal adolescent behaviour. In an article titled *But All Kids Yell at Their Parents, Don't They?* Simmons et al. (2019) observed that, due to accepted social norms in Australia about adolescence as a problematic developmental period, mothers increased the threshold of what behaviours they termed abusive. They trivialised and normalised otherwise dysfunctional behaviour by referencing to what they understood as the cultural norm in their society. Despite feeling unsafe within their homes, they expressed doubt as to whether there was any abuse to report which hindered their ability to seek help. The study highlighted the role social expectations and culture can have in framing parents' definition, and response to CPVA. It illustrates the need for the phenomenon to be re-examined within various cross-cultural settings (Simmons et al. 2019). At the time of writing, no such enquiry has explored the role of culture in shaping Black maternal definitions of CPVA. However, as this is a growing field, with almost all publications in the UK produced since 2010, this may contribute to the lack of such studies.

What constitutes a ‘good’ and ‘well-behaved’ child will differ across the cultural context of different countries and communities (McGuire et al. 2021; Rutter, 2022: 8). However, there is consensus around praising children who comply with the instructions of adults (Cao et al. 2010), while those who resist are portrayed as deviant, particularly in Global South nations where child-rearing can be practiced as an adult-centric enterprise structured to suit the aspirations of elders (Olson et al. 2001; Ofoha et al. 2019: 455; Onwujuba et al. 2015:33). Across African and Caribbean communities, values and rules around respecting elders are sternly upheld, even to the extent that interrupting adult discussion or opposing their advice is considered rude and disgracing the family (Ohuche, 1986; (Ogunnaike and Houser, 2002; Okoli and Cree, 2012; Onwujuba et al. 2015). This high demand for respect may produce a relatively low threshold of what behaviour constitutes ‘bad’ conduct. Social norms around behaviour of children are not ‘randomised but part of a culturally organised system’ that has evolved generationally to meet a family's environment (Ogbu, 1981: 419; Ofoha et al. 2019: 456). Even after migration, family customs and cultural expectations of behaviour travel with parents, who intend to sustain these expected patterns of behaviour in host countries. Notably, allegiance to cultural norms is stronger if parents migrated in late adolescence or adulthood (Onwujuba et al. 2015: 42; Glick et al. 2012).

There is need for research to examine the role of culture and subjectivity around what constitutes CPVA, particularly among parents who originate from Global South nations. It raises questions about whether synchrony or dichotomy exists between the behaviours widely accepted within the field as abusive and those held by mothers from diverse ethnic backgrounds, who may have a relatively lower threshold for behaviours considered non-normative and offensive. Understanding Black maternal experiences of CPVA will require engaging with how they label and differentiate challenging conduct from that which is

abusive or violent. This thesis will adopt the 'self-defined approach' advocated by Paterson et al. (2002) and Wilcox (2012), where abuse is defined as any action that causes family members to feel intimidated, controlled, or compelled to adjust their behaviour in anticipation or accommodation of harm. Practitioners have called for parents to be considered the experts of their own experiences and lead in labelling behaviours as abusive in order to empower them towards disclosure, reporting, and seeking help (Family-Based Solutions (n.d); Holt, 2012: 3; Bonnicksen and Griffiths, 2019). By taking this approach, I can consider how Black mothers define CPVA and contextualise their child's behaviour within the milieu of cultural expectations that govern parent-child relations.

### **Demographic Factors**

While a wide range of factors have been highlighted as potential causes of CPVA, there is no consensus and research studies are often conflicting in this area. It is also beyond the scope of this thesis to explore the causes of CPVA. However, it is worthwhile to draw from existing knowledge on the relevant demographic factors associated to the phenomenon where this literature can be used to interpret Black maternal experiences.

### *Family*

The socioeconomic status of families and the onset of CPVA remains inconclusive, as data on the explanatory power of class is often contradictory. Some scholars argue that unemployment and poverty can exacerbate the frustration of youth at limited opportunities which could manifest as aggression and resentment towards parents (Cottrell and Monk, 2004: 1087). Condry and Miles observed that while unemployment and low socioeconomic status were a reality for some families, there were also parents affected by CPVA in their study who were highly skilled and well-paid professionals (2014: 268). Other studies note

the presence of extreme violence was increased in middle-class households (Cornell and Gelles, 1982; Agnew and Hugueley, 1989: 701; Pagani et al. 2004; Gallagher, 2004: 8).

Regarding family structure, clinical and youth justice studies indicate that young people displaying CPVA are more likely to come from families affected by divorce and separation, thus less likely to live with both biological parents (Kennedy et al. 2010; Routt and Anderson, 2011; Pagani et al. 2003). Single mothers are largely represented in clinical and justice samples and this may be because they are more likely to seek external assistance following CPVA due to limited resources available to cope with their child's behaviour (Simmons et al. 2018: 40; Baker, 2021). According to the Crime Survey of England and Wales, divorced, separated or solo parenting mothers are may have experienced intimate partner violence (ONS, 2019). Thus, the prevalence of CPVA within female-headed households may also be linked to previous exposure to intimate partner violence prior to parental separation (Baker, 2021 :31).

CPVA has been associated to childhood adversities such as witnessing violence in the home, whether in the form of corporal punishment or intimate partner violence caused by mother-to-father or father-to-mother (Pagani et al. 2004; 2009; Stewart et al. 2017; Ibabe et al. 2009; 2013; Lyons et al. 2015; Sasaki et al. 2021; Holt, 2022; Brennan et al. 2022; Nowakowski-Sims and Rowe, 2017; Nowakowski-Sims, 2019). Gallego et al. (2019) found that the probability of CPVA was 71% higher in young people who had experienced victimisation by their parents than non-victimised adolescents. Adverse childhood experiences and adult-initiated violence like child abuse were significantly correlated to CPVA (Nam et al. 2022; McRae et al. 2021; Gallego et al. 2019). These findings appear to have cross-cultural application as studies have confirmed this correlation in Korean and Spanish populations

alongside American samples (Calvete et al. 2015b; Nam et al. 2022; Margolin and Baucom, 2014). There is some indication that exposure to any form of violence, regardless of its origin, is a leading determinant to the onset of CPVA (Orue et al. 2011) as these experiences normalise violence as a form of conflict resolution (Carlson, 2000).

### *Age*

High rates of physically aggressive behaviour have been found to increase in children from 6 months of age and decline at 2 years old (Lorber et al. 2019; Naerde et al. 2014). Though CPVA can occur from as early as age five (Cottrell, 2001), a large proportion of existing research centres on adolescents aged between 12 and 16 (Ibabe and Bentler, 2016; Strom et al. 2014; Condry and Miles, 2014; Snyder and McCurley, 2008). In their longitudinal study of CPVA among Spanish boys, Calvete et al. (2020) found that in a sample of 712 boys, the peak age for the phenomenon was 13-15. CPVA occurs in early adolescence and though it does not cease at 18, there is evidence of a gradual decline with age (Calvete et al. 2020; Holt, 2013; Snyder and McCurley. 2008). Studies largely ignore abuse perpetrated by much younger children and those between 16 and 24, despite evidence to suggest that patterns of CPVA can change with age and with 10% of assaults caused by young adults towards parents (Simmons et al 2018: 34; Snyder and McCurley, 2008; Walsh and Krienert, 2007).

## **Gender and Motherhood**

### *Gender of Victims and Children*

Studies demonstrate that both male and female children use violence within the home (Holt, 2012; Ibabe and Bentler, 2016; Pagani et al. 2009; Calvete et al. 2015). However, there are gendered elements of CPVA identifiable from research. Associations can be made between gender and the type of abuse committed. Males are likely to use physical aggression (Cornell and Gelles, 1982), while females resort to verbal and psychological abuse (Ilabaca Baeza and Fiscella, 2021; Pagani et al. 2009; Calvete et al. 2015; Ibabe and Bentler, 2016; Agnew and Hugueley, 1989). In clinical and community samples, children using violence are overwhelmingly male (Walsh and Krienert, 2009; Calvete et al. 2013; Cornell and Gelles, 1982; Ibabe and Jaureguizar, 2010; Ulman and Straus, 2003; Hong et al. 2012). The gendered nature of CPVA is also pronounced in youth justice samples (Armstrong et al. 2018; Moulds et al. 2019; Moulds, 2019). Internationally, the percentage of male offender's ranges between 66% and 86% (Gallagher, 2004: 4; Harbin and Madden, 1979; Laurent and Derry, 1999; Condry and Miles, 2014: 264). In one study, 87% of reported cases concerned males using violence (Condry and Miles, 2014: 264-266).

In their systematic review of CPVA studies from 1957 to 2011, Aroca-Montolío et al. (2014) found the phenomenon had a higher rate of female instigation than other forms of violence. However, studies that rely on self-report surveys to measure interpersonal violence are limited and depending on methodology and sampling, the gendered portrayal of victimisation and abuse can be skewed (Holt, 2012b; Gallagher, 2008; Baker, 2021: 30). For instance, studies that compare parent reports to those of their children found that daughters over-reported their use of aggression while sons under-reported this behaviour (Boxer et al. 2009; Calvete et al. 2015; Baker, 2021: 30). There is a possibility parents easily identify

male-instigated aggression while minimising the behaviour of their daughters (Pagani et al. 2003; Charles, 1986).

Victim demographics are also gendered, with mothers five times more likely to be assaulted than fathers (Wilcox, 2012; Gallagher, 2004; Calvete et al. 2015; Pagani et al. 2003; Pagani et al. 2004; Edenborough et al. 2008). In a sample of 150 adolescent outpatients, Fawzi et al. (2013) found that the number of victimised mothers were four times the total number of fathers. Condry and Miles (2014) recorded that 77.5% of victims were females, with son-to-mother abuse accounting for 66.7% of all reported cases. Though there are studies which suggest fathers are more likely to experience physical violence, while mothers encounter more psychological and emotional harm (Jimenez-Gracia et al. 2020; Loinza et al. 2020; Pagani et al. 2009). However, several others confirm that among children of all age groups, violence was often directed towards mothers than fathers (Calvete et al. 2013; Ulman and Straus, 2003; Rutter, 2022). As such CPVA has been considered a gendered phenomenon (Condry and Miles, 2014) with feminist scholars arguing that it should come under broader field of violence against women (Edenborough et al. 2008).

### *Critical Review of Feminist literature on Motherhood*

Few studies have undertaken an empirical enquiry into how maternal identity frames and facilitates victimhood caused by the person a woman birthed and is expected to nurture. However, it is important to consider the wider social institution of motherhood (Rich, 1976) and examine how the role, status, responsibility and burden of motherhood enables the gendered dimension of CPVA. Following the rise of ‘mothering experts’ such as Bowlby and Robertson (1953) disseminating theories around maternal instinct and attachment in the 1950s, an intellectual interest and theoretical body of scholarship formed around maternity. Following the mainstream feminist movement of the 1970s, scholars in Euro-American nations began challenging the widely accepted ‘naturalisation’ of motherhood as the

biological and desired destiny of all women (Millet, 1970; Rich, 1977; 1996). They challenged Victorian constructions of the 'angel-wife-mother' with her maternal body presented a nurturing, life-giving and feminine, while society resisted the unclaimed body of the 'unmarried woman' as sensual, immoral, and impure (Millet, 1970; Rich 1977; 1996).

This feminist awakening in Western nations meant that the long-held semantic relationship between womanhood and motherhood and its centrality to the female identity was being challenged (Oakley, 1979; Dinnerstein, 1976; 1999; Chodorow, 1979; Chodorow and Contratto, 1982; Ruddick, 1982). Feminist maternal theorists argued that the emphasis placed on the biological and reproductive function of mothering as proof of womanhood, only served to advance the patriarchal capitalist aspirations of industrial societies which relegated women to the private and domestic sphere while allowing men retain control of resources in dominant public, and economic spheres (Oakley, 1979; Firestone, 1970; Millet, 1970; Rich, 1977). Their ideology presented motherhood as an 'institution' controlled and perpetuated by men and premised on the division of public-private spheres, which empowered the male-father to exist in public spheres reducing the female-mother to domestication in private-spheres (Butler, 1993; Glenn, 1994; Rich, 1996; Richardson, 1993; Gordon, 1990; Gittins, 1985).

### *Feminist Theorisations of CPVA*

Feminist literature is useful to our understanding of why mothers are overrepresented as victims of CPVA. Feminist scholars have shifted theorisations around the phenomenon away from individualistic factors towards exploring societal pathways grounded in sexism and gender inequality (Edenborough et al. 2008; Eckstein, 2004; Cottrell and Monk, 2004). Considering feminist theorisations of gendered power relations within family and society alongside maternal scholarship allows for an exploration of the structural influences that

shape family dynamics and render mothers vulnerable to violence and abuse from their children. When the governance of family life is underpinned by patriarchal notions that assign mothers as domestic workers in perpetual service of other family members while positioning fathers and sons as proxy rulers of the home, women can find themselves oppressed by abuses of this power. This is evident in the transfer of abuse that can occur when mothers who have experienced violence at the hand of male partners, begin to encounter abuse from their sons following paternal absence from the home for reasons relating to divorce, separation or abandonment (Eckstein, 2004; Daly and Nancarrow, 2010; Cottrell and Monk, 2004). It may be that with the role of patriarch now vacant, the son can now 'step up into his fathers' shoes' to inherit this position and power by virtue of his masculine 'birth right' (Holt, 2021).

Cottrell and Monk suggest that through various social processes, male youth learn that the control and domination of women, including their mothers, is acceptable (2004: 1082). Young men assuming such position of power is validated on a societal level as they are expected to take their socially ordained role as the natural leaders of the family and by extension the rightful leaders of the world (Holt, 2021). It may be that their unchallenged and socially-sanction positioning as rulers of the home, and by extension their mothers, can disrupt the conventional parent-child power dynamic, and in some cases lead to mothers experiencing CPVA. In instances where female children are abusive towards their mothers, Cottrell and Monk argue this may be rooted in their perception of their mothers as 'powerless' and 'weak' (2004: 1082). As such they use CPVA in an attempt to remove themselves from this passive image of femininity (Ibid).

### *Mother-blame and Self-blame*

Another contribution of feminist literature to our understanding of CPVA is in highlighting the gendered nature of self-blame among parents and the mother-blaming discourses that permeate society and services, discouraging mothers from disclosing abuse and seeking help. Like all forms of family abuse, CPVA is shrouded in shame, secrecy and stigma (Agnew and Huguley, 1989; Cottrell, 2001; Tew and Nixon, 2010; Holt and Retford, 2013; Baker, 2021: 18). The fear of judgment can make it difficult to disclose abuse even to family and friends (Condry et al. 2020) and parents can instinctively blame themselves for the abusive behaviour (Cottrell and Monk 2004: 1089). Holt and Retford describe the ‘double stigma’ caused by CPVA where parents are first stigmatised for parenting a child that exhibits abusive behaviour and then for experiencing violence and abuse in their homes (2013: 365). Parent blaming is predicated by ideologies of ‘paternal determinism’ which hold parents as responsible for the behaviour, outcome and deviances of their children (Lee et al. 2014; Eaton et al. 2016; 2019; Rutter, 2022). When a child’s behaviours fall outside the margins of what is socially acceptable and expected, narratives around blaming parents increase (Neophytou, 2004). According to Eaton et al. (2019) the ‘self-stigma’ parents experience combines self-blame, self-shame and negative self-beliefs.

However, the attribution of self-blame among parents is highly gendered. While mother-blaming followed many incidents of CPVA, some studies show that fathers were able to resist feeling like a bad parent (Wilcox et al. 2015: 6; Ambert, 1999; Cottrell and Monk, 2004; Holt, 2009:345; Bowers, 2002; Geiger and Fischer, 2005). In the words of one mother, her son became abusive because she was a pushover and did not wield enough discipline or authority when he was younger (Holt, 2009: 352). It is, therefore, unsurprising that Wilcox et al. found that services govern and intervene in family life through motherhood rather than fatherhood (2015: 6). Women are categorised as ‘bad mothers’ and blamed for the

deficiencies of their children (Ladd-Taylor and Umansky, 1997). There is also a long-standing custom of holding women responsible for youth offending and anti-social behaviour outside the home (Gelsthorpe, 1999: 230; Goldson and Jamieson, 2002; Burney and Gelsthorpe, 2008; Condry and Miles, 2012: 248; Hunter et al. 2010: 400-7; Peck et al. 2023). Examining how society constructs ‘good mothers’ and penalises women for falling short of this idealised standard is central to understanding maternal experiences of blame and stigma following abuse or violence from their children.

In Western nations, a ‘good mother’ is defined by intensive mothering ideologies that herald a maternal practice that is ‘child-centered’, ‘self-sacrificing’ and ‘all-absorbing’ (Arendell, 1999; Hays, 1996:8; Sutherland, 2010; Collins, 2021: 1; Li, 2022: 89). A commitment to self-sacrificing for one’s children, to act protectively and provide for them is encouraged to the extent of negatively impacting one’s own wellbeing and safety (Maher et al. 2021: 667; Ladd-Taylor, 2004; Caporael, 1999; Stewart, 2021; Rutter, 2022: 10). According to Ruddick, a woman’s adherence and compliance with intensive mothering practices are policed through ‘the gaze of others’ (1989:11). The standard of ‘good mothering’ serves as a tool of behavioural control for mothers, compelling them to invest their energies into striving towards this idealised maternity (Rich, 2021; Stewart, 2021; Singh, 2017). This hegemonic power of intensive mothering ideals perpetuates the privileges of the White, middle-class experience as the foundation for normal child development and the standard by which ‘all mothers’ are judged (Minnotte, 2023; Dow, 2019; Verduzco-Baker, 2017; Henderson et al. 2016: 513; Phoenix and Woollett, 1991: 21; Christian, 1994; Nguyen Phan, 2024: 35). The ideology of earlier studies on intensive mothering focused more on class as a mediator of experiences (Blum, 1999; Shome, 2011). Less theorised was how race and other structural factors like citizenship, age and ability framed diverse mothering priorities

and in so doing the motherhood of Black women was pathologised (Glenn, 1994; Litt, 2000; Hamilton, 2020; Minnotte, 2023).

As Black mothers are seen to practice outside the expectations of Western idealised intensive mothering, their maternal experiences are rife with mother-blame. Chapter 3 will explore the damaging, racialised tropes used to characterise their motherhood and exclude it from White motherhood. These include the ‘baby mama’, the ‘strong black woman’ and ‘the angry black matriarch’ (Elliot and Reid, 2016; McCormack, 2005). The chapter will detail how the racialised, classed, and gendered-controlling images of Black women as neglectful, emasculating and state-dependent create images of them as irresponsible and unfit to mother (Rigueur, 2021; Tyler, 2022: 53-54; Elliott and Reid, 2019; Roberts, 1993). However, here it is important to acknowledge that while feminist and maternal literature provides perspective on why mothers may overrepresent as victims of CPVA and highlights gendered dynamics of mother-blaming which can negatively affect help-seeking practices, this literature alone yields limited insight into the practices, priorities and experiences of Black mothers in Western nations and the factors shaping their relationships with their children. Any review of gendered power dynamics that excludes race, ethnicity, class and religion, fails to fully contextualise the complex lives of Black mothers, who are the subject inquiry of this thesis.

Maternity is not a universal experience shared, enjoyed and endured equally by all women (Arendell, 2000). Neither are gender power dynamics the only structural force that can shape family relationships nor influence maternal-victim experiences of abuse in the home (Ibid). Early feminist ideologisations and critiques of motherhood was a theoretical stance premised on an essentialised view of ‘womanhood’ that was pan-ethnic, pan-class and not a

product of historical and cultural context (Donath, 2015: 343). Being an off-shoot of mainstream feminism, ‘foundational’ maternal theory and scholarship was limited in making generalisations about male dominance towards *all women*. It essentialised gender relations, presenting *all women* as a single group, unaffected by ethnicity, race and class (Reynolds, 2005; Mohanty, 1988: 65; Mohanty, 2003: 110; Ramazanoglu, 1986: 84). The maternal experiences of Black African and Caribbean women are not solely shaped by their gender, but by the cumulative and intersecting reality of their race, ethnicity, class, migratory status and religion. To fulfil the research aims of this work, it is necessary to explore the nuanced meanings Black women ascribe to their mothering practice and the ways that differs to Western feminist conceptualisations of motherhood. The exploratory nature of this enquiry requires contextualising the narratives shared by the mothers within the wider trajectory of their past and present lives. This includes engaging with what it means to mother a Black child, as a Black woman living in the West.

## **The Centrality of Race in Maternal Identity and Practice**

### *Race in CPVA research*

At present, the role of race and ethnicity in shaping parent experiences of CPVA is yet to be considered within existing research. While an older study suggests no significant difference in perpetration rates between ethnic groups (Cornell and Gelles, 1982), some contemporary studies suggest that White and Northern European youth are more likely to instigate harm towards their parents than youth of other ethnic backgrounds (Lyons et al. 2015; Simmons et al. 2018:39; Agnew and Hugueley, 1989; Cazenave and Straus, 1979; Charles, 1986; Walsh and Krienert, 2009; Snyder and McCurley, 2008; Routt and Anderson, 2011; Hong et al. 2012). However, as these studies rely on police data, their findings may not duly reflect the prevalence of the abuse but rather the reporting practices of some White parents. As ethnic

groups are less likely to willingly engage with justice agencies due to long-standing mistrust of police and authority (Sharp and Atherton, 2007; Sharp and Johnson, 2009) it is likely their representation within police data sets cannot be upheld as an accurate account of prevalence. Moreover, many incidents of CPVA are likely to go unreported for fear that reporting to police or services will harm the family (Wilcox et al. 2015).

In this thesis, disaggregating parent experiences of CPVA requires engagement with the multi-layered and complex nature of Black maternal identity and acknowledging the gendered and racialised disadvantages that frame their livelihoods. By incorporating race and ethnicity into our understanding of CPVA, our comprehension of discourses around maternal guilt and mother-blame can be properly contextualised and our knowledge deepened on how the social identity of parents' can dictate their coping mechanisms and use of support available. To this end, this thesis applies an intersectional lens to its exploration of CPVA, attending to how intersecting gender, race, class, migration and religious identity influence the decision-making processes of Black mothers and form barriers to seeking formal and informal support. Though a universal definition of intersectionality does not exist, a contention to be explored in Chapter 3, it is generally understood as the ability to name social identities, as not mutually exclusive, but 'multidimensional', 'interlocking', 'culminative' and 'reciprocal' (Crenshaw, 1989; Crenshaw, 1991; Knapp, 2005; Nash, 2008; Hill-Collins, 2015). The concept was first coined in Kimberlé Crenshaw's seminal critique of identity politics in how it homogenised the female experience of male perpetrated violence by failing to acknowledge intragroup differences (1990: 1242).

When used as an analytical framework, 'intersectionality' enables research on Black female and maternal experiences to embed considerations of race, gender, class, alongside cultural

and sociohistorical factors into their discourses (Reynolds, 2005; Donath, 2015). For example, the use of intersectionality within gender-based violence research has highlighted the victimhood and survivorship of Black women (Hill-Collins, 2015) and exemplified how social categories held by victims can shape their subjective experiences of violence and determine their access to resources following the abuse (Knapp, 2005: 259). In this thesis, intersectionality is used as an interpretative tool and analytical framework towards two distinct purposes. Firstly, to understand how race, gender, class, migration and religion intersect to shape how Black women ‘reconceive motherhood’ and how experiences of racism frame how they nurture and socialise their children in ways that differ to White women (Story, 2014; Hill-Collins, 1994; Reynolds, 2005; Rodriguez, 2016). Building from this foundation, the second use of intersectionality will be to make sense of Black mothers’ accounts of abuse from their children, and to understand their disclosure, coping and helpseeking decisions thereafter.

### *Reconceiving Motherhood in Black communities*

Black families are culturally diverse and thus vary in child-rearing practices (Bernard and Gupta, 2008; Peters, 1988; Hill-Collins, 1999). The intra-ethnic and group diversity amongst Black women is important to acknowledge, though often going unrecognised (see Chapter 3). It is improbable to encompass every single Black woman’s experience and the meaning they personally ascribe to motherhood, as conceptualisations will invariably differ by culture, religion and country (Hill-Collins, 1990; Reynolds, 2020; Igwe, 2022). However, there are threads of commonality interweaving various Black communities in their perceptions of maternity. Collectivist cultural orientations play a significant role in family life across Black communities (Gatwiri and Anderson, 2021: 158). While early feminist scholars such as Ribbens (1994) conceptualised mothering as an ‘interacting relationship

between self/mother, family and child', intersectional mothering discourses reveal how Black women construct their sense of self and experience their individuality in relation to their community (Reynolds, 2005; de la Rey et al. 1997; Mama, 1995; Sudbury, 1998; Lewis, 2000; Hill-Collins, 1994).

Findings from several studies suggest Black mothers deeply believe the Afrocentric mindset that it takes a community to raise a child (Bryant et al. 2024; Reynolds, 2005; Goetz. 1993; Black Ballad, 2021). As such they adopt mothering practices that extend beyond the private realm of family by providing care and collective social responsibility to those whom they are not legally or biologically connected (Reynolds, 2005; Reynolds, 1999a; Hill-Collins, 1994: 47; Barrow, 1996). Rather than be considered an individualistic endeavour, child-rearing is a communal responsibility shared within the extended family network including aunts, uncles and distant relatives (Ofoha et al. 2019; Onwujuba et al. 2015:33; Heaton and Hirschl, 1999; Okpokiri, 2017). Extending beyond the realm of biological boundaries or nuclear family constructions, Black women practice 'non-traditional' forms of motherhood. A few of these mothering strategies will be outlined here. Shared mothering, also known as 'other mothering', is a practice adopted by low-income Black mothers to utilise multi-generational kinship networks in the provision of childcare (Stack and Burton, 1993; Stack, 1974; Rochelle, 1997; Lara-Villanueva, 2018). This mothering practice occurs where childless women or aunts, sisters, and grandmothers nurture children that are not their own so as to assist Black mothers who want to pursue employment (James, 1993; Rodriguez, 2016: 68; Reynolds, 2005; Olwig, 1999; Dodgson, 1984). In Reynolds' (2005) study of 40 Black British Caribbean families, she found the practice of 'child shifting' to be common. This is where parents shifted parental responsibility for their children to extended family

members and friends, either permanently or temporarily (Reynolds 2005: 38; Bauer and Thompson, 2006).

Black African women are also found to practice shared mothering as response to maternal economic migration (Hall and Posel, 2019). As such they engage in ‘transnational mothering’ where their children remained in home countries as they migrate in search of work opportunities (Hall and Posel, 2019; Madziva and Zontini, 2012; Reynolds, 2005; Barrow, 2008). Community mothering concerns the self-appointed role Black women have taken up to provide care through community projects and education programmes for Black children and other community members (Hill-Collins, 1994; Reynolds, 2005). These include organising Black Saturday schools, education programmes, mentoring schemes and social support groups (Mirza, 1997; Reynolds, 2005; 2006). While ‘activist mothering’ is the strategic involvement of Black mothers in social justice endeavours to improve the environments in which they rear their children and fight against the racial discrimination (Naples, 1992). For example, in her study on maternal activism in the UK, Cook found that mothers involved in the Black-led movement ‘Mothers against violence’ were not only ‘driven by the desire to give back’ but to ‘safeguard their children, future citizens of the community’ (2018; 2021: 362).

While Western feminist theorisations can position motherhood as an institution in service of patriarchy, within Black communities in Africa, the Caribbean and the diaspora, there is a long history of motherhood being revered. Hence why some African female scholars have struggled to fully embrace maternal scholarship due to its associations with ‘radical versions of western feminism’ (Gatwiri and McLaren, 2016: 267; Dosekun, 2007, Essof, 2001, Nzegwu, 2012, Mekgwe, 2008). In various Black communities the ‘mother role’ is an

important societal function and social identity that bestows dignity, power and privilege to Black women (Emecheta, 1979; Madunagu, 2008; Akujobi, 2011; Oyewumi, 2003; Jenkins, 2005: 49). Particularly, for Black women in Western nations like the US and the UK the 'core' of mothering is power, survival and identity (Hill-Collins, 1994; Reynolds, 2005). Through the concept of 'motherwork' Hill-Collins encapsulates the Black mothering ideology that 'individual survival, empowerment and identity requires group survival, empowerment and identity' (1994:199). Thus, the reproductive labour of Black women is linked to the survival, identity and empowerment of their children and communities (Ibid).

Despite these positive conceptualisations, it is important not to idealise the construction of motherhood and womanhood in Black communities, as motherhood can be experienced as a complex and paradoxical institution (Jenkins, 2005: 47; Hill-Collins, 1990; McMahon, 1995). On one hand motherhood is where Black women can experience self-definition, empowerment and become a voice and catalyst for social activism of their communities (Jenkins, 2005: 47; Hill-Collins, 1990: 118). However, it can also be a burdensome experience, exploitative and oppressive in the way to defines the worth of a woman by her reproductive abilities. While in Western states, women are claiming autonomy as to whether or not they choose to become mothers, and their identity as women remains unchallenged irrespective of their decision. However, this is not the case in Black communities in Africa and the diaspora. Due to social perceptions of children giving society its vitality, there are social, cultural, and religious perceptions that womanhood is validated through child-rearing and reproductive ability (Umeh, 1982: 39; Alameen-Shavers, 2019; Heaton and Hirschl, 1999; Devi, 2017: 38). The high value ascribed to marriage and maternity has been used to denote the quality of a woman and is crucial to her standing in some Black African

communities (Olayiwola and Olowonmi, 2013: 143; Davies, 1986; Evwierhoma, 2007: 318).

Following the logic that attaining motherhood bestows power and privileges on women, the reverse is also the case, where women without children are considered ‘failed women, a non-being’ (Wilson-Tagoe, 2017:18). These so-called ‘sterile women’ become caricatures, made to endure the vexation of infertility and perceived to be the ‘dead end of human life’ (Mbiti, 1970; Ngcobo, 1988; 1999; Akujobi, 2011). This demonstrates a clear ‘privileging of motherhood’ within Black communities which contrasts the ambivalence about motherhood that can exist in Western nations (Oyewumi, 2003: 13). By understanding the glorification and reverential symbolism of motherhood across various Black communities, we can hypothesise that CPVA is not only experienced as a highly stigmatised phenomenon but a cultural abomination within the moral and social standards of these communities. The reality of having their maternal aspirations frustrated by their child’s abusive behaviours is a stark contrast to the idealised standard on which motherhood is placed in their respective communities.

### *Mothering as a Black woman*

Racism, used as a form of governance in Western societies, constructs the ‘other’ (members of ethnic groups) as deviant and abnormal, while the dominant group remains universal and unquestioned (Hesse, 1997; Reynolds, 2005). By virtue of their racialised status as a cultural group, Black communities are marked by subordination and oppression (Reynolds, 2005). Experiences of deeply entrenched racism within healthcare systems have only reaffirmed a culture of distrust among Black women and signify that the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves and their children are not prioritised (Igwe, 2022). Even in the birthing of their children, Black women encounter negative and fatal experiences within the healthcare

system. Between the UK and US, they are four to five times more likely to die in childbirth compared to their white counterparts and in a heightened moment of vulnerability have their needs ignored (Knight et al. 2021; Howell, 2018; Oparah and Bonaparte, 2015). Following birth, the mothering practices and abilities of Black women are questioned, vilified, and viewed as dysfunctional through racist and exclusionary processes and systems (Reynolds, 2005; Glenn, 1994; Hill-Collins, 1994; Dove, 2002; Lara Villanueva, 2018; Charlton, 2014). Through the use of racialised stereotypes, the maternal identity of Black women endures symbolic attack. Chapter 3 engages a deeper discussion on the pathologised social construction of the ‘bad’ black mother (Charlton, 2014) through racial tropes such as The Baby Mama, The Strong Black Woman and The Angry Black Woman.

Black mothers are compelled to make complicated and contradictory choices as to whether to teach their children to assimilate dominant White cultures (in order to survive) or resist systems of racial oppression and domination (Reynolds, 2005; Higginbotham, 200; Hill-Collins, 1994). Reynolds (2005) conducted a study exploring the identity and experience of Black mothering among Caribbean heritage women in Britain. She found that a central aspect of their motherhood was developing ‘coping strategies’ to respond to experiences of racism in their own lives and assist their children in responding to racial discrimination. Four main strategies were identified. 1) *Psychological and Emotional Preparation*: Black mothers reared their children to expect racism but perceive it as a driving force to working harder than their White counterparts to ensure they attained their goals. 2) *Monitoring*: By closely observing their child’s education, Black mothers hoped to combat the racist practices within school systems. 3) *Celebrating Black diasporic Culture and Racial identity*: Black mothers worked to counter pathologised images of Black people and promote their child’s positive self-concept and racial identity through the provision of books, toys, and clubs that

celebrated Black history. 4) *Policing their children's activities in public spaces*: Worried about the visibility and scrutiny of ethnic groups in public spaces, Black mothers closely monitored their children within the public domain.

Similar strategies were found in a qualitative study by Elliot and Aseltine (2012). Drawing from 40 interviews with Black, Latina and White mothers, they found that race, gender and class had significant bearings on the 'protective carework' of mothers, particularly those raising young people in hostile environments. The protective carework of these mothers involved three strategies. 1) *Encouraging individual responsibility and making good choices as a means of staying safe*. 2) *Monitoring their child's activities and whereabouts as a critical component of good parenting*. 3) *Limiting their presence in public spaces by keeping children occupied with organised and extracurricular activities* (Elliot and Aseltine, 2012). Discussions on the realities of 'parenting while black' continue to develop across scholarship and public discourse (Lewis-Oduntan, 2020; Okpokiri, 2021a; 2021b; Reynolds, 2005; 2006). Within the field of social work, Okpokiri's study of first-generation Nigerian parents and child welfare in Britain, revealed the racialised experiences Black parents encounter within major service institutions including education, immigration and child welfare (Okpokiri, 2017; 2021).

Several parents reported their a fear of being penalised due to the cultural differences in parenting and 20 out of 25 parents recommended sending their children back home if their behaviour became 'unmanageable' (Okpokiri, 2017: 53). Not only did parents fear engaging with services, but they felt compelled to construct alternative methods to resolving the issues in their family and the behavioural concerns of their children (Okpokiri, 2021). Though few parents chose to 'fight' by challenging their racialised experiences in UK services, the

majority of Nigerian parents in her study said they would choose the ‘flight’ option. This included utilising ‘transpositional’ parenting strategies by sending their children to their native countries to be raised within extended family networks (Ibid, 437, 441). The study suggests that the fear of being penalised for cultural differences in parenting could become a barrier to disclosure and seeking help following CPVA. In Chapter 8, I will explore strategies used by Black mothers to resolve CPVA in ways that reduce possibility of exposure and limit involvement of state agencies, law enforcement or support services.

### **Informal and Formal Support following CPVA**

Victims of intimate partner violence are often encouraged to separate themselves from the source of abuse, however the decision to leave abusive situations does not easily apply to CPVA (Spangler and Brandl, 2007; Harbison, 2008). The impracticality of ‘divorcing from one’s child’ (Holt 2012: 95) and the implications of child abandonment should the relationship be severed are also major concerns for mothers (Wilcox 2012; Miles and Condry, 2015). Thus, the maternal role itself represents a ‘micro and macro barrier’ to mothers disclosing their abuse and seeking external support (Smith, 2020; Nguyen, 2024:32). Studies examining how parents seek support following CPVA reveal the interpersonal and institutional challenges they can encounter. Following disclosure to family and friends, some parents encountered a devaluing of their abuse experiences (Holt, 2011), were dismissed, met with disbelief (Edenborough et al. 2008) or exposed to community attitudes that blamed mothers for the behaviour of their children (Jackson and Mannix, 2004; Hastie, 1998).

Another reason it may be difficult for Black mothers to articulate CPVA even within their social and collective networks is linked to cultural expectations around authoritative

parenting. Within Black communities, some parents may rely on physical chastisement to control and challenge children's undesirable behaviour (Ofoha et al. 2019: 456). Several studies illustrate that these communities can have a negative perception of parents who fail to assert their authority by using physical methods of punishment (Ibid; Ajayi, 2013; Halpenny et al. 2010). When CPVA occurs and normative power dynamics shift in the family, Black mothers may feel humiliated by their predicament as their victimisation contradicts cultural expectations of authoritative maternity. Seeking help from informal support networks may be hindered by fear of judgment, being misunderstood or blamed. Black mothers who experience CPVA are not only at risk of being stigmatised when they engage in formal support pathways through services but may also navigate feelings of shame following disclosure within their racial, cultural and religious communities.

Parents have also pursued avenues of support through General Practitioners (GPs), Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Education Services, Youth Offending Services and the Police (Nguyen Phan, 2024: 148; Clarke et al. 2017: 1427). Institutional responses towards disclosures of CPVA have been considered inadequate and rife with the minimisation of incidents and mother-blaming discourses (Nguyen Phan, 2024: 147; Holt, 2013; Clarke et al. 2017: 1427; Paterson et al. 2002). Nguyen Phan's (2024) doctoral research explored the experiences of eleven mothers abused by their adult children in England and Wales. Mothers in her study reported receiving insufficient support from GP's who either dismissed their claims or instructed them to 'report to the police', only for the police to minimise their experiences, fail to take action or dismiss their case as 'a family parenting issue' (Nguyen Phan, 2024:148).

The mis-categorisation of CPVA as an issue of parental (in)capacity perpetuates gendered narratives around ‘good’ mothering and mother-blaming discourses which present mother as enablers of their child’s abusive behaviours (Nguyen Phan, 2024: 150; Paterson et al. 2002). Institutional dismissal of CPVA as a ‘personal issue’ rather than a social problem also contributes to the propagation of ‘generic’ parenting programmes as an appropriate resolution to parental experiences of harm, despite the argued impropriety and ineffectiveness of such approaches (Wilcox and Pooley, 2015; Bonnicksen, 2019; Holt and Lewis, 2021). These practices perpetuate fear about being blamed for their child’s behaviour and prevent mothers from disclosing their accounts of harm (Hunter et al. 2010).

Research suggests that due to the unique mother-child relationship, victims maintain a sense of legal, moral and parental responsibility for the child displaying abusive behaviour (Holt, 2012; Clarke et al. 2017; Miles and Condry, 2015). The maternal obligation to nurture and protect children who cause harm profoundly complicate disclosure and help-seeking following CPVA. Nguyen Phan (2024) found that maternal narratives of filial violence were shaped by the interconnectedness of the mother-child relationship. Her study suggests that the enduring maternal commitment to care framed the mother’s ‘justice goals’ and their helpseeking efforts (Nguyen Phan, 2024: 210). When engaging with services, mothers wanted professionals to acknowledge attend to the ‘continuity and interconnectedness’ that existed between themselves and their children (Ibid; Dillaway, 2006). Earlier studies also reflected the desire of parents to access professional support to ‘repair their relationship with their child’ (Clarke et al. 2017: 1427) or provide their children with adequate support (Edenborough et al. 2008). As such, some scholars have argued for a holistic approach to address family violence (Taylor et al. 2004) which requires supporting parents by working with both parent and child (Gallagher, 2004b).

As this study explores Black maternal experiences of CPVA, it is important to reflect on the impact race and ethnicity may have on the decision to disclose abuse and seek help. Studies reveal there is Black community-wide perception of health, social care, education and justice services as being institutional propagators of racial inequality and discrimination against Black children (Bledsoe et al. 2011; Okpokiri, 2017; Bywaters et al. 2017; Lammy, 2017; Essien and Wood, 2021; Wallace and Joseph-Salisbury, 2022; Davis, 2022). Black children are systematically pathologised as they navigate through education, health, social care and justice services (Wallace and Joseph, 2022). For Black women, the maternal proclivity to protect their child by refusing to disclose CPVA may also be grounded in an awareness of the racialisation and discrimination that can occur when Black families engage with services.

### *Ableism and Racism in Education and Mental Health Services*

Clinical studies explore the role of pathology, mental health disorders, learning disabilities, and other ontogenetic factors in the commission of CPVA. The phenomenon has been linked to experiences of depression (Laurent and Derry, 1999), borderline personality disorders (Perera, 2006), oppositional symptoms (Nock and Kazdin, 2002), tourette's syndrome (De Lange and Olivier, 2004), schizophrenia (Charles, 1986) and substance abuse (Cottrell and Monk, 2004). In one study, a review of referrals made to CAMHS highlighted the increasing need for neurodevelopmental assessment and support following displays of aggressive behaviour (Mitrofan et al. 2014). In another study, young people accessing forensic CAMHS were found to be aggressive and likely to use weapons (San Kuay et al. 2016). Studies also suggest that special education needs (SEN), autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders can be prevalent in young people who instigate CPVA (Adams et al. 2021; Bronsard et al. 2011; Farmer and Aman, 2011). For example, Kanne and Mazurek (2011) examined the prevalence and factors of aggression in 1,380 children and adolescents with autism spectrum

disorders. They found that during the course of their study, 56% of autistic children aged 4-17 displayed parent-directed aggression, while 68% instigated harmful action following the research period.

Parents can have mixed responses to receiving a formal diagnosis of mental illness or neurodiversity as factors underlying CPVA. Studies show that after mothers received such diagnoses, they reduced self-blame and increased empathy which strengthened their resolve to advocate for their child's access to professional treatment (Holt, 2012; Edenborough et al. 2008; Stewart et al. 2007). Contrastingly, when explanations for the abuse were rooted in the child's personality rather than diagnosis, there was increased likelihood that mothers internalised blame which affected attempts to seek help (Stewart et al. 2007:188). As my study applies an intersectional lens to the exploration of CPVA, it is important to consider how differently Black mothers may feel towards their child's mental health or neurodivergence diagnosis as a underlying factor of abuse and the impact of such diagnosis on their willingness to seek support.

Concerns around the pathologising of Black children through the diagnosis of SEN dates back to British educational policy from the 1940s to 1970s, which disproportionately categorised Black Caribbean pupils and those of other ethnic minority backgrounds as 'educationally subnormal' (Rampton, 1981; Mirza, 2009; Wallace and Joseph-Salisbury, 2022). The term popularised by the Education Act 1944 was used to categorise children with low academic attainment (Williams, 1965; The Underwood Report, 1955). Recent studies indicate that little has changed in the experience of Black children in schools (Demie, 2019; Wallace and Joseph-Salisbury, 2022; Warren et al. 2022; Ray, 2021). The connected struggle of ableism and racism frame the negative encounters Black children and their mothers experience, where labels of mental illness or even neurodiversity can be seen as stigmatising and intersecting with other processes of discrimination.

For Black parents and their children, the relationship between the under-diagnosis and over-diagnosis of SEN and neurodivergence remains challenging (Strand and Lindorff, 2021; Skiba et al. 2008). According to Marsha Martin, the founder of Black SEN Mamas, the under-training of teachers in cultural diversity and SEND allows for unconscious beliefs and bias to inform the way they perceive and respond to the Black child's behaviour within learning institutions. Consequently, some parents within the Black community perceive labels of mental illness, special education needs, or neurological differences as a justified means of excluding Black children and lowering expectations of their future prospects (Williams et al. 2017a; Bhopal, 2014). Receiving a diagnosis can be seen as likely to isolate a Black child, leading to further problems rather than assistance. Acknowledging these contentions is essential to understanding how Black mothers, who experience CPVA caused by children affected by mental illness or special needs, may choose to navigate their abuse and the increased likelihood they will engage in maternal advocacy despite being victims.

### *'Adultification' and Overrepresentation within Criminal Legal Systems*

The appropriateness of the criminal legal system as a response to CPVA is much contested. When a young person offends outside the home, parents contend with the 'moral dilemma' of protecting the child by keeping silent or reporting to the police as a responsible citizen (Holt, 2009: 351). There are examples of mothers who have reported their sons' offending outside the home. In 2008, Carol Saldinack reported her two sons for a violent attack against a man in Norfolk which left him blind in one eye. Her decision to report was to ensure she did not share in their guilt, and she was 'praised' by the police for being 'very brave' (BBC, 2008a). Also, in 2008, Wendy Hutchinson called the police after her teenage son disclosed that he had killed a father of four while intoxicated outside a pub in Lancashire (BBC, 2008b). Nonetheless, one mother divulged paying a 'heavy price' for reporting, as her son

began threatening her safety and life (BBC, 2008a). Both incidents refer to acts of violence committed outside the home.

However, when CPVA occurs, there is evidence of a pressure to maintain secrecy, with some mothers hiding their bruises and refusing to engage with the police officers to display family loyalty (Cottrell and Monk, 2004: 1089). Sam Lewis and colleagues (2023) conducted research in collaboration with two police forces in the North of England to explore police responses to 4,281 cases of CPVA that occurred between January and December 2018. They observed that despite parents and carers initiating reports, in many cases no further action was taken as they later withdrew their support (Lewis et al. 2023:1). The reasons police officers suggested for this behaviour was the fear of criminalising their child (Ibid, 3). However, in another study, where filial violence occurred in the form of elder abuse by adult sons and grandsons, Clarke et al. found that parents were willing to pursue formal justice processes but were discouraged by professionals (2016: 216). They argue that through ‘misplaced paternalism’ and ‘ageist serotyping’, statutory bodies and third sector agencies assumed that engaging with legal system would be harmful to the wellbeing and health of the older parent (Clarke et al. 2016: 216-217).

In cases where the person displaying abusive behaviours is a child or teenager, there is an increased reluctance to seek help through legal processes. Scholars, practitioners, and parents fear the increased criminalisation of children if incidents of CPVA are reported to criminal legal authorities (Miles and Condry, 2015: 1085; Holt, 2009; Wilcox, 2012; AFRUCA, 2020). When CPVA or other filial violence occurs, there is an inseparability of victim, offender, community and moreover maternal caregiving can feel disjointed from the adversarial criminal legal system which may advocate separation (Nguyen Phan, 2024: 210). However, for some parents there is no other alternative. In Holt’s (2009) study, two mothers reported their sons to the police for CPVA relating to criminal damage against their property.

One mother reasoned, ‘this would calm him down for when he gets older... I don’t want him growing up and ending in prison’ (Holt, 2009: 351). Their decision to report their children were thought to be in their best interest, ultimately protecting them in the long term. There is also some research to suggest that the support families affected by CPVA access through Youth Offending Services helps to confidentially introduce parents to other families from whom they can receive and offer empathetic support (Clarke et al. 2017: 1428). Notwithstanding, in their critical reflections on the constitution of CPVA in England and Wales, Holt and Lewis highlight the consequences of conflating the phenomenon with domestic violence and through legal interventions and processes of criminalisation producing a ‘child perpetrator’ and ‘adult victim’ (2021: 803).

While the fear of criminalising children by reporting CPVA can be experienced by all parents and careers (Lewis et al. 2023: 3), considering the overrepresentation of Black youth in the Criminal legal system (Lammy 2017), it is unlikely Black mothers will approach such processes in the same manner as White mothers. The adultification of Black children across legal, child welfare, mental health and education systems is important to consider here. Adultification is a form of racial prejudice in which adultlike characteristics are ascribed to Black children (Epstein et al. 2017; Hood, 2023). By treating children of minority groups as more ‘mature’ not only is their negative behaviour responded to more harshly, they are perceived as ‘street wise’ and ‘less innocent’ (NSPCC Learning 2022). Such service attitudes and preconceived ideas about Black children can negatively influence safeguarding responses and compromise the level of support and protection they receive (Davis, 2022; NSPCC Learning, 2022).

Within the criminal legal system, the Lammy review (2017) highlighted various disparities in the treatment and outcomes of Black, Asian and Minority ethnic individuals. From over policing and harsher sentencing decisions to the overrepresentation of BAME groups in

prison populations, a plethora studies observe racial discrimination throughout criminal legal processes (Veiga et al. 2023; Issac, 2020; Phillips and Bowling, 2017). It is therefore unsurprising that Black people question whether their human rights are as protected as their White counterparts (House of Commons, House of Lords, Joint Committee on Human Rights, 2020) and experience a growing distrust of the legal system (Lammy review, 2017: 6). In light of these troubling realities, Black mothers may avoid using formal support pathways through services.

### *Matriarchal Martyrdom: A Culture of Silence and Self-sacrifice*

The process of seeking support following any form of abuse is complex and shaped by factors relating to the social, cultural, familial and economic positioning of an individual (Liang et al. 2005). A victim's ability to access justice, safety and support will compound with existing structures of discrimination and oppression (Nguyen Phan, 2024: 31; Hill-Collins, 1991). By factoring the intersecting racial and gendered identity of Black mothers into this study's exploration of CPVA, the aim is to increase the likelihood of identifying additional barriers to disclosure and accessing support. In the UK, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women are disproportionately affected by domestic homicide (Siddiqui, 2018; Sisters for Change, 2019). However, the legacy of racism between marginalised groups and statutory justice agents, the hyper-surveillance of minority communities and their subsequent overrepresentation in the UK justice system has informed a reluctance within Black crime victims to report their victimisation (MacPherson, 1999; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Phillips and Bowling, 2003; Murphy, 2013; Lammy, 2017).

The 'heightened visibility' of Black women (Burman, 2004: 33) render them vulnerable to state intervention within their home, as the surveillance of family life occurs at intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, and class (Dorkenoo, 1994; Holt, 2012; BBC, 2015a; Wilcox, 2015). As custodians of their homes, Black women carry an unspoken moral obligation to

shield domestic spaces from wider British society (Parmar, 2014). Studies suggest that when violence occurs within the home, Black and ethnic women are subject to a cultural code of silence that imposes a duty to not only protect their families but indirectly their abusers (Burman et al. 2004; Gangoli et al. 2018). The culture of silence is particularly salient around disclosures to the police and legal agents.

Ngozi Fulani, founder of Sistah Space - a UK domestic abuse service for women of African heritage, shared in a BBC interview that within the Rastafarian community in East London, it is considered 'dishonour' for women to go to 'Babylon' (police) to report their partner as this is a system perceived to be destroying the community (Summers, 2020). Some ethnic groups encourage the practice of suffering silently and herald self-sacrifice as a virtue following domestic abuse (Dutton et al. 2000; Ayyub, 2000; Chow, 1992; Morash et al. 2000). Gleaning from this literature, it can be thought that despite their experiences of CPVA, it may remain a priority for Black mothers to limit state intervention within their homes and avoid feeling that they contribute to the racialisation and stigmatisation of Black children and men. In Chapter 6, I consider how, under the prescriptions of racial and cultural loyalty, the homeplace takes the form of an ad-hoc carceral institution, where some Black women surrender to 'matriarchal martyrdom' in exchange for maintaining equilibrium within family, community and race.

### *Coping strategies and Informal Support*

The use of formal support services and legal processes as a response to family violence is not often pursued by Black women for reasons reviewed above. However, there is research insight into the coping strategies they deploy to navigate life challenges and moments of

familial adversity including preterm birth, intimate partner violence, sexual assault or community violence (Jenkins, 2002; Long and Ullman, 2013; Parnell et al. 2022; Zakama et al. 2024). ‘Coping’ encapsulates individual efforts, behaviours and thought processes deployed to manage, resolve or alleviate stressful situations (Lazarus and Folkman, 1987; Greer, 2011; Algorani and Gupta, 2023). However, Utsey et al. (2000) held that existing measures of coping were grounded in an ‘ethnocentric European worldview’ where conceptualisations of stress failed to consider the distinctive life situations and histories of Black Americans and ignored the ‘culture-specific coping strategies’ of diverse populations (Utsey et al. 2000: 195). To redress this empirical gap, Utsey et al. (2000) developed the Africultural Coping Systems Inventory (ACSI) to measure the 30-item ‘culture-specific’ coping responses of Black Americans to race-related stress. The ACSI produced a four-factor model which entailed: collective coping, spiritual-centred coping, ritual-centred coping and cognitive/emotional debriefing (Ibid: 194). Since its formation, the ACSI has been validated through psychometric findings as a consistent response to stressors within African American, Caribbean and African populations (Utsey et al. 2000; 2004; Watson-singleton et al. 2020).

Multiple studies also suggest that for Black women, spiritually-centered coping and collective coping are most prominent (Mattis, 2002; Greer, 2011; Liao et al. 2020; Jones et al. 2021; Davis and McClain, 2023; Zakama et al. 2024). This can be linked to spiritual practices forming a crucial part of the personal and cultural identity of minoritised women (Thiara and Harrison, 2021; Femi-Ajao, 2018). Black women have been found to rely on religion, faith and spirituality to cope with and navigate life adversities such as race-related oppression, sexism, the stress of single parenting, physical and psychological illness, intimate partner violence and other challenging family dynamics (Dodson and Townsend-

Gikes, 1986; Utsey et al. 2000; Brodsky, 2000; McAdoo, 1995; Mattis, 2002; Braxton et al. 2007; Greer, 2011; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Edge, 2013; Harris, 2019; Watson-Singleton et al. 2020; Oyewuwo, 2020; Ned et al. 2022; Kent et al. 2023; Karaba, 2024). Alongside individualised spiritual practices like rituals, prayers and meditations, Black mothers may also prioritise informal support grounded in ‘Afrocentric’ values that emphasise seeking guidance from elders and community leaders (Greer, 2011; Mattis, 2002; Abrams, 2004; Utsey et al. 2000). Chapter 8 will illustrate how these findings are relevant to understanding how Black mothers affected by CPVA rely on collective and spiritual-centred coping practices to navigate the phenomenon and avoid engagement with formal support services.

## **Conclusion**

Over the last several decades, CPVA has been recognised as a social problem by academics, practitioners, and policymakers (Holt, 2016). In this chapter, a case is made for the need to empirically explore how families of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds experience this family violence. Without such consideration, the literature on CPVA may unintentionally project a false sense of homogeneity across parent experiences. This chapter critically reviewed feminist literature on the institution of motherhood, reflecting on how this scholarship aids our understanding of maternal overrepresentation in victim demographic of CPVA. While acknowledging the contributions of feminist literature, it has also challenged the universality of motherhood (Arendell, 2000). This chapter has stated the need to disaggregate Black maternal experiences of CPVA by centring race, gender, religion, migration and class in their mothering practices and to consider how these social identities shape their priorities for help-seeking following abuse. To this end, the chapter identified the racial and cultural scripts that guide the practice of Black motherhood and recognised the high cultural premium placed on maternity across African, American or

Caribbean communities as essential to understanding how they may navigate CPVA within their collective networks.

It also highlights the realities of mothering as a Black woman and raising children racialised by society. Though the criminalisation of Black youth and the pathologisation of Black motherhood are often considered separate issues (Elliot and Reid, 2019), this chapter suggests how these social realities traverse when CPVA occurs within Black families. It reviews literature on the legacy of racism between marginalised groups and services, the hyper-surveillance of minority communities and how their overrepresentation in criminal legal systems discourage Black victims of crime from reporting their victimisation. This thesis represents a shift away from the homogenising of parental experiences, as it is the first to explore CPVA from a distinctively Black maternal perspective. By centring the narrative accounts of Black African and Caribbean mother-victims, intervening mother-friends and professionals, this thesis will examine how the realities of race, gender, culture and religion intersect to differentiate maternal experiences of victimhood. Ultimately, it aims to contribute knowledge towards understanding the diversity of victim experiences and coping responses to CPVA.

## **THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND ANALYTICAL APPROACH**

### **Introduction**

Research on this sub-field of family violence, though rapidly developing, is yet to consider the diversity of experiences of those impacted by CPVA (Baker and Bonnick, 2021). By centring mothers of African and Caribbean descent as its subject inquiry, this thesis is the first academic exploration of the phenomenon from a lens that is distinctively Black and maternal. Due to the exploratory and experiential nature of this qualitative enquiry, it is not a prerequisite to embark on the empirical project with a specific theory or premise (Potter, 2009: 14). The theoretical framework and methodological approach of this study intentionally remains open-minded and open-ended to accurately recount and examine the personal narratives of Black mothers who have endured abuse, violence and aggression from their children. In order to fulfil the aims of this research project, the interpretation and analysis of data will be guided by analytical concepts and frameworks grounded in Black feminist epistemologies of motherhood and womanhood. As motherhood is not a universal experience but one shaped by the structural forces of racism, sexism and classism, this chapter will highlight and hypothesize how scholarly tools emerging from Black feminist thought can assist in contextualising the lived experiences of Black mothers.

This chapter is structured as follows. It opens by introducing Black feminist epistemologies of motherhood as emanating from Black women in Euro-American states who repurposed their marginalised positions as ‘other’ to actively construct their own stories and challenge negative discourses around Black motherhood. This section includes a discussion on ‘Intersectionality’ as an analytical tool and framework in transforming women’s studies by spotlighting the multiplicity of social identity and the intersecting disadvantage marking the

lives of Black women (McCall, 2005). It will also examine with the limitations of using intersectionality in empirical research and addresses criticisms that *Black feminism* ironically advances the essentialisation of womanhood as it presupposes that *Blackness* is a monolithic universal experience (Reynolds, 2005). While duly noting these critiques, a justification is provided for why this research project maintains its focus on ‘Black’ motherhood despite the manifold intra-ethnic differences, diverse regions, countries and islands encapsulated in the African and Caribbean experience.

In the second section, a Black epistemological reworking of Stigma as a sociological concept is advanced as essential to understanding the racialised undertones of maternal stigmatisation (Tyler, 2018; 2020; Allen and Taylor, 2012). This section outlines the way Black motherhood is stigmatised through racialised and prejudicial tropes that perpetuate the myth of the ‘bad Black mother’ (Charlton, 2014). Here, the ‘Baby Mama’, ‘Strong Black Woman’ and ‘Angry Black woman’ tropes are given special consideration and theorised as barriers to accessing formal and informal support. The final section acknowledges the racialised context in which Black African and Caribbean women raise their children while in Western states. Although the criminalization of Black youth and the stigmatisation of Black parenting (read motherhood) are often examined as separate problems, this section highlights how these experiences form an interconnected struggle particularly when CPVA occurs.

## **Black Feminist Thought on Motherhood**

In order to fully comprehend the lived experiences of Black women mothering in England, it is important to acknowledge the structural realities of racism. Failing to engage with the structural realities of racism within maternal discourses will limit theoretical attempts to understand Black maternal victimisation and the decisions around their disclosure and helpseeking following CPVA. Early feminist and maternal theory held limited relevance to the womanhood and motherhood practiced within diverse communities due to its failure to incorporate ethnicity, race, class, religion and national identity into its theoretical frameworks (Hill-Collins, 1990; 1994; 2000; Dill, 1988; Reynolds, 2005). It normalised the experiences of White, Western and middle-class women and excluded those belonging to other racial and class groups (Reynolds, 2005; Amos and Parmar, 1984; Brah et al. 1999; Mirza, 1992; Afshar and Maynard, 1994). Moreover, by emphasising sameness and sisterhood, early feminist maternal theory did not consider how differently women were marked by ‘experiences of oppression which then shaped their priorities of transformation’ (Ramazanoglu, 1986: 84).

Black feminist scholars from Africa and its diaspora have argued that the focus on patriarchy as the sole cause of gender inequality within early feminist and maternal theory, excludes the ‘structural dominance’ White women exercised over Black and other ethnic women and conceals their collusion with men to subordinate Black and indigenous women. (Hill-Collins, 1990; Roberts, 1997; Reynolds, 2005; Romero, 2013; Crenshaw, 2013; Crawford, 2018). To illustrate the falsehood of ‘universal’ feminism against the realities of race, class and colonialism, Nkiru Nzegwu penned a poem titled ‘*sisterarchy*’ [sister-patriarchy]. Her literary work depicts, with irony, the enthusiasm of a White ‘madam’ celebrating her shared sisterhood with her kneeling African maid, while simultaneously instructing to her to scrub

the floor (Oyewumi, 2003; Uwechia, 2011). Although this is a fictional illustration, there are examples of the exploitation of Black and Hispanic women through the provision of cheap labour and domestic duties to White middle class mothers, enabling their entry into professional spheres and paid occupation (Hill-Collins, 1990; Roberts, 1997; Reynolds, 2005; Romero, 2013; Crawford, 2018). As Oyewumi argues, there is an implied hypocrisy in White women and mothers who advocate for solidarity among ‘all women’ while simultaneously exercising their class and race privilege over non-white women (2003: 4).

By factoring race, ethnicity and class into feminist theorisations, the structural factors that institutionalise divisions among women become more apparent, and the false solidarity of ‘sisterhood’ can be challenged (Reynolds, 2005). Tracey Reynolds, a Black British scholar writing on the constructions of mothering, observes that due to the marginalised position Black and indigenous mothers occupy in society, historic and contemporary Western ideologies on motherhood are dismissive towards the social and cultural value inherent in their parenting practices (Reynolds, 2005). Scholars argue there is a denial of the existence of Black mothering except in reference to its deviation from the idealised maternal practices of the White majority and for its production of teen-motherhood, juvenile delinquency and matrifocal households (Reynold, 2005; Lara Villanueva, 2018; Dei, 2018).

Nevertheless, as Stuart Hall observed, disenfranchised peoples have reclaimed their ‘othered’ status as a new politics of resistance (1992). In the case of mothering discourses, Black feminist scholars in Euro-American states have re-examined their allotted place across the margins of gender, race and class, and used their marginalised position as ‘other’ to actively construct their own stories, create new dialogue around motherhood, intellectualise the lived experiences of Black women and challenge negative discourses around their

maternity (Mirza, 1997: 4; Reynolds, 2005). One example of how Black feminist scholars have re-interpreted mothering is evident in bell hooks' re-conceptualisation of private domesticity and the homeplace as a site of resistance for Black women and not one of domestication and subjugation. Within Western feminism, the delegation of women to the 'homeplace' is largely seen as sexist and subordinating women. However, for Black communities, the construction of the homeplace holds a different meaning and an empowering political dimension. While White middle-class mothers saw their oppression as linked to their confinement to the domestic and private spheres of the home, historically Black mothers were not afforded such experiences. Instead, they were made to work outside the home, living out their public lives in service of White people, whether by cleaning, washing, or caring for their children among other domestic duties (bell hooks, 1990).

Angela Davis, writing on the role of Black women within enslaved communities, recognised that during enslavement the work of nurturing and attending to the needs of Black children and men, even to those outside their immediate family, was the 'only labour...that could not be claimed by White slave owners and oppressors' (Davis, 1971: 5). For Black families existing in Western societies and a colonized world, the 'homeplace' holds immense value and symbolised a refuge and haven from racism and white hatred, and a special domain of warmth, comfort and shelter (bell hooks, 1990: 382-383). It is where, against the racist domination, poverty and deprivation that came with existing in White, Western societies, Black mothers restored the dignity of their children and men and through nurturing, hoped to heal wounds inflicted by racism (Ibid, 384). Though gendered power dynamics can contribute to the subordination of mothers, the mothering experiences of Black women cannot be disconnected from the inequities that mark their lives by virtue of their intersecting identities. Considering its aim to explore Black maternal experiences of CPVA and

understand the factors that frame and facilitate their choice of coping mechanisms and help-seeking behaviour, this thesis must attend to the realities of raising children who face racialisation and criminalisation in Western societies.

### **Intersectionality: An Analytical Framework**

The term 'Black feminism' is commonly associated to freedom projects around the African American woman's experience and abolitionist movement (Rodriguez et al. 2015). Black American feminism was the originator of the intersectional analytical framework, through which the role of race, gender, class, alongside cultural and sociohistorical factors can be incorporated into discourses around Black female experiences (Reynolds, 2005; Donath, 2015). Intersectionality has been hailed as ushering in a radical and important theoretical transformation to women's studies and related fields, and its popularity is connected to the spotlight it places on the multiplicity of social identity and the erasure of social groups on the fringes of society (McCall, 2005: 1771). In recognising how multiple systems of oppression (i.e sexism and racism) create unique experiences of disadvantage, intersectionality serves as a tool for 'theorizing oppression' (Nash, 2008: 1). Moreover, methodologically speaking, an intersectional approach is well suited to qualitative research which lends itself to an in-depth investigation of the complexities of individuals' social lives (McCall, 2005; Mantovani and Thomas, 2014: 48).

Though a universal definition of intersectionality does not exist, a contention to be explored later, it is generally understood as the ability to name social identities as not mutually exclusive, but 'multidimensional', 'interlocking', 'culminative' and 'reciprocal' (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991; Knapp, 2005; Nash, 2008; Hill-Collins, 2015). The concept was first coined in Kimberlé Crenshaw's seminal critique of identity politics in how it homogenised the female

experience of male perpetrated violence by failing to acknowledge intragroup differences (1990: 1242). Crenshaw argued that in operating as distinct and exclusive social movements, feminist and anti-racist movements displayed indifference to how sexism and racism intersect in the lives of Black women (Crenshaw, 1991: 1242). However, the manifestation of intersectionality precedes Crenshaw's coinage, and dates back to the early 80s with Black female social actors operating within grassroot and community activism (Hill-Collins, 2015). As such, intersectionality's 'birthplace' is activism and social movement as demonstrated through earlier generations of Black feminist work through Sojourner Truth, Frances Beal and Anna Julia Cooper (Nash, 2019: 42). The foundations of intersectional analysis were set by these 'interpretative communities' who mobilized its resources for social action, knowing how the multiplicity of their social identities negatively shaped their lived experiences (Hill-Collins, 2015: 8).

In empirical enquiry, intersectionality advances that the interconnected identities of individuals be central to any analysis (Potter, 2015). When used as an analytical framework, intersectionality has demonstrated strength in shaping thoughts around issues concerning violence against women and girls (VAWG) and particularly enhancing our understanding of the victimhood and survivorship of Black women following domestic abuse (Hill-Collins, 2015). Potter deployed a feminist intersectional criminology in her study, *Battle Cries: Black Women and Intimate Partner Abuse* (2008). Her exploration of Black women as victims of crime entailed considerations of their race, ethnicity, and economic status (Potter, 2008: 15). Potter's intersectional analysis used Black feminist criminology to explore and explain how Black women interpreted their abuse. Her findings suggest that their perception of their abuse was shaped by the spheres of social structural oppression, Black community/culture, familial relations, and their social categories (Ibid). She noted that the

devaluation of Black women in American society shaped how the women responded to their abusers, their coping mechanisms, and access to available resources (Potter 2008). Similarly, in Ritchie's *Arrested justice*, Black women were found to be at heightened risk of abuse including battering, sexual harassment, stalking, rape and incest. However, their race and class identity, linked to their disadvantaged position in society, made their victimhood invisible (2012:18). Both studies indicate that the social categories held by victims can intersect to shape their subjective experiences of violence and abuse and determine their access to the resources needed to navigate abusive situations.

### **Limitations of Intersectionality**

From its origins in Black American feminism, intersectionality has 'travelled' throughout the Academy and beyond and is now a tool in the global struggle against oppression (Knapp, 2005). As Carbado observed, intersectionality has crossed 'trans-demographic terrains' as it is called upon by scholars, lawyers, politicians and activists (2013: 811). Although hailed as one of Black feminism's significant contribution to theoretical feminist frameworks, intersectionality has been challenged for its critical limits. The 'definitional fluidity' of intersectionality creates a dilemma as the scope of its proposed function continues to have different meaning (Hill-Collins, 2015: 1; Parmar, 2017). Hill-Collins observed that the scholarly perception of intersectionality varies as widely as the scholars themselves (2015: 13). To some, intersectionality is a *concept* that travels across geographical and scholarly borders (Knapp, 2005; Potter, 2015). While others engage with intersectionality as a *perspective* (Browne and Misra 2003), an *analytical framework* (Yuval-Davis, 2006; Nash, 2008; Cho et al. 2013), an *empirical research paradigm* (Hancock, 2007), a *knowledge project* (Hill-Collins, 2015), or a *heuristic device* or *theory* (Mirza, 2015: 58; Yuval-Davis, 2012). However, the multi-dimensional nature of intersectionality speaks to its malleability

as an interpretative frame that lends itself to various methodologies, rather than existing as fixed body of knowledge (Hill-Collins, 2015).

In this work, I will be using intersectionality as an interpretative tool and analytical framework to make sense of Black mothers' accounts of abuse from their children, and to understand their disclosure, coping and helpseeking decisions thereafter. Black feminist scholars have utilised intersectionality to 'reconceive motherhood' and its meaning to Black women living in diverse contexts (Story, 2014; Hill-Collins, 1994). As Rodriguez notes, the intersection of race, gender and class are central theoretical frameworks to understanding Black motherhood (2016: 32). Racial identity informs not only parent-child relations, but related to this thesis, parental responses to abuse. By adopting an intersectional approach to examining Black maternal experiences of CPVA, I am locating both mother and child in 'the context of their real lives' (Guidroz and Berger, 2009: 1). Using an intersectional analytic framework to understand maternal experiences also aids the examination of how race, and experiences of racism, frame how Black women nurture and socialise their children in ways that differ from White women (Reynolds, 2005).

### *Challenges with 'using' Intersectionality*

There is a disparity between how intersectionality is used within and beyond the Academy. Knapp argues that the fame and speedy travels of the concept is powered by its ability to validate its users by bestowing upon them a badge of 'political correctness' or proof of their 'vogueish knowledge' (2005: 254-255). However, going beyond engaging with intersectionality as a self-branding exercise will require distinctions being made between the temporal structures of 'mentioning' and actually 'using' intersectionality (Ibid: 254). While many scholars *mention* intersectionality, it is unclear whether they actually *do* research from an intersectional standpoint (Knapp, 2005: 254; Derrida, 1990: 75). In their analysis of

VAWG research and policy that purports to adopt an intersectional standpoint, Strid et al. observed the mere *naming* of an inequality to be the frailest recognition of intersectionality (2013: 559, 565). While they deemed *naming* the first step, they asserted that there must be progression towards the naming of inequalities as intersecting, which requires consideration of structural realities as well as individual factors (Ibid). The usefulness of intersectionality does not reside in ‘lip service’ or its mere mention in a paper (Cho et al. 2013). However, because no clear methodological approaches or guidelines exist to its use, the practical use and implementation of intersectionality remains a challenge.

### *Epistemological ambiguity*

The fluid definition of intersectionality generates some epistemological ambiguity that leads to questions about its substantive function (Hill-Collins, 2015; Knapp, 2005). Unanswered ontological questions abound as to how many social identities are to be considered in an empirical enquiry and in what combination (Yuval-Davis, 2006; Mirza, 2015: 59). For instance, Crenshaw centred her use of intersectionality on gender and race (1989; 1990). Other scholars assert that a ‘trilogy of oppression’ is central to analysis and thus the ‘gender-race-class’ triad should be prioritised (Knapp, 2005: 253), while others contend that sexuality must be considered as interlocking within oppressive systems (Nash, 2008: 9; Hill-Collins, 2015: 8). Naturally, the subjective inclination of researchers towards some inequalities will result in favouritism of some to the exclusion of others. Bredström (2006) argues that this risks the production of research that waivers in analytical soundness. The danger of subjectively selecting and excluding social categories also risks perpetuating the ‘myth of homogeneity’ within certain groups (Nash, 2008: 12) which counters Crenshaw’s initial presentation of intersectionality as a tool to explore intra-group differences (1989).

### *Addressing The 'Black' Monolith*

Through 'collective coalitions' (Mohanty, 1988; 2005), 'conscious coalitions' (Mirza, 1997) and a 'politics of solidarity' (Brah, 1992) ethnic and racial groups with shared histories of imperialism, colonialism and slavery, have mobilised against their invisibility in discourses and their structural marginalisation through racism (Anthias and Yuval-Davies, 1992; Brah, 1992; Sudbury, 1998). While speaking with one singular voice has advanced the power of individual groups, otherwise marginalised by their structural position, it has also caused the essentialisation of diverse ethnic groups. In the context of Black womanhood, concerns have been expressed about the authenticity of *Black feminism*, which has been critiqued for ironically contributing to that which it seeks to challenge - the essentialisation of womanhood (Reynolds, 2005; Brah, 1992). The idea of a *Black feminism* presupposes that *Blackness* is a monolithic, universal experience. Ogunyemi (1985) observes that the construction of a 'sisterhood of struggle' even among Black women in a global fight against 'Euro-American patriarchy' has contributed to a neglect of intra-ethnic or intra-racial difference. As such, scholars and activists from Global South nations and those in European countries have questioned the utility of 'Black feminism' outside of the African American experience (Ogunyemi, 1985; Oyewumi, 2003; Rodriguez et al. 2016).

Black feminism has been critiqued as essentialising Black women by failing to address 'African historical and cultural context', nor accounting for the cultural socialisation of African and Caribbean women on the continent and in the diaspora (Kolawole, 2002: 97). As Reynolds (2005) observes, research that employs intersectional or Black feminist approaches must factor into its empirical enquiry the difference and structural variations that exist among Black women, with specific consideration of the role of ethnicity and culture, class, migration, among many others. As such, Black feminists and those seeking to

understand the experiences of African and Caribbean women must incorporate into their theoretical frame, where relevant, the history of the continent (the role of colonization and the origins of patriarchy) alongside the cultural meanings and values ascribed to womanhood and maternity (Gatwiri and McLaren, 2016; Nzegwu, 2012; Igbelina-Igbokwe, 2013). The concepts of patriarchy, marriage, and family must be placed within ‘local, cultural and historical contexts’ (Mohanty, 1988: 67-75).

### *Why ‘Black’ Motherhood?*

In the UK, the term ‘BAME’ (an acronym meant to stand for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) has been critiqued as an outdated way of ‘othering’ together individuals of diverse backgrounds (Fakim and Macaulay, 2020, Okolosie et al. 2015). Some argue that these ‘lazy’ broad-brush terms attempt to tidy away the complexity of heterogeneity, hiding the diversity between Britain’s minorities and lumping together those, whose main shared characteristic is being non-white, into a ‘singular or homogenous ethnic identity’ (Parris, 2016; Malik et al. 2021; Law Society 2023). Though the category ‘Black’ is used in this thesis, doing so is not an attempt to lump the voices of mother-participants into one monolithic maternal identity or experience. Rather, I make clear that in using ‘Black’, I centre my attention on the experience of African and Caribbean heritage women and thus, this study does not consider non-white women who identify as politically Black for mobilisation and solidarity purposes.

Still, I acknowledge that the use of ‘Black’ in this thesis may present as an attempt to mesh together African and Caribbean maternal experiences. However, both locations host a diversity of regions, countries and islands, each with its own cultures and tribes. Thus, it is not the aim of this thesis to ignore these intra-racial and intra-ethnic differences. Rather, there is pressing need within Black mothering discourses to go beyond a reliance on the

aesthetic representations of Blackness to interrogate how differences in ethnicity, culture, class and religion can distinguish Black maternal experiences. Despite recognising the dangers of perpetuating a Black monolithic experience of motherhood, I maintain using the term 'Black' in this thesis to acknowledge how mothers participating in this study navigate England and Wales as a visibly Black ethnic group. While the nuances of culture, nationality, and religion may exist and ought to be factored into understanding each mother's experience, the societal perception of these mothers and response to them as Black women is not a moot point. Thus, when it comes to exploring Black maternal experiences of CPVA and the decisions framing their disclosure and help-seeking behaviours, this thesis will combine considerations of the individual nuances of their identities with the structural implications of their Blackness.

It is also apparent, that while some African or Caribbean women may not feel the weight of their racial identity while in their country of origin, they 'become black' and experience racialization as 'other' after migrating and becoming part of the diaspora (Wright, 2004). Therefore, this thesis must explore the consequences of African-Caribbean mothers becoming 'Black' in England and Wales and how their new racial identity as ethnic minority fits within Western expectations of motherhood. Moreover, when CPVA occurs, what bearings do these new racial considerations have on how African and Caribbean mothers respond, disclose, and navigate formal and informal support? Though these questions are not yet considered in the literature, they are important deliberations that frame this research study. I argue that an investigation of these questions is essential for the field of CPVA to account for diverse experiences of motherhood, victimisation, and crime.

Though drawing upon Black feminist epistemologies around mothering are crucial in understanding Black maternal experiences, I am aware that these theorisations are inspired largely by the African American experience and conceptualisation of mothering. In undertaking this research project, I attempt to balance the need to understand collective identity among Black mothers, while also recognising and incorporating into my analysis the diversity that exists among them and the implication of intra-ethnic differences on their coping mechanisms, and disclosure practices. As the mothers participating in this research project are of African and Caribbean descent, there is need to interrogate cultural nuances and intra-ethnic differences that exist between Black women and shape how they mother and possibly experience CPVA. As a result, I draw into the intersectional framework of this thesis, categories of race, ethnicity, religion, class and migration status to acknowledge and contextualise the collective lived experiences and realities of Black mother-victims and their individual differences.

### **The Power of Stigma**

Exploring the theory around stigma as a sociological concept can illuminate how the pathologisation of Black motherhood occurs in Western societies and how their mothering practices are racially stigmatised as deficient through the utilisation of tropes, myths and stereotypes. Stigma is defined by the *Oxford Dictionary of Psychology* as a ‘mark of disgrace associated with a person, a personal quality, or personal circumstance; a mark on the skin...’ (Colman, 2008). However, Goffman’s ground-breaking conceptualisation of stigma as a sociological concept, idea and practice, redefined public and academic understanding of its impact. Three overarching claims were evident in his initial conceptualisation. The first is that stigma is a ‘perspective’ created in social contexts. Second, people employ strategies of

shame and identity management to limit the devastating consequences of being socially stigmatised. Third, stigma functions as a form of social control (Goffman, 1963).

Goffman also identified three types of stigma: 1) associated with mental illness, 2) physical deformation and 3) identification with a particular social identity i.e race, ethnicity, religion or ideology. Goffman's (1963) seminal work on stigma and the management of spoiled identity is useful to some extent in explaining the emotional and psychological effects CPVA may have on 'spoiling' a woman's maternal identity. Mothers harmed by their children endure a spoilage of their maternal identity due to idealised socio-cultural constructions around motherhood which fuel mother-blaming discourses around the decisions, behaviour and offences of children (Hunter et al. 2010; Nguyen-Phan, 2024; Peck et al. 2023). As a result, these mothers could be said to experience a 'double' stigma: first for parenting a problematic child and secondly for being a victim of family violence (Holt and Retford, 2013). However, Goffman's original conceptualisation – now over sixty years old - does not sufficiently address the pre-existing, and unconcealable stigmatisation associated to Black bodies.

The third type of stigma outlined by Goffman is caused by association to a particular social identity. He recognised that while in some cases the stigmatised can aspire and attempt to conceal their stigmatised identities, there are those whose visibly bear the 'mark' of their stigma, such as racialised minorities, who have no choice but to function visibly as 'stigmatised individuals' (Goffman, 1963; Tyler and Slater, 2018). However, besides the mere acknowledgement of unconcealable stigmatisation caused by racism, Goffman's initial conceptualisation of stigma remained largely apolitical and entirely individualistic in its focus (Tyler and Slater, 2018). Despite writing at a time where overt racial discrimination

was an everyday occurrence for Black people, Imogen Tyler observes that Goffman's conceptualisation did not account for how stigma emanating from social identities is structured through power (2018; Tyler, 2020). However, DuBois, writing decades before Goffman, readily acknowledged that 'being Black' is to be 'badged by colour' and 'marked out for discrimination and insult' (DuBois, 1940/2007: 59, 126; Tyler, 2018). Though DuBois was speaking specifically in the American context and at a time of heightened racial segregation, this 'badge' of Blackness is visibly worn by Black people navigating contemporary Western societies as 'racialised minorities'.

In the decades following Goffman's original work, sociological research and theorisation around stigma has grown exponentially (Tyler, 2018; Hinshaw, 2009: 25). The modern reworkings of stigma prove useful to this project in their shift away from the individualistic focus of stigma to explore the macro-level factors driving stigma processes (Link and Phelan, 2014: 30; Link et al. 2014; Tyler 2020). It is important to highlight that stigma does not inherently emanate from the bodies of the stigmatised (Tyler and Slater, 2018; 2020). Tyler argues that stigma is not the property of any particular person, rather it is manufactured in social settings, where stigmatisation occurs through interactions and exchanges with those depicted as normal, the majority or the standard (Tyler, 2020). It is by their engagement with non-stigmatised persons that people acquire stigma through overt discrimination or subtle, covert forms of microaggressions and hostility (Tyler and Slater, 2018).

According to Tyler, stigma is a machinery of inequality which utilises classism and racism, amongst other overt and covert forms of discrimination as a form of power (Tyler and Slater, 2018; Tyler, 2020). Link and Phelan coined the term 'stigma power', to highlight how stigma structurally participates in the exclusion, control and exploitation of others (2014:

30). Pinker describes stigma as a type of violence occurring within democratic societies (2017), while Steinberg observes how it provides ‘epistemic authority for the denial and suppression of Black humanity’ (2007:42; Tyler, 2018). Other scholars have highlighted how stigma is a tool used by communities and the state to ‘produce and re-produce existing inequalities of class, race, gender and sexuality’ (Parker and Aggleton, 2003; Tyler, 2018).

### *Black epistemological reading of Stigma*

Used as a form of governance in Western societies, racism constructs the *other* (members of ethnic groups) as deviant and abnormal, while the practices of the White majority remain universal, dominant and unquestioned (Hesse, 1997; Reynolds, 2005). Malik (1996) argues that the governmentality of racism has entrenched Western superiority and universalism, thus classifying non-Western groups and their practices as inferior. Tyler’s work observes how ‘genealogies of stigma’ are formed due to histories of oppression and inequality affecting particular groups. One example is the legal and historical practice of racial stigmatisation towards Black people, which denied their personhood not only as being slaves but second-class citizens (Tyler, 2018: 758-759; Tyler, 2020; Spillers, 2003: 21). In the specific context of parenting (often read and understood as mothering), Allen and Taylor (2012) identify that failed motherhood is constructed through an intersectional shaming process which incorporates the so-called moral flaws of race, gender, class and sexuality. For example, they observed a mainstream positioning of ‘tight, White, middle-class mothers’ as the ‘cultural and national bearers of the future’ (Allen and Taylor, 2012: 1,7).

This idealisation juxtaposes the historical presentation, othering and dehumanizing of single, working-class, and Black mothers as the ‘locus of national concerns around morality, raising ‘feral’ youth and proper citizenship’ (Allen and Taylor, 2012: 5; Jensen, 2010; Phillips, 2011; Skeggs, 2005). Here, stigma works to demonstrate the failed femininity and spoiled

maternity of stigmatised mothers and provides justification for the hyper-surveillance of their parenthood and by extension their homes (Allen and Taylor, 2012: 5). The racialised undertone of maternal stigmatisation is important to note, particularly how the pathologisation of White motherhood occurs when associated to Blackness. Tyler exemplifies this by pointing to the symbolic figure of the 'Chav mum', whose identity embodies 'whiteness contaminated with poverty' but also associated to claims that chavs appropriate Black popular culture through their clothing, speech and engaging in sexual intimacy with working-class Black and Asian men (Tyler, 2008: 26; Allen and Taylor, 2012: 8). These authors argue that the disdain towards these White working-class mothers is rooted in anxieties around inter-racial mixing and breeding (Allen and Taylor, 2012: 8; Tyler, 2008: 26).

This thesis is attentive to how Black mothers are 'smeared with the stigma of racial inferiority' (Haywood, 1948:138; Tyler, 2018). It leans into the reorientation of stigma's theoretical lens to 'focus on meso and macro socio-cultural structures and power' (Bonnington and Rose, 2014:7; Tyler, 2018). In order to examine the function of stigma and its impact on Black mothers following CPVA, I draw on Tyler's contemporary reworking of Goffman's initial apolitical conceptualisation of stigma into dialogue with a Black epistemology of stigma (Tyler, 2018). The subsequent section will explore the ways Black mothering is stigmatised, racialised, and pathologised. It will consider the consequences of stigmatisation on Black women, who in their navigation CPVA, are likely to encounter discriminatory practices through various state actors (i.e., police, schools and social services) considered to be institutionally racist.

## **The Racialisation of Black Motherhood**

By virtue of their racial, ethnic and cultural identity, the Black African and Caribbean mothers participating in this study will likely hold perceptions of mothering that differ to those dictated by Western standards. In Chapter 2, I critically reviewed the origins of maternal scholarship as a by-product of the 1970s Western feminist movement. This chapter highlighted that the theoretical stance underpinning early feminist ideologisations and critiques of motherhood were premised on an essentialised view of ‘womanhood’ that was pan-ethnic, pan-class and disassociated from historical and cultural context (Donath, 2015: 343). It also outlined how mothering has been reconceptualised across Black communities, highlighting the unique features, practices and priorities of Black motherhood alongside its collectivist cultural orientations. In this section, I critically engage with the stigmatisation of Black motherhood through racialised tropes and theorise how they may influence how Black women cope with and navigate CPVA.

Through the use of racialised stereotypes, the maternal identity of Black women endures symbolic attack. The myth of the ‘bad Black mother’ (Charlton, 2014) exists through pathologised social constructions of Black women in media, news and socio-political debates as the cause behind youth crime, juvenile delinquency or teenage pregnancy (Reynolds, 2005; Song and Edwards, 1997; Reynolds, 1997; Richie, 2003). As Charlton (2014) argues, racial tropes perpetuate the myth that Black female bodies cannot host good maternal practices. In this context, a trope or archetype can be defined as offensive, race-based caricature or stereotype of individuals or specific groups which have negative implications (Hai-Jew, 2023; Pieterse, 1992). Specific derogatory tropes and cultural images around Black women include the Baby Mama/Welfare Queen, the Strong Black Woman, the Tragic Mulatto, and the Sensuous Jezebel (Steady, 1981: 14; Hill-Collins, 1995; 1990;

1998; 2000; Bogle, 2001; Reynolds, 2005; Igwe, 2022). In this chapter I focus on three tropes particularly relevant to Black motherhood: The Baby Mama, Strong Black Woman and the Angry Black Woman. As the empirical chapters of this thesis will reveal, these tropes are prominent in narratives around Black maternal identity (Chapter 5), framing perceptions of CPVA (Chapter 6), underpinning mother blaming discourses (Chapter 7) and forming barriers to formal and informal support (Chapter 8).

### *The Baby Mama*

The Office for National statistics (2021) reveals that there is a high percentage of lone-parent households among Black populations in Britain, the highest being with Caribbean families where 63% of children live with single parents. Lone parenting is also common among African communities, particularly when mothers migrate to the UK and reside here with children, while fathers remain back home. The Baby Mama (also called the *welfare queen*) is an archetype used to stigmatise Black lone mothers of low-income status, who utilise welfare benefits as a means of survival and caring for their children. Through this categorisation, Black women are presented and perceived as irresponsible, lazy, greedy and unfit to mother (Hill-Collins, 1998; Gilens, 1995; Reynolds, 2005). The construction of Black women as incapable single mothers legitimises state surveillance and interference into their homes on the premise that their motherhood is deficient and their families dysfunctional (Elliot and Reid, 2016). According to Roberts, the societal belief is not solely that Black mothers are likely to corrupt their children, but that Black children are themselves predisposed to corruption (1994: 874). Thus, in blaming Black single mothers for ‘nurturing a next generation of pathology’, society stigmatizes not only these women but also their children (Ibid).

## *The Strong Black Woman*

The Strong Black woman (thereafter SBW) is a racial trope that speaks to the weaponisation of strength against a marginalised group of women. The continued existence and perpetuation of this trope is linked to many factors, however the origins date back to slavery where the portrayal of Black women as physically and psychologically strong compared to Euro-American women justified their enslavement and inhuman treatment (Hill-Collins, 2000; Harrington et al. 2010; Liao et al. 2020: 85; Abrams et al. 2014; 2019). Early feminist conceptualisations of mothering pointed to the public/private divide between men as providers and women as nurturers as a basis of gender inequality and female subordination in domestic spheres (Jagger and Wright, 1999; Silva and Smart, 1999; Duncan and Edwards, 1999; Duncan et al. 2004; Reynolds et al. 2003). However, for Black women, mothering has always been experienced as interlinked across public and private spheres (Reynolds, 2005; Hill-Collins, 1994: 48).

While the unpaid labour of women in the care work of their children and elderly relatives has been recognised as making it difficult, often impossible to sustain waged work (Tyler, 2020), Black women have had no choice but to operate across spheres of paid and unpaid labour for the critical survival of their families and communities. Due to the socioeconomic disadvantage and poverty facing many Black families, Black women have assumed the ‘worker/mother’ role, operating in both public (economic) spheres and the private realm leading female-headed households (Reynolds, 2005; Seguera, 1994). Their assumption of caregiving and financial responsibilities have also been linked to Black men struggling to find employment due to discrimination (Romero, 2000; Laio et al. 2020: 85; Mama, 1995). Some scholars have linked the historic operation of Black mothers across public-private spheres to the arrangement of traditional African families before colonisation, where both

men and women held power and authority within the home and were also empowered to work (Nnaemeka, 1997; Sudakasa, 1996; DuBois, 1908). Nevertheless, the operation of Black mothers in public and private spheres has been linked to the ‘strong Black woman’ schema, where her strength is characterised by self-sacrifice, independence, dogged work ethic and the prioritisation of the needs of her family and community often to the detriment of self (Parks and Hayman, 2024; McDaniel et al. 2023; Liao et al. 2020; Woods-Giscombe, 2010; Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2007).

According to Woods-Giscombé (2010) the unsubstantiated belief that Black women are stronger imposes a five-fold obligation on them to manifest strength, suppress emotions, resist vulnerability, succeed despite lack of resources and help others, irrespective of personal costs (McDaniel et al. 2023). The SBW is based on the systematic oppression of Black women which limits their access to resources while forcing them to rely on internal strength to survive (Laio et al. 2020: 85). The trope has also contributed to racial bias in treatment and pain assessment based on false beliefs about biological differences in the pain thresholds of Black and White people (Hoffman et al. 2016; Holpuch, 2016). It has resulted in Black patients being half as likely to receive pain medication as White patients (Holpuch, 2016). In the UK, recent studies have explored how the racialised narrative of the SBW contributes to disproportionate maternal deaths among Black groups (Knight et al. 2021). Within clinical settings, where life-threatening situations are often ‘physical’ and obvious, despite Black women being vocal about their pain and suffering, they have been denied support, on the premise that they can handle the pain or that they are exaggerating (Brathwaite, 2020; Kasprzak, 2019; Kulakiewicz et al. 2021).

The SBW trope is culturally different to the Baby Mama in that the matriarch utilises her ‘strength’ to take care of her family, independent of welfare and in many cases, male involvement (Joseph and Lewis, 1980; Reynolds, 2005). This trope enables the customary practice of many Black women to prioritise the wellbeing and interests of their families over their own (Igwe, 2022). The cultural expectations of the SBW are not restricted to low-income earning Black women, who work multiple low-paid jobs to survive, but the weaponisation of this trope transcends class divides. Some of the women categorised as SBW are educated, either with middle-class aspirations or attainment. Their achievements and strength are perceived as threatening and emasculating, purportedly rendering Black men ineffective as husbands and fathers which then is considered the cause behind their lone motherhood (Steady, 1981: 266; Staples, 1981; Reynolds, 2005).

Another aspect of the SBW trope is a representation of Black mothers as authoritarian in their child-rearing approaches. There is evidence that Black mothers centre their ‘protective care framework’ around raising and shielding their children, who are racialised within society (Elliot and Reid, 2019). Some studies suggest that they utilise authoritarian parenting approaches to prepare their children to exist in a racialised and increasingly violent world (Elliot and Reid, 2019; Elliott and Aseltine, 2013; Elliot, 2012). In the context of child-rearing, the SBW tropes implies that Black women possess the capacity to protect their children from society’s ills but also control and prevent them from getting in trouble (Elliot and Reid, 2016).

The expectation that mothers should be able to control their children and partners has been critiqued (Hunter et al. 2010; Peck et al. 2023). However, as I will show in Chapters 5 and 7 through the concept of militant maternity, this expectation is increasingly stigmatising for

Black women who are perceived within societal imagination and their own communities as being supernaturally pre-disposed to strength.

### *The Angry Black Woman*

Interlinked with the expectation on Black mothers to demonstrate strength at all times is the associated fear and policing of their rage through the trope of the Angry Black Woman (ABW), which depicts them as hostile and aggressive (Walley-Jean, 2009; Ashley, 2014; Motro et al. 2022; Salerno et al. 2017). In cases where Black mothers attempt to advocate on behalf of their children who may be experiencing discrimination or racial microaggressions in school environments, their strength is problematised as ‘threatening and intimidating’ (Brathwaite, 2020; Allen and White-Smith, 2018; Reynolds, 2005). Even when the suffering of Black mothers turns to ‘justified rage’ at the loss of a child to police brutality, racist attacks, gun violence or knife crime, there are societal expectations placed on grieving and ‘angry’ Black mothers to exude composure, moral character and saintly decorum in order for their victimhood to be socially affirmed. Cook found that gaining public empathy required that mothers were ‘strong and independent’ yet remain ‘unthreatening’ and had to be ‘virtuous, dignified, inspiring and persuasive’ (2021: 355-366).

Black mothers who utilise great strength to engage in activist work following the tragic loss of a child must subscribe to ‘good’ and acceptable mothering practices to prevent the weaponisation of their strength and anger, which may reduce societal empathy toward their victimisation and maternal activism. The case of Doreen Lawrence is useful to consider here, whose son Stephen was murdered by a racist gang of White boys while waiting for a bus in Eltham. The British media recognised and praised, Doreen’s *strength* which enabled her to *fight* for justice and campaign for the conviction of her son’s murderers for more than

decade (Jones, 2020: 93). However, Doreen noted that even while grieving, she was cautious not to display her anger and risk being categorised as an ‘angry black woman’ which could eradicate public sympathy and halt justice campaign efforts (Jones, 2020: 93). While on one hand, strength is consistently expected from Black mothers, they also find themselves in a quandary where their displays of strength, particularly anger, will be policed in moralistic and prejudicial ways.

### *Racialised Tropes: A Barrier to Accessing Support*

The existence of racial tropes, like the SBW, seem to indicate that Black mothers are likely to hide their internal struggles and therefore be unwilling to disclose and share their experience of CPVA within their community and beyond (Liao et al. 2020: 85; Hill-Collins, 2000; Woods-Giscombe, 2010; Donovan and West, 2015). According to McDaniel et al. (2023), Black women adopt, internalise and perpetuate the SBW trope in order to survive and navigate the world in light of their intersecting social identities. Similarly, Laio et al. (2020) argue that in light of the trauma and hardships caused by navigating oppression, some Black women have attempted to reconceptualise the meaning of the SBW as a survival strategy and coping mechanism. Other scholars suggest Black women are reclaiming strength, and by extension the SBW trope, as a spiritual birth right (Woods-Giscombe, 2010), a cultural mandate to aspire towards (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2007) or a quality inherited from their foremothers and predecessors (Amankwaa, 2003: 310; Chisholm, 1996). Furthermore, there is some indication of Black women preferring the SBW to other tropes considered more humiliating such as The Baby Mama (Laio et al. 2020: 85). In Chapter 5 of this thesis, I will demonstrate how racialised tropes contribute to the idealisation of strength within Black motherhood. Chapter 7 will reveal that, despite these long-standing cultural scripts around Black women as strong matriarchs, there were inherent tensions and contradictions between these idealisations and the reality of their mothering.

For example, when CPVA occurred, this thesis will show how maternal blame was assigned to authoritative mothers perceived to have negatively modelled strength through their use of corporal punishment.

Moreover, notwithstanding attempts to reconceive the SBW trope, its existence has been found to do more harm than good. According to Hill-Collins (1990), the trope has permitted a societal denial of the vulnerabilities and struggles that mark the Black maternal experience. It contributes to an inability to recognise or affirm the victimhood of Black women or secure their protection. Another danger of attempting to re-claim the SBW trope is that it enables a ‘socially and culturally sanctioned self-silencing’, where Black women are taught to normalise and internalise struggle (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2007: 46). The unwillingness among some Black women to show vulnerability, admit feelings of weakness and disclose to others the problems that exist in their lives and families can significantly harm the likelihood of receiving support and have detrimental effects on their physical and mental health (Igwe, 2022; Amankwaa, 2003; Chisholm, 1996; Schreiber, 1996). In Chapter 8, I will show how the SBW constitutes a barrier to seeking formal and informal support following CPVA, due to the socialisation of Black mothers to maintain a positive external representation of their families.

Women assuming the role of nurturer and protector is a common experience in motherhood, regardless of race, ethnicity or class. Black women, however, face the unique concerns and challenges that accompany raising children who are racialised by Western societies. Black women living in Euro-American nations not only face the likelihood of racialised encounters directed towards themselves, but also their children. Thus, their mothering practices were framed by this unfortunate social reality. In order to understand how the racialised experiences of Black mothers may shape their disclosure and help-seeking practices following CPVA, there is need to appraise the realities of being a Black child and Black parent in society that upholds Eurocentric values to the rejection of Afrocentric ideals (Unnever and Gabbidon, 2011: 21). Carlene Firmin emphasised the importance of acknowledging the social and cultural context surrounding Black livelihood when researching their experiences (2020). Firmin's 'contextual safeguarding' is a theoretical and operational framework which advocates for social care systems or services to factor in the socio-cultural context in which extra-familial abuse occurs among ethnic groups (Firmin, 2020). Arnez and Condry also advance for the adoption of an 'holistic and contextual approach' when thinking about the lives of young people to account for their relationships, learning experiences and offending (2021:17).

For Black mothers, the gendered power dynamics within CPVA occur against the backdrop of racialised narratives. In Chapter 8, I will demonstrate how the principles of contextual safeguarding can be used to highlight the racialised context and social environment in which Black mothers and their children 'do family life'. Studies reveal how the hyper-surveillance of deprived communities by police results in the racialised targeting of Black youths through an abuse of stop and search powers (Jones, 2020; Philips and Bowling, 2003; 2017). The visibility and movement of Black males in public spaces has been disrupted by race and

policing with ‘politicised ‘street’ crimes being tied to the Black male identity, (Reynolds, 2005; Gilroy, 1987; Runnymede Trust, 1996). Consequently, many Black mothers live in fear of their sons being subject to harassment, racial attacks police and peer-violence (Reynolds, 2005). Chapter 8 illustrates how mothers in this study, due to raising children in cities and neighbourhoods affected by deprivation, crime and heavy policing, viewed their victimisation from CPVA as secondary to their child being unsafe or in conflict with the law. Moreover, maternal concerns emanating from a child experiencing harm outside the home, offending or becoming a victim of criminal exploitation added a layer of complexity to support pathways that involved state agents like the police. Due to the intersecting identities of both mother and child, and their shared struggle, Black women are known to deploy strategies of survival and resistance to protect their children, and limit state intervention into their families (Rodriguez, 2016: 62). While other mothers lack the confidence and cultural capital to engage with professionals and services following CPVA, for fear that their mothering would be pathologised and seen as the cause for their child’s behaviour.

### *Stigma in Social Care and Mental Health Services*

Stigma, as a form of power and governance is designed into systems of provision which problematize help-seeking and make disclosure difficult (Tyler, 2020). For reasons discussed above, Black mothers can find themselves ‘silenced by the shame and stigma’ (Du Bois, 1920; Morris, 2017) of their pathologised motherhood. However, they are not alone in their experiences of racism and racialisation. Black children and adolescents navigate, alongside their parents, discriminatory institutions and services. As Robert states: ‘The powerful western image of childhood innocence does not seem to benefit Black children. Black children are born guilty. They are potential menaces, criminals, crackheads and welfare mothers waiting to happen’ (1994: 874). Through the process of adultification,

Black children are considered ‘less innocent’, more ‘street wise’ and ‘aggressive’ within schools, child protection and mental health services (NSPCC Learning, 2022). These preconceptions and systemic biases, driven by racial prejudice, negatively influence and compromise safeguarding responses to Black children implying they are not in need of protection and support (Davis and Marsh, 2020; Perera, 2020; Davis, 2022; NSPCC Learning, 2022).

When Black children experience mental health concerns, undiagnosed post-traumatic stress disorders and being at risk of causing harm to themselves, their families and wider community, they are less likely to be referred to conventional mental health services (Duberry, 2021: 30; Davis 2022). One study suggests that Black mothers can be resistant to receiving support from such services for fear that their children will be ‘labelled, stigmatised or sectioned’ and the implications of these labels for their future prospects (Duberry, 2021: 30). This is particularly telling as previous research has found CPVA to be associated with mental health problems and learning disabilities (Saylor and Amann, 2016; Retz and Rösler, 2010; Miller and Anderson, 2023). If services neglect the needs of Black children, Black mothers are less likely to disclose CPVA, to reduce the risks of service intervention and additional stigmatising labels being applied to their children.

## **Conclusion**

This thesis looks beyond individualised pathways to CPVA to focus on how macro-level factors such as social structure and institutional responses to Black women and their children can shape their experience and navigation of family violence. To this end, it is important to incorporate into the theoretical framework of this thesis, an awareness of how racism shapes Black mothering (Reynolds, 2005). This chapter details how a Black feminist epistemology

on motherhood and intersectionality can be applied to an empirical exploration of CPVA to understand Black maternal experiences of this phenomenon. The strength intersectionality brings to this research project is its attentiveness not only to intersecting individual identities, but to power relations and social inequality (Hill-Collins, 2015; Hancock, 2007a: 249; 2007b). The social categories most pressing to this thesis are the race, gender, culture, religion, migration and class status of participating mothers.

This chapter has advanced a Black epistemological reworking of Goffman's (1963) initial apolitical conceptualisation of stigma to demonstrate how Black and working-class motherhood has been stigmatised as a spoiled and failed maternal experience (Tyler, 2020; Allen and Taylor, 2012: 5). The exploration of stigma and its sociological application to Black motherhood have elucidated the harmful tropes and racial stereotypes that pathologise Black women and perpetuate the myth of the 'bad Black mother' (Charlton, 2014). Though various tropes exist, the Angry Black Woman, Strong Black Woman and Baby Mama were explored in depth as particularly relevant to mothers experiencing CPVA. In Chapter 5 of this thesis, I explore how these racialised tropes perpetuate idealisations of strength within Black motherhood. However, despite these long-standing cultural scripts of Black women as authoritative matriarchs, Chapter 7 will expose the inherent tensions and contradictions that work to their disadvantage. While in Chapter 8, I illustrate how the prejudicial tropes of the 'Angry Black Woman' and 'Strong Black Woman' work together to deny the vulnerability of Black mothers, prevent them from disclosing CPVA informally within their social networks while also impeding services from recognising their victimisation (due to cultural differences in how emotions are displayed).

Although the criminalization of Black youth and the stigmatisation of Black parenting (read motherhood) are often examined as separate problems, this chapter suggests that these

experiences form an interconnected struggle particularly at the site of CPVA. Through processes of adultification, Black children are subject to racial stereotypes which allow their needs and vulnerabilities to go unseen (David and Marsh, 2020; Davis, 2022; Duberry, 2021). Instead, they are pathologised as they navigate services in education, mental health, social care and the legal system (Jones, 2020; Lammy, 2017; Essien and Wood, 2021). The pathologisation and stigmatisation of Black motherhood and childhood can occur within institutions purporting to help their families. As Elliot and Reid argue, these stigmatising processes can amount to a form of 'family criminalization', wherein some women fear losing access to their child as punishment for their parenting (2019: 198). In this thesis, the work of intersectionality, the sociological concept of stigma, and the structural consequences of stigmatised motherhood are key to understanding the experiences of Black women experiencing CPVA while existing at intersecting axes of disadvantage. Though not without its limitations, adopting an 'intersectional' analytical framework assists this thesis in its aim to advance an understanding of the victim experience of Black mothers and their decisions around disclosure and possible (dis)engagement with formal and informal support pathways.

## **FOUR: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

Capturing the abuse experiences of a group largely excluded from empirical research and marginalised by the intersections of their gender and race comes with many challenges. In this thesis, it was important to adopt a research methodology that centralises the voice of research population in empirical exploration (Smith and Osborn 2003; 2015). Due to the exploratory nature of the study and the importance of deploying methods that sensitively capture victim experiences and encourage participant involvement in the research process (Stanley and Wise, 1990), a multi-qualitative methodological approach was deemed appropriate. Namely, the use of semi-structured interviews, focus groups and victim questionnaires. This chapter opens by providing justification for a qualitative methodological approach, while the second section examines the participant recruitment process and identifies challenges encountered in accessing Black mothers with lived experiences of CPVA. It discusses the necessity of targeted sampling through formal and informal gatekeepers to raise awareness about the study and provide access to participants. This section also details pen biographies of the eight Black mother-victims that participated in the study. Though the descriptions are short and inherently incomplete, the biographies are included to honour the personhood of the mothers and acknowledge their identity outside of their abuse experiences.

Next, the methodological approaches to data collection are individually analysed, this section also discusses the processes of transcription, coding and data analysis. In the fourth section, I reflect on the sensitives of this research study, ethical considerations and the importance of preserving anonymity. Some time is then spent on the subject of researcher

reflexivity. I discuss the intersecting identities I share with the research participants (Black mothers) and apply a ‘self-critical lens’ to this study, acknowledging some of the ‘intersubjective dynamics’ between myself and participants (Finlay and Gough, 2003: 4; Okpokiri, 2017: 82). As a Black female scholar exploring sensitive research on Black families, I engage with the concept of ‘insider status’ and outline its many advantages to this study but also the risks of over-identifying with participants. Also discussed is feeling an implied ‘sense of duty’ and how I have navigated these challenges. Finally, I reflect on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the research process, emphasising the benefits and limitations of conducting my fieldwork online.

### **Justification of Qualitative Methodology**

This study is the first to empirically consider how CPVA intersects with race and motherhood in the experiences of Black women and how their maternal identity can compound with existing racial and systemic barriers to shape their disclosure and helpseeking behaviours. Qualitative research design is ideal for an area of empirical enquiry where there is little previous research (Gallagher and Francesoni, 2012) because it foregrounds ‘meaning, subjectivity, context’ and prioritises how individuals interpret their lived experiences (Sparkes and Smith, 2014:14; Labuschagne, 2003). This study engages the perspectives of various groups who interact with CPVA in direct and indirect ways including mothers (victims and non-victims) and professionals. Thus, it was important to select a research design that permitted for an extensive exploration of how a specific phenomenon is experienced through individualised experiences (Koch et al. 2014).

Secondly, qualitative methods are frequently deployed in studies seeking to capture victim experiences. When investigating sensitive subjects, such as family violence, qualitative

methods empower participants to be actively involved in the research process (Stanley and Wise, 1990). For example, Katz (2015) used semi-structured interviews in an exploration of the mother-child relationship during domestic violence. While Smith used similar methods to capture the court experiences of sexual assault and rape victims (2012; 2018). Thirdly, the centrality of intersectionality as an analytical framework in this study necessitated the use of qualitative methodologies that account for the social realities of Black mothers and ‘the context within which women make sense of their lives’ (Woodiwiss et al 2017: 5; Nguyen Phan 2024: 55). The analytical tools available within qualitative methods, such as inductive analysis, is aligned to the goals of this study and the importance of ‘identifying multiple realities and contextual factors (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Jenkins, 2005: 58).

The ecological validity of qualitative research is questioned due to concerns around the generalisability of the findings. However, the goal of this project is not to establish generalisability, but to intentionally move away from the implied homogenising of parent experiences following CPVA. The study aims to capture a distinctly Black and maternal perspective of the phenomenon. It works to challenge the universality of motherhood by highlighting the nuanced meanings, practices and complex priorities that frame the Black maternal experience. Qualitative research methods support my quest to purposively target a selected sample, while respecting the truth of multiple realities and allowing for research reflexivity (O’Leary, 2010; Okpokiri, 2017: 61).

## **Exploratory mapping stage**

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, it was important to first conduct a mapping stage to develop a preliminary understanding of issues in the field and establish whether Black mothers affected by CPVA wanted to express their experiences through research participation. While conducting my literature review in 2020, I designed a mapping stage where I shared my proposed research to professionals in the fields of youth justice, social care, education and mental health services. I engaged in initial conversations that explored their professional experiences supporting Black mothers. I made no attempt to access or interact with victims. All the professionals that engaged in this exploratory mapping stage expressed their interest to participate in the study once ethical approval was provided. Though it was ultimately challenging to recruit participants for this study, the professional and community connections made at the mapping stage were instrumental in directly accessing victims at later stages. I received ethical approval from University of Oxford Social Sciences and Humanities Interdivisional Research Ethics Committee (SSH IDREC) on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022. Research Ethics Reference: R79763/RE001.

## **Participants**

### *Recruitment*

Due the sensitive area of research, it was a challenge to recruit participants. As I was interested in capturing the experiences of a specific population (Black mothers of African and Caribbean descent), it was important that I adopted multiple recruitment strategies. There is evidence that participants from Black and ethnic backgrounds are unwilling to engaging in research (Faugier and Sargeant, 1997; Watters and Biernacki, 1989). Consequently, it is common practice to use targeted and purposive sampling to recruit populations considered ‘difficult-to-reach’ (Femi-Ajao, 2016:107; Peterson et al. 2008; Robinson et al. 2006). Purposive sampling allows the researcher to target a sample based on

the research aims but also personal knowledge of the population and respondents most useful to the enquiry (Babbie, 1995; Jenkins, 2005: 59). Once ethical approval was granted, I engaged in a preliminary phase of target sampling by creating a list of organisations and services likely to interact with and offer support to my participants. Those listed were gatekeepers who could assist and advance the reach of the study as they had direct access to individuals who are otherwise challenging to reach. Formal gatekeepers were professionals working with the target population, while informal gatekeepers often reside in the communities they serve, using their own resources to support participants (Patton, 1990; Emmel et al. 2007; Emmel, 2017; Burgess, 1984; Femi-Ajao, 2016:118).

To connect with formal gatekeepers, I email several UK-based organisations and services working with Black women. I began with London due to my professional experiences working in the city within known crime prevention organisations. In a way that mirrors the multi-layered and cross-sectoral nature of CPVA, I reached out to organisations within the sectors of Youth Justice, Social Care, Mental Health and Education. Beyond emails, I used social media platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter to establish connections with social workers, teachers, therapists, parent coaches, community leaders and pastors with direct experience supporting Black mothers experiencing CPVA. I used Canva to design a research flyer which I circulated on Twitter, LinkedIn and submitted to the newsletter of leading Black network for therapeutic and social care professionals. The flyer detailed the purpose of the study, criteria for participation, method of interview, my contact information (email address) and my picture. This recruitment approach raised awareness about the study and garnered great professional interest. A total of 26 professionals contributed to the study. Though others expressed an interest in interviewing, I had to stop at this number due to capacity issues.

Engaging services, faith-based organisations and community groups offered two important benefits to this study. Firstly, the data from the professional interviews deepened my understanding of how Black mothers experience services and the possible barriers and facilitators to their engagement. Secondly, interviewing ‘gatekeepers’ opened a gateway to Black mothers who had accessed formal or informal support. It is common for gatekeepers, who are convinced of the integrity of a study, to share details of potential participants or provide access to their clients (Kirchherr and Charles, 2018:1). In this way, researchers are able to deploy a snowball sampling method, relying on the network of the existing sample to recruit others who trust them (Ibid, Polit and Beck, 2004: 289). After interviewing professionals, community and faith leaders, I asked if they would consider sharing the study with past and present clients who could be interested.

Many of the gatekeepers were open to sharing the study within their professional networks or with Black mothers within their past or present caseloads. However, there were some, who despite their enthusiasm towards the study, expressed caution about referring clients. Some expressed concern that the interview process could harm the mental health of mothers, especially those still going through CPVA. One Black female social worker, who was also serving the Nigerian community in London as a faith leader, feared that recommending the study to mothers would appear as though she was ‘reporting them’ to a stranger. She was determined not to create a sense of distrust in her relationship with mothers. Studies show that some gatekeepers ‘prioritise protection over participation’ even in cases where the benefits of participating in the study could outweigh the risks (McCosker et al. 2001; Sparrman, 2014: 305; Baker, 2021: 114). Though having good intentions, the paternalistic tendencies of gatekeepers can create an additional barrier to research participation and further ostracise groups already marginalised, depriving them the opportunity to communicate their experiences and needs (Baker, 2021: 115).

I conducted focus groups with Black African and Caribbean mothers (non-victims) to gather data on the meaning, practices and priorities of Black mothering in England and to ascertain community attitudes towards CPVA. To recruit focus group participants, I used convenience and targeted non-probability sampling, pursuing Black mothers to which I already had access and proximity. This decision encouraged snowball sampling. For example, the focus groups mothers invited their friends to participate in online discussions. While the interviewed Black professionals, who also served as community leaders, circulated the victim questionnaire to women in their professional caseload and personal connections. Targeted and purposive sampling has been critiqued for producing an unrepresentative sample due to its preoccupation with a specific group or particular characteristics (Kirchherr and Charles, 2018; Shaghghi et al. 2011). Convenience sampling has received criticisms for selection bias and creating unrepresentative sample size (Femi-Ajao, 2016; Blaikie, 2010; Guest et al. 2011). While the use of snowball sampling has been critiqued for its reliance on pre-existing relationships among the sample, which could skew data and exclude those existing outside of these established connections (Shaghghi et al. 2011).

As this thesis was concerned with understanding the experiences of a specific population (Black mothers affected by CPVA), the targeting of these individuals was essential to fulfil the aims of the study. Moreover, as this study examines a highly stigmatised form of family violence among a population whose views are often marginalised from research, it was anticipated that accessing willing participants would be a challenge. Considering Black women have the tendency to utilise personal, social, and religious connections rather than engaging with formal support through service providers, the use of snowball sampling was instrumental as mothers were informed of the study by those already within their network

of trusted individuals. I also decided to use convenience sampling to maximise my existing network of Black mothers.

### *Access challenges*

Three Black mother-victims engaged in the study after being referred by professionals. However, this was not sufficient, as it was important to access mothers who had relied on informal mechanisms of support, so as to sufficiently vary the sample and avoid skewing the data (Etikan et al. 2016 :55). Mothers who engage in the study through formal gatekeepers are likely to have had positive encounters with providers of formal support and possibly a different experience to those who had to navigate CPVA independently or through informal support. Due to the under-reporting of CPVA, fewer parents are coming forward to access service support. Moreover, the risks of doing so are heightened for Black mothers whose children may experience racism, prejudicial treatment, criminalisation and pathologisation within various services (Wallace and Joseph-Salisbury, 2022; Perera, 2020: 8; Gunter, 2015). To divest from overlying on professionals as the source for participants, I made attempts to find Black mothers through social media channels, i.e., Twitter and LinkedIn. However, soon realised it was still likely that my professional contacts would share the flyer, reducing the likelihood of diversifying the pool of participants.

To increase the likelihood of Black mothers participating in the study, it was imperative to diversify the sample of participants by engaging with informal support pathways such as Black community groups and faith-based organisations. I searched online for African and Caribbean community groups, associations and parent hubs. I also contacted the welfare teams of multifaith and non-denominational networks, asking administrators to circulate the flyer to their members. The feedback I received from this recruitment method was the unwillingness of mothers to participate in the study for fear of ‘snitching’ on their children

to a researcher. Leaders of faith and community groups invited me to speak to their members about topics not directly related to my research. For example, due to my background in youth work, outreach and education, I was asked to deliver a presentation to Black parents on building positive cultural identity within their children and on the topic of online safety. While there was no guarantee, I hoped that in giving these free sessions, I would build rapport with Black mothers in these respective communities and make an in-person connection which could garner interest in the research. At the end of the presentation, I informed attending parents about my study and shared ways they could participate. Though these parent workshops did not immediately increase the amount of mothers willing to be interviewed, it did alert me to the desire of some mothers to share their experiences anonymously. This brought about a necessary pivot in my research design through the introduction of the victim questionnaire (to be discussed in a later section).

### *Sample*

Within qualitative enquiry, it is suggested the sample range from 7 to 10 participants (Gentles et al. 2015). As a three-pronged mixed qualitative approach was taken to data collection, there were different samples for each method. A total of 19 Black African and Caribbean mothers (victims and non-victims) participated in this study. They ranged from 36 to 55 years of age. All the mothers, but one, were first-generation migrants, being the first of their families to make the UK their home. The (victim) parent sample consisted of 8 Black women who had directly experienced abusive and violent behaviour from a child they mothered. Three of the mother-victims agreed to in-depth interviews, while the remaining five mothers chose to share their experiences via the victim questionnaire. The (non-victim) parent sample involved 11 Black African and Caribbean mothers participating in two focus groups. The expert sample included 26 professionals of diverse vocational backgrounds, all having direct experience supporting Black mother-victims affected by CPVA.

A large sample size was unlikely in this study due to how the under-reported and highly stigmatised nature of CPVA compounds with the racialised experiences of Black women living in Western societies. Nonetheless, one methodological limitation caused by a small sample size is the limited generalisability of the study's findings. However, the aim of this study was not to create generalisable results but to undertake an in-depth and intersectional exploration of CPVA. The literature around the phenomenon, though fast developing, is yet to account for how categories of race, ethnicity, culture, class and religion shape parent experiences and navigation of this phenomenon. The aim of this thesis was to disaggregate Black maternal experiences of the CPVA and highlight the barriers these women face when navigating abuse and seeking help.

### *Inclusion and exclusion criteria*

Establishing a criterion for participant involvement was a multi-tiered process. Participation was open to African and Caribbean mothers of all relationship status, whether single, married, widowed or divorced to ensure the study reflected the diversity among Black women. The criteria of 'mother' was also widened to include stepmothers, biological and adoptive mothers, and even grandmothers, as 'grandmothering' is considered a collective parenting practice within Black communities (Peterson, 2018; Burnette, 1997; Smith-Ruiz, 2008). While it was necessary that the 'mothers' had directly experienced violence or abuse from the child they cared for, there were no time restrictions on when the abuse occurred, and historic accounts of CPVA were welcome. Another important criterion was to define the type of behaviour that constituted CPVA. In Chapter 2, I highlight inconsistencies within literature around varying definitions and terminology around the phenomenon. I created room within my enquiry to consider a breadth of behaviours, ranging from physical and injurious acts of violence to verbal, financial, and emotional abuse. Moreover, as this

study adopted the 'self-defined approach' advocated by Paterson et al. (2002) and Wilcox (2012), it was important to include any behaviour that Black mothers believed constituted harm, abuse or violence. Lastly, in this thesis, 'child' does not refer only to age-based notions of individuals below 18, but rather the relationship between the victim and perpetrator (Simmons et al. 2018: 32). Understanding the criteria of 'child' in a relational sense rather than numerical category is pertinent to a study focused on Black families, as young people within black households are likely to stay with parents above age 18 and for longer than their white counterparts (Lei and South, 2016). However, it was a requirement that the 'child' displaying harmful behaviour was within the age of 12 to 25 at the time of the incident(s).

### *Participant Biographies*

Though 19 Black African and Caribbean mothers contribute to this study, this section provides a brief biography of the eight mother-victims with lived experience of CPVA. The short biographies provide some contextual insight into their background, social realities and individual stories. These profiles are inherently incomplete as they rely on information I gathered and what mothers were willing to share with a stranger. Yet, they are included as a means of honouring the personhood of the mothers and acknowledging aspects of their identity that exist outside of their challenging circumstances. I have been careful to remove any potentially identifying details. All names are pseudonyms.

**Oyinka** has three children, two daughters and a son (her youngest). She is Black African, of Nigerian descent. Although she is married to the father of her three children, she has largely 'solo-parented' them since birth, as her husband lives and works in Nigeria but visits the UK every two months. Her eldest daughter, Lola, now in her early 20s, has been displaying controlling, aggressive and violent behaviour towards Oyinka and her two

younger siblings since she was in secondary school. Oyinka still has a tumultuous relationship with Lola, but the physical element of the aggression has reduced since Lola moved out the home for work in another city after dropping out of university.

**Jane** has four children, three sons and a daughter (her youngest). She identifies as Black British and did not wish to specify of which descent. She is a single mother, having parented all her children by herself, due to their father 'not being in a good place himself, not really active in their lives, not really showing any interest'. Her third son, Jackson, started being verbally and physically abusive towards her and invading her personal space at 10 years old. He would also pull his younger sister's hair and also hit her. Jane is a professional (social worker) and while enduring violent behaviour from her son, was tasked with supporting families going through a similar situation to herself.

**Chardonae** is a married mother of three children, one son (eldest child) and two daughters. She is Black British, of Caribbean heritage and proudly shares how her parents migrated to England as part of the Windrush Generation. She describes her relationship with her son Anthony as 'having its traumas'. When he was born, Chardonae was a single teenage mother, unsure of who Anthony's biological father was. For most of his childhood and adolescence, she was a single mother, before marrying later in life and having her second child 17 years after him. Anthony's aggressive behaviour towards her started when he was 8 years old, when he first pulled a knife on her while angry. Chardonae experienced 10 years of Anthony's abusive behaviour, locking herself in her bedroom and him out of the house to cope with the situation. Their relationship remains characterised by verbal abuse and disrespect.

**Kike** is a married mother of one child. She is British-African of Nigerian descent and has been living in the UK for 25 years. Her son Tobi is 16 years old and is verbally abusive and threatening towards her. Both Kike and her husband feel as though they have failed as parents, however she reveals that 'I always blame myself, feel as if I have done something wrong'. As a result of her son's behaviour, she struggles with low mood and insomnia.

**Latoya** is married mother of three children: a 21-year-old daughter, and two sons aged 15 and 13. Latoya grew up lacking an emotional relationship with her own mother but held hopes of being a 'good mother' herself. Her daughter Sharon began displaying harmful behaviour towards her when she was 19 years old, and this behaviour persists. Sharon would aggressively push her mother, control her movements, and use verbal aggression to belittle her. Sharon's behaviour not only upsets Latoya but scares her younger siblings.

**Badu** is a single, adoptive mother of Black African heritage. She lives alone with her 9-year-old adopted daughter, Ire. Badu had a 'challenging' relationship with her mother and had the hopes of being a good mum. She describes her experience of living and parenting in the UK as lonely and has felt that as a Black mother, many people struggle to understand her. Badu has been experiencing abuse from her daughter since she was 8 years old. Ire displays behaviour which ranges from hitting and throwing household items when she does not get what she wants. Badu does not personally feel responsible for the behaviour, and this may be connected to the lack of biological or genetic connection between herself and Ire. Badu has attempted to navigate the issue by engaging the school and often 'giving in' to the demands of her daughter. She has expressed that she is often not believed when she discloses CPVA.

**Zaya** is a widowed mother, who identifies as being of Mixed Black Caribbean and White heritage. Following the death of her husband due to terminal illness, she solo-parents her son and daughters. Zaya considers the death of her husband is a source of pain for their only son, Isaiah, aged 15 years old. He has damaged property around the house and uses physical force on Zaya by pushing her and dictating her movements. According to Zaya, the common causes of conflict between her and Isaiah are missed school days, mixing with peers, and the possibility that he is weathering depression. In sharing her experience, Zaya is very conscious of how Black boys are pushed into stereotypes through racial profiling and how hostile society is towards them. These views have made her reluctant to engage in services and support.

**Elaine** is a divorced grandmother of Black British Caribbean heritage. She had taken on the role of mothering her granddaughter, Shayanna since she was a child because her mother was unable to look after her. Elaine shared that she grew up around domestic violence in a family she describes as being ‘very dysfunctional’. She always hoped to be married while raising her child in a ‘good home’, but instead was a single mother in the late 80s, which she says affected her ability to mother her daughter. According to Elaine, ‘we are coming from a family of rejection which filtered from me to my daughter to her children, and I was left with the carnage to clean up’. Elaine described Shayanna’s past behaviour to include threatening her with knives, kicking and slapping in addition to swearing and other forms of verbal abuse. The impact of her behaviour on Elaine was immense and led to the onset of depression, sleepless nights and guilt. Now, having spent some time in a psychiatric hospital, Shayanna continues to live with Elaine, with her behaviour much improved.

## **Data Collection**

Data collection occurred over three research methods; semi-structured interviews, focus groups and victim questionnaires. The purpose of a multi-method qualitative approach was to expand the avenues through which data could be collected as the focus of the study is an under-reported form of family violence experienced by a marginalised group. Moreover, using multiple methods allows for methodological triangulation and creates avenues to explore how the data corroborates or contradicts one another (Brown et al. 2015: 125; Mason, 2002). Due to the exploratory nature of the study, it was important that participants were active co-producers of knowledge. I wanted to use data collection methodologies that would enhance their ability to steer the study and through their contributions raise themes that I could not have anticipated, being an outsider to the experience of CPVA. To fulfil these aims, I chose to collaboratively use in-depth semi-structured interviews, focus groups and victim questionnaires. These methodologies readily lend themselves to feminist research that centres the lived experience and voices of the interviewees (Stanley and Wise, 1990).

### *Semi-structured Interviews*

In the tradition of qualitative research, interviews (whether unstructured or semi-structured) are a commonly used method for data collection (Bevan, 2014; Bryman, 2016). Interviews generate data that assist researchers in ‘interpreting the social world of their participants’ (Yeo et al. 2013: 178). They highlight critical moments in the narratives of interviewees and its influence on the formation of their identities and lived experience (Shildrick and MacDonald, 2008: 339; Potter, 2008). As a method of investigation, semi-structured interviews allow ‘for a flexibility and flow of interaction between interviewer and interviewee’ enjoining one another in knowledge creation (Yeo et al 2013). The notion of ‘give and take’ between researcher and participant made semi-structured interviews a desirable choice (Galleta, 2013: 24; Galleta and Cross, 2013). The semi-structured interview

format allows the data collection process to be ‘theoretically driven’ with specific variables of interest to explore, while also allowing participants to suggest new meanings to the study (Galleta, 2013: 24; Galleta and Cross, 2013). Moreover, it is an established practice among scholars researching women’s lived experience of family violence to use in-depth interviews as a prime means of data collection (Gillum, 2008; Gillum, 2009a; Humphreys and Thiara, 2003; Potter, 2007; Femi-Ajao, 2016: 119).

I interviewed participants (mother-victims and professionals) only once, using remote interviewing techniques and video conferencing methods, namely Microsoft Teams and Zoom. All participants (except one mother-victim) were comfortable being interviewed with cameras on. I explore possible reasons why the one participant declined to put on her camera in the succeeding section on researcher reflexivity. Besides this instance, I was able to read the body language and non-verbal cues of all interviewees. My interviews with mothers-victims, though only three in number, were extensive and longer than the typical length of semi-structured interviews. The shortest was 1hr 26 minutes and the longest was 2hrs 12 minutes. It was important during the interviews to balance a degree of flexibility and giving participants freedom to bring up issues they considered relevant, with the need to ensure the gathered data was relevant to the inquiry, research questions and comparability of responses between interviews (Patton, 1990; King et al. 1994; Flick, 2009). I found that having an interview schedule helped to limit the likelihood of variability which could affect the internal validity of the study.

The interview schedule for mother-victims and professionals were developed with the expertise of my supervisor and created with reference to the literature review, research objectives and questions (Ayres, 2008; Heinonen, 2015). I began each interview by

introducing myself and the aims of the project. I reminded all participants of their right to withdraw consent and asked them to confirm their willingness to continue with the interview. They were informed that the conversation would be recorded for transcription purposes and held securely. Building from this foundation, the mother-victims were invited to discuss their status and experience as mothers. The interviews with mothers were aimed at gaining insights into their lives, their upbringing and the aspirations they had towards motherhood. It was important to understand their experience of CPVA, the impact of the abuse, how they have coped with and navigated the phenomenon. However, I began by asking them about their upbringing, fond childhood memories, and their relationship with immediate and wider family. This was done to relax participants and give me the opportunity to familiarise myself with their backgrounds i.e., taking note of how many children they had and building my understanding of their native countries and cultural expectations around parent-child relations.

When it came to asking about CPVA, I chose to describe the phenomenon using words like ‘challenging, difficult or aggressive’. I felt these terms moved away from diagnostic terminology likely to be used in professional settings, and more appropriately, they reflected how mothers were likely to describe their child’s behaviour. I only used the term ‘child-parent violence and abuse’ when interviewing professionals as they were already familiar with formal terminology. Interviews with professionals were more aligned with the average length, ranging between 35 minutes to 1 hour 10 minutes. It was important to examine the perspectives of formal and informal ‘gatekeepers’ with experience supporting Black women through CPVA. On a pragmatic level, engaging gatekeepers assisted my efforts to access a marginalised group of participants. However, in addition to this, the data gathered from these interviews greatly enriched the study as professionals drew from their various vocational

experiences in their responses. The themes emerging from the expert interviews centred on the scope of support offered to Black mothers and the barriers and facilitators of successful intervention.

### *Victim Questionnaire*

The research design of this study was iterative. Though I began with the aim of interviewing the mother-victims directly, it was soon revealed that there was need to pivot my approach and include new methods. Geraldine Brown, researching the wellbeing of Black mothers living in the Midlands with experiences of gun crime, observed that ‘in the doing of research’ investigators encounter challenges far beyond what they anticipated when completing their ethical approval applications (2020:3). The dynamic, messy and non-linear nature of research is difficult to foresee (Brown, 2020; Brown, 2015) and such was the case in this study. After several months of attempting to recruit mothers-victims, often through informal and formal gatekeepers, it became apparent through conversations that some mothers wanted to anonymously contribute to the study, without which were concerned by the risks of being identified. At the start of my study, it was not anticipated that a victim questionnaire would be necessary. However, considering the premium Black mothers placed on anonymity, it was important to provide them a way to privately contribute to the study.

It was important to create an avenue within the data collection process to allow for anonymous contributions. I designed a victim questionnaire to gather textual responses from Black mothers about their experience of CPVA. This was done to widen participation in the study. I informed the SSH IDREC of the decision to include an anonymous questionnaire in my research methodology and received additional ethical approval. I drafted and submitted an online survey template to the committee detailing the purpose of the study, and examples

of the questions the participants will be asked. The questionnaire was created using Jisc Survey software. On the landing page of the survey information was provided about the nature and purpose of the study, the participation process, how data would be used and the rights of participants.

After this first page, participants were required to tick a box to acknowledge this information, confirm their age (above 18) and give their consent to participate in the study. The questionnaire asked closed questions regarding specific information relating to the ethnicity, age, demographic and income details of mothers. For these areas, participants were given a drop-down list of options to choose from. Outside of this section, the victim questionnaire utilised open-ended questioning to encourage mothers to provide descriptive accounts of their experiences with CPVA. I shared the questionnaire on Twitter, and it was also retweeted by notable organisations supporting Black women affected by family violence. The survey was completed by 5 mothers, identifying as being of Black African and Caribbean heritage.

There were limitations to using this methodological approach. As responders were unknown to me, there was no opportunity to provide debriefing after they completed the questionnaire. However, I provided the contact details of organisations who offer practical and therapeutic support to Black women navigating family violence. Moreover, although some participants may find the traditional interviewing method unsuitable and challenging to engage with (Lareau, 2011; Willis, 2019), online questionnaires are also laborious, requiring time dedication and a level of literacy to participate. Furthermore, though anonymity is beneficial in other ways, it creates a barrier between researcher and participant, preventing further clarification or elaboration on identified issues. Despite these limitations, victim

questionnaires are an increasingly effective means of using self-narrative to explore pertinent themes. Moreover, the victim questionnaire was created in response to the preferences of Black mothers who wanted to anonymously contribute to the study. Without making this necessary amendment, their experiences would have been excluded.

### *Focus Group Discussions*

Similar to the interviews, the focus group discussions were conducted virtually, using Zoom. The decision to conduct focus groups with Black African and Caribbean women was geared towards enhancing collective knowledge creation around the realities, practices and priorities of Black motherhood in England. Unlike semi-structured interviews, focus groups are not designed to respond simply to the researcher's questions, but rather allow for an exploration of group dynamics and accommodation of how 'group effect' can shape participant responses (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2004: 198, Montell, 1999; Freeman, 2006: 491). I wanted to utilise focus groups to observe how Black women share and produce knowledge around their motherwork when in a collective environment. While the group dynamic allows for collective knowledge creation, it also provides room for challenging or rejecting assumptions around presented themes (Montell, 1999; Morales-Williams, 2014: 73). As detailed above, I used convenience sampling in recruiting focus group participants by first reaching out to Black mothers to whom I was acquainted. This activated a snowball effect as those mothers invited other women within their network, who were unknown to me. However, as some of the mothers were already known to one another, this replicated a degree of familiarity within the focus group (Finch and Lewis, 2003; Okpokiri, 2017: 73).

Two focus groups were organised with a total of 11 African and Caribbean mothers (non-victim) participating. One focus group lasted for 1 hour 90 minutes, while the other was 2 hours and 8 minutes long. In a style similar to the interviews, I began the focus group session

by inviting mothers to share about their upbringing and childhood. They were asked how many children they had and to share their mothering priorities and practices. It was also the aim of this focus group to gather preliminary findings on community attitudes to CPVA, particularly around the perceived causes of this phenomenon. As this focus group was with non-victims, I used a vignette to gauge the participants views on the phenomenon. Vignettes help to simulate dialogue and debate in group conversations through the use of real-life examples (Mooney, 2000; Okpokiri, 2017: 62,73).

As ‘concrete illustrations’ (Schostak, 2002: 167), these scenarios draw upon the existing understanding of participants and ‘synthesize sensitive viewpoints’ (Bradbury-Jones et al. 2014: 427; Okpokiri, 2017: 73). The vignette I presented to the mothers (see appendix) detailed the experience of Fola, a married mother of twin teenage boys affected by CPVA. I intentionally described non-physical forms of abuse (verbal and financial) to gauge whether the group would firstly identify these behaviours as harmful, abusive, violent or merely disrespectful. I was intentional in ensuring Fola was married because of the societal and cultural tendency to problematize Black single motherhood as cause for the behaviour of children. I also chose to include forms of CPVA that were not overt or excessive in presentation, in order to observe how subjective interpretations of harm would manifest within the group.

## **Data Analysis**

### *Transcription (Phase 1)*

Following the gathering of data, the practice of analysis is crucial in the qualitative research process (Bryman 2016). Through an inductive, deductive or combined analytical procedure, raw data transforms into constructs of meaning (Denzin and Lincoln, 1995; Pope et al. 2000; Femi-Ajao, 2016: 132). From the preliminary process of transcription to categorisation and

coding, important interpretations emerge from data (Englander, 2012; St. Pierre and Jackson, 2014). In this study, interviews and focus group discussions were audio recorded and transcribed. For the victim questionnaires, transcription was not required before analysis. To assist with transcribing the interview and focus group data, I used an artificial intelligence software named Otter.AI. The software was useful to an extent with transcribing interviews of professionals, however the quality of transcription significantly reduced for the interviews with mothers and the focus groups. I reflected on the plausible reasons for this. Though the professionals came from a range of different backgrounds, they used formal dialogue in their interviews and spoke with British accents. Predictably, Otter A.I was able to translate their speech well. However, the conversations with mothers (victims and non-victims) were poorly transcribed by the software. This was surprising to observe as all of the mothers (except one) were employed in professional roles including social care, teaching and nursing (similar to experts). Arguably their interviews should have been transcribed by the software to the same standard as the professionals.

Reflecting on possible differentiating factors, I realised that because I was intentional in building rapport with the mothers, there was a sense of informality and openness in our discussions. This atmosphere of familiarity meant mothers were comfortable using colloquial terms, speaking in pidgin (broken) English or freely speak in their native accents. Observing this behaviour brought to mind the reality of ‘racial code-switching’ among Black people in the workplace to be accepted and perceived as professional (McCluney et al. 2021). The mother’s use of colloquial terms and native accents was not accurately transcribed by the Otter.AI software. Hence, I spent significant amount of time correcting and re-transcribing these interviews and discussions. After transcribing the interviews and focus groups, the data was anonymised using pseudonyms that reflected the cultural and

ethnic identity of the participants. Since the data gathered by the victim questionnaire did not require transcription, I downloaded and imported participant responses from the JISC survey platform onto my laptop and allocated each participant number with a pseudonym. Using excel, I created a 'participant information sheet' placing the real name of participants alongside their assigned pseudonyms to ensure accurate use. Once gathered, all the data and transcripts were stored in compliance with the University of Oxford policy on Data Protection and CUREC advice.

### *Coding (Phase 2)*

Codes are described as 'units of analysis' which form the 'building blocks' of wider themes that relate aspects of data to research questions (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 82; 2016; Clarke and Braun, 2017: 297; Miles and Huberman, 1984). The coding process occurs in different stages and can begin before data collection. There is a 'provisional coding practice' (Mils and Huberman, 1994) also called 'pre-coding' where codes are developed based on existing findings within the literature (Layder, 1998). However, as this study is exploratory in nature and no specific literature exists on how Black mothers' experience CPVA, it was not possible to create an exhaustive list of literature-inspired provisional codes before data collection. Nevertheless, to gather a sense of relevant themes, I reviewed literature on the disclosure and help-seeking practices of Black women following intimate partner violence. Although there are notable distinctions between the former and CPVA, there are studies to suggest that in the mother-son dyad, women experience abuse in similar ways (Cottrell and Monk, 2004; Eckstein, 2004).

Reviewing this literature, I made the preliminary step of noting provisional themes that could be relevant at the stage of coding and analysing data. These included: faith and spirituality, resistance to services, service distrust, strong Black woman, and notions of self-

help. I found these pre-codes and provisional themes useful to direct my navigation of the data in search of connections. Once transcription was complete, I re-read the transcripts several times to ensure in-depth understanding and an immersion in the data (Silverman, 2013). While reading, I highlighted unanticipated themes that emerged from the participants. I used the software Nvivo to assist in this inductive process and to create sub-themes exploring the multi-layered and complex dimensions of Black maternal experience of CPVA. As I began writing initial thoughts this created opportunity to further reflect on the data, observing more connections between codes and themes.

### *Analysis (Phase 3)*

Thematic analysis was most suitable for this exploratory study which focused on understanding the social reality, behaviour, perception and lived experience of my participants (Clarke and Braun, 2017; Miles and Huberman, 1984; Guest et al. 2012:12). Following the codification process, thematic analysis entails identifying and interpreting emerging patterns, commonalities and themes within data (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun et al. 2016: 84; Ladapat, 2010: 926-927). My analytical process began with a deductive approach, as I made use of pre-conceived codes that emerged from existing literature on CPVA and Black female experiences of intimate partner violence. However, I was cautious to avoid coercing my data to fit within existing codes. To negate these risks, I also took an inductive approach to analysis, choosing to follow the unique experiences of the participants (Azungah, 2018). This study used three qualitative methods: semi-structured interviews, focus groups and textual victim questionnaires. Using multiple methods of data collection created an avenue for triangulation (Denzin and Lincoln 2008). My analytical process included triangulating the data generated by each method and making thematical comparisons to one another.

## **Ethical Considerations**

The process of sharing experiences of violence and abuse can be emotionally distressing (Ellsberg et al. 2008; Garcia-Moreno et al. 2006). The sensitivities of this study required that research was conducted ethically under established ethical standards to prevent exposing participants to harm (Patton, 2015; Ritchie et al. 2013; Polgar and Thomas, 2013). Before beginning the study, ethical approval was sought and granted by the University of Oxford SSH IDREC) on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022. Research Ethics Reference: R79763/RE001. I adhered and maintained the ethical standards and policies set by the University. I informed all participants (of interviews, focus groups and victim questionnaire) about the purpose, methods and potential risks of participating in the research. Before engaging participants, I ensured that our initial correspondence clearly outlined the parameters of the study. Attached to each email was a document (letter of engagement), where I shared information about myself, and the aims of the research.

When further interest was expressed, I sent an information sheet detailing more about the project and a consent form to which participants placed their digital signature or printed out their full names. Participants were reminded that they could take frequent breaks and refuse to answer any questions that proved too distressing. They were also given a document listing support organisations and therapeutic services they could access following the interview. Due to lack of direct contact, there were limitations on the support I could provide mothers who anonymously contributed to the study through the victim questionnaire. However, these participants had a greater degree of control over what they chose to disclose, reducing the complications that can arise with sensitive research (Burton et al. 2015; Radford et al. 2017; Baker, 2021: 110).

Sensitive research explores ‘the private worlds of people’ (Cowles 1988) and can cause harm to participants through incrimination or by retribution because they disclosed experiences relating to abuse or crime (Finch, 2001; Radford et al. 2017). Thus, when researching experiences of interpersonal violence, ensuring the security of participants is crucial (Baker, 2021 :110). Moreover, specific information can be shared about participants experiences with their children and other family dynamics which can increase the risk that they could be identified (Okpokiri, 2017: 81; Bickford and Nisker, 2015: 278). To combat these risks and preserve anonymity, I assigned participants pseudonyms and did the same for named children and other family members (Elliot, 2005; Long and Johnson, 2007).

Interviews with survivors of violence, trauma and abuse can also aid the healing process (Taylor, 2002; Baker, 2021: 98). It was my aim to make the interviews and focus groups a space where mothers can candidly share their experiences. I received comments from participants acknowledging and appreciating the outlet for discussion. One mother even described her interview as feeling ‘like therapy’ (Chardonae). It was reassuring to see that at least one participant in this study vocalised that value of the interview in supporting their emotional wellbeing. It was a humbling experience to have mothers share such challenging with a stranger in the hope to raise awareness and possibly help others. Seeing the vulnerability of the participants made me determined to make ‘something’ of the sensitive knowledge they shared about their lives. However, I soon realised that the specific impact of one’s research was not a guarantee nor was it subject to one’s control.

## **Reflexivity and the Role of the Researcher**

In qualitative research, the researcher is a ‘facilitator-observer’ and ‘primary instrument’ of data collection (Bey, 2020; Willis et al. 2016). As Letherby observes, ‘social scientists...are part of the world we study’ (2003:8; Brown, 2015). Stanley and Wise (2003) note that the

production and interpretation of knowledge occurs contextually, often reflecting our social locations. They coined the term ‘accountable knowledge’ which acknowledges the relationship between research process and product (Stanley and Wise, 1993; Letherby, 2003; Brown, 2015). Researchers must take caution to identify the beliefs, bias, personal assumptions and values that can subjectively impact the research process (Smith and Noble, 2014; Roulston and Shelton, 2015; Clarke et al. 2015: 43). The aim of reflexive practice in the qualitative research process is not to eliminate personal beliefs but ensure that empirical enquiry is not structured around bias and subjective expectations (Roulston and Shelton, 2015). Practicing reflexivity requires making a conscious effort to identify personal assumptions and account for how they can protect participants and the integrity of the research process from the ‘unnecessary harms’ these subjectivities may cause (Guillemin and Gilliam, 2004; Femi-Ajao, 2016: 145).

Attributes such as class, culture, age, race and lived experience are areas that can raise challenges around researcher positionality (Rowe, 2014). As, there are several identities I share with research participants, it was important that I apply a ‘self-critical lens’ to my study and acknowledge areas of ‘intersubjective dynamics’ between myself and the participants (Okpokiri, 2017: 82; Finlay and Gough, 2003: 4). I am a 29-year-old, Black British female of Nigerian descent. Though born in Nigeria, I migrated to England with my father aged two. I grew up in inner-city East London and have only visited Nigeria a sum total of three times across my lifetime. I am the eldest of three children, and the only girl. I am married and during the course of my doctoral study became a mother. As a Black woman (and now mother) researching the experiences of Black mothers (mostly first-generation immigrants), I held ‘insider status’ due to shared characteristics with participants. It was important to reflect on how my presence could ‘critically shape the stories participants choose to tell’ (Riessman, 2008: 50).

While the concept of ‘insider’ status is met with mixed perspectives in the field of qualitative enquiry, in this study, sharing characteristics with participants was instrumental to understanding CPVA from a Black maternal perspective. Firstly, the credibility I held as an ‘insider’ was instrumental in securing a sample of willing participants (Odum, 2017: 39). Black and Asian communities are often considered ‘difficult-to-reach’ populations for the purposes of empirical research, and as discussed above, recruiting participants for this study was a significant challenge. However, the barriers were surmountable because of shared social identities around gender, race, culture and at times religion. For example, as a Black woman of African descent, the mothers could identify with me due to a shared socio-cultural background and understanding of collective values and norms around family. Furthermore, through my experience growing up in England, I likely shared similar experiences with their children, who were the focus of our discussion. Additionally, I believe being a female researcher helped the mothers feel comfortable sharing aspects of their motherhood and girlhood experiences.

Notwithstanding the many benefits, my ‘insider’ status presented challenges. While the characteristics I shared with the mothers helped establish rapport and cultivate an atmosphere of ease which facilitated open discussion, I had to be mindful of ‘over-identifying’ with participants. Over-identifying with research participants engenders the risk of agreeing or disagreeing with their statements which could contaminate the data and skew analysis to reflect my opinions as opposed to the reality of participant experiences. Thus, to ensure the individuality of participants and the acknowledgement of their experiences, it was important to not over-emphasise our commonalities. Moreover, when it came to the writing process, I had to guard against the tendency to present insightful data as ‘matter of fact’ due

to the existing knowledge afforded by my insider status as a Black female living in England. As Riessman encapsulates, the pressing challenge facing researchers within insider knowledge of their empirical enquiry is having to ‘make strange what appears utterly familiar’ (2005: 90; Okpokiri, 2017: 57).

Though gender was a dominant identity shared between the mothers and I, it is insufficient in itself as there were other ways I presented as an ‘outsider’ to the experiences of the participants (Riessman, 1987). Although I am now a mother, I was not at the time I was conducting my fieldwork. Moreover, being a relatively young researcher at the time (26 years old), I was concerned that my age and my non-mother status would be a barrier to building rapport with first-generation immigrant Black mothers and understanding the life experiences of women parenting in their late thirties to mid-fifties. However, these concerns did not materialise and there are various possible reasons. For instance, during my interviews and focus groups with mothers, I often referred to my practice as a youth justice professional. I did this to perhaps mitigate the risks of being dismissed by participants because I was a younger woman (and non-mother) researching issues of motherhood and family violence. It felt important to reference my background working with young people because while I did not have a child or the experience of parenting an adolescent, I was able to demonstrate a knowledge of the challenges facing young Black people and the issues around their racialisation, criminalisation and pathologisation within services.

Another way I presented as an outsider to the mother-participants was that I did not have direct experience of CPVA. When raising awareness about the study, I received questions about why I was researching this type of family violence. With further conversations, some revealed their assumption that perhaps my investigation was driven by a personal experience of CPVA. There were instances I wondered if my lack of ‘lived experience’ or personal

connection to the phenomenon would be a barrier to participants (mothers especially) trusting me with their narratives. To mitigate these effects, I explained that while I did not have a personal connection to CPVA, my professional experience working with young Black people at risk of exploitation and offending has shown me how challenging and complex the home life can be. I also shared how my involvement in a rapid research project exploring CPVA during the Covid-19 pandemic sparked my curiosity to explore this issue further (Miles et al. 2024).

Yet again, I observed how suspicions around my distance to the CPVA were appeased by my professional background as a former youth worker, community outreach officer and my continued active participation in various grassroots projects supporting young people of diverse backgrounds. My professional identity affected how I interacted with participants as I was alert to their need to have their child accorded empathy and understanding. When mothers in the focus group expressed having challenges and misunderstanding with their children, I felt compelled to offer a ‘youth-worker perspective’ which they appeared to be grateful for. However, it was necessary to be cautious about this approach so as to not risk over-identifying and becoming too familiar with participants.

The power imbalance between researchers and participants can be an ethical concern in qualitative research. Though I was the researcher, the mothers and professionals participating in the study were the experts on CPVA, whether by lived experience or specialist training. While I do not think concerns around power differentials were exacerbated within this study, my involvement in the academy represented another level of ‘othering’ which distanced me from the mothers. As a young Black woman completing an advanced programme at the University of Oxford, I was informed by several Black

professionals and mothers that they considered my work 'impressive' and wanted to know more about my experience studying at the institution. Despite there being no personal connection between myself and the participants, many were comfortable to share that they were 'proud' of me. In my view, rather than dictate my interaction with participants, my role as researcher helped to offset potential barriers that could have been caused by my (relatively) young age.

Nevertheless, to prevent any potential power imbalances forming between myself and participants, I engaged in the following practices to ensure respect and equality between all parties. At the start of the interview, I reminded participants that they were free to leave, withdraw consent or refuse to answer any questions. Though I had an interview schedule with overarching questions, it was important that participants felt in control of the direction of conversations. I used humour where appropriate to make participants comfortable, particularly during their reflections on childhood experiences in their native countries. At times, I highlighted similarities between myself and the participants. This looked like positively responding to their use of pidgin English or colloquial terms. Other times, I confirmed their assumptions of cultural values that I was expected to know. I also used empathetic terms and phrases while responding to their disclosures. For example: 'I can't imagine how challenging that must have been for you.' Ultimately, the apprehensions I had around being an 'outsider' due to my lack of direct experience of CPVA, my non-mother status at the time of fieldwork, and being a researcher in my mid-20s, did not materialise as pressing concerns. It seemed my 'insider' status as a Black female of Nigerian descent with experience supporting Black youth who had come in conflict with the law was considered more valuable to participants.

### *Navigating a sense of 'duty'*

Irrespective of racial and ethnic background, CPVA is a highly stigmatised form of family violence in the way it threatens societal perception of childhood innocence and disrupts typical understanding of family hierarchy and power dynamics between parent-child. However, as explored in Chapter 3, the Black maternal experience of CPVA is unique due to the pre-existing ways Black children are pathologised within education, mental health, social care and criminal justice systems and how Black and single motherhood is perceived as the cause of social ills including youth offending and teen pregnancy. Due to my intersecting identities, I was required to navigate role plurality at various stages of the research process. I frequently heard Black professionals, mothers and fellow researchers say, 'I am glad you are the one doing this research'. It is likely there were fears that the racist and prejudicial stereotypes already impacting the lives of Black women and their children could be exacerbated by a study that explores how patterns of violence occur within their homes. They emphasised the importance of someone from the Black community undertaking this research, implying that they would sensitively handle the topic of CPVA in Black families, ensuring neither parent nor child are vilified.

In this regard, the participants and I shared an unarticulated fear that this study could be misconstrued as 'evidence' to advance the racialised narrative of Black children being violent and aggressive. As a Black researcher, it felt like there was an implied sense of 'duty' on me to be intentional in the way I presented the data, accounting for all the sensitivities. There were times I worried that in the presenting the thoughts of the mothers, I could be misunderstood as validating their perspectives. In these circumstances, leaning on Patton's (1990) concept of 'empathetic neutrality' was important in reminding me that I need not share the views of my participants to respect and accurately present them. Rather, I approached the field recognising that complexities and multi-layered perspectives exist and

to engage in the balance of acknowledging, reporting and challenging the evidence (Patton, 1990: 55; Jenkins, 2005: 69).

My position remains that it is not the quest of this study to problematize Black mothering practices as pathway for their child's behaviour, nor is this thesis concerned with evidencing aggression among Black children or providing any justification for why they should be subject to punitivism or criminalisation. However, I understand I have no control over how this study is received or whether individuals choose to misconstrue its findings to perpetuate their own prejudicial and racist views. Instead, the focus of this enquiry is to investigate how the practice of Black motherhood compounds with experiences of racialisation to limit the support pathways available to Black women affected by CPVA. I have written extensively on researcher reflexivity and researcher positionality to identify aspects of my identity that may have bearings on the study. Challenges come with bestriding multiple roles, and I have attempted to highlight a few in this section (Phoenix, 1991; Hawkins, 2010; 2015; De Andrade, 2000; Brown, 2015: 144). However, I recognise that it is not possible to curate a 'complete picture' of my 'whole identity' within a thesis chapter (Henne and Troshynski, 2013: 467). There is much debate around insider/outsider status within academic research (Merton, 1972; Miller and Glassner, 1997; Merton, 1972). However, I have worked towards managing the opportunities and obstacles to the best of my ability. I occupy what Hill-Collins (1999) describes as 'outsider-within' status; a unique standpoint allowing Black women to reflect on their positioning within family, society and self to produce a distinctive analysis on class, gender and race (Hill-Collins, 1999: 155; Morales-William, 2014: 52). Within Black feminist epistemology, researchers possessing 'lived experience', even to some degree, validates the knowledge produced (Hill-Collins, 1990; Morales, 2014: 74).

## **Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic**

This study was conducted by a sole researcher within constrained budget and the fieldwork undertaken throughout the years of the global Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic brought unique dimensions, benefits and challenges to this study. In July 2020, I was involved in a rapid-research study exploring the impact of Covid-19 lockdowns on experiences of CPVA. My participation in this project brought about a interest to further explore and disaggregate Black maternal experiences of this phenomenon. I began my doctoral studies in October 2020 with a combination of in-person and online seminars and supervisions in the aftermath of the pandemic. While writing my literature in my first term, I was advised by my supervisor to undertake an exploratory mapping stage and gather perspectives from professionals on their experience supporting Black mothers affected by CPVA. This process was highly engaging and informative. As the pandemic had ushered in the use of online platforms for work, education and socialising purposes, many professionals opted to participate in the mapping stage through Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Their availability to participate could be linked to limited commute to work and reduced in-person meetings and home visits.

After receiving ethical clearance in February 2022, I began recruiting participants for the interviews, focus groups and later, victim questionnaire. The pandemic brought a lasting change to the nature of work, with many roles offering a hybrid of online and office work, if not completely remote. Due to this, professionals and mother-participants were well acquainted with video conferencing methods, and preferred virtual ways of contributing to the study, even though I offered to travel to their specific locations. This brought several advantages. Pragmatically speaking, remote interviewing methods reduced the expenditure of time and resources. In previous times, researchers would incur extensive costs travelling the country and beyond to interview participants, who could reschedule, cancel without

notice or simply not arrive. Secondly, remote interviewing allowed participants time flexibility, as such interviews and focus group discussions were scheduled for late evening, early weekend mornings or whenever children were sleeping or otherwise engaged. Such time arrangements would have been difficult to organise and possibly unsafe if the meetings were held in-person.

Virtual participation allows participants to engage with research discussions from the safety and comforts of their home (Hannah, 2012). However, as CPVA is a hidden abuse occurring in the home, for some participants being in this environment does not offer the sense of safety normally expected. However, because the interviews were remote and mothers could join through devices like phones, tablets and laptops, they were at liberty to move to areas and spaces within their homes or outside that felt safe. Combined with time flexibility, mothers were able to participate at the time of day that was safest for them, whether due to their child being at school, work or sleeping. Remote interviewing also gave mothers the opportunity to choose whether or not to participate with cameras on. One of the mother-victims, Oyinka decided to keep her camera off throughout our conversation. Although we were on a video conferencing platform (Microsoft Teams), our conversation felt more like a telephone interview. There was no obligation on Oyinka to be seen by me and this increased her comfortability and willingness to share transparently. It did not feel appropriate to probe Oyinka as to why she wanted to keep her camera off, as I thought it was important to respect her decision and preferences around research participation. However, her camera being off reduced my ability to read her body language and gauge any distress caused by our conversation. To mitigate this issue, I made it a point to remind her, and the other participants, that they can stop or pause the interview at any time.

The mothers who agreed to be interviewed (Oyinka, Chardonae and Jane) were no longer experiencing abuse from their children in the home. Contrastingly, the mothers who completed the victim questionnaire were still experiencing CPVA. Although remote interviewing would have offered these mothers a means to participate, it may be challenging to speak on these issues from the home while their child is there. On reflection, this could be why they opted to contribute to the study through the victim questionnaire. Though advantageous in many ways, remote research methods come with challenges, such as issues with technology, disruptions with unexpected visitors or deliveries. There were also initial challenges around building rapport with some professionals through the ‘cold’ introductory emails I sent when in search of participants. Despite these limitations, I believe the use of remote interviewing techniques aligned with the aim of this study and significantly improved the participation of professionals and mothers alike.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has explored and justified the three-pronged mixed qualitative methodologies adopted in this thesis. Although the sample size of Black mother-victims is small, the study does not aim to produce a work that is generalisable to the whole population. Instead, its focus is to conduct an in-depth exploration of the narratives of Black mothers who have experienced CPVA. Due to the sensitive nature of the study, accounting for ethical considerations and researcher reflexivity was important to ensure the integrity of the research. This chapter has outlined how my identity as a Black female living in the UK provided ‘insider credibility’ and the privilege of access to participants. Despite being a complete stranger to the mother-victims, there was an inferred sense of sisterhood or daughterhood by virtue of our shared racial, gender and cultural identity. However, being an insider also engendered the risk of over-identifying with the mothers and presenting as ‘matter of fact’ the unique data gathered from the study.

Despite these shared similarities, there were ways I remained an outsider to the participants. For example, being a young researcher with no lived experience of CPVA and a non-mother at the time of conducting fieldwork. In light of these realities, participants were sometimes curious about the motive behind conducting this research. Nevertheless, I believe these factors contributed to me having some distance from the mother's experiences which helped navigate the challenges that can arise with insider status. This chapter has outlined the online fieldwork parameters in which the study took place, and the effects of the global covid-19 pandemic on participant recruitment and data collection. The next four chapters draw on empirical data to portray how CPVA intersects with race and gender in the experience of Black mothers to deconstruct their maternity, frame their coping practices and facilitate how they seek help.

## **FIVE: THE MAKING OF THE BLACK MOTHER: MAPPING TENSIONS WITHIN BLACK MATERNAL IDENTITY.**

### **Introduction**

Centralising maternity in our understanding of CPVA is essential for numerous reasons. Firstly, the state of being a mother places affected women in proximity with violence and abuse. As shown in Chapter 2, several studies show that victim demographics are highly gendered, with mothers being five times more likely to be assaulted by their children than fathers (Wilcox, 2012; Gallagher, 2004; Calvete et al. 2015; Pagani et al. 2003:2004; Edenborough et al. 2008). In a UK study of police data, Condry and Miles (2014) found that 77.5% of victims were females with son-to-mother abuse accounting for 66.7% of all reported cases. Due to the overrepresentation of mothers as victims, the gendered nature of CPVA can be placed within the broader field of violence against women (Edenborough et al. 2008). Secondly, normative beliefs around the mother-child relationship, revered perceptions of motherhood and childhood innocence, keep CPVA a hidden and highly stigmatised form of abuse. Moreover, the legal and moral responsibilities mothers have towards their children (despite their use of abuse) raise complications around ending the violence and fears around relationship severance which highlight the impracticality of ‘divorcing your child’ (Holt, 2012: 9). Further consideration on the practice and experience of motherhood can enhance understanding of what facilitates the gendered dimension of CPVA.

The aim of this chapter is to interrogate motherhood and disaggregate the Black maternal experience, highlighting its multi-layered and complex nature. Motherhood as a universal experience enjoyed and endured equally among women has been challenged (Arendell, 2000). As a gendered social role, motherhood is interpreted and experienced in ways shaped

by race and ethnicity (Jenkins, 2005: 46; Bridges and Orza, 1992;1993). Embracing the intersections of gender, class, culture, religion and race are essential to moving beyond eurocentric mothering ideologies to understand the nuances of Black motherhood (Odum 2017:112; Hill-Collins, 2000; Gilkes, 1983; Riedle, 1991). Furthermore, it requires an appreciation of the cultural scripts guiding the way Black women operate as mothers within society (Odum, 2017: 104). These scripts are dictated by gender expectations, community influences, family dynamics and oppressive systems of racialisation (Ibid). Hill-Collin's (1994) concept of 'motherwork' is helpful. She found that Black mothers engage in 'reproductive labour' that links their survival and care to the survival, identity and empowerment of their children and communities (Ibid). 'Motherwork' encapsulates the Black mothering ideology that 'individual survival, empowerment and identity require group survival, empowerment and identity' (Hill-Collins 1994:199). The terms survival, power and identity warrant further exploration. While physical survival can be assumed for White and middle-class children, the foremost priority of Black 'motherwork' is to safeguard the physical subsistence of Black children, whose bodies are under threat of systemic physical dangers (Hill-Collins, 1994:201; Coleman-king et al. 2023: 120).

On the theme of power, Black maternal empowerment manifests in dynamic ways. First is the decision to become a mother, despite policies discouraging low-income Black women from pursuing motherhood. Maternal power is also displayed in their fight to keep children despite systematic efforts to disempower racial communities by separating mothers and children (Hill-Collins, 1994: 205). Black women also exercise maternal power by drawing on Afrocentric traditions to educate and moralise their children in their cultural heritage (Ibid, 206). Despite the contrary efforts of mainstream institutions to exclude Black people, Motherwork demonstrates to Black children ways to integrate their cultural norms into these

spaces (Coleman-king et al. 2023: 120). The third theme relates to identity. Through motherwork Black women create positive racial identities for themselves and their children, which counter the negative narratives depicted in social institutions of Black children and their histories (Hill-Collins, 1994; 209; Odum, 2017: 41; Coleman-king et al. 2023: 120). Motherwork is pertinent to understanding how Black women resist racism while raising racialised children living in oppressive systems (a point developed later in this chapter). Overall, the interconnected themes of survival, power and identity can be observed throughout the maternal identities and practices of participants in the study.

The argument of this chapter is structured as follows. The opening section outlines six critical concepts which offer insight into the cultural, racial and religious scripts (narratives and expectations) that frame Black maternal identity and practice in England. It must be emphasised that Black women are not a homogenous group, and as such intra-ethnic differences will exist. However, these concepts emerge from commonalities established through interviews, focus groups and questionnaire responses from 19 African and Caribbean mothers and mother-victims. These are the concepts to be addressed: Maternal Might, Militant Motherhood, Matriarchal Providers, Collective Nurturers, Sacrificial Motherhood, and Sacred Maternity. The second section examines the tensions that arise when the reality of Black motherhood conflicts with venerated expectations. Specifically, it discusses cultural shifts that frame the reality of child-rearing in England for Black mothers and highlight why they are exercising autonomy over which maternal identities they choose to adopt. For instance, while their changing views on maternal discipline may mirror the decline in the social acceptability of corporal chastisement, it also reflects the realities of mothering in a society with cultural expectations around family that are distinct to those in

their native countries. The inter-generational tensions that emerge from the realities of raising their children in a 'mixed culture' are also explored.

The final section considers the intertwining of Black motherhood with the resistance of racism and the navigation of oppressive structures. Due to the negative social constructions around Black motherhood (single motherhood particularly), Black women are subject to scrutiny. Attempts are made to confine Black single motherhood into reductive categories with the dichotomised stereotypes of 'welfare queen' and 'strong matriarch' being dominant tropes. This section highlights the psychological and physical labour Black women undertake to counter negative conceptualisations of their motherhood. The criticality of 'motherwork' (Hill-Collins, 1994) to the survival of Black women, their children and their communities in racialised societies is also considered. This includes the complicated and contradictory choices Black mothers living in western societies are compelled to make - whether to teach their children to assimilate dominant White cultures (in order to survive) or resist systems of racial oppression and domination (Reynolds, 2005). It is impossible for a chapter to fully articulate the collective experiences of all Black mothers, nor does it advance a monolithic rhetoric about Black maternity. It shows the nuances, contradictions and complexities of Black mothering ideology and how their social and cultural experiences can differ (Jenkins, 2005: 97). Critically engaging with Black motherhood as identity, practice and experience is key to understanding how Black women navigate the phenomenon of CPVA.

## **Black Maternal Identities**

### *Maternal Might*

Across various Black societies, including African, Caribbean and African American communities, becoming a mother forms a central aspect of womanhood, personal identity and self-worth (Glenn, 1985; Hill-Collins, 2000; O'Reilly, 2004; Reynolds, 2005; Edin and Kefalas, 2005; Olayiwola and Olowonmi, 2013; Igwe, 2022). Motherhood is said to bestow status, privilege and empowerment to their womanhood (Emecheta, 1979; Madunagu, 2008; Akujobi, 2011; Oyewumi, 2003). The concept of 'maternal might' forms the foundation on which future expectations and dynamic typologies of Black maternal identities are built. It shows that respectability and status are not automatically afforded to all Black mothers but only reserved for those who demonstrate strength in the face of life's hardships and use their maternal might to advance the ecosystem of Black family life and community survival.

A.A: How would you say Black mums are seen within the Black community in Britain?

Betty: Positive I would say. Very, very essential. The overall view is respect, loved, central. And strong, also expected to be strong.

Maternal might is a pre-requisite to successful mothering practices among Black women. Studies have linked the operation of Black mothers across public and private spheres to the 'Strong Black woman' trope. Where strength is characterised by self-sacrifice, independence, dogged work ethic and the prioritisation of her family and community needs often to the detriment of self (Liao et al. 2020; Woods-Giscombe, 2010; Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2007). Chapter 8 revisits the notion of maternal might alongside the 'Strong Black Woman' trope and considers how it frames the navigation of Black maternal

suffering, acting as a barrier to the identification of CPVA. As this chapter will show, Black women are required to utilise their maternal might to become matriarchal providers, engage in the collective nurturership of other Black children, remain sacrificial in disposition, militant in their use of discipline, spiritually discerning and dogged in their resistance of oppressive racial structures. The community wide respect for Black mothers appears contingent on their fulfilment of expectations to display strength and respectability.

### *Militant Motherhood*

Following the perception of Black mothers as possessors of maternal might, there is an expectation that they raise their children within cultures of strength and fortitude. Studies show that Black mothers centre their ‘protective care framework’ around raising and shielding their children, who are racialised within society (Elliot and Reid, 2019). Some women opt for authoritarian and critical mothering approaches, for example displaying ‘harsh criticism’ as a means of fortifying their children to survive in an oppressive world (Surrency, 2021: 53; hooks, 1993; Morales-Williams, 2014: 46). By enforcing disciplinary regimes which control the movement and social interaction of their children, Black mothers hope to create a ‘security base’ for their children, guarding against the perceived wiles of the West, whether those are drugs, and engaging in reckless, anti-social behaviour (Arthur, 2008; Bledsoe et al. 2011: 754; Bledsoe and Robey, 1986). Collectively, the maternal practices and priorities of Black women are aimed at increasing the likelihood of their child’s survival in a world that fails to recognise their humanity (Elliot and Reid, 2019; Elliott and Aseltine, 2013; Elliot, 2012; Hill-Collins, 1994).

While the enforcement of discipline is not unique to Black mothers, the concept of militant motherhood encapsulates the Black maternal commission to rear children with a consciousness of inequality and racial injustice and to use discipline as a means of

eradicating weakness, with the hopes of instilling within them a strength to survive and contend with the harshness realities of the world. The use of extreme disciplinary measures in the accounts of the study's participants point to the centrality of militancy in Black maternal identity. Physical discipline and harsh verbal reprimanding were common practices.

‘Growing up in a West Indian culture and having friends from other Black backgrounds, Nigerian, Ghanaian. The common theme across the cultures is you are seen and not heard, you do not even dare to talk back to your parent, like are you mad?’ – Miriam, Child and Adult Safeguarding Practitioner

‘My biological mother was your typical African mother, very strict, very harsh, not understanding at all or forgiving. We didn't get on. She felt I was spoiled rotten and wanted to put me straight’ – Sharon, Married Mother, Black African.

The mothers spoke of the normalisation of being raised amidst strict maternal regimes. Their reflections revealed how commonplace militant motherhood was in Black maternal traditions. When practiced, militant maternity supports the existence of family hierarchy and clearly defined power dynamics between parent and child which, across Black cultures, confirmed the narrative that mothers were to be treated reverentially. Though a seemingly typical way to mother among Black women, there was a sense of discomfort among the mothers about the militant dimensions of Black mothering. For example, Niecy seemed to rely on humour when sharing how she would be physically harmed by her mother when she tried to advocate for more freedoms while growing up.

‘I couldn't even talk to my mum that way. Oh, the teeth... something would be happening in your mouth. You're not allowed [laughs]. You want to advocate to go out and the mouth will start bleeding because you're not allowed to say all that, it's not on. [laughs]’ – Niecy, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

Another way some mothers attempted to manage their discomfort around the realities of militant maternity were through their attempts to contextualise extreme examples of discipline by reference to what was previously accepted as a cultural norm or normative maternal behaviour in former times. While Niecy and Elizabeth emphasise the good intentions underlining their mother's excessive use of corporal punishment, it was evident from their reflections that if such practices of militant motherhood were repeated in contemporary times, it would cause detachment and disconnection between mother and child.

‘It's not that they [mothers] hate you, they wanted the best out of us. And that [physical beating] is the only language they know. If you use the same hand to treat a child here, you will lose that child because the child will interpret you hate them’ – Elizabeth, Married Mother, Black African.

‘They [mothers] didn't know anything else... they didn't see anything wrong with it [physical beating]. It didn't kill us. It wasn't like we felt we were abused. But then what they don't realise is, it didn't kill you physically, you're not dead, but emotionally some of us we died somewhere’ – Niecy, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

To some degree, the way Black mothers practice militant motherhood, particularly physical discipline, can be understood through a framework of care. However, the extent to which Black women implement militant maternal regimes in their child rearing differs. While Niecy and Elizabeth contextualised their encounters of severe discipline as being guided by good intentions, other women vehemently stood against the practice of militant maternity and struggled to make sense of the difficulties they encountered from their mothers under the guise of discipline. According to Tara, physical discipline was used by her mother to conceal her inability to regulate her emotions which resulted in a transference of aggression onto her children.

‘My mom was so strict. She used cane on us. When you weigh what you have done to what you receive as discipline...it is too much. She put what she was passing through on the children’ –Tara, Married Mother, Black African

‘As parents some of our childhood is informed by trauma. The trauma we've gained from being beaten silly.’- Enitan, Black African, Married Mother.

The performance of militant motherhood in unpredictable ways and for elusively defined reasons can induce high levels of mental distress, but also point to concerns around a mother's self-control, linking to the point raised by Tara. However, Feyi felt that receiving physical punishment was ‘good’ in comparison to the ‘constant worry that they might punish me’. At this stage of the focus group discussion, the women shared how their mothers practiced militant motherhood in ways that caused harm. Feyi recounted when at 13 years old, unwell with Malaria and experiencing loss of appetite, her mother used authoritarian methods to forcefully medicate and feed her.

‘I can never forget this. For Mum to force me to eat, you know what she did to me? She put pepper in my eyes so that I won’t see as she is feeding me and refuse the food. I was vomiting everything she was putting in my mouth, but she put another one again. She thought she was helping me so that I will not die, because I had not eaten for three days.’ - Feyi, Married Mother, Black African

Mothers expressed a perpetual fear of being beaten for speaking amiss or behaving contrary to expectations. For Sharon, meals were difficult to navigate. As she is dyslexic and went undiagnosed throughout childhood, her behaviour was misinterpreted by her mother as slow, stubborn and defiant. This resulted in her receiving more physical discipline.

‘Mealtimes were a terror. I didn't want to eat because I was afraid. I couldn't tell my left hand from my right, and if I put my left hand in the food, I get this whack that will send me across the room...when she died, it was a relief because I got beatings all the time.’ – Sharon, Married Mother, Black African.

Instead of recognising the personal challenges their children faced and addressing them in meaningful ways, the women felt their mothers relied on physical discipline in their attempt to moralise them. Listening to Sharon and Feyi sharing their stories, Ronke, a 45-year-old mother of three, shared that there were times militant expressions of maternity could be seen as malevolent.

‘The way I see it, I would call it wickedness. How can you ask your child to bring something and the child is struggling to carry the thing, falls down, and the first

thing you're getting is a slap on your face? 'Are you blind? Can't you walk' I didn't really know much then, but I knew it was bad.' - Ronke, Single Mother, Black African

Listening to the women's accounts, it is apparent that whenever they displayed weakness as children (whether falling ill, struggling to obey instructions due to physical limitations or undiagnosed conditions such as dyslexia), their mothers responded harshly to their frailties. Research suggests Black mothers can use critical disciplinary practices to fortify their children with the aim of preparing them to survive independently in a harsh world (Elliot and Reid, 2019). The use of militant mothering techniques, particularly physical chastisement, was observed as a common practice among some Black mothers. However, there were women who, due to their own difficult experiences of excessive maternal discipline, challenge its purpose and continued use.

### *Matriarchal Providers*

The responsibilities of mothering are typically confined to household labour and being a primary caregiver to children (Jenkins, 2005; DeMeis and Perkins, 1996; Thompson and Waler, 1989; Demo and Adcock, 1996). Early feminist theorisations of motherhood pointed to the public/private divide between men as providers and women as nurturers as a basis of gender inequality and female subordination in domestic spheres (Jagger and Wright, 1999; Silva and Smart, 1999; Duncan and Edwards, 1999; Duncan et al. 2004; Reynolds et al. 2003). However, Black women were not historically confined by domestication but due to the socioeconomic disadvantage affecting her family and community, were expected to perform the 'worker/mother' role across the public/private spheres (Jenkins, 2005: 106; Benin and Keith, 1995; Reynolds, 2005; Seguera, 1994). Again, the concept of maternal might resurges as the means by which Black mothers discharge their duties as matriarchal

providers, while still performing conventionally maternal roles of nurturing children. It was clear from the mother's account that discharging this dual-burden and aspiring to meet these cultural expectations caused much strain.

‘As a mother, I am supposed to be providing...supposed to be nurturing my child. I am a mom, I am supposed to be the leader of this child’ – Mabel, Single Mother, Black Caribbean.

‘I was struggling to put food on the table. I was a student studying social work with five children. My head was like popcorn (laughs)’ - Elizabeth, Black African, Married Mother and Social Worker

During enslavement, Black women were required to work plantations, labouring in fields alongside their men and were subject to ‘gendered forms of exploitation’ including wet nursing (West and Knight, 2017). In contemporary times, cultural expectations remain on Black mothers to financially cater for their children and men, who due to discrimination are affected by rates of high unemployment and incarceration (Romero, 2000; Laio et al. 2020: 85; Mama, 1995). For first-generation immigrant mothers, there was also the additional obligation of supporting families across borders, often locating them as the main or sole provider for their families (Ratlebjane, 2015). As a social worker, Elizabeth had supported other Black and immigrant mothers in a similar position.

‘Mum brought three of them from Congo by herself, while their father was back home. She had to work, send money back to Congo. She worked long-day shifts

finishing after 9pm and then night duty as well coming back around 7am' - Elizabeth,  
Black African, Married Mother and Social Worker

The centrality of labour and financial provision in the carework of Black women was also evident in conversations with professionals, who had to adopt flexible interventions to support mother who were working multiple jobs alongside study commitments. Mary-Anne, a psychologist shared the physical distance she had to commute in order to support two African mother-victims.

'A Southwark mom, she's working in East Acton. I travelled there to see her for half an hour. The other mom was a student nurse and working. She was like I can only see you on the weekends.' - Mary-Anne, Psychologist

However, a Black mother and professional herself, Mary-Anne also discharges the maternal obligations of matriarchal provider and could appreciate the challenges of navigating this burden.

'I understand that grind and that struggle. I think they appreciate that a lot. I'm not gonna penalise you, because you have to work to put food on the table, to create a better future for your family' – Mary-Anne, Psychologist

Other intervening professionals, unaware of expectations around matriarchal provision, may misunderstand the prominence of work in the lives of Black mothers as evidence of self-centred ambition or parental inadequacy. Chapter 7 illustrates how aspects of Black maternal identity are problematised as being blameable for incidents of CPVA. Black mothers are

expected to possess maternal might, and their internalisation of this cultural script then substantiates expectations around matriarchal provision.

### *Sacrificial Motherhood*

The intertwining of motherhood and sacrifice is well noted in literature (Ardenell, 2000). Through the processes of pregnancy and delivery alone a woman's body is transformed and subject to much risk. Beyond the years of infancy, studies show that women are likely continually sacrifice for their children, whether it be their happiness (Nam et al 2022), interpersonal relationships or career prospects (Horne and Breitkreuz, 2014; Shen et al. 2014). In Femi-Ajao's (2016) study on Nigerian women experiencing abuse from their male partners, children were considered a 'reward' for their suffering. Mothers chose to remain in abusive relationships, believing this would keep fathers active in their children's lives. In making this personal sacrifice, they hoped to be rewarded with their children becoming successful. They sought comfort in being seen as 'good mothers', even though they were unsafe in failing and abusive relationships (Femi-Ajao, 2016:162).

Similarly, the mothers in this study advanced a comparable rhetoric that sacrifice is the price mothers pay, and it should yield the rewards of well-behaved and compliant children. For these women, their participation in cycles of maternal sacrifice evidenced good mothering. Linked to the purpose of a matriarchal provider, is the expectation that she utilises her maternal might in the sacrificial service of her children and community. Hence, despite their many sacrifices, mothers and mother-victims expressed confusion and disappointment at their lack of reward by way of their child's conduct. The ideology that 'good' mothering is rewarded with good children highlights a tension within the idealisation of sacrificial motherhood among Black women.

‘If you know the number of times I have heard, ‘I did not come to this country for them to disrespect me. How dare you? I've toiled to give you a future that is better than what I had, how dare you treat me like that' – Mary-Anne, Psychologist.

‘In our communities, having a child that is naughty or bad is seen as a personal failure. You, as a parent, have failed. - Kukua, Independent Domestic Violence Advocate.

This belief endorses a type of ‘privatized mothering’ that dismisses the external limitations placed on Black mothers which increase their burdens while restricting their resources and negatively impact their mothering (Elliott et al. 2015: 367; Surrency, 2021: 55). Ultimately this parenting philosophy is grounded in reductive explanations that mothers are to blame for delinquency in children (Surrency 2021). Those who have negative experiences with their children are seen as inadequate mothers (Femi-Ajao, 2016: 161; Adeloje, 2013), hence why motherhood is intertwined with the self-esteem and confidence of Black women (Jenkins, 2005: 119). Feelings of shame, blame and responsibility were heightened in mother-victims and the narratives of these women are explored in the succeeding chapters of this thesis. For instance, Chapter 7 uncovers the ways Black mothers are held responsible for their victimhood; a perceived punishment for where they supposedly fall short of these idealised maternal identities. While Chapter 8 addresses how idealisations of good mothering evidenced through sacrificial motherhood creates a culture of silence around CPVA.

### *Sacred Maternity*

The mystical and sacred enjoin in the mothering practices of Black women. Becoming a mother is considered a spiritual privilege permitted by a divine being (Devi, 2017: 37;

Oyewumi, 2003: 13). Within Black art, music and stories, the divinity of mothers is confirmed through cultural scripts that bestow a ‘halo of maternity’ on Black women acknowledging them as supreme mothers and goddesses (Akujobi, 2011:3; Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994). Across African and Caribbean cultures, there is evidence that the five largest religions are practiced: Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism (Maldonado-Estrada, 2024). While some individuals shared these beliefs, others choose to practice African native and indigenous religions, Haitian voodoo, folk magic, and Rastafarianism to mention a few. The centrality of spirituality in Black maternal identity and practice was emphasised in the experiences of mothers in this study. The practice of spiritual maternity appeared to be framed by the mother’s formative experiences of judiciously observing morning prayers, family rituals and devotions. For Feyi, continuing the practice of sacred maternity was important to her, even if she did not intend to practice them as intensely in the lives of her children.

‘It [childhood] was fun because both of them [her two mothers] were very spiritual...the early morning prayers, you had to wake up to do morning devotion. You can't say ‘oh no let me sleep 5 minutes more’. But now our children in UK, you still have to go and wake them up three more times’ - Feyi, Married Mother, Black African

Sacred maternity among Black women appeared to serve two distinct purposes. Firstly, there was a perception of motherhood as a place of divine assignment, where women are tasked with helping their children self-actualise, attain independence and achieve what one mother described as a ‘God-given destiny’.

‘Without over-spiritualizing it, I think a good mother is a mom who helps her children fulfil their God given destiny. Lead them to where they are independent...stand on their own two feet.... responsible members of the society and the body of Christ.’ - Sharon, Married Mother, Black African.

In addition to the belief that motherhood is a spiritual privilege and place of divine assignment, mothers upheld the sacredness of their maternity by deploying spiritual practices and rituals towards the protection of their children as they navigated the world. The mothers revealed their belief in the existence of a spiritual world, and the ideology that spiritual factors, if left unaddressed, could cause problems for their children. When children were experiencing failure at school or in the case of mother-victims, displaying disruptive behaviour, this was linked to spiritual attacks and manipulation.

‘It kind of hit me bad that she is not doing well. Like...spiritually are they being attacked? Is that why they don’t want to finish school?’ – Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

‘One mother, trying to make sense of her child’s behaviour was like ‘it must be my village people’. - Mary-Anne, Psychologist

Within West African contexts specifically, there is a communal fear around the interference of ‘village people’. This conceptualises spiritual forces, witches, sorcerers and evil spirits from one’s ancestral village or hometown perceived to be the cause for one’s misfortune. It is similar to the notion of ‘evil eye’, where it is believed that due to jealousy, people were monitoring their families and using spiritual methods to send evil to their children. The

centrality of spirituality in Black maternal practice is evident, serving as both an obligation and a tool to safeguard their children. As Chapter 8 will decode, sacred maternity also manifests in the spiritual rituals and practices Black mothers deploy to cope with and navigate CPVA. It also substantiates their decision to desist from service engagement in the hopes of divine intervention and miraculous transformation in their child's conduct.

### *Collective Nurturers*

This normative expectation of mothers as agents of socialisation, carrying the cultural responsibility of nurturing, educating and moralising their children, exists across various cultures and societies. However, Black mothers nurture their own children alongside their broader role as collective nurturers and moral guardians to children in their communities. Maternal scholarship on the experiences of White middle-class women detail mothering as an 'interacting relationship between self/mother, family and child' (Ribbens, 1994). However, intersectional mothering discourses reveal that Black women construct their sense of self, experience their individuality and practice mothering in relation to their community (Hill-Collins, 1994; Reynolds, 2005; de la Rey et al. 1997; Mama, 1995; Sudbury, 1998; Lewis, 2000).

Mothering in non-white communities extends beyond the realm of biological boundaries or nuclear family constructions to incorporate 'non-traditional' forms of motherhood. Collective nurturing is a dimension of 'shared mothering', where Black women, whether aunts, sisters and grandmothers become 'othermothers' to children in their community, some of which they are biologically unrelated (Stack, 1974; Rochelle, 1997; Lara Villanueva, 2018). Even Black women, without biological children of their own, experience a form of maternal responsibility towards all Black children (Reynolds, 2005; Olwig, 1999; Hill-Collins, 1994). Collective nurturing is performed by Black mothers living in Africa and

the Caribbean and those rearing children in the diaspora grieved the loss of collective nurturing practices post-migrating.

‘In the African setting, everybody trains the child. We all train the child together. It’s not like ‘this is your child, you train the child’, which is what we are doing here [England]. I caution myself with dealing with other people's children, but it's a thing where if your friend's child is doing wrong, you can caution them’ - Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

On migrating to Western nations, Black mothers experience a loss of a literal and symbolic village wherein their children were communally raised among extended family (Ofoha et al. 2019; Onwujuba et al. 2015). Being in a long-distance marriage and solo-parenting her three children in England, Oyinka, a mother-victim in the study, felt outnumbered and overwhelmed without the support of her co-maternal labourers. She reported experiences of isolation when it came to correcting her daughter’s behaviour. Oyinka believed that had her family been living in Nigeria, her daughter would be subject to collective nurturing by herself and othermothers. Within this African setting, she believed CPVA would have been challenged and her daughter’s behaviour improved.

Oyinka: ‘I only wish maybe when I took her to Nigeria, my husband agreed that we left her there for a while. I believe things would have changed’

A.A: Why is that? What is it about Nigeria that would have changed things?

Oyinka: Because she would be in an African setting.

A.A: What does that mean?

Oyinka: When I say African setting, like she'll be where everybody trains the child. In Nigeria, she will have people around that she won't be able to...like nobody's going to tolerate her threatening anybody. She has two, three aunties that will tell her no, you are wrong. Whereas here, it is only your voice and the systems are now backing her.

Whether, or not raising her child in Nigeria would have had any effect on her daughter's conduct cannot be determined. However, Oyinka's perspective illuminates the centrality of collective nurturing in Black maternal identity and practices, even for those parenting in the diaspora. Black women understand their motherwork is a collective nurturing effort towards their children and all Black children in their communities. Mothers who were isolated from family by distance or migration turned to Black-led parent groups, cultural societies, and faith communities to find a community of matriarchs and othermothers. Succeeding chapters will demonstrate how 'collective nurturership' though an aspect of Black maternal identity has its limitations. Chapter 6 will show how the sharing of maternal burdens as a practice of collective nurturing can become a pathway to CPVA, particularly when a mother's intentions are misunderstood by their child. Chapter 7 explores how Black mothers use collective nurturing practices as a tool of shame and reputational management following CPVA, while Chapter 8 emphasises the criticality of collective nurturing in how Black women navigate this form of suffering.

## **Tensions between Idealised Motherhood and Challenging Realities**

The first section has outlined six concepts that provide critical insight into Black maternal identity and frame the complex, and often contradictory meanings associated to motherhood within African and Caribbean cultures. While each concept puts forward an idealised version of Black mothering, in actuality, women encounter tensions when navigating the reality of motherhood in light of these venerated expectations. This segment explores the cultural shifts that accompany the reality of child-rearing in England. It also considers how some Black mothers, though aware of idealised Black maternal identities, choose to discontinue specific mothering practices to account for contemporary realities.

### *Changing views about maternal discipline*

‘It is impossible to escape your past completely. You are shaped, you are moulded by your history, your environment, we know that.’ – Sharon, Married Mother, Black African.

There was some recognition that while the mothers could not fully disentangle themselves from their experiences of being mothered, they could resolve to discontinue using militant maternal approaches with their children and adopt a more nurturing practice. The women did not disregard the idealised view of Black mothers as chief disciplinarians and acknowledged its continued practice in their native countries. However, due to their childhood experiences of militant motherhood, three women shared their changing views around maternal discipline and their commitment to mother differently to the way they were raised. For Tara, a nurturing maternal practice looked like being open to the perspectives of her children, listening to their contributions and, when unhappy with their conduct, relying on spiritual practices as opposed to punitive measures to change their behaviour.

‘The relationship that I had with my mum changed me...because of the love that I expected to receive from her which I could not have, I make sure that I am open to my children and listen to them. Any issue between me and my husband, I don't place it on them. If I observe something that I'm not happy with... my mother would start screaming and shouting...but because I believe in God, I pray more about it...’ - Tara, Married Mother, Black African

Similarly, Chioma's aspirations towards motherhood were driven by a desire to re-parent herself and extend to her children the type of nurturing she desired but did not receive due to her mother's militant maternal practices.

‘My relationship with my mom made me want to have kids, so that I can change everything that had gone wrong, change all the issues and problems I faced. One of the things is being open. For me, relating to my kids, I am open and vulnerable.’ – Chioma, Married Mother, Black African

Likewise, Enitan prioritises friendship building with her sons as an essential part of her mothering practice. Instead of engaging in a power struggle for dominance or instilling a sense of reverential fear within them (as is the practice in militant motherhood), she emphasises the importance of being loved, liked and trusted by her children.

‘That [physical discipline] is a no-no with my children. I want my children to love me...to like me. There were times, I love my mom, she loved me dearly, but I didn't particularly like her. With my children, I am a lot more open...come home

from school and tell me your news rather than be scared of telling me anything.’ -

Enitan, Married Mother, Black African

Enitan, Tara and Chioma lean towards expressions of mothering that rework the archetype of Black women as fearsome matriarchs that cannot be challenged by their children. They eschew the concept of militant motherhood and using tactics of control and fear on their children, despite this often being a normalised expression of Black mothering. By emphasising the importance of friendship, vulnerability and love in the nurturing of their children, these mothers advance a Black maternal practice that balances maternal strength with gentleness. Though revolutionary, their changing views on maternal discipline encountered challenges. Two mothers highlighted that their decision to establish openness and friendships with their children at times engendered them to be seen as weaker than their male partners. They observed that this increased the likelihood their children directing challenging behaviour towards them, believing there would be no consequences.

‘Because I am the friendly one, my husband is the strict to one. My kids sometimes just ride on me. And I'm like, ‘I'm your mum. I like the banter. I like the friendship... but don't talk to me the way you're talking to me’. I'm still working on drawing the boundary. - Chioma, Married Mother, Black African

In using the phrase ‘ride on me’, Chioma presents an image of herself in a debased position while her sons, in a position of usurped authority, dictate the direction in which she moves. A Similar account was shared by Feyi who felt her decision to prioritise gentility in her mothering, as opposed to militancy, resulted in being respected less by her children, because she was not as fearsome as their father.

‘In African communities, we feel children should fear the father more than the mum. They see mum as the weaker person, they can just throw everything on. I'm trying to tell my children that it is not true...whatever they do in the presence of their dad is what you should do with me. You cannot respect your father more than me. I know moms are soft, but I think we should be equal with the father.’ - Feyi, Married Mother, Black African

These accounts highlight a tension facing Black mothers who are shifting away from militant motherhood and maternal discipline. There seemed to arise a new challenge of securing their child's respect without the use of fear-inspired techniques, in comparison to fathers who seem to maintain authoritative positions in the home. This underlines another paradoxical aspect of Black motherhood. While the reflections of Tara, Chioma and Enitan link authoritative and militant motherhood to harms experienced in their childhood, it seems that to completely eschew the exercise of ‘maternal might’ can mean some Black mothers may receive differential treatment to their male partners, possibly making them more vulnerable to their child's disruptive behaviour.

### *Navigating Cultural Change*

The mother's changing views around discipline could be linked to the contemporary shift away from the social acceptability of adult-to-child violence in the form of corporal chastisement, which was prevalent in the 1960 and 70s (Hagan, 2024; Emmerson, 2020). However, as first-generation immigrants, the use of corporal punishment within the homeplace is not prohibited in African countries and Caribbean Islands, but still considered an important part of child-rearing (Landon et al. 2023). Patty, a professional coach for African parents navigating cultural realities of raising their children in the UK, held the view

that without much external change, mothers are likely to repeat the practices inherent in their upbringing. A similar sentiment was echoed by Katie, a Caribbean mother of two boys.

‘Parents parent the way they were parented because that's the only form of parenting they know. Unless they intentionally go out of the box and figure out other ways to parent, it automatically defaults to that’ – Patty, Parent and Youth Coach

‘If we were to be truthful, if we were in our native country, it will be more or less what we were brought upon. The fact that when you don't know different, you won't do differently. - Katie, Black Caribbean, Married Mother.

As physical discipline remains the idealised norm in their native countries, it requires reflecting on the reasons behind an attitudinal shift around maternal discipline. In the section on militant motherhood, some of the women experienced cases of severe discipline including forced feeding despite vomiting, the use of pepper in eyes to control behaviour, and physically beating for dropping a heavy item or using an incorrect hand to eat. For these mothers (Chioma, Tara, Feyi, Sharon and Enitan) their difficult childhood experiences were enough to cast shadow on the practice of militant motherhood in Black communities. For other women, their changing views were driven by the cultural shifts that came with living in a country different to the one of their origin. Due to new legislative parameters and cultural expectations around parental responsibility and family life, mothers possessed an increased knowledge of parent-child relations which gave them the freedom to deviate from aspects of Black maternal identity that they considered archaic or harmful.

‘Because we are here [England], we have learned, we adapt. Society has a lot to do with how to bring up children, as well as environment and culture. I have seen incidents where culturally parents were parenting children how they were brought up. The law stepped in to say, you need to learn to parent differently. I actually think I am being a better parent here as opposed to if I was in Jamaica.’ - Katie, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

The cultural and legislative expectations around parenting were interpreted by Katie as a necessary force for good, particularly in protecting children from harmful cultural practices. Sharon, a 55-year-old mother of three, felt that if she grew up a child in contemporary Britain, it would have been necessary to be separated from her mother.

‘If I was a child today, social services would have taken me away. It was really hard.’ – Sharon, Married Mother, Black African.

Her reflection illuminates the complex perceptions and relationship Black mothers have with social services in England. There is evidence that Black children are overrepresented within the care system (Chand, 2000; Okpokiri, 2017; Bywaters et al. 2017). As such, Black parents fear, among other things, that child protection laws will be used against them and their children in racist and discriminatory ways (Okpokiri, 2017: 135-136). With these reservations duly noted, this study has shown there are instances where Black mothers consider it necessary for state intervention to protect children from harmful parenting practices justified by reference to cultural practice. The perspectives shared by Katie, Enitan, Patty and Sharon illumine a standpoint not typically heard among Black mothers: an

appreciation of how the cultural and legislative guidelines around parenting in England has enhanced their mothering practices.

Though an insightful contribution to this discussion, these four mothers are well-integrated into British culture. Having lived in the UK for decades, all four mothers hold registered qualifications in helping professions as GPs, Nurses, Social Workers and Former School Teachers. Their acculturation is significant and doubtless expedited by their professional and educational training which has exposed them to a knowledge of safeguarding and the ability to decipher the legislative and cultural expectations around parenting in the UK. Therefore, they speak from a perspective not representative of the majority of Black mothers.

### *Inter-generational tensions and mothering in a 'mixed' culture*

There are Black mothers who experience parental powerlessness, particularly as first-generation immigrants practicing family life in a foreign country and mothering in a mixed culture. Tensions arose from the friction caused by raising children in a culture different to their own, while learning to adapt their mothering practices to what was acceptable in England. Beatrice's experience of supporting African mothers aligns with studies that suggest the desire adhere to the cultural norms is stronger among immigrants if they migrated to Western countries in their late adolescence or adulthood (Onwujuba et al. 2015: 42; Glick et al. 2012).

‘Many of the mothers I work with were born and raised in Africa. They have been brought up with a set of standards...expectations...values that they find difficult to instil in their children once they arrive here or if they [children] are born here’ -

Beatrice, Black African, Married Mother, Parent Coach.

Despite changes in a family's cultural and physical environment due to migration, immigrant parents embody native values and customs around family governance and move with the intention to practice these patterns of behaviour in host countries. I asked Beatrice to specify the tensions and concerns her clients encountered while mothering in England.

Beatrice: Mothers find it a challenge to raise them in the way that they want.

There's almost like a culture shock you know. They think how will I go about instilling certain values, behaviours, character qualities?

AA: Can you give examples?

Beatrice: How children are presenting. Mothers don't think they are being respectful, not listening to them. Maybe refusing to observe their faith or share the family's value system. Mothers struggle to navigate that culture shock.

Cultural interpretations around respect and the scope of a young person's autonomy within a family differs across societies. Across Black societies, child-rearing is considered an adult-centric enterprise in which child development is structured to suit elders' aspirations, purpose, and desire (Onwujuba et al. 2015: 36; Bledsoe and Sow, 2011; Okoli and Cree, 2012). Rules around respect are strictly upheld within their cultures, family, and broader society. In African communities specifically, a high premium is placed on parental honour. Even to the extent that interrupting adult discussion or opposing their advice can be considered rude and disgracing to the family (Ohuche, 1986; Ogunnaike and Houser, 2002; Okoli and Cree, 2012; Onwujuba et al. 2015). These are patterns of behaviour which may

not be seen as disrespectful by Western standpoints but culturally cause significant offence to parents. Furthermore, kneeling, bowing, squatting or prostrating on the floor to greet one's parents or elderly family and community members is considered a customary display of respect across various African countries including Uganda, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe (Wójtowicz, 2021; Sesanti, 2010). However, another site of tensions arises where those outside of these communities interpret these respectful salutations as punitive or a means of subordination.

More relevant is the issue of personal values and beliefs. While in England, it may be acceptable for a child to exercise autonomy over whether to adhere to their parent's religious beliefs or disagree with them, a difficult value system is upheld across Black societies. In Nigeria where a majority of the mothers-participants are from, children are considered communal assets answerable to and can be corrected by all elders irrespective of kinship ties (Hron, 2008; Okoli and Cree, 2012; Akhilomen, 2006: 8). Niecy, a mother of Caribbean descent, also advanced similar views around interpretations of respect.

'My daughter would say, 'Mom, it's the 21st century now, we are allowed to go out, we can't just stay in'...I couldn't even talk to my mum that way' Niecy,  
Married Mother, Black Caribbean

She contrasts her daughter's free speech and self-advocacy with the restricted dialogue she had with her own mother. Though she attempts to make light of the consequences that would follow her speaking amiss, Niecy's comparison of her daughter's vocality to her childhood experience suggests that this new culture around respect may be a struggle to embrace. Her contribution indicates that these tensions around respect are not unique to African mothers or first-generation immigrants only but form part of wider expectations around Black family

life and parent-child relations. Young people reserve the right to choose which aspects of their culture to accept or reject, however ‘inter-generational tensions’ can occur between them and their parents (König and de Regt, 2010: 11). The likelihood increases when young people, who migrate as adolescents or are born abroad, struggle to navigate the reality of being raised in a mixed culture and balance the conflicting expectations of their parents and the host society (Glick et al. 2012: 1528; Fuligni, 2001).

While the vocality of young people is encouraged in England, expectations around the respect and submission of children is the norm in many African and Caribbean communities. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, children in England have been publicly recognised as active members of society. Their participation in collective decision-making and institutional structures is considered essential to enhancing child protection, upholding children’s rights and improving their self-esteem and skills (Sinclair and Franklin, 2000; Tisdall et al. 2008: 343). Daniella, a trained social worker, recounted the first time her children had a school ‘safety day’ and how it encouraged them to be vocal about their home life.

‘When my kids were younger, they had this whole day on child safety... got given the Childline number...came back home with a little ego. I said, ‘yeah, that’s a good number, I wonder where the parent-line is?’ They were looking at me. I said ‘yeah, parent-line for when little kids get on their parent’s nerves [laughs]. I remember how empowered they felt; saying ‘oh you can’t shout at us anymore!’’. Yes, I bloody can.’  
– Daniella, Mixed (Ghanaian and Irish) Mother.

While this safety education was crucial, it came without an ongoing conversation around the remit parents had to enforce rules and discipline. Without this, ample room was given for

young people to interpret any form of parental correction as an infringement of their autonomy. There were mothers and professionals who felt the cultural emphasis on youth voice offers a shield to young people who sought to take advantage or manipulate their parents with false accusations. Though these cases may be the minority, examples of this behaviour are important to mention.

‘This era is different. Young people know their rights, they threaten with social care, I'm gonna phone the social worker, tell the school. They do that to their parents and their parents back down, because what can you do when a young person says that to you?’ – Katherine, Targeted Youth Support Worker

‘When you've got children like my son that are very bold and will go and say things...The social worker said to me, ‘when a child says something, there's a tendency that it is very true’. They tend to believe the children first.’ - Isoken, Married Mother, Black African

Acknowledging inter-generational tensions and the challenges of mothering in a mixed culture is not to critique children's rights or protection laws. These remain essential to ensuring the health and safety of young people. However, this discussion highlights that though aspects of Black maternal identity remain idealised as sacred, matriarchal and sacrificial, there are tensions that arise in face of these challenging realities. Despite expectations of maternal might and militant motherhood, there are Black mothers made timid by their children and those who feel like the efficacy of their child-rearing has been severely compromised in the West. In Okpokiri's study, one Nigerian parent expressed "...children now exploit, even abuse the laws designed to protect them but use it

to negatively intimidate their parents with such threats... so that injects fear into you" (2017: 137). Another parent reported, '... [they are] going out late in the night; you cannot stop them. If you stop them, they'll report you to social services (Ibid, 136). Though a minority of cases, it cannot be overlooked that some young people can manipulate legal protections or use their social construction as innocent and vulnerable to the detriment of their parents (Holt, 2012: 88; Holt, 2009; Eckstein, 2004). Chapter 6 highlights examples of how inter-generational and cultural tensions unique to the Black maternal experience become pathways to CPVA and exemplifies the psychological harm caused by false accusations.

### **Navigating and Resisting Racism and Oppressive structures**

Contrary to idealisations of Black women wielding matriarchal power within their homes, due to racialised systems of oppression, they can experience powerlessness and be subjected to forms of judgment as they navigate life, work and motherhood in England. This final section discusses the intertwining of Black maternity with the resistance of racism and the navigation of oppression structures. While there are no genetic grounds for racial classification, the formulation of 'Blackness' as a racial category occurred after the coerced removal of Africans to the Global north (Wright, 2004:1). Thus, despite the rich diversity of cultural values, histories, religions, ethnic and ancestral influences among Africans and Caribbean, they are largely identified in Western nations through the simple, reductive and homogenising category of 'Black' (Ibid).

This is particularly challenging for first-generation immigrant mothers; whose racial identity bore no consequence in their native countries. They now 'become black' after migrating to the West and experience racialization as 'other' (Wright, 2004). As stated in Chapter 3, although the term 'Black' is used in this thesis, it does not attempt to coalesce the voices of

mother-participants into one monolithic maternal identity or ignore the intra-racial and intra-ethnic differences that exist across the regions, countries and islands that comprise Africa and the Caribbean. Rather, this term is used to reflect how African and Caribbean mothers navigate the West as a visible minoritised group. This thesis recognises that the societal perception and response to their Blackness significantly impacts Black maternal experiences from healthcare and education, to employment and family life. This section considers some of the oppressive and racist structures they are forced to navigate alongside their children.

### *Countering Negative Archetypes of Black Motherhood*

Black women are confronted with negative messaging and prejudicial perceptions about their maternal identity and practices. Through media, news and socio-political debates around teen-motherhood and youth delinquency, the pathologised social construction of the ‘bad’ Black mother is perpetuated (Charlton, 2014). Chapter 3 extensively considers the use of racialised stereotypes like the ‘Baby Mama’, ‘Angry Black Woman’ and the ‘Strong Black Woman’ to define Black maternal identity. The Baby Mama archetype is used to stigmatise Black lone mothers of low-income status, who utilise welfare benefits as a means of survival and caring for their children. Through this categorisation Black women are presented and perceived as irresponsible, lazy, greedy and unfit to mother (Hill-Collins, 1998; Gilens, 1995; Reynolds, 2005; Surrency, 2021: 58). While the racial trope of the ‘Strong Black Woman’ is one who emasculates Black men and is the ‘workhorse of her family and the community’ (Joseph and Lewis, 1980; Reynolds, 2005; Surrency, 2021: 58).

The women in this study, whether interviewees, professionals or focus group participants, held various relationship statuses. Some were married, while others became single mothers through divorce, widowhood and choice. While attempts are made to confine Black single motherhood into reductive categories, this study found that Black women become solo

parents for various reasons and can experience single motherhood in dynamic and diverse ways, going far beyond the dominating the 'baby mama' or 'strong black woman' archetypes. For example, Oyinka found herself 'solo-parenting' her three children for almost two decades while in long-distance marriage. Her husband did not want to relocate to the UK, considering his well-paying job in Nigeria and chose to offer his family financial support from overseas. Oyinka shared her initial struggled to accept this version of 'mothering' because it deviated from the traditional upbringing, she had with both her parents.

'I had the burden of raising them, and whenever daddy was around, it was like novelty, and he would come with gifts and spoil them with money and all that. I'm not going to say it was easy. It was difficult, especially at the beginning...because of the way I was raised... with my two parents and my dad was a diplomat.' – Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

Oyinka's experience (as a married mother 'solo parenting' three children) disrupts reductive conceptualisations of Black single motherhood. However, these circumstances were not unique to her. Patty, a Nigerian mother and Parent Coach, shared how prevalent it was for Black mothers, though married, to carrying the sole responsibility of parenting and at times financially providing for their children.

'A lot of Black mothers are left alone to parents by themselves. And I'm not even talking about single moms, where dads are not around. Married mothers parenting on their own, dads are there but silent...not involved. A lot of the pressure on the

children's education, their welfare is on the Black woman. They are having to be both fathers and mothers.’ – Patty, Parent and Youth Coach.

My conversation with Elizabeth, a Black mother and social worker specialising in youth justice, also highlighted the reality of married Black women who were building and managing families across borders. This had a similar effect of making them solo parents and sole providers for their families. It was beyond the scope of this study to interrogate why these women remain partnered to seemingly disengaged fathers. However, the prevalence of Black women carrying the sole burden of nurturing and providing for their families while choosing to remain married, disrupts the oversimplified notion of ‘strong matriarch’ who simply dismisses and emasculates Black men.

Moreover, the accounts shared above and, in the study, counter the dominant perception of Black single mothers as ‘welfare queens’, unfit to mother and state-dependent. Rather, they tell of women who choose to work multiple (often low-income) jobs, often alongside their studies, to provide for their families, rather than depend solely on the state. Contrary to societal perceptions, within Black communities, the practice of single motherhood is yet another way Black women are expected to display maternal might and be matriarchal providers. This was evident in cases where fathers were absent from the home and Black women had to depart from traditional scripts of feminine motherhood and adopt an authoritative practice to control their child’s behaviour.

‘In a family where there hasn’t been a strong [male] role model, it could be grandfathers, friends whatever. She is put under a microscope about how her and the children are doing, how’s she’s doing as a parent. This can make her double in

strength...have to be an extra strong character. Because that is missing, she's got to be tough... to be mum and dad in this' – Betty, Therapist

'My mom was a woman who divorced her husband. So, she felt like, 'I don't want people to think oh, because I'm not with my husband, you guys are just behaving badly.' – Enitan, Married Mother, Black African and Social Worker.

Due to the negative societal constructions around Black motherhood and single motherhood especially, Black women are subject to constant scrutiny. The ideology that good mothering produces good children compounds with this stigmatisation and heightens the scrutiny of Black mothers who are parenting alone. These observations suggest that some Black women may feel the need to portray a counternarrative that exemplifies their internal strength and resilience despite their challenging circumstances. By choosing to become matriarchal providers, some Black women attempt to distance themselves from negative, racialised perceptions of their motherhood.

### *Resisting the Racialisation of Black Children*

Racism, used as a form of governance in Western societies, constructs the 'other' (members of ethnic groups) as deviant and abnormal, while the dominant group remains 'universal and unquestioned' (Hesse, 1997; Reynolds, 2005). Black women, living in Western nations have to navigate 'intersectional and institutional structures of patriarchy, sexism, anti-black woman and girl racism, and classism' as they strive towards wellness for themselves and their families (Richardson, 2019: 25; Coleman-king et al. 2023: 121). The criticality of

motherwork, a concept defined earlier in this chapter, becomes apparent in understanding how Black women and their children navigate oppressive and racialised societies (Hill-Collins, 1994). One common way Black women practice ‘motherwork’ is by asserting their knowledge and experiences on their children, which some authors have coined to be a ‘culturally sustaining pedagogy’ (Coleman-king et al. 2023: 118). For mothers in this study, providing racial education, alerting their children to the realities of racism and preparing them for differential treatment in society was considered an important part of their maternal practice.

‘I say to my children...if there are five white boys, and you are the only black boy, and the five boys are all mucking about, if something goes wrong, you will be the perpetrator. You will be the one they will pick.’ - Enitan, Black African, Married Mother.

‘There is a stigma already, especially if it's a black boy and all of that. I know that there are already bad vibes, if we're to be honest, racism is real.’ – Keisha, Black Caribbean, Married Mother.

Black mothers living in Western societies are faced with complicated and contradictory choices regarding whether to prepare their children to assimilate into or resist systems of racial oppression and domination (Hill-Collins, 1994:209; Reynolds, 2005; Jenkins, 2005). The writings of WEB Dubois’ on ‘double consciousness’ and biculturality explain how Black people have to protect the essence of their Blackness but also concede with the rules, dictation and cultural consciousness advanced by the dominating White cultures in which they exist (Jenkins, 2005: 127; Hannerz, 1969; Young, 1974; Valentine, 1971). However, in

teaching their children to navigate biculturality and develop strategies to respond to racism, Black mothers must decide whether they will focus on assimilating into dominant White cultures or resisting them (Reynolds, 2005; Higginbotham, 2001). For example, Enitan offered her sons a strategy of avoidance, where she instructs them to 'run' from any sight of trouble to avoid the risk of being marred by the negative narratives around Black boyhood.

'So, what do I say to my children? Run. If you see they are doing rubbish, go the other way, even though they're your friend. I don't want to hear it. Because at the end of the day, they already have a stereotype. They have a narrative. We can't change it, unfortunately.' - Enitan, Black African, Married Mother.

The practice of instilling caution in children towards the existence of negative stereotypes is a common among Black mothers, regardless of location. In the United States, African American mothers 'recalibrated parenting strategies' in response to perceived inequalities and fear that mainstream institutions will criminalize their children (Elliot and Reid, 2019: 197). Studies show that a Black mother's 'protective care framework' includes limiting their children's exposure to violence through the monitoring of their environment by physically keeping them at home wherever possible, limiting their socialisation with peers, telling cautionary accounts about the dangers of surrounding neighbourhoods, and instilling a culture of 'minding your own business' within their children (Elliot and Reid, 2019: 1999; Elliott and Aseltine, 2013; Elliot, 2012; Furstenberg et al. 1999; Tack and Small, 2017; Jarrett and Jefferson, 2003; Rosenblatt and DeLuca, 2012; Reynolds, 2005).

### *Language Barriers*

For first-generation immigrant Black mothers, navigating services and systems in England can be further complicated by language barriers and a lack of access to formal education.

Due to their limited knowledge of the host country, some immigrant parents can suffer greater degrees of alienation as they encounter problems accessing parenting and other vital services (Yang et al. 2022; Kim et al. 2018a; 2018b). However, compared to them, their children may experience faster rates of acculturation and a good command of the English language due to formal education. An inability to speak English can undermine the parental authority of immigrant parents (Jackson et al. 2017) as they have to rely on their children and teenagers as ‘socio-cultural navigators’ of their new country (Yang et al. 2022; Creppy-Hetherington, 2011). In this way children can enjoy linguistic privileges and can exercise a form of power over mothers who are unable to speak English well or depend on them for interpretation. Cases were shared by professionals of Black mothers whose dependence on their children had made them vulnerable.

‘Her daughter knew how to manoeuvre her way in the system. Like, ‘oh, I’m going to call social services on you’. And her mum will be panting because she is not literate enough to defend herself. She started using the system on mum...’ – Elizabeth, Social Worker

‘I can think of a few examples where moms have been sole parents...haven’t learned English yet. Their sons become proxy rulers of the household because they’ve gone to mainstream school, learned English and run rings around them. One time I got an interpreter because I didn’t believe he was translating properly to his mom’ – Nicolas, Youth Offending Team (YOT) Officer

In order to empower one Black mother affected by CPVA and help her reinstate control of the home, Elizabeth advised her to learn English. She believed that encouraging her to seek

an education was a preliminary step to restoring normative power dynamics and re-gaining her child's respect. At times, Elizabeth had to use pidgin English as a means of successfully communicating with mother-clients, who were of African origin.

‘When I sat down with her, I said, I want you to go back to school, go and do ESOL. She said, can I study? I said, yes, but I want to perfect your English first. Your daughter sees you as a local village woman.’ – Elizabeth, Social Worker

Not only did her daughter hold a language leverage against her mother, it appeared that she felt a sense of embarrassment connected to her mother's inability to speak English despite living in England. Considering their upbringing in a mixed-culture, and possibly even having dual-citizenship, there are young people who may their biculturality and linguistic privilege to code switch in ways that further exclude their mothers. As Chapter 8 will reveal, considering the lack of cultural sensitivity and awareness in services, systems of oppression can interact with CPVA to further subjugate Black mothers, resulting in their isolation and disengagement from services.

### *Unsettled Status*

It is worth noting that for some families, unsettled status is an issue. Though not the experience of all the women in the study, an interview with an IDVA highlighted the importance of factoring immigration status into our understanding of Black maternal identity and experience. Studies have written extensively on how the lack of legal status increases the vulnerability of immigrant women to immigration-related abuse (deportation) and violence by their male partners (Raj and Silverman, 2002, 2003; Silverman et al. 2005). However, in this study, an example was shared of how Black immigrant mothers with

unsettled status or working with another's documentation can find themselves defenceless to manipulative children.

‘The power shifts. This is what we're seeing now. Mothers are being blackmailed by their sons and daughters, saying, ‘I know, you're working with someone else's papers, so call the police if you like’ – Kukua, Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA)

Kukua shared her experience supporting a mother who encountered harm from her teenage son. He was aware of her unsettled migration status and knew this would limit her willingness to engage with criminal legal services or report his abusive behaviour. The mother's anxiety around her unsettled migration status and the associated risks with engaging with authorities seemed to encourage her son's instigation of CPVA. The example sheds light on how a similar form of coercion used against immigrant women vulnerable to intimate partner violence could reflect the realities of Black immigrant mothers experiencing CPVA. As this study does not directly engage Black mothers with unsettled status, this remains an avenue for future research to explore.

## **Conclusion**

This thesis investigates and documents the experience of CPVA from a Black maternal standpoint. This chapter serves as a foundation to this empirical enquiry by revealing the multi-layered practice of Black mothering. The dynamic and dialectic way Black women interpret, and practice motherhood is essential to understanding the impact of their child's use of abuse towards them and their navigation of harm. This chapter contributes to scholarship by challenging the universality of motherhood through six critical concepts

providing insight into the cultural scripts (narratives and expectations) that frame Black maternal identity. Namely, Maternal Might, Militant Motherhood, Matriarchal Providers, Collective Nurturers, Sacrificial Motherhood, and Sacred Maternity. Although collectively these concepts advance an idealised version of Black motherhood, this chapter also demonstrates how Black women encounter tensions when navigating the reality of motherhood in light of these venerated expectations. The emergence of intergenerational tensions, along with the challenges of mothering in a mixed culture were provided as examples.

For some Black mothers, the reality of raising children in a culture distinctive to their own and adapting their mothering practices to accommodate for British norms and values was a source of tension. The chapter also documents the re-framing of their child-rearing practices including an attitudinal shift away from maternal discipline. While participants did not disregard the idealisation of Black mothers as chief disciplinarians, there was a turning from the practice of militant motherhood and the excessive reliance on physical discipline, despite these practices being observed in their native countries. It has also been highlighted how the differential rates of acculturation between immigrant parents and their children can be challenging for mothers experiencing CPVA.

Finally, this chapter demonstrated the intertwining of Black motherhood with the resistance of racism and the navigation of oppression structures. Black women experience the racialised pathologisation of their motherhood through tropes like the 'baby mama' and the 'strong Black woman'. To resist these negative social constructions, this chapter shows how some Black mothers chose to become matriarchal providers, often carrying the sole burden of nurturing and providing for their families while choosing to remain partnered to disengaged fathers. Such behaviours challenge the reductive and negative miscategorising

of Black single motherhood and the oversimplified notion of the ‘strong black woman’ who dismisses and emasculates Black men. In addition to resisting their own racialisation, the ‘motherwork’ of Black women was linked to ensuring the survival of their children and communities (Hill-Collin, 1994). However, in teaching their children to navigate biculturality and develop strategies to respond to racism, Black mothers are compelled to choose whether to focus on assimilating into dominant White cultures or resisting them (Reynolds, 2005; Higginbotham, 2001). Building on this foundation, Chapter 6 unveils the narratives of Black women ‘mothering through’ CPVA. It is the first of subsequent chapters to apply a critical lens to when the idealisation and reality of Black motherhood, as outlined in this chapter, compound with the complexity of this stigmatised phenomenon.

## **SIX: THE DECONSTRUCTIVE PROCESS OF MOTHERING THROUGH ABUSE**

### **Introduction**

Becoming a mother is considered a definitive aspect of womanhood for many Black women, representing a central piece in the formation of their personhood and self-esteem. However, the traditional portrayal and valorisation of idealised Black motherhood, as explored in Chapter 5, are deconstructed once a child uses violence or within the home. The occurrence of CPVA is wide-reaching in its ability to upheave normative power dynamics in parent-child relations and family hierarchy. As this chapter will reveal the act of mothering through this phenomenon subjects the maternal identity of Black women to a deconstructive process, negatively altering the experience of motherhood in distinct ways. Through a collaborative use of semi-structured interviews and anonymous survey responses, eight mother-victims participated in this study and shared their experiences of abusive behaviour from their children. In addition to their responses, data has been included from focus group mothers, some with vicarious experience of CPVA through the observation of mother-friends. Also, incorporated is data derived from interviews with professionals who support mother-victims. Using this layering approach allows this thesis to integrate different perspectives and encounters of CPVA. This facilitates a mediation between professional knowledge and mothers' knowledge, highlighting the silences and alignments that exist between varying accounts of this subtype of family violence.

This chapter aims to outline the deconstructive impact of CPVA on the self-concept and personhood of Black mothers through the following stages. The first section considers the non-physical assault Black mothers can endure from their children, the weaponisation of words, cultural slurs and language used to cause shock, humiliation and harm their self-

esteem. It addresses the impact of verbal abuse as silencing tool, a means of depleting the 'maternal might' of Black mothers and erasing their idealised function as disciplinarians. The second section analyses the Black maternal experience of physical assault. In the wider literature on CPVA, son to mother abuse is seen as the most common form (Pagani et al. 2009; Ibabe and Bentler, 2016; Cornell and Gelles, 1982). In my study, mothers spoke at length about CPVA from sons and daughters. However, the child's gender was instructive in how their maternal identity was deconstructed. This section speaks to why Black women were subject to the infantilising process of 'girlification' when facing physical abuse from their daughters. However, when sons were physically abusive, their motherhood was repurposed to serve as a repository of male rage. The third section considers how financial abuse undermines the idealisation of Black mothers as matriarchal providers. While performing the dual role of 'worker/mother', Black women were subject to monetary woes caused by the actions of their children including fraud, financial harm and coercion, alongside risks to their earning potential. Those working in helping professions specifically social work, education, law and policing were particularly affected. This section also establishes how money can become a site of conflict between first-generation immigrant Black mothers and their 'bi-cultural' children, particularly when it came to the redirection of financial resources towards family members living in native countries.

The fourth and final section of this chapter constructs CPVA as an attack against the essence of 'homeplace'. For Black women, 'homeplace' holds significance as an abode for nurturing her children and a site of resistance and healing from wounds inflicted by the racialisation and oppression associated with existing in White, Western societies (bell hooks 1990: 384). However, when mothering through CPVA, Black mothers experienced a dismantling of homeplace at various levels. This occurred through the use of household appliances against

them, their children causing property damage and in two cases, engaging in criminal activity at home (i.e drug selling and weapon storing). The safety of homeplace was compromised as mothers were subject to carceral-like conditions by their children restricting their movement and the surveillance of state agents like the police in the home. By exploring the narratives of Black mothers alongside professional accounts, the chapter aims to further the Black feminist epistemological approach and foreground Black women not only as experts of their own experiences, but creators of knowledges around the different ways of understanding CPVA.

## **Non-Physical Abuse**

### *Cultural and Linguistic Slurs*

As interviews progressed, mothers revealed a wide spectrum of abusive behaviours ranging from verbal abuse and intimidation with weapons to physical violence and property damage. Their narratives align with accounts in the literature on the range of abusive behaviours parents can experience from their children (Edenborough et al. 2008; Cottrell and Monk, 2004; Holt, 2012). Of the eight mothers-victims in this study, two reported experiences of non-physical abuse from their children. The verbal aggression included swearing, threats, and the use of degrading names. While the notion of maternal might and the idealisation of strength among Black mothering was outlined in Chapter 5, when subjected to her son's verbal assault, Chardonae described feeling like her personal strength was being depleted, which undermined her ability to exercise control of the home.

‘Anthony was a bully. He knew how to demoralise me, sap and take out my personal strength and control by verbalising’ - Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

The use of verbal aggression in attempt to undermine mothers were consistent across both maternal and professional accounts.

‘There were psychological behaviours there as well, like punishing mom, real elements of DA [Domestic Abuse], saying mean things to mom, a real lack of empathy, being quite cruel. She was only little...12/13’ – Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

The specificities of verbal abuse and its impact on the personhood of Black women requires nuanced consideration as there are distinctions in how Black women make sense of the causes of CPVA and its impact on their livelihoods. Children displaying abusive behaviours considered the cultural background and literacy of their mothers when seeking to weaponise their words. They used offensive words to inflict shock, humiliation and harm the self-esteem of their mothers. In one mother-daughter dyad, the child’s use of mother’s native language in the verbal assault intensified the impact of her words.

‘...if mom doesn't know what slag is, who is going to call their mum a slag? That doesn't hurt them. They say what they know will hurt. She called her mom an ashewo [yoruba word for prostitute] because she knew that would set her mum off. Calling her mom, a slag, it wouldn't hit the same way. She knew the weight of the word in Yoruba. She knew it had punching power’ - Mary-Anne, Psychologist

Understanding the extent of the psychological harm inflicted on Black mothers through their child’s use of non-physical assault requires situating words within their cultural context. Some young people who were bilingual or of the 1.5 generation (those who immigrated to

the UK in early childhood) were able to utilise cultural and linguistic slurs to inflict emotional harm on and undermine their mothers. By using native language in the verbal assault process, these young people intensified the ‘punching power’ of an otherwise non-physical assault. Notably, these are words that, when spoken outside of relevant ethnic and cultural communities, have limited if any effect. Thus, emphasising the importance of contextualising even the most common forms of CPVA within family and cultural context.

## **Physical Abuse**

### *The Infantilisation of Black Mothers*

In my small group of mother victims, four described experiencing physically aggressive and violent behaviour from their male children, while the remaining four from their daughters. All eight mother-victims reported experiencing a range of physical violence from their children, though to varying degrees. Physical abuse included being slapped, kicked and assaulted with the throwing of objects.

‘I have been kicked, slapped in the face, and sworn at’ – Elaine, Black Caribbean Grandmother.

‘He would attack me, pull my hair, get in my face and make me feel sad’ – Jane, Black British Single Mother.

‘We’ve got parents with broken arms, black eyes, one got pushed in front of an oncoming train’ – Cassie, Child-Parent Abuse Specialist

Physical abuse was also observed by several practitioners when they visited homes to conduct assessments. However, in this study, maternal identity was reframed and deconstructed differently depending on the gender of the child displaying CPVA. Though motherhood is typically characterised by strength, power and respect within Black cultures and communities (Hill-Collins, 1994; Reynolds, 2005), when Black women were physically assaulted by their daughters, they were subject to an infantilising process of ‘girlification’. Oyinka, a Nigerian mother of three children, experienced physical and verbal abuse from her eldest daughter. When describing her response to her daughters’ assault, Oyinka utilised words such as ‘tackle’, ‘hold’ and ‘restrain’. These verbs disguise the extremely abusive nature of their mother-daughter interaction, and instead present the situation as a physical altercation between two women.

‘There were times she put her hands on me. I’ll have to tackle her to the ground, sit down on her leg and hold her hands together to restrain her from hurting herself and me’ - Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

Oyinka’s descriptive account of how she attempted to intercept her daughters use of physical assault is reflective of how three different practitioners described the phenomenon of daughter-mother violence in the case of Black women. They mentioned that mothers experiencing violence from their daughters respond to the experience as though they are fighting another female.

‘They still experience it as abuse with the girls, but like an ‘outrage abuse’ like ‘how dare you?’ kind of thing. It is an automatic response to protect themselves from ‘another female’ even though it’s their daughter. - Betty, Therapist

‘With daughters, the situation is that you are dealing with another woman.’ – Minika,  
Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead

In one professional’s account of the mother-daughter dyad, an emphasis was placed on ‘wig-destroying’ nature of the physical exchanges between Black women and their daughters. It invoked the image of the hairpulling that can occur between two girls fighting, transforming the retelling of CPVA into a form of parody. To further highlight this, the professional referenced girls fighting in single-sex girl schools, drawing links between mothers and their daughters in a similar way. While attention was not taken from what she described as ‘brutal-level violence’, the reference to schools and weave-pulling had a form of comedic effect which alleviated the severity of the abuse transpiring.

‘There’s something about girls engaging in interpersonal violence with mom. They are like ‘you’re a woman, I’m a girl’. That young girl and her mom had fights. I mean wig destroying, weave-pulling fights. It was brutal-level violence. Think about girl’s schools which are brutal as well, it’s all things go.’ - Mary-Anne, Psychologist.

Here, the valorised archetype of Black women as matriarchs, disciplinarians and divine beings were reduced to caricatures of ‘girl on girl fighting’. However, the reference to ‘weave-pulling fights’ when addressing Black mothers and their daughters is pertinent for several reasons. Firstly, more than being purely aesthetic, hair forms part of personal identity, self-creation, appearance, expression and consciousness of Black women (Banks, 2000; Patton, 2006:28; Majali et al. 2017; Bowles, 1990; Manning, 2010). Though some Black women consider their hair a ‘crown of glory’, the racialisation of Black hair and the

rhetoric of anti-blackness has a colonial legacy (Ivey and Majonga, 2016). British colonizers deemed Black hair to be animalistic, more akin to sheep wool than human hair (Byrd and Tharps, 2014: 4).

In contemporary times, racism towards Black hair is an experience both Black mothers and their daughters struggle against. This is another example of how racist attitudes in oppressive societies can depose Black mothers from an otherwise reverential position to one of shared struggle with their child. Due to the centrality of hair to Black women and it being a determining factor in whether or not she is respected (Banks, 2000: 29), it is perhaps then unsurprising that in order to inflict harm on Black mothers, daughters directed their aggression towards their hair, an area of great sensitivity, identity and source of beauty. Daughters can target these aspects of shared identity and struggle with their mothers to inflict harm on their personhood. The infantilisation of Black mothers occurs when their hair, an important aspect of their womanhood and identity, is under attack in these assaults.

Another example of the infantilisation and girlification of Black mother's experience following CPVA can be seen in how sons attempt to influence the relationships they have with their daughters in a way that normalises the use of abuse towards them. In Chardonae's experience, she only encountered abuse from her son and none from her two daughters. However, part of her son's abusive behaviour was his attempt to deconstruct the image of Chardonae as a respected matriarch and reduce her to the state of being 'handled' as one would a child. She believed that her son's aim was to impair her relationship with her daughters by encouraging his sisters to also disregard their mother. If successful, he would recruit his siblings in the maltreatment of their mother.

‘What he was trying to do was damage the relationship I had with the girls, his sisters. He was like I am going to handle your mom in a certain way, and you're gonna see me handle her a certain way.’ – Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

There were mothers in the study who, despite responding defensively to their daughters’ use of violence, shared that they were ‘frightened’ of them. Their very decision to act in ‘self-defence’ shows that they apprehended real harm. Due to the overarching similarities and struggles Black mothers shared with their daughters, there is an inverting of power dynamics in families. Due to the feminisation of the physical abuse (i.e wig-destroying) it appeared harder for mothers to recognise and respond to their experiences as CPVA and not merely disrespectful behaviour. Within the mother-daughter dyad, the phenomenon seemed to undermine their ‘maternal might’, displacing Black mothers from a position of matriarchal honour to becoming ‘one of the girls’.

### *On Becoming Repositories of Male Rage*

There were clear gender differences in how Black mothers interpreted and responded to their sons’ abusive behaviour. It appeared the essence of their motherhood was deconstructed and given new purpose as repository of male rage. As shown, when daughters displayed abusive behaviour, Black women experienced an inverting of the power of their motherhood. However, in mother-son dyad, CPVA was likened by both mothers and professionals to the abusive behaviour of a male adult partner. Sons displaying abusive and violent behaviour ceased to be seen as children by their mothers and were perceived as men to be feared. This view of sons as men can be perceived as a form of adultification within itself.

‘Mothers connect their son’s behaviour with their fathers. Like ‘you think he’s gonna do that to me after everything I’ve been through with his dad?’. There’s a connection in the way it’s registered and interpreted...It’s not just I am your mum, and you are my son. This is a male being physical with a woman. Maybe mothers think they can handle the girl but can’t the boy’ - Betty, Therapist

‘With sons, you are dealing with another man, like a husband or partner’ – Minika, Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead

‘The boy would whip her with a broom, and tell her to shut her fucking mouth and whatever else’ – Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

When the governance of family life is underpinned by patriarchal notions that assign mothers as domestic workers in service of other family members, and position fathers and sons as proxy rulers of the home, women can become oppressed by this abuse of power. Studies show that mothers who experience intimate partner violence sometimes experience a continuation of abuse from their sons following paternal absence whether due to divorce, separation or abandonment (Eckstein, 2004; Daly and Nancarrow, 2010; Cottrell and Monk, 2004). Cottrell and Monk suggest that through various social processes, male youth learn that the control and domination of women, including their mothers, is acceptable (2004: 1082). Moreover, with the role of patriarch now vacant, it may be that sons ‘step up’ into their ‘father’s shoes’ and assume a position of controlling female family members by virtue of his patriarchal ‘birth right’ (Holt, 2021). As daughter-mother CPVA was feminised by mothers and professionals, the attitude of Black mothers towards their son’s use of violence was also gendered. There was a maternal logic around this abuse that was absent from how

mothers rationalised their experience with their daughters. Chardonae described her son's anger as a display of 'alpha' behaviour and an exercise of dominance over his majority female-membered family.

'They [sons] feel like they can let their 'alpha' out and throw it all over her. It's a heavy burden mothers have to pay. I don't know who else pays that. Who else is going to pay that price? Who else is going to be the conduit for male anger?' –  
Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

Chardonae's mention of the 'alpha' male in relation to her son's actions is revelatory. Originating from the scholarly field of animal behaviour, the term 'alpha' describes highest-ranking individuals in a social group (Mech, 1999; Sumra, 2019). As a masculine profile prevalent in public discourse, 'alpha' describes a man that occupies a dominant, assertive role in social and professional scenarios. With the emergence of social media and the rise of the 'manosphere', scholars have theorised how 'antifeminist masculinities' including the Alpha and Incel interconnect with notions of toxic masculinity to frame situational and structural power relations and incite violence towards women (Ging, 2019; Harrington, 2021).

Chardonae's reference to this masculine profile and her figurative expression of sons who 'let out' their alpha and 'throw it all over' women suggest her belief that social dominance is inherently within men (including male children). Her rhetorical questions 'who else is going to pay that price?' points to an (unwilling) concession that 'alpha' behaviour is to be expected from sons and that mothers have no choice but to respond as burden-bearers to their male-child's aggression. The emphasis she places on the 'heavy burden' and 'price'

only mothers pay is telling. She also expresses doubt as to who else could ‘be a conduit for male anger’. This suggests that while other women (non-mothers) would be expected to leave abusive male partners, a separate moral code may apply for mothers and sons. In a way that mirrors Chardonae’s construction of a maternal burden to endure abuse from their sons, Kukua referenced the maternal body as key to understanding the obligations on mothers to endure.

‘Mothers are taught this is who you are. We are their safe havens. You birthed this child; you were a home to them. You always have to be that to them. It doesn’t change, even when they are being abusive towards you’ – Kukua, Independent Domestic Violence Advocate.

There is a perspective that ‘good wombs have borne bad sons’ (Shakespeare, *The Tempest*). However, there is a long history of parents, particularly mothers, being made legally and morally accountable for their child’s behaviour (Feld, 1999:32; Platt, 2009; Ladd-Taylor, 2004; McInnis, 2021; The Learning Network, 2024; Zimbalist, 1998; Youth Justice Board, 2022). The views from Chardonae and Kukua suggest that a life-long consequence of a woman’s biological role as part-creator and prenatal chamber of her child is the expectation that she will remain their place of safety, irrespective of their behaviour towards them or others. Notwithstanding, attitudes around mother and child as forever connected irrespective of abuse were more often invoked when instances of son-mother violence were described. A possible reason for this could be the ideology that it is the birth of a male child that confirms the maternity of a woman, while ‘sonless’ mothers experience a subordination to other women (Baloyi and Manala, 2019; Caspani, 2013; Akujobi, 2009).

Studies confirm that due to unique mother-child relations, mothers experiencing CPVA struggle with the ‘impracticality of divorcing their children’ the way they would their partners (Holt, 2012: 9). However, for Black mothers this impracticality is worsened by their need to protect their sons against criminalisation and exposure to the legal system (see Chapters 3 and 8). The subjection of Black men and boys to processes of racialisation and pervasive social and educational disadvantage is well documented in research, for example their over representation in criminal justice systems (Lammy, 2017; Philips and Bowling, 2017) or school exclusion statistics (Gunter, 2015; Perera, 2020; Arnez and Condry, 2021). In this study, two professionals highlighted the prejudicial perceptions and racist treatment of Black males. Kukua argued that perhaps in defiance of oppressive structures, there is a favouring of Black boys within their communities.

‘The overvaluing of Black boys in our communities and that they are leaders and we’re just submissive somebodies. Therefore, when they do things, we have so much grace...have to bear the brunt of whatever trauma or anger they experience, so they can become better versions of themselves’ - Kukua, Independent Domestic Violence Advocate.

Kukua suggests there is an acceptance that the racialised experiences Black males encounter outside the home can provoke expressions of ‘anger’ or ‘trauma’ in the home. By contextualising the behaviour of their sons in this way, Black mothers understand the source of the anger and are expected to demonstrate forbearance in the hopes of their transformation. It could be argued that the differential and gendered response mothers have towards sons who display CPVA, in comparison to their daughters, mirrors wider community values to protect Black boys and men, irrespective of their actions.

‘Because of how much sons are valued within the community; mothers remain quiet about their behaviour. They protect them in the very same way they did their fathers’-

Aisha, Trauma-Informed Domestic Abuse Practitioner

This section has outlined the significant impact of a child’s abusive behaviour on the self-concept of Black women by emphasising how CPVA inverts Black matriarchal power. Accounts of mothers and professionals described an infantilisation process emerging through violence initiated by daughters. In the case of sons, Black mothers became unwilling yet available repositories of male rage.

## **Financial Harm**

### *‘Black Tax’ on Matriarchal providers*

The centrality of labour and financial provision in the carework of Black women was discussed in Chapter 5 through the concept of the ‘matriarchal provider’. Those mothering through CPVA while performing the dual role of ‘worker/mother’ were subject to various monetary concerns, including financial harm, risks to employment and reduced earning power. The Black mothers participating in this study were from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. There was Oyinka, a middle-class first-generation immigrant financially able with the support of her husband, to sponsor their three children to attend fee-paying boarding schools in the UK. Chardonae, though once a teen mother, always had a well-paying job and prided herself on not needing to depend on welfare to survive. However, there were mothers raising their children amid deprivation in urban cities like London. As first-generation immigrants, many of the mothers and mother-victims in this study migrated to England seeking better opportunities for their children and families. Regardless of their

socioeconomic position, Black mothers were under obligation to financially provide for immediate and extended family members in their native countries.

‘She would often say to me ‘it’s me that brought them [to the uk], their father is back home [Congo] three of them are with me. I have to work to send money back home.’

- Elizabeth, Social Worker.

Black Tax (defined in Chapter 5) is the reality of many migrants and upwardly mobile Black individuals including those in the diaspora (Mangoma and Wilson-Prangley, 2018; Sibiya, 2018). In this study this financial obligation represented a site of conflict between mother and child, becoming a pathway to financial abuse. Children growing up ‘bi-culturally’ in the UK can struggle to understand the financial obligation placed on their mothers and the redirection of resources back ‘home’ rather than being used to fulfil their wants. One professional recounted a case of a son who used his mother’s financial details to practice fraud and make large unauthorised online purchases. The reasons he offered for causing her financial harm and depleting her resources, were linked to material possessions he felt entitled to. He reportedly said ‘I deserve to have all these things; other people have them. She said she didn't have it [money], but she did. She was building a house in Nigeria; she had the money for that. She just didn't want to give it to me so, I’ll take it’.

Immigrants who choose to build property in their country of origin do so to provide accommodation for family members, often elderly parents, in their absence. However, this young man understood his mother’s building project in Nigeria as proof that she was prioritising the needs of extended family over his wants. Another case shared by a social worker, was of a mother and daughter undergoing the process of reunification as the girl had

recently returned home from living in placement. Her social worker described her behaviour as ‘constantly targeting her mom’, ‘bullying’ and mounting financial pressure on her, saying ‘you better get me this, you better get me that’, leaving her mother ‘absolutely terrified’. While there is need for caution against generalising from a small sample, these two cases provide examples of Black mothers who felt that their financial decisions were being scrutinised and controlled by their children. There were other examples, as recounted by professionals, of children misusing their mother’s funds and personal details to apply for loans, credit cards, making unauthorised bank transfers, and practice fraudulent behaviour.

‘Mum was a nurse, worked extra night shifts. Her son stole her money, took her card and used it to make fraud. Mum didn’t know until the police showed up and arrested her, saying she made the payments. It was her youngest son who told her what his older brother was doing.’ – Elizabeth, Social Worker

‘...taking out loans and loans and loans in her name. Stealing money, doing online bank transfers, using parents as guarantors without permission, moms being left with debts to pay.’ – Kukua, Independent Domestic Violence Advocate.

‘He would steal from mom, take her debit card, spend money and it would just show up on her bank statements. It got to a point where she was so tired, she came to me at church crying’ – Reece, School teacher and Faith leader.

These examples show the plight of Black mothers from families with a range of incomes, and this extended to mothers affected by poverty. One study highlighted how the frustrations of unemployment, deprivation and poverty can create feelings of defeat in youth at the

limited opportunities which could manifest as aggression and resentment towards parents (Cottrell and Monk, 2004: 1087). Similarly, in this study, poverty can place Black mothers in a vulnerable position to their children. The respect and honour they are accorded as mothers (or the lack thereof) can be reflective of their perceived maternal shortcomings. For instance, deprivation can negatively impact a child's perception of their mother as she falls short of the expectation of being a matriarchal provider.

‘If mom is struggling financially, and the children are not having what they should have, no stable accommodation, moving from one place to another, they may feel hate towards their mom. They will have no respect for the mom who struggles to look after them’. - Reece, School teacher and Faith leader

In other cases, children occupied positions of power within the home when they became co-labourers alongside their mothers, also earning money and contributing to the household income. Three examples were shared by professionals of cases where children were working from a young age (as early as 12) and earning their own income (often illegally) to alleviate financial burdens. While this does not automatically lead to CPVA, it increases the likelihood of co-dependency between mother and child which can contribute to changing power dynamics and make mothers apprehensive about challenging their child's behaviour or sudden possession of material goods.

‘I have had moms say that they feel scared of their sons because he is now 13/14, they're big and they make their own money...how does mum deal with that? They're just living in fear.’ - Daniel, Head of Parent Engagement, and Restorative Justice Facilitator

‘When her child brought something back that she never gave him money for, but she’s not asking where you got this because she will get beaten up for confronting their child about something she cannot replace. She can’t give the child money. She can’t buy them those designer things.’ – Minika, Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead

For such Black mothers attaining the idealisation of a matriarchal provider was essential to maintaining normative family hierarchies. Receiving respect from their children was not solely contingent on their ability to ‘mother’ through the provision of nurture and care, but also entailed providing financially, confirming the positioning of Black women as the ‘work-horses’ of their families (Reynolds, 2005). The literature on socioeconomic status and CPVA remains inconclusive and often contradictory (Cottrell and Monk, 2004; Condry and Miles, 2014; Agner and Hugueley, 1989; Cornell and Gelles, 1982). However, this study reveals that in the experiences of Black mothers with financial obligations outside immediate family or those with low socioeconomic status, an inability to provide the *wants* and demands of their children could result in a sense of resentment, disrespect and ultimately the infliction of financial harm.

### *Penalties on Maternal Earning*

Although not a direct form of financial abuse, the earning power and work-life of Black mothers were significantly affected by their experience of CPVA. Chapter 5 has addressed how Black mothering has been experienced as interlinked across public (economic) and private spheres to ensure the survival of their families and communities (Reynolds, 2005; Seguera, 1994; Hill-Collins, 1994: 48). In this study, CPVA was also experienced by Black mothers working in helping professions. According to professionals, these mothers were

working as teachers, social workers supporting young people exhibiting difficult behaviour, or within intense working environments such as policing or law.

‘Half of the parents we support are in frontline practitioner roles including social workers, police officers, barristers and the education sector.’ - Cassie, Child-Parent Abuse Specialist.

‘Across my career I have supported parents with professional jobs, high income salaries experiencing this [CPVA]. Mothers who are social workers, senior teachers, lawyers’ - Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

Professionals recounted how these mothers rarely experienced respite from emotionally charged environments as they were between their child’s harmful behaviour at home and working alongside young people exhibiting similar behaviour at work. According to Katherine, a targeted youth support worker, one mother was working as a teaching assistant in a special needs school and became accustomed with ‘young people attacking her every day and then her child doing the same thing at home’. Working in emotionally charged environments may intensify the psychological impact of CPVA. Mabel, a counsellor and psychotherapist, shared the way she supports Black mothers in helping professions, who felt inundated by their workloads, and invalidated at work while experiencing CPVA at home.

‘Mum was a social worker. She had to deal with racism in terms of the work environment... sometimes she will be the only Black person dealing with a case and it would affect her emotionally. Having to deal with her child on top of that was very difficult’ - Mabel, Counsellor and Psychotherapist

Specific to those working in helping professions, there were concerns that the mother's challenging home situation would be exposed in the workplace and undermine her ability to 'help' vulnerable groups and fulfil her work obligations. For example, Jane believed that if CPVA was revealed, her lack of control at home and her child's behaviour would undermine her professional abilities.

'I am a social worker with lived experience of child-parent abuse. I wouldn't have dreamed of going to work and saying my son is attacking me and smashing the house. I was embarrassed...I'm a professional and I can't manage my own son's behaviour' - Jane, Black British Single Mother.

'We are very privileged that they [social workers] trust us because they won't go to their colleagues. They are worried about gossiping, being questioned whether they have the fitness to practice under social care England' - Cassie, Child-Parent Abuse Specialist.

Two professionals recounted how mother-victims struggled to maintain an astute professional image and were desperate to 'hold it all together' to conceal the vulnerability caused by their child's display of abusive behaviour or their engagement in criminal activities.

'Mum was quite a senior teacher in the borough, her son came into the criminal justice system. She tried to overcompensate because she was a professional. You feel vulnerable, don't you? Like I'm a professional, I'm meant to have my shit together' - Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

‘Mum was trying to be a social worker. Don’t know how she ever got to practice because she was majorly a self-harmer and going through the active process of being a victim to her ex-partner and her son.’ - Nicolas, Youth Offending Team (YOT) Officer

AA: ... is she a qualified social worker now?

Nicolas: Yes. It was all flagged, but she obviously managed to hold it together at work a lot better than what I saw.

It could be inferred from these professional recounts, that the mothers in these specific cases perhaps exerted themselves at work, in an attempt to hide challenges at home. To overcompensate for CPVA, which is seen as a person failure, they may have directed the ‘maternal might’ they were unable exercise over their children into their careers. CPVA may also affect the earning power of Black mothers employed in helping professions, due to the sensitive nature of their work. One professional provided examples of children who placed their mothers in constant fear of losing their reputation, professional registration and income by threatening to make false accusations and jeopardise their careers.

‘We are seeing younger children, teenagers and adult children use their parent’s job for coercion and control. An allegation of abuse towards a parent, regardless of whether they have done it or not, they are probably going to be suspended pending investigation. Depending on their role and position, they may never go back to that employment’ - Cassie, Child-Parent Abuse Specialist.

Two mothers, Ronke and Isoken, shared personal experiences of how their earning was affected by false claims made by their child at school. Isoken's son made exaggerated claims about her temper, while Ronke's child claimed he was being hit with a wooden stick at home. They were both subject to the surveillance of state agents in their home for several weeks (further discussed below in the section on the deconstruction of homeplace) and suspended from work and earning over several months.

‘Because of what he said, they [school] anonymously called social services...a social worker kept coming to my door, it was a big thing. Because I was working with children, I was reported to Ofsted and it took me out of a job for like five months’ - Ronke, Single Mother, Black African.

‘I had a similar experience with my son. They [school] didn't call me, they called MASH straight away. Weekly visits. I was open. I didn't resist. My pin number is very precious to me. I've worked too hard; I won't let it go. I don't want to be barred because I work with vulnerable people’ – Isoken, Married Mother, Black African.

When Black mothers experience CPVA, their ability to function in their dual role as nurturers and providers is significantly compromised. Though idealised as matriarchal providers, they may become victims of CPVA and experience the strain and depletion of their earning power and resources.

## **The Dismantling of Homeplace**

White middle-class mothers have historically experienced their oppression as linked to private spheres of the home (Oakley, 1970; Firestone, 1970). However, bell hooks has re-conceptualised private domesticity, suggesting that for Black women the homeplace is a site of resistance and not one of domestication and subjugation. By virtue of their racialised status as a cultural group, Black communities are marked by subordination, inferiorisation and oppression within Western society (Reynolds, 2005). As chapter 5 explained, the ‘motherwork’ of Black women living within the Western landscape is shaped by the need to protect their children, male partners, and wider community from discrimination (Hill-Collins, 1994: 201). According to hooks, for Black families existing in Western societies and a colonized world, the ‘homeplace’ held immense value, symbolising a refuge from racism and White hatred (1990: 382). As extensively detailed in Chapter 3, the homeplace is where Black women restore the dignity of their children and Black men by nurturing and healing wounds inflicted by the racist domination and deprivation that accompanies existing in White societies (bell hooks, 1990: 384).

‘My home has always been a place of safety. It's one thing I need - to feel safe at home. The dangers are out there, the dangers are not in here.’ - Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

The home provides ‘ontological security’ when the world can be seen as threatening (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998: 25). Prior to the onset of CPVA, Chardonae shared that she found safety and security in her home. However, her son’s abusive and violent conduct negatively altered the meaning and experience of homeplace. A similar position was reflected by three other mother-victims and confirmed through professional accounts. One mother Abeni, a married middle-aged Black woman living in the northwest of England, described how her 15-year-

old son would physically assault her and afterwards, lock her in the house, preventing her from going to work. Typically, a worker of night shifts, she also recounted that on repeated occasions he would set fire to parts of the house (garden and kitchen). Alarmed neighbours called the fire brigade, meaning she would be forced to leave work and return home. In other instances, she shared that he would hold large parties into the early hours of the morning, causing noise pollution to neighbours, who would alert police. The aftermath of these gatherings included the destruction of some home property. Abeni sustained physical harm from her son, damage to property and her employment hindered by his actions, all contributing to the loss of security in her homeplace. This one example illustrates how the physical, psychological and financial impact of CPVA can interface and undermine the security of the homeplace.

Feelings of insecurity can also be caused by children using everyday household items to intimidate or cause harm to mothers. These include laundry baskets, coffee tables and cutlery. Two mothers made reference to their children using knives in threatening ways towards them. According to Chardonae, her son 'first pulled a knife on me when he was about seven or eight'. While another mother, Oyinka, described how her teenage daughter had, on two occasions, reached for a kitchen knife after verbally assaulting her. Oyinka detailed having to use the kitchen door as a shield to defend herself and avoid being harmed by the knife.

'When she starts shouting, she goes to the kitchen to carry a knife. I will hold the door shut but she will put the knife through. She was trying to stab me at the point, but I grabbed her wrist and blocked the knife off'. - Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African.

These two examples are severe and unusual but represent how uniquely CPVA can be experienced and affect the homeplace.

‘She smashed the coffee table and threatened to stab mum with a broken glass from it. Very volatile young lady.’ – Nicolas, Youth Offending Team (YOT) Officer

‘If something happens that she doesn't approve of, she will threaten her mom with a knife, and smash things up. There's been police reports.’ - Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

‘He was at home, excluded from school. Got upset because Mum unplugged the PlayStation accidentally. He picked up the laundry basket and threw it right at her’ - Katherine, Targeted Youth Support Worker

The above professional accounts seemed to indicate that when everyday household items were used to intimidate mothers, other forms of CPVA occurred including verbal aggression and property destruction. In one example, the destruction of property (glass coffee table) became a makeshift weapon (stabbing instrument). Professionals also made references to children breaking windows and white goods and kicking doors from their hinges, which collectively induced a high degree of insecurity.

### *Criminality in the homeplace*

Some professionals described examples of children engaging in criminal activity outside the home and bringing it into the homeplace. This included weapon possession or the storing and selling of illegal substances from the home.

‘Her son had possession of a bladed article, totally disrespectful in using the house, putting weapons and drug money under his bed. He lost all connection with family, treating home like a hotel’ - Nicolas, Youth Offending Team (YOT) Officer

‘Mom found cannabis in the house and decided to get rid of it. The boys got angry that their stuff is being touched’ - Katherine, Targeted Youth Support Worker

It seemed, from these specific examples, that some young people did not share in the value their mothers placed on the home, but instead treated it like a ‘hotel’ or storage. In one professional account, when a mother acted in defence of the homeplace and attempted to cleanse it of criminality by ‘flushing’ drugs down the toilet, her son became violent.

One safeguarding consultant described the case of a Caribbean mother who said: ‘I found my child’s drugs and I flushed it down the toilet and he started going mad’...obviously this now becomes a debt bondage situation, but Mum was not aware of that’ – Miriam, Child Safeguarding Consultant

### *Carceral conditions*

Some mothers described a restriction of their freedom of movement within the home. Professionals also recounted examples of mothers being prohibited by their children from using communal spaces in the home, being limited to specific rooms per time or locked in the house.

‘For fear of life, I told the other children to go into the toilet in my bedroom and lock themselves there’ - Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

‘Grown women being forced to stay in their room by their children. [Saying] ‘you can’t be out of your room at this time’ – Jada, Independent Domestic Violence Advocate

‘It’s like having a presence in the room. The young person accommodates a room and nobody else can go in there once he is in there’ - Mary-Anne, Psychologist

There were examples of mothers taking preventative measures to avoid their children by locking themselves into rooms or making an escape when the home felt unsafe. One mother described this act of self-confinement as occurring over several years, sharing that she spent a whole decade ‘locking myself in my bedroom’. In these instances, restriction around the mother’s freedom of movement transformed the homeplace into carceral-like environment.

‘Moms will lock themselves in a room to hide from their young person or they’ll call me or panic and leave the house. Their children were ruling the roost’ - Katherine, Targeted Youth Support Worker

‘Mom had to physically lock herself in the bedroom while her daughter is screaming, shouting and banging on the door’ - Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

The significance of homeplace for Black women is connected to its function as a safe space for the nurturing and socialisation of their children. Therefore, despite the physical and psychological harm inflicted on Chardonae by her son, she described that she felt ashamed for her decision to temporarily remove him from the home while in search for respite from CPVA.

‘If somebody is making me feel threat, they have to be on the other side of the door. I don't care who that is. I was locking him out...I am so ashamed to say that now.’ - Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

AA: You locked him out because you were not feeling safe in your home. Why would you be ashamed of that decision?

Chardonae: But where does he go? Where does he go then? Because it's his home as well. He needs to feel safe in his home. But when I lock him out, he hasn't got a home.

Putting aside her need to experience security at home, Chardonae viewed the primary purpose of the homeplace as providing safety for her child. Though locking him out offered her [temporary] respite, it brought feelings of shame for rendering her son homeless. Idealisations around Black maternity about sacrificial motherhood, matriarchal provision

and collective nurturership place continued obligations on suffering mothers towards those causing them harm. Moreover, actions taken by mothers to remove children from the home were seen to aggravate situations, causing additional damage and exacerbating CPVA.

‘When I locked him out...he punched through the window. My front door had a glass window in it, reinforced with metal. He punched it straight though.’ – Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

‘When I quickly closed my room door, she kicked the door so hard, saying she was going to kill me. The hinges came off. Up until now I have not fixed the door.’ - Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

‘Mum eventually kicked him out because she was worried about her younger son being influenced and unsafe. He would still break into the house to steal food and beat her if she tried to stop him’. – Annalise, Children and Family Practitioner

This section highlights the double-bind Black mothers face following CPVA. Not only is the homeplace transformed to an environment of confinement and control, a sense of security is removed through the destruction of property and the threatening use of everyday household items. While one mother considered temporarily removing the child instigating CPVA from the home, she later reported feeling shame at making her child ‘homeless’. Moreover, upon his return to the home, CPVA seemed to be exacerbated through further property damage.

### *State agents and surveillance*

In addition to being a security base, the home provides a shield from surveillance (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998: 26). This function is crucial for Black women who are subject to systems of surveillance along with their children (Elliot and Reid, 2019; Gurusami, 2017, 2019; Roberts, 2002). Chapters 3 and 5 discuss the racialised tropes around Black motherhood (i.e. the baby mama and strong black woman) and how these constructions of Black women as unfit and dysfunctional mothers provide justification for the heightened scrutiny of their parenting and their children's actions (Elliot and Reid, 2019: 198; Chaney and Brown, 2016: 12; Cammett, 2016). State surveillance of family life occurs at the intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, and class (Dorkenoo, 1994; Holt, 2012; Wilcox et al. 2015). Thus, the 'heightened visibility' of Black women predisposes their home to state intervention (Burman et al. 2004: 333). Several mothers in this study experienced psychological distress when their children made false accusations to state agents (the Police) or threatened to weaponise vital support services (i.e. ChildLine) if their wishes were unmet. Oyinka reported feeling powerless when this form of coercion was used by her daughter, and the homeplace was intruded by state agents.

‘She puts a knife to me and everything else but then she would just say, ‘Oh, my mom is threatening to kill me’. I've had police come to my house three times. When she's doing things in the house, she will say ‘I'll call the police, or I'll call my social worker...I can call Childline.’ These are the powers that they have given to her. She could use it willy nilly against me. She could lie and say anything. This girl feels she can do anything and get away with it.’ – Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

Her daughter used knives in a threatening way, forcing Oyinka to re-negotiate the use of her home by hiding knives for several months. The irony was that her daughter reported Oyinka to the police for allegedly threatening to use knives on her. As a result, Oyinka was compelled to open her home to the police, who wanted to investigate the legitimacy of her daughter's claims. As a Black woman, navigating police presence in the homeplace was a challenging experience. To convince them against the likelihood that any child abuse was occurring, Oyinka had to rely on the presentation of her other children as well-mannered and 'calm'. She was also intentional about presenting a calm demeanour to contrast the erratic behaviour of her daughter and accuser.

'Obviously, when they [police] come in, and she will say 'oh, this this this' and they'll see the other children, they are all calm. I am calm, and so she is the only one going crazy.' - Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

When other forms of family violence occur, like intimate partner violence, the victimhood of Black women has historically been ignored by the police due to racial stereotypes. The victimisation of Black women remains perplexing to social imagination (Reynolds, 1997), and this has been linked to the delayed response of statutory and justice agencies to their disclosures of abuse. For instance, their presentation of calmness and composure at the time of reporting, as opposed to displaying high levels of distress, has been seen to indicate they are not truly fearful, vulnerable victims (Wolfe-Robinson, 2019; Mama, 1989). Black women have been forced to reassess their victimhood, and recalibrate their demand for protection and justice, in the face of police statements such as, "I don't think you're as vulnerable as you think you are" (Thiara, 2011: 230).

For Oyinka successfully navigating police presence in the homeplace also required a display of provision or middle-class wealth. She was the only ‘stay at home’ Black mother in the study, whose children are privately educated in the UK. Her husband, an expat and businessman, though living in another country, is financially responsible for the household income. Oyinka believed that her ability to present a spacious and well-furnished home strengthened her position as being innocent of the accusations. By displaying apparent middle-class living standards, she believed the police would doubt that caring matriarch of a well-resourced family could bring harm to her child.

‘Then they’re [police] like, where’s your room? I take them to her room. She has the biggest room in the house.’ - Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

Oyinka’s use of homeplace in this way suggests that Black women of means may rely on class and economic advantage to attempt to navigate the state surveillance triggered by the hypervisibility of their racial identity. In her case, her middle-class home, and specifically the large size of her daughters’ room excluded her from the categorisation of a ‘bad Black mother’ or ‘baby mama’ whose economic struggles and encounters of deprivation predispose her maternity to suspicion and judgment. As outlined in chapter 3, Black women across the socioeconomic spectrum are subject to tropes such as the baby mama (to describe the state-dependent, often single mother) and the strong, independent Black woman (to typify working, professional and middle-class mothers). For some Black mothers, financial resources may provide a way of resisting the surveillance and presence of state agents in their home following CPVA.

## Conclusion

This thesis is the first body of work to explore CPVA from an intersectional perspective by foregrounding the racial, cultural and gender identity of Black mothers in its empirical consideration. Though commonalities may be present in the type of abuse experienced by mothers, there is little knowledge about how the challenges and realities of race can differentiate maternal accounts of harm. By centring the narrative accounts of eight Black African and Caribbean mother-victims, intervening mother-friends and professionals, this chapter begins to explore this empirical gap. The first section highlighted the wounded self-concept and personhood that some Black mothers experience following verbal abuse from their children. It emphasised that need to situate the non-physical assault of Black mothers within cultural context. Next, the second section addressed the issue of physical assault. It showed that while this type of CPVA can be caused by sons and daughters, Black mothers in this study responded to physical abuse in gendered patterns, which had disparaging effects on how their maternity was deconstructed. When harm was inflicted by daughters, the mothers were subject to a process of infantilisation. However, physical abuse from their sons repurposed the essence of their motherhood to serve as a repository of male rage.

The third section highlights the myriad ways CPVA can affect the resources, earning power and employment experiences of Black women. As matriarchal providers, the centrality of work and economic provision in Black motherhood cannot be overstated. At times it seemed that receiving the respect of their children was not solely contingent on their ability to provide nurture and care, but their ability to provide financially. Mothers with means experienced a depletion of their resources by their children through fraud, theft and financial coercion on how to spend their income. However, some Black mothers of low socio-economic status were made vulnerable to their children in other ways. Through professional

recounts, examples were provided of cases where such mothers relied on their children to contribute to household income and alleviate financial burdens. This sense of co-dependency between mother and child contributed to an inverting of power dynamics, suggesting that for some Black mothers discharging the obligation of matriarchal provider can be essential to maintaining normative family hierarchies.

Finally, this chapter exemplified how CPVA deconstructs the meaning of homeplace for Black mothers through various mediums. These include children making threatening use of household appliances, damaging property, introducing criminal activity in the home (through drug selling or storing), subjecting mothers to carceral-like conditions by restricting their movement at home or exposing the homeplace to surveillance of state agents like the police. The spatial overhaul caused by CPVA is deeply significant for Black mothers, as they consider the homeplace a place of refuge, healing and site of resistance from the racist and oppressive societal structures in which they live (bell hooks, 1990).

Once the home is compromised by CPVA, Black mothers are made to experience fear from within the home and the structural forces external to it. Desperate to experience respite from CPVA, some mothers felt compelled to remove the child displaying abusive behaviour, however feelings of shame soon followed. This was linked to their understanding of the homeplace as not solely being their shelter from a racist world, but also a refuge for their children. Though the decision to remove the child from the home was done to protect themselves, it also endangered and exposed that child to the harsh realities the homeplace was designed to guard them against. The next chapter outlines the complex way Black mothers and others apportion and locate blame, shame and responsibility within them for CPVA. Chapter 7 details how 'failure' within Black motherhood pivots on the notions of

shame, blame and due to the privatisation of Black mothering practices, the transfer of responsibility to mothers-victims for their suffering.

## **SEVEN: FAILED MOTHERHOOD: DISCOURSES ON MATERNAL GUILT, MOTHER-BLAME AND RESPONSIBILITY TRANSFERENCE**

### **Introduction**

The interrelated concepts of maternal guilt, mother-blame and self-blame have been explored by sociologists, feminist scholars and maternal theorists in various spheres of research including perinatal studies, education, child and adolescent mental health, and domestic abuse (Moulding et al. 2015; Toews et al. 2019; 2021; Scott et al. 2019; Azzopardi, 2022; Purtle et al. 2022; Dawson, 2021). Ideologies around deviance, criminality and violence being caused by ‘poor parenting’ and ‘bad familial socialisation’ have long tenanted popular discourse (Purtle et al. 2022). Evidence of mother-blaming discourses in the West existed from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, where housewives were blamed for ‘smothering their sons’, making them communists or homosexuals, while working mothers were blamed for perpetuating juvenile delinquency by neglecting their children (Ladd-Taylor, 2004:11; Feldstein, 2000; Ladd-Taylor and Umansky, 1998). Studies on maternal accountability find that mothers shift from experiencing mother-blame to self-blame by assuming total responsibility for the actions of their children (McInnis, 2021: 41). This shift from external to internal is catalysed and intensified as women interact with their social networks, family and support agencies (Williams et al. 2017: 601; Jackson and Mannix, 2004). This suggests there is a symbiotic relationship between mother-blame and self-blame (also synonymous with maternal guilt).

The practice of mother-blame propagates the myth of perfect motherhood, an idealised and unrealistic standard resulting in self-blame when internalized by women (Toews et al. 2019; Jackson and Mannix, 2004). In Western nations, a ‘good mother’ is defined by intensive mothering ideologies that herald a maternal practice that is ‘child-centered’, ‘self-

sacrificing’ and ‘all-absorbing’ (Arendell, 1999; Hays, 1996; Sutherland, 2010; Collins, 2021: 1; Li, 2022: 89). To fall short of this idealised standard is to practice a ‘failed motherhood’. Should issues arise within the family, whether concerning a child’s mental health or their disruptive behaviour (Moses, 2010a; 2010b), this is perceived as the ‘failing’ of these mothers, which invites the imposition of blame from various sources including friends, family, helping professionals and wider society (McInnis, 2021: 2; Jackson and Mannix, 2004: 155). Chapter 6 illustrated the deconstructive impact of CPVA on the maternal identity and practice of Black women. This chapter builds on this foundation, establishing that the narrative around ‘failing families’ is actually rooted in constructions of ‘failed motherhood’, where women are blamed for CPVA due to their perceived failing in the moralisation of their children. It argues that Black mother-victims, whose maternal practices deviate from Western ideals of intensive mothering, are considered to practice a ‘failed motherhood’. It is through this rhetoric that maternal guilt, mother-blame and self-blame for CPVA occurs. Moreover, due to the symbiotic relationship between mother-blame and self-blame, women affected by CPVA become entrapped in a web of guilt, judgment and condemnation.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first provides definitional clarity on maternal guilt and untangles the psychological web of mother-blame and self-blame. The second section highlights the attitudinal shift away from childrearing being perceived as a collective nurturing practice within Black communities when CPVA occurs. This section draws attention to the privatisation of Black motherhood across six sites where they are considered to exhibit ‘failed motherhood’. The third and final section of this chapter considers the inculcating of Black single motherhood in mother-blaming discourses through four overarching failings. Their deviation from intensive mothering ideologies that are practiced

by White, middle-class, married and unemployed mothers is seen to foreground their maternal failing. For instance, their role as matriarchal providers, through a crucial strategy of survival for Black single mothers, can be problematised as them ‘failing to be present’ thus constituting a form of neglect, having negative impact on their child’s behaviour. With regard to their unmarried status, this section reveals instances where some Black single mothers were blamed by their children and professionals for their perceived failure to detect men considered to be deficient fathers, whose absence, passivity or involvement in criminality were considered triggers to children displaying CPVA.

### **Defining Maternal Guilt**

In Adrienne Rich’s seminal book *Of Woman Born*, maternal guilt was defined as an ‘overwhelming worry’ resulting in ‘the burden of...daily, nightly, hourly’ questioning ‘Am I doing what is right? Am I doing enough? Am I doing too much?’ (Rich, 1977: 223; Collins, 2021: 1). Guilt has also been conceptualised as a ‘moral emotion’, a feeling of self-judgment that is socially induced (Collins, 2021:1). It occurs when a person believes they have done something wrong, however guilt can progress to shame when one goes from feeling like one did a bad thing to feeling like one is a bad person (Ibid, Turner and Stets, 2005: 176). In parenting discourses, guilt is not experienced as a ‘gender-neutral’ psychological phenomenon, but rather confirms the gendered societal expectations of childrearing as a mother’s responsibility (Collins 2021; Li, 2022: 88; Glavin et al. 2011; Simon and Nath, 2004). Cultural standards of good parenting are measured by the quality of maternal roles (Borelli et al. 2017). Introduced by Hays (1996), ‘intensive mothering’ encapsulates the ideology within industrialised Western culture that a ‘good’ mother expends a vast amount of time, resources and energy in childrearing. The total devotion of a woman’s psychological, emotional and physical well-being into her children, particularly at the

expense of her needs, remains the yardstick for good maternal practice (Ennis, 2014; Douglas and Michaels, 2005; Nam et al. 2022; Arendell, 1999; Scharp and Thomas, 2017).

Following this supposition, mothers are held solely responsible for safeguarding and tending to the wellbeing of their children (Mullender et al. 2002; Moulding et al. 2015: 258; McInnis, 2021: 3). According to Hays (1996) the gendered socialisation of women as primary caregivers creates a 'guilt gap', where mothers 'experience higher levels of guilt than men about how their actions, inactions and choices impact their children (Li, 2022:88). Moreover, because they carry the burden of childrearing, women are subject to scrutiny when they fall short of societal expectations of mothering (Li, 2022: 88; Slobodin et al. 2020; Collins, 2021; Borelli et al. 2017; Simon, 1995). They are blamed when issues arise within the family sphere (Castro, 2019; McInnis 2021: 2; Arcia et al. 2005). Maternal guilt can manifest differently across women. Mothers who are employed or engaged in business can express guilt at their inability to practice intensive mothering (Collins, 2021; Sutherland, 2010). While women with children who experienced challenges with physical or mental health experienced maternal guilt and self-blame for perceived oversight, inadequate parental advocacy, transmitting 'bad genes', adverse family situations or simply not 'doing more' for one's child (McInnis, 2021; Moses, 2010: 119-120).

### **Mother-Blaming: A response to Youth Offending and CPVA**

Due to societal assignments around the maternal responsibility to moralise children, there is a correlating level of mother-blame placed on women for the actions of the males in their lives, including their children (McInnis, 2021: 2; Arcia et al 2005; Reimer and Sahagian, 2015; Moulding et al. 2015: 249). When it comes to anti-social behaviour and offending outside the home, society ties vices including drug abuse and youth violence to the existence

of 'bad' mothers' who lead 'pathological families' (Ladd-Taylor, 2004; Feld, 1999:32; Platt, 2009; Hoffman and Vander ven, 2007; Pickett, 2017: 361). Women who 'produce' children that offend and commit serious crimes are considered failures at what is supposedly a woman's primary function - child rearing (McInnis, 2021: 2; Gálvez, 2019). Several studies on the relatives of serious offenders and murderers reveal the self-blame mothers experienced due to their biological connection to those who commit heinous acts. In May's (2000) study a mother whose son was guilty of murder said 'I was the one that actually bore David. I brought him into this world, and if I hadn't, he wouldn't have grown up and done that' (2000: 204). Similarly, in Condry's work on *Families Shamed*, women had their motherhood defined through the sexual and violent offenses of their sons (2007: 68). They were deemed 'responsible' for their existence (Ibid, 69).

The rhetoric around mother-blaming persists when discussing a child's display of aggression and violence within the home. CPVA is also known as mother abuse due to the gendered nature of the harm and the overrepresentation of mothers as victims (see Chapter 2). This phenomenon intersects various disciplines including youth justice, child protection and domestic violence. The under-reported nature of CPVA has been linked to the silence of mother-victims caused by their fear of judgment and mother-blame should their experiences become known. Two Spanish studies found that an overwhelming majority of the Hispanic mothers whose children exhibiting disruptive behaviours blamed themselves and felt stigmatised by others, including those in their social network (Arcia and Fernández 2003; Arcia et al. 2005). Other qualitative studies reflect similar findings of mother-victims feeling revictimised by the external judgment and mother-blame following disclosure of CPVA, which re-enforced their narratives of self-blame (William et al. 2017b: 602). Hunter et al. (2010) found that in the experience of mothers referred into intervention programmes

for family violence, many chose silence as a tactic of avoiding others blaming them for their child's abusive conduct. Mother-blaming silences mother-victims by imposing feelings of embarrassment, shame and maternal guilt (Williams et al. 2017b: 604).

### **Privatised Mothering**

There is a cultural responsibility on Black mothers to engage in the socialisation of their children, while serving in a broader role as a collective nurturer and moral guardian to all Black children. Chapter 3 introduced the practice of 'shared mothering', where Black women, whether aunts, sisters, grandmothers and those biologically unrelated, become 'othermothers' to children in their community. Across Black communities, the socialisation, and upkeep of children has been understood as a shared responsibility among several individuals. However, once Black women encountered CPVA, they experienced a privatisation of their mothering. Through this privatisation process, a child's outcome (and behaviour) was constructed as the sole responsibility of the mother-victims and evidence of their maternal inadequacy. The privatisation of Black mothering dismisses the hostile environments and structural inequalities in which these women raise their children (Elliott and Reid, 2016).

This rhetoric perpetuates the practice of decontextualising women from the challenging realities surrounding and shaping their mothering practice (Azzopardi, 2022: 1648). Limited attention is given to the intersecting racial, economic and gendered realities that frame the lived experiences of mothers (Ibid). Ignoring the unwarranted pressures Black mothers face, they are expected to be 'strong' and save their children, their individual responsibility considered the solution to structural problems of racism and poverty (Ibid). as such, these women experience blame (internally and externally) when their children falter (Ibid). In this

study, there are examples of an internal privatisation of Black mothering, where affected women self-blame for their victimisation. There are also external examples of privatisation, where professionals and other focus group mothers blamed mother-victims by placing responsibility on them for CPVA (responsibility transference).

### *Failing to moralise children*

All mothers participating in this study were asked for their definition of a 'good' mother. Initially, participants were reserved in their responses, and chose to emphasise that defining 'good motherhood' was a subjective enterprise and depended on a range of factors, including the unique needs of each family. When prompted to share their subjective views, there were overarching themes around the importance of transparency and prioritising friendship with children as evidence of good mothering. However, as conversations proceeded, it became apparent that 'good mothering' was evidenced by the successful life outcomes, academic achievement and upstanding morals and behaviour of a child. The response of Oyinka, a mother-victim, was illuminating.

A.A: What would say makes a good mother?

Oyinka: I think just the love for your children, for them to do well, for them to (pause) to be honest with you sometimes I feel I am a failure. Because this is not the way I pictured it.

Though Oyinka began by offering an idealised definition of good mothering as being one primarily grounded in love, she paused and in a moment of transparency revealed that the performative aspect of 'good' motherhood was ensuring that your child becomes a success. This appeared to be weightier proof of good maternity. Offering part definition and part confession, Oyinka disclosed how distant she felt to the definition of a 'good' mother due

to intertwined issues around her daughter failing academically and directing abusive behaviour towards her in the home.

A.A: How do you mean?

Oyinka: I don't know. I just feel maybe (pause) because she's the first child and she's not really doing too well. There are other milestones that she has not crossed yet. She still has not finished [university]; she needs a degree. For that, I put the blame back on myself. I will keep blaming myself. The only thing I can say is the love [she feels for her daughter] is there.

By directing blame and responsibility to herself for her daughter's life outcomes, Oyinka endorses a privatised mothering ideology which spouts that if 'good' mothers produce good and well-performing children, the reverse must also be true. Oyinka's only comfort was still connected to performative elements of her motherhood, and she proudly shared in the interview that her other two children were well-behaved (non-abusive) and performing well academically. Other mother-victims also felt burdened with self-blame and responsibility due to their perceived failing as moral agents of their children. Women are tasked with the cultural responsibility of nurturing, educating and moralising children. Chapter 6 discussed the life-long consequences of a mother's biological role as creator and prenatal chamber for her child, namely being her inability to fully disconnect herself from abusive children. Whether directly or through professional accounts, Black mother-victims shared feeling a sense of responsibility for CPVA due to their role in 'creating' a deviant child.

'You end up with that guilt. My sister and I both have it. We are angry with our children, our boys...but we still feel it's our fault. I feel completely responsible for

him and his behaviours...he's absolutely vicious. I must have made him that way.

It's my lack of good parenting. All of it comes down to my fault, if I'm honest. I

just think it's my fault (cries)' – Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

'I remember very vividly, mothers would often say at [therapy] sessions, 'where did I go wrong? What have I done to get my child here?' They really embody how historically the perception of blame is heavily placed on mum in terms of children's behaviour.' - Mary-Anne, Psychologist

The above perspectives reflect beliefs within African societies that speak to the maternal role as one of moral socialisation and place the responsibility for immoral children on mothers. Two prominent African proverbs serve as examples: 'A good child belongs to the father, whereas a bad child belongs to the mother' and 'a wise child gladdens the heart of his father, an imbecile saddens the heart of his mother'. When CPVA occurs, Black mothers can construct their failure to 'moralise' their children as reason for their abuse, transferring responsibility away from other factors and justifying the blaming and condemning of themselves.

### *Failing in sacred maternity*

Chapter 5 established that within the mothering practices of Black women, the mystical, religious and sacred enjoin. The concept of sacred maternity encapsulates two purposes: motherhood as a divine assignment and a medium of securing the protection of children through rituals, spiritual practices and religious devotion. In the religious groups of the mother-participants, the ideology of children being obedient and submissive to parents was considered evidence of good behaviour. Conversely, when children displayed 'bad behaviour', the involvement of evil was suggested. In one case, a professional shared that a

daughter instigating CPVA towards her parents was perceived by them to be taken over by evil spirits.

‘...working with a family from Cameroon. It was the daughter who was being abusive, and they kept saying, they were convinced that she had the devil within her’  
- Catrina, Social Worker.

Spirituality is also significant in the navigation of abuse. Studies show that Black women navigate their suffering through spiritual practices including prayers, attending religious gatherings and seeking the counsel of religious leaders as a first point of intervention (Femi-Ajao, 2018; Thiara and Harrison, 2021). Chapter 8 will illustrate how Black mother-victims use spirituality to respond and navigate CPVA. However, the mothers made little mention of using sacred maternity as a preventative tool. Instead, it was Elizabeth, a Black professional and mother (non-victim) who held the view that a lack of religious devotion in mother-victims implies their children are not sufficiently trained in religious and moral scripts around good conduct. In her view, this foundational issue may be why children practiced immoral acts (in this case, the sacrilege of abusing their mothers). Considering Elizabeth’s insider status, as a Black African mother of five children, a Christian woman and registered social worker, her account was revelatory:

‘When children lack morals, there's a problem. Mother don't go to church; father don't go to church. Even in social work, we are advised to teach children their faith, that it helps. I asked one child, he says ‘I don't have no religion’. He doesn't belong anywhere. Mum is dating all these different men at the same time. He told me mum would tell him to lie when different men would come to the door’.

Elizabeth ties the absence of morality to a lack of religious foundation which she evidences by no church attendance. By pointing out the example of a mother-victim who had multiple partners and frequently asked her son to lie on her behalf, Elizabeth suggests this to be evidence of her immorality, makes her a questionable example. Although Kukua thought differently to Elizabeth, she also acknowledged that Black mother-victims were made to feel that failing in the religious socialisation of their children made them partly responsible for their behaviour and CPVA.

‘Mothers feel, I wasn’t Christian enough; I didn’t pray enough. You weren’t Muslim enough; you didn’t fast enough. You didn’t do enough. A child being abusive towards you is a personal failure.’ – Kukua, Independent Domestic Violence Advocate.

Given the centrality of sacred maternity to Black mothers, and philosophies of parental reverence in various religious scripts, the occurrence of CPVA could be considered a reflection of a mother’s lack of due diligence in spiritual devotions. Kukua’s account acknowledges that Black mother-victims may experience internal blame and maternal guilt connected to their perceived failure to dutifully practice sacred maternity. These perceptions around self-blame and judgment hold significant implications for the willingness of Black mothers to approach their informal support networks while navigating CPVA (discussed further in Chapter 8).

### *Failing to protect*

Mothers, considered custodians of the home, are subject to a moral, social and legal duty to protect their children from harm (Azzopardi, 2022: 1645; Terrance et al. 2008; Jackson and

Mannix, 2004). This sense of duty is built on the long-standing, erroneous perception of mothers as ‘all-sacrificing, all knowing, all-powerful mother’ and thus capable of protecting her children whatever the cost (Azzopardi, 2022: 1646; Epstein, 1999; Johnson and Sullivan, 2008). Falling short of the ideological ‘duty to protect’ is seen as a maternal ‘failure to protect’ (Azzopardi, 2022). A strong basis for mother-blame is formed when children directly experience abuse in the home or through secondary victimisation, witness domestic violence occurring (Jackson and Mannix, 2004; Mabatah et al. 2016: 357).

In this study, one mother-victim, Oyinka, expressed maternal guilt and self-blame for failing to protect her daughter from sexual assault that happened in the family home. Oyinka was physically and verbally assaulted by her teenage daughter (Lola). However, following her daughter’s suicide attempt, her independent school referred to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Lola began working with them. About a year into her sessions with a CAMHS therapist, Lola disclosed she was the victim of rape. Shortly after, the trauma following her daughter’s rape experience was suggested by mental health practitioners as a potential trigger for her abusive behaviour towards Oyinka and her siblings. Initially, Oyinka resisted this explanation. Rather than engage with her daughter’s disclosure of a childhood sexual assault, she maintained the view that her daughter was simply attention-seeking.

‘She [daughter] said it was this German man that use to come and fix things in the house. I feel maybe he did molest her, like touch her inappropriately but I don't know, if (pause) like, because I feel she exaggerates a lot. She went too far with the exaggeration that he actually raped her. Her description of what he did was not real.

She said I was in the house when it happened. I was like, I never left you with this man.’ – Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

Her suspicion towards her daughter’s assault seemed concerning. Oyinka’s denial of her child’s traumatic experience may be linked to the physical abuse she experienced from her daughter and the psychological harm caused by her false accusations to the police and social services. However, as the interview progressed, it appeared that it was easier for Oyinka to deny the possibility of her daughter’s sexual assault than to grapple with the reality that it occurred in their home, under her supervision and was withheld for many years. Reflecting more on the day the disclosed rape happened, Oyinka shared the following.

‘I remember the day she's talking about; I was in my room. And I told her, I said get out of that room. And she left the room. So, when did that happen? In what space of time did that happen? I didn't notice or I wasn't aware? On the day [Lola] disclosed...I just started crying, because...as a mother hearing your child has been raped and I didn't even know’

Oyinka proceeded to ask a series of rhetorical questions which revealed an internal dialogue around self-blame. Deeply confused and taken aback by her daughter’s sudden disclosure of childhood sexual abuse, Oyinka was overwhelmed by the reality that she failed to protect her child and created a home environment where secrecy could exist between them.

‘Was I not close to her enough that she could confide in me? This is where I sit back and think, where did I go wrong? What did I do? What could I have done? Why didn't she tell me? She never told me, and she was never able to tell me, but she's

telling you people [CAMHS] years after. If she told me on day, I'd run into the room. I can't even trace the man back. The thing really brought me down. It really took me out for a long time'

Not only did Oyinka feel that she had failed in her duty to protect her daughter, the CPVA she experienced was being linked to a traumatic event underpinned by her perceived maternal failure to safeguard her child. Once again, the unique dynamic between mother-child manifests as an important consideration when understanding how responsibility for CPVA is transferred and linked to examples of maternal failure or inadequacy.

### *Failing through physical punishment*

Possessing strength, authority and wielding 'maternal might' are key idealisations in Black maternal identity and practice. However, when CPVA occurred, these characteristics in Black women were problematised as modelling and normalising aggression in the home. Mother-victims who were considered 'aggressive', 'angry' or who physically punished their children were held responsible by professionals for triggering within them a sense of injustice and retaliation, wherein they learnt to respond with physical violence.

'A teenager who has become violent to their parents? It started with their parents. The parents beat them. They grow up, especially the boys, wanting to go to the gym and get muscles because they are not going to tolerate anything from their parents'.  
– Patty, Parent and Youth Coach.

'Parents use physical punishment, and the child responds vice versa.' - Beatrice,  
Parent Coach

A similar view was shared by some Black mothers (non-victims) who participated in the focus groups. They held the strictness and militancy of Black motherhood (as evidenced through physical discipline) as linked to a child's use of aggression in the home. The mothers were presented with a vignette on a fictitious scenario of CPVA featuring Fola, a Nigerian mother of twin teenage boys. The vignette (see appendix) deliberately excluded any mention of Fola's conduct or parenting style, so as to not lead participants to conclusions. Despite this, more than half of the mothers hypothesised that the boys were abusive to Fola (their mother) because she must have been strict and physically disciplined them, though nothing in the vignette alluded to such.

A.A: Why do you think child to parent violence and abuse happens?

Feyi: Bad parenting. If we hear that a child is abusing their parent, as an African parent, I think parenting caused it.

A.A So you think the parent has done something to cause this behaviour?

Feyi: Yes. The child could rebel because you know, most of our parents are strict... now the children are the ones hitting back.

The causality between childhood experiences of corporal punishment, the normalisation of violence as a form of conflict resolution and aggression towards parents in later years has been suggested in various studies (Calvete et al. 2015; Ibabe et al. 2013; Carlson, 2000). However, as Chapter 5 has established, the issue is that the practice of militant and disciplinarian maternity is an idealised aspect of Black mothering identity and practice. Due

to long-standing cultural scripts around Black women as strong matriarchs, assumptions are then made that if they should experience abuse from their child, they are responsible because they must have modelled the use of verbal and physical aggression to communicate disappointment or frustration.

### *Failing to practice militant motherhood*

The conclusion that Black mothers who physically discipline their children model and normalise the use of violence in the home and therefore are to blame for CPVA is a reductive one. It is unable to account for the paradox that emerges where Black mother-victims, who deviate from cultural scripts around militant and disciplinarian maternity, still experience their child's abusive conduct. For these mother-victims, CPVA cannot be explained in this way. Instead, unlike professionals and focus group mothers who believed the use of corporal punishment normalised violence within homes, Chardonae felt her deviation from the cultural idealisation of militant maternity shifted the power dynamics between herself and her son. This speaks to a double-bind affecting Black mothers. Should they adhere to traditional idealisations of Black mothering as militant, authoritative and lacking in maternal tenderness, they are blamed for modelling aggressive behaviour to their children. However, should they choose to move from these scripts and embrace a gentler way of child-rearing, they can still be held responsible for losing control of their children, which was Chardonae's experience. Chardonae was determined to raise her son differently to the strict parenting methods her mother deployed. She felt her childhood experience of being physically beaten traumatised her in a way she did not want to pass on to her children.

‘I was a young mom. I was trying to do things different. I didn't want to beat him the way we were beaten as children as a way of controlling and punishing us. It wasn't sadistic punishments, but my mom had no other option.’

Though she had a personal commitment to changing her maternal practice, Chardonae expressed that deviating from the idealised method of childrearing and the use of physical discipline meant she was unsure of a suitable alternative. Moreover, given the context in which she raised her son (a single teenage mother in South London), Chardonae expressed some regret as to whether her parenting methods were best suited for their turbulent social environment.

‘I didn't want him to grow up with fear, but I had no idea how to grow him. I may have grown him a little soft...a feminist kinda thing. Make sure he respects women...be kind, don't be violent, don't be aggressive. But I'm not sure he (pause) I don't know if that was the right way to grow him up as a boy in South London.’

Despite her commitment to a progressive maternity (and the feminist mothering of her son), Anthony's resulting abusive behaviour towards his mother and female romantic partners, caused Chardonae to doubt whether her deviation from normative Black maternal practice was ideal. Her decision to rear him ‘a little soft’ and ‘feminist’ conflicts with long-standing practice of Black mothers to utilise authoritative and militant parenting strategies. The practice of militant motherhood can be linked to ensuring the survival of their families. Black feminist epistemology highlights the way race, gender and class intersect to frame Black mothering priorities and strategies (Reynolds, 2005). As shown in chapters 3 and 5, child-rearing within the context of deprivation, racism, community violence and heavy policing may demand that Black mothers display strength and dominance in order to regulate their children's behaviour as they are deemed less innocent through processes of adultification and given less room for error. The dichotomy between the perspectives of

Black women unaffected by CPVA (whether they were professionals or focus group participants) and the views of mother-victims highlights the need to further explore Black community attitudes around this hidden form of family violence.

### *Failing to change negative family environments*

Black women experienced a sense of shame and were thought responsible for continuing cycles of pain in their families. Five of eight mother-victims shared their difficult relationships with their own mothers. Some described their mothers as aggressive, while others felt they ‘lacked an emotional relationship’ with them and experienced rejection. Two mothers (Elaine and Chardona) shared that they felt personally responsible for perpetuating a legacy of pain and rejection in their families. Elaine, a woman of Black Caribbean descent, disclosed having a tenuous relationship with her granddaughter (Nicole), who she cared for as both a mother and grandmother. Elaine assumed responsibility for her granddaughter Nicole as she considers the ‘carnage’ of her behaviour as being connected to the rejection she experienced from her mother.

‘Things have been dysfunctional from when she was born. From an early age [Nicole] was rejected by her mom because I had rejected her mom, and then I was rejected by my own mother. We are coming from a family of rejection, which filtered down from me to my daughter to her children. I was left with the carnage to clean up’ – Elaine, Grandmother, Black Caribbean

While the practice of ‘grandmothering’ is common in Black communities for various reasons, including providing assistance to biological parents affected by economic instability, substance abuse, incarceration, teen pregnancy or family conflict (Peterson, 2018; Burnette, 1997; Smith-Ruiz, 2008). In Elaine’s case, her ‘grandmothering’ responsibility appears to be the penance she must pay for her perceived responsibility in

perpetuating ‘dysfunction’ and ‘rejection’ to her children. Chardonae echoed similar sentiments to Elaine when sharing about her relationship with her mother. Her mother struggled to express love emotionally and physically to her children, not out of malicious intent, but simply because she had not experienced such expressive love from her own mother. Chardonae’s account also constructs this image of lovelessness, pain and rejection being ‘filtered down’ through maternal-child relations.

‘I knew that she [her mother] didn't get love. When I used to ask her questions about what you were like when you grew up, she would say, ‘I didn't get a lot of love, I got food. People were kind to me, but I didn't get hugs and kisses’. So, she never was that kind of person’ – Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

Her mother’s account of being fed, but not shown physical affection presented Chardonae with another idealised image of Black motherhood, where being a matriarchal provider centres on the provision of a child’s physical and material needs, as opposed to displaying emotional affection. Attempts were made by participants (one mother-victim and one black female professional) to contextualise the impulse behind the survival-oriented nature of Black mothering, the seeming de-prioritisation of emotional connectedness between mother-child and the cycles of rejection and trauma encountered in some Black families. They both considered it necessary to acknowledge the plight Black people have collectively experienced of deprivation, crime, violence and racism and its impact on family life. They felt that dysfunctional family experiences (like CPVA) can be linked to the historic disadvantage and cumulative struggles of the Black community.

‘Don’t forget we are growing up with traumas that we haven’t dealt with before bringing up a family. I remember in the 60s 70s 80s, children were having children, 16-18-year olds, in order to have a house. This cumulative thing has come down the line of tragedies within the Black community’- Minika, Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead

As a Black Caribbean woman living in the UK and a direct descendant of the Windrush generation, Chardonae offered her thoughts on the challenging socio-historical backdrop against which many Black mothers raised their children and the unfortunate reality that these challenges remain today. Following the devastation of the second world war, the British government encouraged the migration of its commonwealth citizens to assist in re-building efforts. This patriotic rhetoric invigorated many skilled Black Caribbean men and women to embark the ‘Empire Windrush’ ship to the ‘Mother country’ in the 1950s. In her reflections, Chardonae highlights the family-wide impact of the Caribbean-British transmigration of the Windrush generation.

‘There was a lot of trauma in South London in the 80s. We were the generation from the parents that came in from the Windrush. Our families were messy, difficult and full of all sorts of issues. They left children behind, came with some, got into new relationships. We were all suffering with something. A lot of emotional trauma that we've taken from our parents and some really poor parenting.’

It was common for skilled men to arrive on British shores first, leaving their wives and children behind until they had settled before later sending for them. Thus, there was a rise in mother-headed families, not necessarily due to relationship breakdown, but the pursuit of

economic opportunity and the betterment of family life (Reynolds, 2005). However, this wave of migration left a trail of broken attachments and disrupted families in its wake, thus the institution of the Black family was perceived to be ‘under attack’ during this time (Anim-Addo, 2000:12). As many came from rural and traditional Caribbean environments, none were prepared for the conditions industrialised and urban communities in England would provide (Anim-Addo, 2000: 11). On arrival, they found themselves in over-crowded accommodation, their children subject to racist educational practices and they personally experienced discrimination at work (Ibid). Skilled Black men were denied access to employment befitting their qualifications which opened the door to participation in illegal activities in ensure the survival of their families. Chardonae’s father left a middle-class profession in Jamaica and accepted a low-paying manual labour job in England. In time, he began to sell drugs to substantiate a meagre income and provide for his seven children.

‘My dad was a highly intelligent man. He was a proof-reader. So, all the government documents, punctuation, grammar, spelling comprehension, he had that spot on. When we came here, they got him digging the roads, laying Yorkshire electricity. He became a depressed man the rest of his life. My dad hustled weed.’ – Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

Chardonae shared how some Black men in her community in the 1980s engaged in another lucrative criminal business; the ‘pimping’ of young Black girls. This decision, she explained, was similar to selling illegal substances, and rooted in a desire to survive and ‘hustle’ beyond a meagre salary, however with no regard for the possible consequences on others.

‘There was pimping, putting young girls out on the street, that was a money earner. My dad's generation were actively involved in that. You can trace it back to racism,

you can trace it back to there was nothing else. If you didn't want to dig the streets or work in a chemical factory: you've got two choices, this really horrible life or you've got this hustle that can bring in the money.'

By raising the intergenerational impact of the Windrush Generation, Chardonae shares one example of how the exodus of Black people from their country of origin profoundly reframed Black family life. While at other times in her interview, she expressed feeling personally responsible for her son's abusive behaviour due to her role in 'creating him', here she balances that view by recognising that the context surrounding the formation of families has bearing on their structure, values and resources which, in turn, can frame the outcome of the children. While mother-victims like Elaine and Chardonae acknowledged the existence of tension and pain in their own personal relations with their mothers, it was through professional accounts these tensions were constructed as connected to CPVA and evidence of wider patterns of family dysfunction. It could be that family members struggled with effective communication, were experiencing challenges with mental health, or domestic violence may have occurred. In other cases, the family context was shaped by a 'snowballing' and compounding of these various factors.

'This family does not know how to control their anger. They are all hypervigilant. The slightest thing will kick off a domestic situation...when I went up last week, they were just screaming at each other, he'd lost his phone and neither of them knew how to talk about it in a sensible manner. It's also the ACE's, neglect, mom's alcoholism, domestic violence by him and on him' – Nicolas, Youth Offending Team (YOT) Officer

‘Witnessing DV in the home, if the parents have got mental health difficulties, if there's financial difficulties, all of these things snowball and get worse.’- Derica, Psychotherapist and Counsellor

‘Even if there isn't intimate partner violence within the home, if a family struggles with communication, and a young person doesn't know how to identify their emotions, they can resort to violence’ – Mary-Anne, Psychologist

Instead of perceiving a child's use of violence as indication of some inherent deviance or ‘evil’, Firmin (2020) suggests that professionals contextualise a child's conduct by factoring into their assessments the wider circumstances, situational challenges, and realities of their daily lives. However, here the emphasis some professionals place on familial dysfunctional can be connected to the blaming of mother-victims. For example, those who view children who instigate CPVA as mirroring behaviours that their mothers have either modelled or allowed in their households. By highlighting Black mothers as curators of the context in which young people are exposed to familial dysfunction, they can be held responsible for the CPVA that ensues. By failing to moralise their children through by modelling of desirable conduct or change negative family environments, these mothers can be perceived as contributors to their behaviour.

### **Pathologising Black Single Motherhood**

Another way Black mother-victims experienced maternal guilt and mother-blame for CPVA was through the problematisation of single motherhood. The opening section of this chapter engages with the academic discourse on mother blaming and how it is a common experience

for women who deviate from Western society's idealized view of 'good' mothers, namely being White, unemployed and in monogamous marriages to men (Collins, 2021; Arendell, 1999; Hays, 1996; Okimoto and Heilman, 2012). Chapter 3 critically considered the damaging racial tropes used to characterise Black motherhood (The Baby Mama, Strong Black Woman and the Angry Black Woman) and exclude it from White motherhood (Elliott and Reid, 2016; McCormack, 2005). It exemplified how the biases around 'The Baby Mama' rest in racialised, classed, and gendered-controlling images of Black women as neglectful, emasculating and state-dependent, conjuring images of them as irresponsible and unfit to mother (Rigueur, 2021; Tyler, 2022: 53-4; Elliott and Reid, 2019; Roberts, 1993).

In this third section, the chapter continues to explore the ideology of 'failing motherhood' among Black mother-victims but exclusively centres around their singlehood. Here, mother-blaming discourses occurred through four failings, three of which were increasingly male-centred: failing to be present, failing to detect unscrupulous men, failing to placate unfaithful fathers and failing to identify paternal identity. In this study, the eight mothers-victims held a range of various relationship statuses. However, whether married, widowed, divorced or single, they all experienced a form of loneliness when it came to parenting and navigating CPVA. Oyinka, though married for over two decades, was single-handedly raising her three children in the UK and bearing the brunt of her daughter's behaviour. Chardonae began her journey as a teenager single mother, though now married, continues to experience a hostile relationship with her relationship with her son. While other women (Jane, Badu, Zaya and Elaine) experienced single motherhood in the traditional sense. Through professional accounts, it became apparent that paternal absence was recurrent in the experiences of Black women affected by CPVA.

‘Mum had seven children and the father was, and this is something that’s common between the cases, is that he wasn’t really there’ - Mabel, Counsellor and Psychotherapist

‘There is often an absent father with male children using violence. There's no reference point, no balance, no model on how to handle emotions and feelings from a male perspective in the home.’ – Derica, Psychotherapist and Counsellor

Black single mothers were held responsible by some professionals for triggering their child’s aggressive behaviour when they displayed frustration or anger about the plight of their single motherhood. According to Minika, Black mothers who are bringing up children on their own are ‘angry’ and the consequences of this harboured frustration are far-reaching.

‘...there is a lot of anger in the air, anger from the child, anger because you no longer have that parent who they feel great attachment for... angry because of what the other parent did...wishing they were there and that anger is not dealt with’ - Minika, Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead

Professionals recounted how mothers who felt abandoned by abusive male partners would make comparisons between them and the child instigating CPVA. Although these women were speaking transparently about their predicament, their use of comparison between father and child (sons) was seen by professionals as being connected to their child’s future display of violence and abuse.

‘I had a conversation with mum and it [son’s behaviour] was really affecting her. Dad was in jail and eventually took his own life in prison. The boy was really mucked up and there was self-hatred going on. His mum would refer to him being like his dad and he would flip’ - Betty, Therapist

‘I’ve known mums that because the boys look like their dad, they get it hard. But the thing that is often forgotten is that those boys turn to men. He can remember how she used to treat him’ - Daniel, Head of Parent Engagement, and Restorative Justice Facilitator

These accounts suggest that the anger Black single mothers may feel about parenting alone, the behaviour or departure of their male partners can be problematised by professionals. In earlier sections, Black mother-victims were thought responsible for CPVA by professionals and other mothers for modelling aggression through physical punishment. However, here, the anger they may feel towards their challenging life circumstances is perceived to be problematic in of itself and a potential trigger of CPVA.

### *Failing to be present*

In the case of Black single mother-victims, they were blamed from failing to be present within the home, and ultimately their children’s lives. Chapters 5 and 6 discuss the centrality of work and financial provision in the carework of Black women. The identity of the matriarchal provider is even more salient for women who are nurturing and providing for their children single-handedly. Although Black mothers are held to this idealised standard and expected to discharge these responsibilities, in reality, they encountered challenges navigating this dual burden. Research confirms that Black mothers carry a disproportionate

amount of financial and parental responsibilities, while lacking the necessary emotional support to discharge these duties (Elliott et al. 2015; Holland, 2009; Surrency, 2021: 56).

‘To keep things going, mum is not there as much as she could be or is needed.

There is not enough time for these relationships to really flourish, to actually notice the changes that might be happening for your child.’ - Betty, Therapist

‘Mum was a nurse, working all the extra shifts and the children struggled...there was a break down in relationship’. - Elizabeth, Black African, Married Mother and Social Worker

‘There are issues around work life balance. Some of these mothers have two or three jobs, there are challenges around being available to support their child and being present in their life.’ – Beatrice, Black African, Married Mother, Parent Coach.

The misconception that mothers working produced neglected and poorly reared children and contributed to youth offending is long-standing one (Grubb and Lazerson, 1988; Ladd-Taylor and Umansky, 1998; Ladd-Taylor, 2004; Hoffman and Vander Ven, 2007). According to traditional ideologies, mothers are placed in the domestic sphere, dutifully tending to their child’s every need. Thus, ‘breadwinning’ mothers from Black and other ethnic groups are subjected to harsh judgment (Li, 2022: 98). The centrality of economic labour in the carework of Black women further removes them from the Westernised ideals of ‘good motherhood’. At times a mother’s unavailability (due to the demands of being a matriarchal provider) was thought by some professionals to be connected to a growing

distance between Black women and their children and their inability to notice where their children were struggling or intervene by addressing negative changes. Though acknowledging how the necessity of work for Black mothers could implicate mother-child relations, Elizabeth hesitated in ascribing mother blame.

‘Mother will put food on the table, mother will do the school run...will go to work... will look after them - only one person. What can she do? You know the rent in London? Mama has to pay the rent. If she doesn't go to work sheesh, she won't pay the rent. I don't blame any single mother for anything.’ – Elizabeth, Social Worker.

While Elizabeth recognised that a breakdown down in mother-child relations could be linked to maternal absence and a pathway to CPVA, she was vocal about the multiple burdens Black single mothers carried and the sacrifices made for their children. Her response reveals a sympathy for Black mother-victims who, despite struggling to discharge a dual burden as providers and nurturers, find themselves victims of CPVA, which some may consider linked to them ‘failing to be present’. As shown in Chapter 5, there is a widely held cultural view that maternal sacrifices and burdens will be rewarded with morally upstanding and high achieving children. The production of ‘good’ children externally validates the moral work of Black mothers. Thus, the reverse, the occurrence of CPVA, points to a deficiency in their mothering.

### *Failing to detect unscrupulous men*

Professional accounts were not isolated in linking responsibility for CPVA to the single motherhood of Black women through to their partnership with men perceived to be failing

fathers. Another avenue through which Black mothers were transferred blame and responsibility for CPVA was connected to their failure to detect men who became absent, passive or abusive fathers. In this study, a father who practiced deviance was one who either engaged in criminality outside the home, used violence within the home, or was adulterous and abandoned his existing family to start a new one. A critical perspective was put forward by one of the mother-victims (Chardonae). Before expressing her thoughts, she first asserted that she 'woman centred' and had 'a lot of sisters, strong women'. Perhaps to indicate that it was important that her views are not seen as a critique of Black womanhood but simply a case of delivering 'hard truths' to her 'sisters'. She began sharing about a large family in her community affected by issues relating to violence and drug-related criminality.

'We recently lost somebody in the community, and he had 35 children. Know what he gave one of his sons when he turned 18? An ounce of weed. He goes here you go; this is as much as I can do for you. But some of those women have more than one child for him. He had a lot of baby mothers, but let's say at number 20, didn't you think this guy has got enough kids?'

She describes the passing down of cannabis usage and selling as an example of dysfunctional inheritance. Though acknowledging that this not a prime example of good fathering, Chardonae's attention seems geared towards the 'baby mothers' who enabled such a man to have children by making available their wombs. In her continued critique, she implies that Black women should be 'discerning' about who they 'reproduce for'.

'An act of love or lust should not necessarily produce a life that neither person was particularly ready for. Do you need to have his child? Have a bit of fun and be

done. Some of those men should not have had children...I'd be more interested in why we can't wear condoms.' – Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

Another Black female professional Minika (though not a mother) echoed a similar rhetoric. She placed her emphasis on Black single mothers not 'asking the right questions' and not being 'brave enough' to stop the phenomenon of deviant fatherhood happening to their children.

'...a man coming towards her, and she doesn't ask the right questions...you have children? What really happened? But she doesn't want to hear it. She thinks this is my man now, with all his warts. He is bringing money in for a little while, but then it will stop...As Black women we are not saying to ourselves, who do we have to become as women to stop this constant thing [deviant fatherhood] happening to our children, we're not brave enough' - Minika, Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead

Responsibility transference is evident in the shift away from absent or passive fathers to the blaming of Black single mothers for failing to detect and sieve out unscrupulous men. By vilifying their choice of male partners, responsibility transfers from fathers (who were absent, passive or abusive) to Black mother-victims for supposedly creating dysfunctional families by 'choosing' to have children with deviant men.

*Failing to placate unfaithful fathers*

The conceptualisation of deviant fatherhood not only applied to men who used violence within the home, but those who fractured their families by creating new ones through infidelity. In this study, professional accounts reveal two examples of Black mothers-victims being blamed by their children for failing to keep fathers within the home, who considered this justification for CPVA. Reece, a secondary school teacher and faith leader, shared a time he had to intervene (as a pastor) in the case of a teenage boy who physically assaulted his mother after holding her responsible for his father's adultery which resulted in a second family with a younger woman. The boy blamed his mother for his father's absence and directed the rage and frustration he felt at being abandoned by his father, towards her. It was not immediately apparent why his mother was harmed for his father's act of betrayal against the family, but it soon became apparent how the son was able to locate fault within his mother.

Reece: I was shocked he was being so violent with his mom...He witnessed his dad being unfaithful in the marriage, and later they found out that he impregnated one of the young girls attending the church. But my question was why the mom? Why not his dad?

AA: What do you think is the answer to that? Why was mum on the receiving end of the violence, despite his father doing the wrong?

Reece: He thought his mom was not there for his dad and that is why he went after a young girl. His dad brainwashed him to think it was all his mom's fault, that she was always saying no, not allowing him to have sex with her.

The other example was of Trisha, a Black Caribbean mother who was verbally and physically abused by her sons (aged 11 and 15) after it was discovered their father had been unfaithful and engaged in a homosexual relationship. Nathaniel adopted a holistic approach to his intervention with Trisha and her sons, working with mother and children individually and together as a family. Through his multi-layered engagement with the family, he was able to offer a holistic perspective on the challenges they faced.

‘When dad came out as gay, he left the family, and they [sons] felt like they had to step up. They also had this anger within themselves, hatred towards their dad and blame towards mum that this happened.’ - Nathaniel, Secondary Age Lead Practitioner

Two practitioners described some of the homophobic attitudes in traditional Caribbean communities that may have made their father’s sexuality more difficult to come to terms with.

‘They would never imagine that Dad would have been gay, especially from a Caribbean background. Culturally, in Jamaica and the West Indies, gay people are killed out there. It’s a big no.’ - Nathaniel, Secondary Age Lead Practitioner

‘This would have discredited them as young boys. In the Caribbean community, just as the African community, being a B man [batty boy – gay man] is not a good thing. They are really strong against it’ - Minika, Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead

Trisha was just as affected as her sons, sharing their shock not only of the news of his sexual orientation, but the reality of his unfaithfulness and eventual leaving of the family home. Nathaniel described how before his homosexual orientation was uncovered through a series of social media posts, Trisha's husband was verbally aggressive towards her. Her sons observed this treatment of their mother, and in Nathaniel's view, when grappling with their own identity after their father's departure, they modelled this pattern of behaviour as a means of asserting male dominance over Trisha.

'They felt their Dad isn't a man because he is gay. They started pushing, hitting mom but mainly verbal and emotional aggression, putting her down. But that's what their dad used to do to make himself feel better, when he was in the closet. All that built up anger, and frustration he would put that towards mum. The kids thought it was her.' - Nathaniel, Secondary Age Lead Practitioner

Trisha was not alone in experiencing this repeat victimisation. Professional accounts indicated the prevalence of mothers becoming an outlet for their children to express frustration at their father's rejection, departure or absence.

'Sinead kept on wanting to be the supportive mother...a devoted mom. Her son's anger stemmed from his dad's rejection... I think subconsciously he blamed her for dad leaving the home' - Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

'Her dad was involved with drugs and the UK authority deported him. Her daughter saw it as the fault of the mum. She totally lost it with mum, and she felt completely helpless with the situation' - Reece, School teacher and Faith leader

Scholars have observed that abuse from one parent towards a child may trigger aggression against the non-abusive parent (Cottrell and Monk, 2004; Holt, 2012). In this study, two professionals confirmed that young people may instigate CPVA either through learned behaviour from observing their fathers abuse their mothers or in retaliation to mothers who failed to ‘defend’ them from their fathers.

‘He is angry with mom and gets rude to her, gets in her face, insults her. He didn't see his dad respect his mum; he doesn't know how to respect his mom. He has seen that his mother is weak. She couldn't defend him all those times with his dad.’ – Patty, Parent and Youth Coach.

‘They observe and learn that when mum doesn't do what you want, you can just use violence because that's what your dad did. They replay that, and mum replays the victimisation because she's been in that role before. It is all about roles. - Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

Professionals held the view that by watching their fathers, children can develop an understanding of their mothers as weaker and controllable. It can be implied from Patty's account that a child's perception of their mother as ‘weak’ as opposed to the revered ‘strong Black woman’ archetype is framed through her inability to ‘defend’ them from abusive fathers. While Natalia suggests that due to the abuse mothers experience from fathers, they may ‘replay’ similar roles of victimisation with their children.

### *Failing to identify paternal identity*

In the examples above, the identity of fathers was known, despite their absence, infidelity or abusive behaviour. Whether or not this intensified a child's feeling of frustration and anger towards their mother cannot easily be determined. However, in the case of one mother-victim (Chardonae) paternal identity was not initially known and this brought significant challenges to the mother-son dynamic. She shared that her son had been abusive and controlling from early childhood and continues to exhibit such behaviour, despite now being in his late 30s. Reflecting on when CPVA started, Chardonae felt that her son not knowing the identity of his father may have triggered a sense of anger and resentment towards her.

‘This is not gonna show me in a very good light, but I thought somebody else was his dad and it wasn't. The two boys I slept with, there wasn't much of a gap, but I didn't do it on purpose.’ – Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

Chardonae relocated from London to a smaller town in the UK, where both men (the actual and the perceived father) were staying. Her son also moved to the town temporarily, following a relationship breakdown. She anticipated that he would likely come in contact with the two men, as the town had little racial diversity.

‘I knew what was going to happen at some point, they were going to meet up. They were gonna look at each other, and say, why am I looking at my twin? I had to bring it up and he reacted... I've explained to him and apologised, I've tried to link everybody up. He is still very angry with me...when he gets angry that [CPVA] comes out of him and I did not know how to deal with his anger’

As shown in this study and existing research, CPVA does not solely occur in single mother-households. However, it was a recurrent theme to link the damaging impact of deviant fatherhood to the perceived failures of Black mother-victims, particularly those of single status. At times these mother blaming discourses were held by children as a means of justifying their anger and CPVA. However, there was also instances of Minika (a professional) and Chardonae (a mother-victim) transferring responsibility to Black single mothers for ‘not asking the right questions’ or minding ‘who they produce for’, thereby blaming them for partnering with fathers that were passive, abusive or absent. As discussed in chapter 3, these perspectives mirror the pathologisation of Black motherhood as the cause behind social ills such as youth crime, juvenile delinquency or teenage pregnancy (Reynolds, 2005; Song and Edwards, 1997; Reynolds, 1997; Richie, 2003).

## **Conclusion**

Following CPVA, Black mother-victims experience maternal guilt and mother-blame in complex and layered ways. This chapter demonstrates how, through the privatisation of Black mothering, a child’s display of aggressive and violent behaviour is decontextualised from the relevant social and environmental factors in which Black women rear children and tied solely to their ‘failed motherhood’. There are six areas Black women experience mother-blame for their supposed ‘failed motherhood’. Namely, these are: the failure to moralise, to protect, to practice sacred maternity, and to change negative family environments. Black mother-victims also experienced blame for failing through physical punishment and not exuding traditionally feminine qualities like maternal tenderness. Paradoxically however, they were also blamed for failing to practice militant motherhood, where CPVA was thought to be connected to being ‘soft’, permissive and allowing children to usurp maternal authority.

The third and final section of this chapter examined the pathologisation of Black single motherhood. It illustrated how through the interconnected processes of mother-blaming and responsibility transference; Black single mothers were made to pay for the sins of men perceived to be failing in fatherhood. These mother-blaming discourses revolved around four 'failings', three of which were increasingly male-centred. Namely, failing to be present, failing to detect unscrupulous men, failing to placate unfaithful fathers and failing to identify paternal identity. It was also observed that the issue of failing paternal practice among Black men was not discussed among mothers or professionals. Instead, the reality of deviant fatherhood was used to further pathologise Black mothers for choosing to reproduce with men who practiced criminality, used violence within the home or abandoned their families following infidelity.

Enhancing our understanding of CPVA and de-stigmatising the phenomenon requires engagement with how processes of maternal guilt and mother-blame work to silence mother-victims (Williams et al. 2017b: 605). As there is currently no empirical consideration of how the intersecting racial, gender, religious and class identity of mother-victims frame how they cope with and navigate CPVA, Chapter 8 will address this gap by mapping the formal and informal support pathways available to Black mothers. Building on this chapter, it will illustrate why mother-victims choose to maintain their silence out of fear of judgment, mother-blame, the desire to protect children from public scrutiny and salvage mother-child relationship (Paterson et al. 2002; Williams et al. 2017b: 598; Cottrell and Monk, 2004). It will also highlight the factors that facilitate access to support and notable barriers.

## **EIGHT: BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS TO ACCESSING FORMAL AND INFORMAL SUPPORT PATHWAYS**

### **Introduction**

Coping encapsulates individual efforts, behaviours and thought processes deployed to manage, resolve or alleviate stressful situations (Lazarus and Folkman, 1987; Folkman et al. 1986; Greer 2011; Algorani and Gupta, 2023). Race and gender intersect to frame coping strategies and help-seeking behaviours of a marginalised group. Previous research has identified that Black women deploy a range of strategies to navigate life challenges and moments of familial adversity including preterm birth, intimate partner violence, sexual assault or community violence (Jenkins, 2002; Long and Ullman, 2013; Parnell et al. 2022; Zakama et al. 2025). Utsey et al. (2000) developed the Africultural Coping Systems Inventory (ACSI) to measure the ‘culture-specific’ coping responses of Black Americans to race-related stress. Since its formation, the ACSI has been validated through psychometric findings as a consistent response to stressors within African American, Caribbean and African populations (Utsey et al. 2000; 2004; Watson-singleton et al. 2020). Additional studies have found that for Black women, spiritually-centered coping and collective coping strategies are most prominent (Mattis, 2002; Greer, 2011; Liao et al. 2020; Jones et al. 2021; Davis and McClain, 2023; Zakama et al. 2024). Collective coping refers to one’s reliance on social networks made available through community members, kin, friends and partners. While spiritually-centered coping encapsulates the resilience that comes through one’s connection with a higher-power (Watson-Singleton et al. 2020).

This thesis is the first to explore how Black mothers in England cope with and navigate CPVA through the pathways of support available to them. This chapter opens by outlining three collective coping strategies emerging in how Black mother-victims navigate CPVA.

These are (a) finding solidarity with ‘sisters-in-sorrow’, defined as mothers who personally identify with challenging family dynamics, if not direct victims of CPVA; (b) reliance on Black community networks to find othermothers and community fathers, in so doing victims create ‘makeshift’ villages to replicate in England the collectivist childrearing practices native to their countries of origin; and (c) utilising transnational family connections to activate the relocation method, in order to bring equilibrium to the home and behavioural transformation by safely removing the child using abuse without service intervention. Secondly, the chapter turns to spiritually-centered coping practices, as spirituality can form a crucial part of the personal and cultural identity of minoritised women (Thiara and Harrison, 2021; Femi-Ajao, 2018). Though these self-directed coping practices can be empowering, this section also expresses caution around mothers solely relying on spiritually-centred coping strategies to the exclusion of other support pathways. The third section explores the barriers to accessing collective and spiritually-centred support, which includes risks that disclosure can further trigger CPVA, the role of shame as a silencing mechanism, and the detrimental impact of internalising the race-gender trope of the ‘Strong Black woman’.

In the fourth section, support pathways beyond the family and community level will be examined. I consider the service experiences of Black mother-victims across schools, social care, and legal institutions and the barriers they encounter while seeking support for their child(ren). Although the role of nurturer and protector is a common experience in motherhood, regardless of race, ethnicity or class, this section highlights the tripartite role Black women occupy as ‘mother-victim-advocate’. It emphasises how advocacy and maternal activism form essential parts of the Black mothering practice, due to the realities of raising children who are racialised in Western societies. Building on this premise, the

fifth section investigates the nuances of youth offending and CPVA. It exemplifies how, for Black mother-victims, seeking support by formally disclosing their abuse experiences can feel counterintuitive to the maternal responsibility to protect Black children, who are routinely pathologised and labelled violent and aggressive (YMCA, 2020; Cooke and Halberstadt, 2021; Davis, 2022). Nevertheless, the perceptions of Black women towards services are not monolithic. The final section of this chapter presents preliminary findings about Black community attitudes towards CPVA and shares the nuanced deliberations of Black mothers (non-victims) towards service engagement following this phenomenon.

## **Collective Coping Practices within Informal Support Pathways**

### *Solidarity with Sisters-in-Sorrow*

Of the 19 Black mothers and mother-victims directly participating in this study, 13 were first-generation immigrants, being the first of their extended family to gain citizenship or residency in a foreign country. On relocating to England, they experienced a loss of a literal and symbolic ‘village’ wherein children were communally raised as a shared responsibility among extended family (Ofoha et al. 2019; Onwujuba et al. 2015). Now, living in the UK, three mothers expressed feeling isolated in their mothering practice as it seemed child-rearing was a more individualistic endeavour than in their native countries.

‘While there are better systems in the UK, there is a loss of our culture and tradition’ – Latoya, Co-parenting Mother, Black Caribbean

‘Living in the UK is okay, but a bit lonely. One of the challenges I have encountered is people not understanding me. It is difficult to instil cultural values in your child’ – Badu, Single (Adoptive) Mother, Black African.

In order to construct a makeshift village in the UK, Black mothers and mother-victims turned to faith communities, Black parent support groups, and cultural gatherings to find friends, othermothers and community fathers with whom to do family life. This included seeking practical help such as finding work, accommodation, and temporary house sharing.

‘I had three children, all under four years old...I had to juggle so many things. Luckily, I got support, because you know, when we are abroad, you meet your fellow African person, you just lean on them and say, ‘oh, this is my situation’. They ask ‘oh where is your husband’ (pause) ‘he doesn't live here, I'm on my own’ and they help in that way’. – Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

However, when it came to navigating her daughter’s abusive behaviour, it was important for Oyinka to seek out *sisters-in-sorrow*, which are women also enduring a form of suffering in their mothering practice. Her account suggests that the shared experience of maternal suffering served as a shield against possible judgment.

Oyinka: I have people I call sisters, we're like friends that are really close. They know what is happening in the house

A.A: Did you feel judgment from your friends?

Oyinka: It wasn't like judgment because everybody's going through one thing or the other. It may not be as bad as mine, but we all had our issues that we share, so they could relate to me.

Another mother-victim, Chardona, shared the value of expressing her anger and experience of her son’s behaviour with her biological sister, who also encountered challenges with her

son. Outside of her sister, Chardonae did not mention disclosing to any other individual about her experience of CPVA, suggesting the centrality of her sister's support in navigating the situation. Another testament to the importance of *sisters-in-sorrow*, was that Chardonae's participation in the study was through her sister, after she came across the research flyer online. Illustrating how sisterhood can be established through maternal suffering, Oyinka shared how she found comfort in a 'sister-in-sorrow', whose son had received a 15-year sentence under joint enterprise.

'He was meant to be at home. She had gone to work. Someone got stabbed...he doesn't even know the rest of the boys that were there. They [police] bounded all of them...the boys were given 20 years he had the least sentence because they couldn't really pin anything on him. Poor mother is suffering today because he is in that situation.' – Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

The closeness of Oyinka to a mother whose son faces incarceration suggests that Black mother-victims may seek out 'sisters-in-sorrow' from those also suffering from the perceived actions or inactions of their children. In light of the maternal guilt and mother-blame that follows CPVA (Chapter 7), it might be that Black mother-victims seek out this form of solidarity to negate the isolation that can come with the shame of deviating from idealisations of Black motherhood (Chapter 5). They may feel that empathy and comradery can be found in women who also similarly struggled over their children and were seen to fall short of this revered maternal image.

## *Black Community Networks*

Black community networks and parent groups were a central informal support pathway for Black mother-victims. Aside from faith communities, it was within these social spheres that they accessed matriarchal mentors, othermothers (defined in Chapter 2) and community fathers who offered support and addressed the behaviour of their children. In participating within these community groups, Black mothers gained access to the wisdom of elders, which is highly prized in African and Caribbean communities. For example, individuals, now with adult children, would frequent these gatherings in the hopes of sharing the knowledge of their parenting experience with younger parents, and as a result Black mothers had access to matriarchal mentors.

‘Before Covid we met up monthly, and I found that the people that will come [to the parent support group] already had adult children and didn’t need to parent no more. But they were concerned with others, they wanted to share their experience with younger parents.’ – Teona, Parent Group Facilitator

The Black professionals interviewed in this study held various specialist positions such as restorative justice practitioners, youth workers, teachers and social workers. However, they were able to successfully interact and informally support Black mother-victims mainly through their roles as community leaders. Although the founders and volunteers of these Black-led community hubs and parent groups were registered practitioners in helping professions, because Black mothers sought help through these informal channels there was no professional obligation on community leaders to record and report all that was being shared. The mothers felt a sense of guaranteed confidentiality as this unofficial, ‘backdoor’

approach to support came with safeguards against mandatory referrals and wider service attention.

‘What happens in the system is there'll be lots of things on the record. But when I am coaching, I not obliged to give my case notes to anyone because I'm working with the family. Schools and social workers are obliged to share the notes and all that kind of stuff. - Patty, Parent and Youth Coach.

Othermothers, sisters-in-sorrow and matriarchal mentors were an essential part of the collective informal support mother-victims garnered from Black community networks. However, there was one example of a ‘community father’ being sought to intervene within families affected by CPVA. Daniel, a youth justice professional and community leader, shared that his successful interactions with Black mother-victims, despite being male, were due to his lived experience.

‘The ultimate goal is to support parents to have a violent free household. I help them understand themselves first...the trauma they may have experienced childhood. I share my own journey, witnessing domestic abuse and mental health, drugs and alcohol as a child growing up in North London.’ - Daniel, School Head of Parent Engagement, and Restorative Justice Facilitator

By disclosing his own challenging childhood experiences and possible parenting mistakes, Daniel identified with the ‘shared suffering’ of mothers and was able to support in a non-judgmental way. The recognition of matriarchal mentors, othermothers, and community

fathers is essential to encouraging disclosure among Black mother-victims, and the discussion chapter will address the policy implications of this finding.

### *Transnational Family Networks and the Relocation Method*

Another collective coping strategy of Black mother-victims was reliance on their transnational family networks to gain respite from CPVA. Transnational families are defined as those with members who live apart while retaining collective welfare and unity across national borders (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002; Bryceson, 2019). Immigrants maintain their transnational families through remittance of financial payments and global transactions (Germano, 2018; Lindley, 2011; Shandy and Fennelly, 2006). The colloquial term ‘Black tax’ conceptualises the burden on the Black middle class (actual or perceived) to make financial transfers to support direct and extended family members (Mangoma and Wilson-Prangley, 2018; Sibiya, 2018). While living in the UK, many Black women maintain transnational families mainly through the reverting of monies and resources to those back home.

The notion of being ‘shipped back’ describes a parent’s decision to relocate their child to their native countries, often to stay with extended family members, which can result in ‘transnational fosterage’ (Asima, 2018). While this can be done for educational purposes (Kea and Maier, 2017), it is an option some Black parents revert to when there are concerns around safety and/or the behaviour of their child. According to Bledsoe and Sow (2011), the decision of West African immigrant parents to send ‘unruly children’ back to their native countries were connected to fears that their child’s indiscipline when experienced alongside the hostility and racism of the West can endanger the family. In their study parents expressed fears around ‘undisciplined children’ getting involved in violence or crime (Ibid, 748).

In this study, two mother-victims attempted to use transitional family networks as a way to cope with CPVA and receive informal support. It was hoped by Tito and Oyinka (both of Nigerian descent) that a changed cultural environment accompanied by the close monitoring of extended family members would bring a positive behavioural change in their children. However, neither attempt to relocate their children through transnational family network was successful. Tito had family members who were in the Nigerian army, and aimed to put her son in a military school to 'fix him up' and develop 'self-discipline'. However, once her teenage son became aware of the 'shipping back' method and became suspicious of his parents using this approach, he refused to go on family holidays or even follow his parent to airports, frustrating Tito's hopes of him attending a military school. However, for Oyinka and Isoken (a non-victim who wanted to send her son to Nigeria for cultural child-rearing purposes), their husbands disagreed with the relocation approach, putting an end to their plans.

'I have felt like sending these children back, but my husband keeps saying no don't do that because, who's gonna look after them? Your parents are getting old. But if I did not have to listen to him, one or two of my children would have long gone. I was ready to buy a ticket. I would just say...I'm sending you on holiday'. – Isoken, Married Mother, Black African

In Oyinka's case, the family had visited Nigeria several times as her husband lives and works there. While their daughter was in her early teens, Oyinka suggested that she remain in a boarding school in Nigeria. However, her husband refused this suggestion for undisclosed reasons, leaving Oyinka to conclude it was about the strength of their father-daughter bond.

‘I told him, we should try and leave her in Nigeria...put her in boarding school, let her do her a level there...but her dad being the soft person he is, he had that bond, that attachment with her being the first daughter’

Due to the patriarchal structuring of their homes, Isoken and Oyinka felt compelled to concede to their husbands view against relocating their children, despite their personal belief that using transnational family networks may be an effective coping strategy. There was a gulf between the ideation of ‘shipping’ children back to native countries and the limited practical implementation of this strategy. Despite its lack of practical success among Black mother-victims, within the focus group, Ronke (a widowed African mother of three children and non-victim) shared that if she was experiencing CPVA, she would utilise the relocation method. She did not mention engaging extended family connections in her native country (Nigeria) but rather suggested using existing infrastructures like boarding schools.

Ronke: I just want to be African for a minute. I would just send the children back to Nigeria.

A.A: Interesting. Why would you do that?

Ronke: Well, it might look like it’s a bit abusive, but I’ll send them to boarding school in Nigeria. I just feel like the system there will work better with them. By the time they return, they would be a changed person...as a Nigerian parent I would do that. I’m not gonna wait here and watch my children go into things that I wouldn’t be able to redeem them back.

Ronke’s preferential stance on the Nigerian system as one of transformation reflects the thought-processes of Oyinka and Tito (mother-victims) who believed that the African boarding school system would instil a culture of discipline, and respect in the child using

violence. Nonetheless, despite there being some consensus between Black mothers and mother-victims on the use of transnational family networks and relocation methods to navigate CPVA, this coping strategy also received critical responses. According to Elizabeth, the risks around the relocation approach are in its indeterminate nature.

‘It doesn’t always work. I remember this boy who was stabbed in uni, when he was 12/13, his mom sent him back to Nigeria, he spent two years there, brought him back, he still joined a gang. Another woman sent her children there, and they came back sound. It depends on the environment they are exposed to in Nigeria, depends on where you kept them.’ - Elizabeth, Married Mother, Black African and Social Worker.

While relocation could either improve or worsen the child’s behaviour and relationship with their mother, there were judgmental views of mother-victims who took this approach. Enitan viewed it as shifting maternal responsibility to another person. She vehemently dissented that there could be any desirable result using this informal support pathway.

‘There we go again. Another parent trying to push their parenting onto somebody else. You haven’t been able to look after them, to get them to behave, then you send them to Nigeria to do what exactly? To live with whom exactly? It’s bad news and it will end tears, nothing [good] is going to come of it.’ – Enitan, Married Mother, Black African and Social Worker.

A driving force behind the presence of African and Caribbean immigrants in Britain is the search for better opportunities for themselves and their children. The decision to send one’s child(ren) back to native countries and live with extended family members carries the ‘pain

of separation, dislocation and sometimes regret' (Asima, 2018: 197). The findings of this study suggest that attitudes within the African and Caribbean community towards the relocation method are conflicted. Therefore, the collective social and cultural spaces surrounding Black mother-victims will determine whether or not the use of transnational family networks is encouraged as a viable support pathway following CPVA. Moreover, it must be acknowledged that relocating a child for instigating CPVA is not an option for all mothers.

For instance, it is unavailable to those subject to immigration proceedings, with unsettled or undocumented status, or those who do not have dual citizenship and are unable to freely move across borders. Such was the case for Fatou (a mother-victim) who fled Sierra Leone at the end of the civil war with her son, who was being groomed as a child soldier. Fatou's story was shared by her psychologist Mary-Anne, who was interviewed in this study. According to Mary-Anne's account, due to Fatou's son being exposed to violence in his native country, there were 'push and pull factors towards gang affiliations' in the UK. She described 'suitable intelligence' that he was involved in drug dealing and after Fatou confiscated his bike, violent outbursts began at home. Fatou's navigation of CPVA required service engagement, as the relocation method was an impossible pathway for an asylum seeker.

### *Spiritually-centred Coping Practices*

Research across several decades has consistently found that Black women rely on religion, faith and spirituality to cope with and navigate life adversities. These include race-related oppression, sexism, the stress of single parenting, physical and psychological illness, intimate partner violence, among other challenging family dynamics (Dodson and Townsend-Gikes, 1986; Utsey et al. 2000; Brodsky, 2000; McAdoo, 1995; Mattis, 2002;

Braxton et al. 2007; Greer, 2011; Shorter-Gooden, 2004; Edge, 2013; Harris, 2019; Watson- Singleton et al. 2020; Oyewuwo-Gassikia, 2020; Kent et al. 2023; Karaba, 2024). According to Mattis's qualitative inquiry, when Black women are faced with adversity, religion and spirituality assists their 'meaning-making' and coping experiences by helping them accept realities, transcend limitations, grapple with existential questions, discern their destiny, experience growth and trust in divine knowledge and guidance (2002: 309). When family violence occurs, spiritually-centred practices are salient for Black and minoritised women (Femi-Ajao, 2018; Thiara and Harrison, 2021; McLean et al. 2003; Anand and Cochrane, 2005). The findings of this thesis confirm their relevance in navigating CPVA. Five out of eight mother-victims emphasised the value of 'prayer', 'spiritual healing', 'relying on church family' and 'local religious groups' to cope with their child's abusive behaviour.

'I strongly believe in prayer and have been receiving excellent free support from my local church' – Elaine, Grandmother, Black Caribbean

A.A: How were you managing the situation before services came into the picture?

Oyinka: The only other way of managing stuff, and its church really.

A.A: Did you share at church?

Oyinka: No, just personally praying, and praying. Going for church programmes, believing God that things will get better. The way to manage for me was to keep praying, hoping for the best and talking to her whenever she's calm.

While the spiritual observations of mother-victims were practiced individually, Oyinka and Elaine emphasised seeking support from their faith leaders. This decision could be grounded in 'Africentric' values that emphasise seeking guidance from elders and community leaders,

alongside individualised spiritual practices like rituals, prayers and meditations which lower distress (Greer, 2011; Mattis, 2002; Abrums, 2004; Utsey et al. 2000). Seeking the counsel of religious leaders could also be linked to the perception that there was a spiritual cause behind their child's abusive behaviour. The concept of sacred maternity was addressed in Chapter 5, and the maternal blame experienced for failing in this duty detailed in Chapter 7.

‘Eventually, I told my pastor because there was a day, we were getting ready to go to church and she kicked off...that day she said she was going to kill me. I was a worker in church, so I called the pastor to let him know. He left the church and came to my house. As he was talking to her, she was feeling remorse...like maybe she overreacted’ - Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

The Black church has historically and presently offered women a wider church family that operates a kinship network providing emotional and financial support, job referrals and a nurturing environment (McAdoo, 1995: 428). Though the role of faith-based organisations (FBO) in supporting Black women affected by domestic abuse has been considered (Shaw et al. 2022; Williams and Jenkins, 2019; Femi-Ajao, 2016; Bent-Goodley, 2006), there is scope for future studies to examine the role of these institutions in responding to CPVA. For the purpose of this study, I briefly engaged with a Pastor who had supported four Black mother-victims. In our dialogue, I queried why, as a faith leader, he believes these women sought his help. Reece responded by highlighting the importance of sharing or at least understanding the cultural worldview of Black mother-victims. This includes recognising their desire for the abuse to end and their child's behaviour challenged but for the family to remain intact and the future prospects of their child unharmed by their disclosure. A pressing concern mother-victims had around services was that attention would shift from their child's

abusive behaviour to a critical examination of their parenting (a point I return to later in the chapter).

‘The reason they come to church, to pastors, is because number one, confidentiality, they can trust the pastors. Pastors keep the family together. Most of the social workers are White and their cultural worldview... they don’t have a clue the social context of the Black community. White social workers don't know what respect really means when it comes to our community. Pastors understand what respect means from the mother’s own worldview.’ – Reece, School teacher and Faith leader

In Chapters 2 and 3, I considered the cultural codes and values shaping family dynamics within African and Caribbean communities and the expectation that children reverence the sacredness of motherhood. Black mother-victims sought the counsel of Black faith leaders who shared this reverential view of motherhood and understood how CPVA undermined that idealised image. It is possible they did so believing their child’s behaviour would be considered the problem, as opposed to the child or their mothering practice. Through spiritually-centred practices, Black women reduce their need to rely on society, services and government (Woods-Giscombe, 2010; Laio et al. 2020:85; Mattis, 2002). While adopting these self-directed coping practices can be empowering, one professional was weary of mothers who solely considered spiritual and religious coping strategies to the exclusion of all other mediums of support.

‘I know many Black African people who if a child has any of those issues, they'll pray to Jesus for him to take it away as opposed to get professional help. It is something that happens quite a lot across the Black culture for different reasons’ – Teona Parent Group Facilitator

Teona's comments highlight a challenge within the Black community: the contention between using faith/spiritually-centred coping strategies to respond to personal and family problems while also proactively engaging with professional help. Studies have shown that spiritual coping strategies, for example prayer and church attendance, could sometimes be seen as ultimate solutions and a barrier to seeking psychiatric treatment for mental illness (Breland-noble et al. 2015; Pederson, 2023; Pederson and Pederson, 2023).

## **Barriers to Collective and Spiritually-Centred Support**

### *Disclosure: a trigger of further abuse*

When disclosing their experiences of CPVA within family and religious networks, Black mother-victims, particularly those raising children alone, hope to access the support of othermothers, community fathers and religious leaders. However, this thesis found there are instances where disclosure within collective and spiritual networks can trigger further abuse. One professional highlighted that a mother's disclosure could be seen as 'snitching', and therefore the aggression following disclosure could be interpreted as punishment for this perceived act of betrayal.

'Inviting communities or agencies into your home is seen as snitching...The family is a very protected area, nobody's gonna want to go snitch on their child' - Jada, Independent Domestic Violence Advocate.

In my discussion with a social worker, she recalled a situation where twin daughters were verbally abusing their Nigerian mother. When she enquired about their motives, the girls explained they were enraged by their mum 'telling their business to the whole church'. Similarly, in conversations with a London-based youth worker, the case of a young boy,

who had physically abused his mother, was raised. When challenged on his actions, he responded, 'why does she always tell everyone that I'm bad. She doesn't love me'. This may suggest that children who use violence and abuse in the home feel shame about their actions when their behaviour is made known to outsiders. A mother's disclosure may unintentionally confirm a negative perception. In both cases the mothers, one Nigerian and one Caribbean, were single mothers. They relied significantly on their social and religious networks to share the burdens they single-handedly carried while raising their children. However, Betty shared how the involvement from family and community members can actually heighten tensions at home between mother and child.

'A mother might ask [her community] for help, but the help that's coming in does not really have a listening ear...family members are horrified that their little nephew or niece is (pause) like this how you're treating your mom? The adults coming in are trying to be another parent for the child. They say 'you do not do this in this family. This is your role, behave well' that type of thing' – Betty, Therapist.

These reflections suggest that responses of intervening family members after discovering CPVA can be an important determinant of whether Black mother-victims feel supported after disclosure or are made vulnerable to further incidents of abuse.

### *Shame as a silencer*

As with many immigrant communities residing in England, Black mothers socialise by participating in religious and social ethnic groups (Raj and Silverman, 2002a; Femi-Ajao, 2018:208). Femi-Ajao (2018) found that African women of Nigerian descent refused to disclose experiences of intimate partner violence for fear of community gossip and to avoid shame and ostracisation from their social groups. Black mother-victims adopted a similar

approach when their children displayed violence and abusive behaviours. However, in this thesis, the shame mothers anticipated was tied to the idealised cultural image of maternity in which they felt they failed. Chapter 5 extensively details these idealisations, but put simply, motherhood is considered a position of spiritual honour, dignity and reverence within various African and Caribbean communities, and the sacredness of maternity is honoured through the respect and obedience of ‘good’ children. Therefore, the very occurrence of CPVA was in conflict with these values:

‘It’s an embarrassment. As a mother, I should have it all together. I should be able to control my children, not my children controlling me’ – Amina, Single Mother, Black African

‘For this Ghanaian Muslim family, their concern was very much ‘what would our community think of it, think of us?’ This is haram. This is unheard of. We provided everything this child needs and yet here we are.’ There is such a heavy sense of shame. They were very concerned with how their faith community would look at them’ - Mary-Anne, Psychologist.

For Black mothers, the inconceivability of their predicament, being so far-removed from the cultural ideals of motherhood, intensified feelings of shame and they were apprehensive of being misunderstood and judged by their community. Chapter 7 explored how these women experience maternal guilt, mother-blame and responsibility transference in complex and layered ways. It illustrated how Black mother-victims were blamed for CPVS because they practiced a ‘failed motherhood’. Ultimately, the fear of being shamed, blamed and judged

within family, religious and community groups was a barrier to Black mother-victims utilising collective support pathways.

In her attempt to demonstrate the perceived inconceivability of Black mothers experiencing CPVA, one mother-victim drew reference to male victims of intimate partner violence. While both situations are realities, Chardonae felt the view that men cannot be victims of abuse perpetuated by women was similar to the perception of a Black mother being the victim of her child's behaviour. She shared that after disclosing her abuse to community members, they struggled to reconcile their view of her to that of a victim, and least of all by a child they believed she should exercise control over.

‘It’s like a man admitting to being a victim of domestic violence. It’s like, really? But you’re stronger? Black women suffer from that same disconnect. You should just get your Dutch pot and whack him. Give him a good old slapping, fight back and he’ll stop it. The bully will stop bullying you, if you stand up to the bully. [Anthony] was a bully.’ – Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

As CPVA violates cultural understanding of Black mother-child dynamics, the shame of ‘failed motherhood’ and seeking help for highly stigmatised family issues came with the risk of collective shaming and a sense of isolation. Some participants pointed to the possibility of competition and comparison within family, social and religious communities. To illustrate his point, Daniel raised the Afro-Caribbean proverb of raising children within a village. Though acknowledging the popular rhetoric of collective childrearing practices across Black communities, he observes that the realities of competition, pretence and comparison in communities should not be denied.

‘We’ve got this saying, but does it actually work? ‘It takes a village to raise a child.’ But what happens when the villagers become very competitive? I know Caribbean families will say ‘don’t chat my business outside’, so where do you go for help? Everybody’s trying to live this perfect life. Trying to be Miss Bouquet when you’re actually Miss Bucket<sup>1</sup>.- Daniel, Head of Parent Engagement, and Restorative Justice Facilitator

Oyinka expressed her concern about disclosing CPVA within collective networks for fear that it could be weaponised against her. She confirmed a cultural narrative endorsed within African circles against the sharing of family challenges to outsiders. She reflected on how her White colleagues appeared to freely disclosed family matters she considered private.

Oyinka: As Africans you don't really want to share what is happening.

A.A: Why do you think that is?

Oyinka: Maybe it's the way we were brought up, we just feel that people use what's happening to you against you. I don't know how it works with White people, but I feel like they are more open. They just tell you 'oh my daughter is this and my son turned gay'. I work with them. They just come up and tell you wilfully. But for us, we always want to be seen in a good light.’

Oyinka describes the socialisation of Black mothers to present a positive appearance of their families or control the external narrative around their home matters. This stance can be

---

<sup>1</sup> The reference here concerns the British sitcom ‘Keeping Up Appearances’ that aired from 1990-1995. Its central character, Hyacinth Bucket, a pompous housewife, aspires to climb the social ladder despite her working-class family background. As such she insists that her surname (Bucket) is pronounced Bouquet.

linked to the internalisation of strength among Black women as a cultural standard and expectation within their communities and beyond. Chapter 5 introduced the concept of ‘maternal might’ and explicated the idealisation of strength within Black motherwork. It established that within Black communities, respectability and reverential status are not automatically afforded to all mothers but reserved to those who demonstrate strength in the face of life’s hardships and use their maternal might to advance the ecosystem of Black family life and community survival. This suggests that within some social, family and spiritual networks, there may be expectations on Black mothers as matriarchal providers to not solely build their families, but to provide self-generated solutions to family issues, while maintaining a positive external representation of their families.

### *Internalisation of Strength*

As discussed in Chapter 3, the ‘Strong Black woman’ is a race-gender trope that encapsulates a cultural expectation on Black women to display unrelenting strength, self-sufficiency, and the assumption of multiple roles through sacrificial caregiving (Woods-Giscombé, 2010; McDaniel et al. 2023). This valorisation of strength can be a significant barrier to seeking support following an experience of abuse. The SBW trope posits that when challenges arise, it is incumbent on Black women to prioritise getting through the issue as opposed to getting help. Jane, a mother-victim and qualified social worker, reflected on the plight of Black mothers in her community, who in the face of family challenges like CPVA or intimate partner violence, feel the need to maintain a presentation of strength.

‘There are a lot of single moms in my community and they’re all strong. They've all done what they have to do. They don't want to be seen as weak. They feel like, I've dealt with it... it's okay. We are alright. That's how they function.’ - Jane,  
Single Mother, Black British

Chardonae, though of Caribbean heritage, echoed similar thoughts to Oyinka about a prevalent culture of silence around family issues in the Black community. However, she highlighted the impact of racism, slavery and discrimination on Black people as contributing to the pressure to appear strong and protect themselves from scrutiny.

‘Maybe it’s a protection thing. We cannot be seen to fail. It’s going to sound really weird, but they defeated us because we were enslaved. Slavery weakened us. We weren’t strong enough to not be slaves. It’s irrational but we have to appear strong, show no level of weakness even amongst ourselves.’ – Chardonae, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

Due to the added pressure on Black women to shun vulnerability and exhibit strength, they can exhibit low levels of self-compassion and low use of collective coping strategies which further psychologically isolate them in experiences of pain and abuse (Laio et al 2020). Chapter 3 theorised how the cultural tropes of the ‘Strong Black Woman’ and ‘The Superwoman’ contribute to systematic oppression against Black women and their families by denying their vulnerability and limiting their access to resources by compelling them to rely on internal strength to survive (Hill-Collins, 1999; Laio et al. 2020: 85).

## **Engagement with Schools, Social Services and Criminal Legal Institutions**

While there are a growing number of specialist services addressing CPVA and domestic violence organisations offering support for this subtype of family violence, the engagement of Black mothers with these services remains low. This thesis shows that Black mother-victims of CPVA may encounter difficulties with seeking formal support, particularly from statutory services, because they mother racialised children, who may be subject to processes of discrimination and criminalisation. This section outlines the barriers these women experience when engaging with schools, social care services, and criminal legal institutions.

### *Euphemistic Language*

One major step towards receiving support at service-level is firstly the recognition of experiences as abuse. This identification process requires using recognisable language when communicating about CPVA. This thesis found that the ability of Black mothers to communicate their abuse experiences was hindered by their use of euphemistic language. They categorised their child's use of violence and abuse as 'misbehaviour', 'disrespectful' or 'rudeness', which undermined the severity of their suffering and the extent of harm they endured. The mother's use of euphemistic language may indicate a lack of recognition on their part, but perhaps also assists in minimising the incidents of violence (in their minds) to situations they can self-manage without the need of pursuing formal support.

'They don't call it abuse. They call it disrespect, misbehaviour. Disrespect has been the biggest word. When I ask, what do you mean by disrespect? That is when I get the stories behind it. They don't... wouldn't call it abuse.' - Patty Parent and Youth Coach.

‘Mothers haven't necessarily termed it as child to adolescent parent violence because part of this is an education issue. They will say things that 'thumping down his mother' or 'he's just gone mad'. The cognition is not there that this is a form of domestic abuse...’ – Miriam, Child Safeguarding Consultant

‘We've seen a lot of verbal abuse, but they don't identify that as a form of abuse’ – Kukua, Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA)

Euphemistic language was also used by some mothers when sharing non-physical forms of abuse, particularly those verbal or financial in nature (discussed in Chapter 6). In speaking about their abuse experiences euphemistically, Black mothers participate in a form of reputational management for themselves and their children. This may help deflect away from the existing stigma and false perception of dysfunctional parenthood within the Black community and its link to youth offending. The choice of language used can work to minimise abuse experiences and impede effective access to formal support pathways.

### *Limited recognition of underlying factors*

Clinical studies have highlighted a range of associated factors in the commission of CPVA (see Chapter 2). However, there were Black women who struggled to recognise these underlying conditions or factors which shaped how they sought help. For example, not knowing a child was being bullied at school or a victim of crime. One mother was unaware that her son was falling into a depressed state. He was experiencing anxiety and chronic fatigue as symptoms of depression, but she misinterpreted his behaviour. Unaware and unable to seek mental health support for him, escalations occurred, resulting in violent and aggressive outbursts in the home.

‘Because he lays in bed, wasn’t going into college, she [mum] classified it as lazy, but he was going into depression because of all this crap that hit the fan. His friend being attacked, a bike being taken, another friend being beat up. One day he was standing with the boy that took the bike back, then he was marked and targeted from there. You know what they say about guilty by association, all that stuff.’ - Betty, Therapist

Studies that examine parental help-seeking behaviours have established a clear link between their awareness of underlying causes and the use of available support services (Thurston et al. 2018:162; Williams et al. 2022). It is likely then that parents unaware of the multiple factors underlying their child’s use of CPVA will be unacquainted with the tools and services that could help reduce levels of disruption in the home. An inability to recognise a problem can impede the need to seek support. Oyinka reflected that the development, training and education she has had since the time of her CPVA experience, has meant that she better understands, with hindsight, the causes underlying her daughter’s behaviour.

‘The last two years, I started working in mental health and I've begun to better understand things about her behaviour which I wouldn't have known at the time—  
Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African

Now a mental health professional, with hopes of qualifying as a social worker, Oyinka’s training increased her awareness of mental illness as underlying factor for CPVA. Though an isolated account, Oyinka’s experience suggests that it is possible for Black mother-victims to develop their recognition of associated factors underlying their child’s behaviour, which could enhance their willingness to engage with services.

### *Resisting the stigma of labelling*

The underutilisation of services by Black mother-victims was not only linked to limited recognition, but at times an active resistance of the pathologising of their children through professional diagnosis around mental illness or special education needs. The findings of this study notably depart from existing research which show that clinical diagnosis is desired by mothers as it helps increase empathy towards their child and better advocate for their access to professional treatment (Holt, 2012; Edenborough et al. 2008; Stewart et al. 2007). Three Black professionals suggested that there may be a stronger resistance to this in the Black community, due to a deep-rooted suspicion towards the labels of mental illness, special education needs, or neurological differences being used as a ‘justified’ means of excluding Black children and lowering expectations of their future prospects.

‘There are mothers that don’t want it [diagnosis]. It’s double-barrelled isn’t it? In schools’ people can have lower expectations of a child with a diagnosis. It’s the stigma around it, and there’s culture as well’ – Betty, therapist

‘SEN in the African Caribbean community isn't really recognised like that. A lot of folks who have SEN go undiagnosed that leads into fixed term and permanent exclusions in school. Mom doesn't even know what SEN is. She hasn't been given the strategies to be able to cope with it, so they are [her and her son] at loggerheads’  
– Daniel, Head of Parent Engagement, and Restorative Justice Facilitator

In addition to working as youth and mental health professionals, Dericia and Patty also serve as Black community leaders. They recounted instances of Black mothers resisting a diagnosis for their child as a maternal strategy to protect their future prospects from the

stigma of mental illness. Their practice of maternal activism looked like resisting labels perceived to pathologise Black children and portray them as broken, deficient or abnormal.

‘A child having special education needs...the family not being accepting of the diagnosis. They are somewhat in denial or refusing to accept the truth of the diagnosis and what it means for the child.’ – Dericca, CAMHS CBT Therapist

‘Parents are trying to protect the future of their children. They're saying, if this [CPVA] changes, they don't want that stigma against him in the future. Who wants extra stuff on their kids record? They must deal with issues around being Black just coming into an interview...if you have all the other mental health issues added to it as well, as parents we think that our children are not going to have a chance in the world’ - Patty, Parent and Youth Coach (Black African, Married Mother).

The suspicion around the pathologising of Black children through schools and special education dates back to British educational policy from the 1940s to 1970s, which disproportionately categorised Black Caribbean pupils and those of other ethnic minority backgrounds as ‘educationally subnormal’ (Rampton, 1981; Mirza, 2009; Wallace and Joseph-Salisbury, 2022). The term popularised by the Education Act 1944 was used to categorise children with low academic attainment (Williams, 1965; The Underwood Report, 1955). Recent studies indicate that little has changed in the reality of Black experiences in schools (Demie, 2019; Wallace and Joseph-Salisbury, 2022; Warren et al. 2022; Ray, 2021).

One study found that children of ethnic background can be over-represented for some types of SEN and underrepresented in others (Strand and Lindorff, 2018). While there are aspects

of SEN that have an objective biological basis, there are ‘judgmental categories’ where subjective conclusions are constructed with reference to a pupil’s behaviour. It is within this category that a disproportionate identification of Black pupils is higher (Strand and Lindorff, 2021; Skiba et al. 2008: 69). In some studies, Black parents have expressed their view of special education as a tool used by some teachers to exclude Black children (Williams et al. 2017a; Bhopal, 2014; Williams and Bryan, 2013). The label of mental illness or even neurodiversity can be seen as stigmatising and intersects with other processes of discrimination. As such, pursuing formal support pathways that may result in receiving a diagnosis may be avoided by some Black mothers as this outcome is perceived to likely to isolate a Black child, leading to further problems rather than assistance.

### **Balancing Motherhood, Victimhood and Advocacy**

Nevertheless, suspicion and concern around the stigma of labelling were not shared by all Black mother-victims. Jane, a qualified and practicing social worker, shared how she ‘fought’ to get a professional diagnosis of her son’s autism and how important this was to her identity as a mother. Initially, it did not occur to Jane that her son could be experiencing challenges related to neurodivergence until she began comparing his behaviour with his older and younger siblings. Considering her vocational background (social worker) in a helping profession, Jane was likely aware of the possible conditions and factors underlying CPVA. Though risks of stigmatisation persist, she saw a diagnosis as a pathway to accessing more support for her son.

‘Not saying I condoned it, but there was a reason behind my son’s behaviour. It helped me a lot. Because I was thinking, why would my son want to just attack me or pull my hair? Or get in my face or make me feel sad? I used think, am I a crap

mom? What's going on? But I knew I wasn't because I had older children and it was just this particular child' - Jane, Black British Single Mother.

From professional accounts, the Black mother-victims willing to engage with schools and family services were driven by the need to seek help for their children whose behaviour stemmed from various psychological and neurological challenges. For these mothers, their willingness to engage with formal support pathways was predicated on receiving assurance that their children would be helped and supported, as opposed to stigmatised, punished or criminalised for their actions.

‘The first ever referral we received was a mother and daughter. The daughter had autism, maybe 14. The mother was physically hurt and had to go to the hospital, but her concern was always, what services can you offer to my child? Every call, every conversation: ‘Is there resources for my child? What kind of organisation can support my child? What can you do for my child?’ – Kukua, Independent Domestic Violence Advocate.

Black mothers found that they had to balance a tripartite role of mother-victim-advocate when seeking support for their child. For Jane, who believed her son was on the spectrum, her advocacy efforts were towards getting his school to support with a diagnosis and offer behaviour management assistance. While Zaya also sought help from services but felt frustrated at long waiting periods and the lack of support offered interim.

‘[Seeking help] falls on deaf ears, falls onto a waiting list that never reaches your child because he is Black. Services are quick to say nothing and do nothing, Zaya, Single Mother, Black Caribbean and White.

‘I had to hold the school accountable. Because when I was trying to address...I kept saying, look there's something going on, we need to have a SEND co meeting because, we're struggling at home with his behaviours as well. It was a fight right through. We didn't get a diagnosis until he was 15, just before he's on his GCSE.’ – Jane, Single Mother, Black British.

Jane’s five-year wait for her son’s diagnosis and Zaya’s continued wait are not unique experiences. Many families with neurodivergent children experience a prolonged wait for a diagnosis (Children’s Commissioner, 2024). However, for Black parents and their children, the relationship between the under-diagnosis and over-diagnosis of special educational needs and neurodivergence is complicated and extends beyond the common frustrations of a prolonged waiting period. The intersecting struggle of ableism and racism frame the negative encounters for Black children and their mothers in schools and services. Marsha Martin, the founder and CEO of Black SEN Mamas recognised that within learning institutions, ‘teachers are under-trained in SEND and cultural diversity and allow unconscious beliefs and bias to inform the way they perceive and respond to the Black child’s behaviour’.

### *School: A Site of Struggle*

Schools are a key setting for building the behavioural, emotional and social outcomes of young people (Goldberg et al. 2019). They are also uniquely positioned to support the wellbeing of parents by providing them resources and information around stress management, the mental health of their children/adolescents and empower parental wellbeing (Ibid; Maynard et al. 2019). However, school can also be a site of struggle. A resistance towards school has been observed as a cause of conflict between parents and their children (Condry et al. 2020). Bullying has also been linked to a child's aggressive behaviour at home (Cottrell and Monk, 2004). In this thesis, two mother-victims and several professionals shared how a child's experience of bullying and unfair treatment by teachers in school resulted in a transfer of aggression towards mothers at home.

‘Because of his frustrations, he is being bullied in school because of his neurodiversity. He was being targeted by other pupils; he just didn't know how to handle it. And he's coming home and takes it out on me and his sister, it was awful, it was horrendous.’ – Jane, Single Mother, Black British

‘They [teachers] were always calling me, giving reports that she's very outspoken. She's like the spokesperson who will face the teacher and say no, ‘that's wrong’, or this or that. And, of course, some teachers don't like confrontation.’ – Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African.

For Black children schools can be ‘sites of social suffering, particularly for those misrepresented as having severe behavioural issues or whose learning differences were considered deficits (Wallace, 2018a; Wallace and Joseph-Salisbury, 2022). In 1971, Bernard

Coard's seminal book *How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Sub-normal in the British School System* provided an empirical account of how institutional racism in British schooling system misallocated and misrepresented the ability of Black pupils. The racialisation and criminalisation of Black children in learning institutions remains a pressing contemporary issue. From facing punishment and exclusion on factors concerning their identity, with their cultural hairstyles being perceived by educators as rule-defying and distracting (Essien and Wood, 2021; Joseph-Salisbury and Connelly, 2018) to the construction of their expressive and confident mannerisms as 'disruptive' and 'aggressive' behaviour (Perera, 2020: 8; Gunter, 2015). Through this, school life can be complicated and traumatic for Black children whose criminalisation extends into classrooms (Gunter, 2015).

Less attention has been paid to how racialised encounters at school are experienced as oppression by Black children which might trigger anger, violence and abuse in the home. However, participants in this study suggested that racialised experiences of young Black people within social institutions can contribute to disruption at home. When Jane first approached her son's school for support, initially teachers would dismiss her requests for assistance and a diagnosis by using her son's behaviour to justify his exclusion from school. In addition to her son experiencing bullying from peers at school, he also faced discrimination and unfair punishment from his teachers. Rather than view him as vulnerable and in need of support, Jane's son was perceived as deviant and his exclusion from school seen as the solution to navigating behavioural challenges. This worsened her son's wellbeing, which had compounding effects on intensifying his behaviour towards her at home.

‘Teachers were saying...‘he doesn't even look at you, when you're talking to him. We can't have him in, he's a...’ what’s the word one of the teachers said? I'll think of it in a minute. I was thinking this just isn't right. They're not rude and obnoxious, they just haven't got the social skills.’ – Jane, Single Mother, Black British

Jane’s experience with school as a site of struggle was reflected in professional accounts who acknowledged that some schools could be dismissive of children with challenging behaviour, without first exploring the underlying issues. Oyinka’s daughter attended a private school in the South West of England, where she was a visibly ethnic minority student. Her daughter’s outspoken personality in a conservative environment was difficult for staff to embrace. Oyinka felt her daughter was being marked out as a problem child due to her personality.

‘I don't know what happened this particular day or whatever she did in school, but they called me. She walked out on a teacher, walked out of the school compound protesting what the teacher had done. They reprimanded the girls and called us [parents] to come and carry our daughters back home.’ – Oyinka, Married Mother, Black African.

Oyinka’s daughter experienced mental health problems and attempted to take her own life. After her first suicide attempt, Oyinka and her husband approached the school to find out more about her school-life and enquire as to whether it could be linked to her mental health crisis. Instead of being offered support, the school shifted blame to Oyinka, emphasising that her daughter’s distresses must be linked to matters of the home.

‘We went to the school...it was a serious matter that she wants to kill herself. The school were only trying to defend themselves. They were pushing it back to us, saying that it’s the issues she was facing at home that was affecting her. They said it’s a home problem, it’s not a school problem. We kind of had to leave it at that.’

By shifting responsibility for CPVA (and its underlying factors) to Black mother-victims and their homes, schools may confirm mother’s initial suspicions of the inadequacy of formal support available. Mabel, a mental health professional of Caribbean descent, reflected on the challenging relations between schools, Black mothers and their children.

‘Some of the teachers, they gossip. Some Caucasian teachers don't really know how to deal with a Black child. Some do understand the background and cultural aspects of things, but some don't. They say, ‘that’s the troubled child or angry’. Just leave them in the corner. Can't be bothered to deal with them, or have a teacher’s assistant stay with them’ – Mabel, Counsellor and Psychotherapist

Natalia, a manager of a Youth Offending Service, recognised that many of the young Black people involved in justice services had challenging experiences of school, from the primary age.

‘Some of the children who were labelled as being difficult...well actually, there's a clear learning difficulty here, or a need for an ASD or ADHD assessment. [Knowing this] you're able to understand why the classroom environment might have been challenging, or why they couldn't adhere to boundaries at home.’ - Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

Schools are uniquely positioned to support young people and their families as they have more access to resources than some individual parents. However, despite their role in supporting the development of all children and assisting parents in this shared responsibility, there were two mothers who experienced a lack of curiosity and described schools as failing their children. As previous research indicates that Black children are more readily labelled as violent or disruptive (Perera, 2020: 8; Gunter, 2015) this suggests there may be a problem with schools identifying and supporting Black mothers experiencing CPVA. The findings from this thesis indicate that there are Black mothers, like Jane, who, alongside their victim experiences choose to advocate for their children, who are also victims of wider racial and systemic discrimination. Further research might focus on the approach of schools to this problem.

## **Institutional Distrust and Barriers to Formal Support Pathways**

### *Systemic racism*

The racialised experiences Black mothers and their children encounter within British school systems is reflective of their accounts navigating other services, including social care and criminal legal institutions. With regards to social care, studies show concern as to whether perceptions around childhood innocence and vulnerability apply to young Black people (Davis, 2022; Roberts, 1994: 874; 2014). Through the process of adultification, Black children are considered ‘less innocent’, more ‘street wise’ and ‘aggressive’ within schools, child protection and mental health services (NSPCC Learning, 2022). One mother, Zaya, feared that her disclosure and use of services would only ‘confirm’ these racialised views of Black youth. She was inclined to think her son would be perceived stereotypically as opposed to being seen as vulnerable and in need of support.

‘In Africa or the Caribbean, you can be who you are. Here, our sons are pushed into stereotypes and racial profiles. There is overt hostility towards Black boys. Help comes if your child engages, why would your child engage with the system that causes the problem?’ – Zaya, Widowed Mother, Black Mixed (Caribbean and white)

Zaya’s reflections suggest her fears that abuse disclosure and engagement with formal support may give a false sense of legitimacy to racist stereotypes of Black children and youth and undermine the quality of support available. Studies suggest there are preconceptions and systemic biases that negatively can influence the safeguarding of Black children and compromise the quality of responses implying they are not in need protection and support (Davis and Marsh, 2020; Davis, 2022; Duberry, 2021). The reality of these findings was confirmed through Betty’s account (a family practitioner and therapist) who recollected a time she had witnessed a non-Black caseworker refuse to take on the case of a Black mother-victim and son. The case file detailed the extent of CPVA experienced and included descriptions of her son’s physical appearance as being tall and largely built, despite being in early adolescence. These were reasons listed by Betty’s colleague as why she wanted the case to be reallocated to someone else.

‘Family support workers, services are very much White middle class. This family I was working with... there was violence, and he was smashing things up at home. The case was for a family support worker but reading his file... it said he was very tall and built, a lot of young Black boys are very tall. She said she’s scared; she doesn’t want to do the case. That’s when they put it on my caseload. I made the

initial appointment. He was reluctant to meet but [when he did] I couldn't believe the way he was talking about his feelings. He said afterwards, I'm never able to talk to the ones they send to me normally.'

Though a single account, Betty's reflection highlights that within services Black bodies can be racialised as threatening. By virtue of the adultification process, Black children can be seen as intimidating by the professionals supporting them which can affect the quality of support provided. Two Black mothers (non-victims) participating in the focus group expressed doubts about approaching family services in any capacity. They believed in limiting the scope for systems to intervene in their family life following racialised suspicions around the (in)adequacy of Black mothering.

'I am African, I wasn't born here, I just feel automatically that the system hates me. I'll need to be careful [approaching services] because tables can be turned, instead of them investigating [CPVA], I will be scrutinised.' – Esther, Black African, Married Mother.

'To begin to look for help will be difficult, because the same people you're gonna go to for help for are the same people causing our problems. They take our children or separate us from our children when they recognise that we have a problem.

[Services] are going to add to your problems' – Teona, Parent Group Facilitator

As shared in earlier sections, though the role of nurturer and protector is a common experience in motherhood, regardless of race, ethnicity or class, advocacy and maternal activism form essential parts of Black motherhood due to the realities of raising racialised

children. However, where Black mothers have advocated for their children experiencing discrimination or racial microaggressions, their strength has been problematised as threatening and intimidating (Brathwaite, 2020; Allen and White-Smith, 2018; Reynolds, 2005). These prejudicial responses are rooted in the racial tropes of the ‘Strong Black woman’ and the ‘Angry Black woman’ stereotype which depict Black mothers as hostile and aggressive (Walley-Jean, 2009; Ashley, 2014; Motro et al. 2022).

‘This Angry Black Woman label. Before I was a social worker, I worked in domestic abuse for 18 years in total. And most victims of abuse are angry. Black mothers of these children [displaying CPVA] will be treated differently. Treated as though they are reacting aggressively rather than being traumatised because of what they experience.’ – Catrina, Social Worker.

‘There are cultural differences around how people present, show emotion and communicate. A problem arises when mothers apparently don’t look sad enough. But what if you hold yourself together, comport yourself, don’t cry, are very factual about what happened, say it as it is. You’re not sat there crying your eyes out but your very angry at what’s gone on. People are thinking you are the mad person.’ - Lily, Young People Service Manager

While demonstrating strength is expected from Black mothers within their communities and wider society, they also find themselves in a quandary where their display of strength and anger are policed in moralistic and prejudicial ways. The ABW and SBW tropes work together to deny the vulnerability of Black women and raises a barrier to professionals recognising their victimhood, vulnerability and need for help and protection (Wyatt, 2008;

Hill-Collins, 2005). This contributes to the dismissal and minimisation of Black maternal suffering, a commonplace occurrence across various sectors and services. Concerns also remain about whether services recognise cultural differences around how emotions are displayed and the messages they communicate. Whether services were in education, schools, social care, mental health or child protection and justice spheres, institutional intervention could increase the vulnerability of Black families. It can cause further ‘system violence’ to parents already experiencing family violence (Holt, 2012: 151).

### *Investigating Nuances: Youth Offending and CPVA*

The connection between young people who offend outside the home and subsequent displays of abusive behaviour within home is a complex, yet important reality to consider. In this thesis, professionals raised concerns around youth offending, weapon possession and child criminal exploitation as being connected to CPVA. They shared that Black women raising children in cities and neighbourhoods affected by deprivation, crime and heavy policing were aware of the likelihood of harm occurring outside the home. As some young people feel safer when carrying weapons, this also increases their likelihood to be victims and perpetrators of serious youth violence (London Assembly, Police and Crime Committee, 2016). Professionals supporting young people living in these areas recognised the wider implications of navigating daily life with fear and hyper-vigilance.

‘Some of the young people I support are exposed. Southwark specifically has high levels of serious youth violence. That ‘on-the-edge hyper-vigilance, I’m going to be on the defensive before they get me attitude.’ They adopt that on road but then think its functional within the home as well’ – Mary-Anne, Psychologist

‘All of our young people present with so many different risks as well. They might be kicking off at home, violent towards mom, but they might have behaviours that go on outside of the family home. It might be county lines or serious youth violence.’-Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

Professionals reported that in Black families, incidents of CPVA are often discovered as a derivative of other investigations into the family linked to crime occurring outside the home. Natalia, a professional within Youth Justice system, described a pathway in which CPVA is typically exposed. For example, in one case a young person was arrested for weapon possession and after contact has been made with the family, it became apparent that he was threatening his mother and causing severe property damage. By highlighting possible connections between CPVA and youth offending, this thesis suggests that a young person’s display of abusive behaviours within the home should not be considered in isolation but contextualised with an appreciation for the complexities of their real lives.

Contextual safeguarding is a theoretical and operational framework, created by Carlene Firmin, to draw attention to the cultural and social context in which extra-familial harm occurs (Firmin, 2020). Although used commonly to understand causes of peer-peer abuse, the principles of contextual safeguarding emphasise placing the behaviours of young people within the context of their social reality. Arnez and Condry also argue for the adoption of an ‘holistic and contextual approach’ when thinking about the lives of young people to account for their relationships, learning experiences and offending (2021:17). For the purpose of my study, ‘contextual safeguarding’ is useful in highlighting the need to consider the context and social environment in which Black mother-victims and their children ‘do family life’ as

it highlights the concerns that shape their victim experiences and disclosure practices following CPVA.

Recent studies in youth justice reveal that young people involved in crime and criminal exploitation are vulnerable and should be seen as victims rather than perpetrators (Williams and Finlay, 2018; National Crime Agency, 2019; Youth Justice Legal Centre, 2020; Arnez and Condry, 2021). In Natalia's professional experience, she observed that when harmed by a child who had offended or was a victim of criminal exploitation, Black mothers viewed their victimisation as secondary to their child being unsafe and in conflict with the law.

‘In most instances, mothers almost put their abuse to one side. They're like ‘I'm just really worried about what's happening there, or what he's doing with his time, or that I can't get a hold of him’. They don't really account for the abuse. They seem concerned about the child's welfare more than what they're suffering. It's quite maternal though, isn't it?’ – Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

For Black mother-victims reporting their abuse experiences may feel counterintuitive to the maternal responsibility to protect their children. One YOS manager described a case where a mother was regularly threatened with weapons by her son, yet it was not until he was arrested for issues outside the home, that his violence towards his mother was exposed. Despite this, she internalised maternal guilt for not being able to protect him from dangers outside the home.

‘When he got arrested, she said, and it's a really stark statement: ‘I just can't keep him safe’. And I thought that's interesting, because actually he's not making you

safe. Threatening her with weapons, smashing her walls in... to live with that? But she seemed more concerned about what was happening outside of the family home.’ – Natalia, Youth Offending Service (YOS) Manager

Adding in the realities of criminal exploitation and youth offending brings a layer of complexity to Black mother-victims seeking support of justice agents like the police. In addition to general fears about the criminalization of children and concerns of a moral panic about behaviour of young people (Condry and Miles, 2013), young Black males are more likely to be criminalised and disproportionately represented in prison population (Lammy, 2017; Davis and Mash, 2020). Studies reveal how the hyper-surveillance of deprived communities by police results in the racialised targeting of Black youths, particularly boys, through an abuse of stop and search powers (Jones, 2020; Philips and Bowling, 2003; 2017). The visibility and movement of Black males in public spaces have been affected by race and policing (Reynolds, 2005; Gilroy, 1987; Runnymede Trust, 1996). Earlier sections have illustrated how Black mothers and their children experience a shared struggle against systemic racism. As many Black mothers fear their sons being subject to harassment, racial attacks police and peer-violence (Reynolds, 2005), they may perceive police intervention as not desirable.

‘Any involvement of reporting or police can be controversial in our community. The police are seen as the enemy...the distrust between communities spans over centuries. I don’t have any children yet, but I know there is no way I would invite basically a gunman to my house to stop my child abusing me.’ - Jada, Independent Domestic Violence Advocate.

Across the Black community notions of racial loyalty and cultural prohibitions guard against disclosing family challenges to justice authorities. However, this thesis found evidence of varying views as to whether Black mother-victims should seek formal support from criminal legal processes. When presented with a vignette (see appendix) and asked to advise Fola (a Black African mother experiencing CPVA from her twin boys), all the focus group mothers recognised the internal conflict around whether or not Fola should disclose her predicament. They echoed concerns of how reporting her sons could engender unwanted service attention and intervention to the family. Nevertheless, of the eleven Black mothers (non-victims) that participated in focus group discussion, only two mothers advised addressing CPVA internally and said they would only consider external support from collective networks if the behaviour persisted.

‘...Thank God it’s not happened to me, but...even if I’m being hurt, I wouldn’t be the first person to rush up to authority, police, whoever. I would first try and resolve inhouse, hope it is a one-off situation’ – Chioma, Married Mother, Black African

‘As a mother it is difficult to go to any agency to report your children, because of the love you have. But if the aggression continues, the mother has no choice but to find another solution...a lot of mothers suffer in silence because they don’t want their children to get into problems with authorities’ – Tara, Married Mother, Black African

Niecy put forward a middle-ground approach which did not encourage the reporting of one’s child to justice authorities for the violence caused, but instead supported engagement with

therapeutic services to redress behavioural or psychological factors underlining the child's conduct.

'These circumstances are not normal. It can be something to do with mental health or disabilities within the child that are not known. If your child is being violent, you have to get help, maybe not from authorities but some kind of other health or psychiatric support' – Niecy, Married Mother, Black Caribbean

However, the majority of mothers (seven) advised that Fola engage with justice authorities and report the behaviour of her sons. According to these mothers, the very occurrence of violence within the home indicates that higher level intervention was required. Three mothers expressed the view that engagement with police could be necessary to prevent the escalation of CPVA to grave crimes such as homicide.

Enitan: For me, I would seek help where there's help. I'm not going to pray about it, because it's beyond prayer now. Are you going to have that child referred to a psychiatrist or if all that fails, then juvenile detention straight? Because a 14-year-old behaving that way to their mum will become the 18-year-old killing people.

Feyi: I know this might be harsh, but she can't address their behaviour herself. Now it has turned to beating and abuse, she should report it and put it in the hands of the authorities.

Ronke: In our culture there is 'I can't do this to my child. I don't want people to hear I'm the one reporting my children to the authority', but I would advise her to do

that...only a matter of time before the authorities come for them anyway. The same system that protects children up to a certain age, if they go past 18, the same system...will come back and nail them. She should seek support now. There might be some sort of intervention to bring them back. They can be become better people.

Ronke believed that a mother-victim who was mindful of engaging services and formal support at this stage, will inevitably confront it later on, if her child's behaviour worsens. By advising that Fola engage with authorities, she envisaged that intervention could prevent the escalation of her son's behaviour. However, such an outcome cannot be guaranteed and would inevitably depend on the quality and success of the intervention. Moreover, it must be acknowledged that, while insightful, these views are from non-victims responding to a fictitious scenario. There is always a possibility that mother-victims may decide against engaging criminal legal processes. Nonetheless, these focus group contributions are useful in demonstrating the varying perspectives among Black mothers as to the threshold of abuse that warrants engagement with formal support and diversity of thought around the involvement of justice authorities. Furthermore, although examining Black community attitudes towards CPVA is beyond the scope of this thesis, these preliminary focus group observations suggest there is ground for future research to explore collective attitudes towards this highly stigmatised form of family violence.

## Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter contributes to knowledge on gender, family violence and specifically CPVA by conceptualising and enumerating the layered factors underpinning the disclosure patterns and coping strategies of Black mother-victims. This study is the first to apply an intersectional approach to CPVA and shift away from homogenising parental experiences by centring its analysis on the realities of marginalised women raising children racialised in Western society. The chapter detailed the centrality of collective and spiritually-centered coping strategies in how Black mother-victims navigate violence and abuse from their children. Though they found comfort and support within their collective and spiritual networks, there were hindrances to accessing informal support. Three notable barriers emerged from this study: the role of shame as a silencer, the internalisation of strength, and the risk of disclosure within collective and spiritual spaces triggering further instances of abuse.

Regarding engagement with formal support pathways, multiple barriers were identified. In light of their shared struggle with their children, they deployed strategies of survival and resistance to protect and limit state intervention into their homes (Rodriguez 2016: 6). One such strategy is using euphemistic language to describe their abuse experiences. Their misclassification undermined the severity of their suffering, victimisation and the extent of harm they endured. Another barrier to service engagement was limited awareness of factors underlying abusive conduct. However, there were times mother-victims actively resisted the labelling and pathologising of their children through the diagnosis of services. Despite experiencing CPVA, Black mothers had to balance victimhood, motherhood and advocacy as they navigated services including schools, social care and justice institutions.

At the time of writing there is little empirical consideration of how CPVA relates with child criminal exploitation, nor is there sufficient documentation of how Black mother-victims experience justice services. However, this thesis has highlighted possible connections between CPVA, youth offending and child criminal exploitation. It suggests that a young person's use of aggression within the home should not be considered in isolation but contextualised holistically with an appreciation for the complexities of their real lives (Firmin, 2020; Arnez and Condry, 2021). Due to the reality of raising children, who may already be subject to processes of discrimination and criminalisation, Black mothers faced unique challenges engaging with justice institutions. Future research can build from this preliminary recognition of nuances between CPVA and youth offending to further interrogate these intersections. Crucially, this chapter has illustrated how the intersecting identities of Black women and their children can significantly shape the formal and informal support pathways available following CPVA.

## **NINE: CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

As the first in-depth academic work to investigate how Black mothers perceive, experience and navigate CPVA, this study redresses an existing empirical gap by advancing an intersectional exploration of this subtype of family violence. It accomplishes this firstly by highlighting the nuanced meanings Black women of African and Caribbean descent ascribe to motherhood, the ways their maternal identity and practices differ from White and Western conceptualisations, before considering the wider implications on their navigation of CPVA. Known as an effective tool used to ‘dismantle essentialism’ and recognise how multiple systems of oppression (i.e. sexism and racism) create unique experiences of disadvantage (Nash, 2008: 1), intersectionality illuminates the complex lived experiences of research subjects (Collins and Bilge, 2020; Armstrong, 2023: 205). Intersectionality involves the naming of social identities as not mutually exclusive, but ‘multidimensional’, ‘interlocking’, ‘culminative’ and ‘reciprocal’ (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991; Knapp, 2005; Nash, 2008; Hill-Collins, 2015).

In this thesis, intersectionality has been used as an analytical framework to illustrate the complex and coalescing identities of marginalised women and to examine how race, racism and intersecting disadvantage shapes their maternal identity, practice and experience. By incorporating race, ethnicity, religion, class and migration status into its investigation of CPVA, this thesis portrays how this subtype of family violence compounds with the social identities of Black mothers to shape their perceptions, experiences and navigation of abuse. This chapter opens with a discussion of main research findings addressing how the research questions have been answered. Next, the limitations of study are considered before delving into theoretical and conceptual contributions of this thesis to scholarly knowledge on matricentric

feminism, Black motherhood and intersectionality. Finally, the implications for policy and practice are discussed.

## **Discussion of Research Findings**

The four overarching research questions guiding this empirical enquiry were: How is the experience of CPVA shaped by Black maternal identity and practice? How is CPVA defined, understood and experienced by Black mothers? How does CPVA intersect with Black motherhood to exacerbate narratives of maternal guilt and mother-blame? How do Black mothers seek help following CPVA and what influences their decisions? Each question is addressed.

The maternal identity and mothering practices of Black women is a complex and multi-layered phenomenon shaped by cultural scripts (narratives and expectations) emerging from gender expectations, community influences, family dynamics and oppressive systems of racialisation (Odum, 2017: 104). In its first empirical chapter, this thesis challenged the presumption of universality within motherhood and the implied homogenising of parental experiences of CPVA. Emerging from this thesis is a conceptual model of six maternal identities providing insight into the idealisation of motherhood within Black communities. Namely, Maternal Might, Militant Motherhood, Matriarchal Providers, Collective Nurturers, Sacrificial Motherhood, and Sacred Maternity. The valorised portrayal of Black motherhood is significant, and the value of these conceptual contributions will be discussed in the succeeding section. However, despite these venerated expectations of maternal identity and practice the reality of Black mothering in Western nations was shaped by manifold tensions. For example, the challenges of mothering in a ‘mixed culture’, the development of intergenerational tensions

between mother and child and the socio-political pathologised constructions of Black womanhood and childhood.

Building on from the critical concepts provided in Chapter 5, in Chapter 6 this thesis unveils the experiences of Black women ‘mothering through’ CPVA, finding that idealisations and aspirations around maternal identity were significantly altered and deconstructed once a child displayed abusive behaviour within the home. The findings of this study reveal that When Black mothers experienced non-physical assault from their children through the weaponisation of words, cultural slurs and language, there was a depletion of their ‘maternal might’ and ability to perform their idealised function as disciplinarians. These findings highlight the need to situate the non-physical assault of Black mothers within cultural context as young people who were bilingual or of the 1.5 generation (those who immigrated to the UK in early childhood) could utilise aggressive cultural and linguistic slurs to inflict emotional harm and undermine their mothers.

Given the centrality of labour and financial provision in the carework of Black women and their roles as ‘matriarchal providers’, this thesis found their experience of financial abuse to have unique and dire consequences. The literature on socioeconomic status and CPVA remains inconclusive and often contradictory (Cottrell and Monk, 2004; Condry and Miles, 2014; Agner and Hugueley, 1989; Cornell and Gelles, 1982). However, this study saw that Black mothers with low socioeconomic status or those subject to financial strain caused by ‘Black Tax’ and social obligations to financially support extended family, struggled to provide for the *wants* and demands of their children. This ‘failure’ around matriarchal providership resulted in a sense of resentment, disrespect and the infliction of financial harm. The findings suggest that for some Black mothers, receiving respect from their children was not only contingent on their

ability to nurture, but provide financially. Effectively discharging the role of ‘matriarchal provider’ was a means of maintaining normative family hierarchies and power in their homes.

Regarding the experience of physical assault, all eight mother-victims reported a range of physical violence from their children, though to varying degrees. In my small group of mother victims, four women described experiencing abuse from sons, while the remaining four were harmed by their daughters. These findings differ from those observed in earlier studies, which find male children to be more physically aggressive towards their mothers than female (Pagani et al. 2009; Ibabe and Bentler, 2016; Cornell and Gelles, 1982a). While conclusions cannot be drawn about gender in a small sample such as this, it was notable that the gender of the child impacted on how Black mothers experienced physical abuse. When physical harm was caused by daughters, this study found there was a marked departure from the adulations of Black maternal identity as a position of strength, power and respect across their communities (Hill-Collins, 1994; Reynolds, 2005). Rather, the valorised archetype of Black women as matriarchs, disciplinarians and divine beings were reduced to caricatures of ‘girl on girl fighting’.

Following the feminisation of CPVA in the mother-daughter dyad, this study found that attitudes towards the male child’s use of violence and abuse were also gendered. Examples were found of mothers and professionals likening a son’s abusive behaviour to that of a male adult partner, which can be seen as a form of adultification in itself. While some Black mothers experienced physical abuse from their daughters as an altercation with another woman, their encounters with sons suggest a repurposing of their motherhood to serve as a repository of male rage. These findings agree with previous studies that indicate women who experience violence from male partners can encounter a continuation of abuse from their sons following

paternal absence from the home (Eckstein 2004; Daly and Nancarrow 2010; Cottrell and Monk 2004).

The research data indicates that Black mothers uniquely experience CPVA through the dismantling of 'homeplace'. For Black women, the home does not only provide ontological security (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998) but presents as refuge from racism and White hatred (hooks, 1990). However, the spatial overhaul caused by CPVA undermined the meaning of homeplace on several levels. For example, when children used household items to inflict harm, cause property damage and subject their mothers to carceral-like conditions by restricting their movement within home. The research data provided examples of children exposing the homeplace to surveillance of state agents like the police and social workers through false accusations and in two cases, children bringing criminal activity in the home through drug selling and weapon storing. This thesis found that once the homeplace was compromised by CPVA, Black mothers began experiencing fear from within the home and the structural forces external to it.

Chapter 7 examined the psychological experience of maternal guilt and mother-blame following CPVA. It identified six sites where Black women were blamed for exhibiting a failed and stigmatised motherhood. Namely, the failure to moralise their children, to protect, to practice sacred maternity, and to change negative family environments. Black mother-victims also experienced blame for failing through physical punishment and not exuding traditionally feminine qualities like maternal tenderness. Paradoxically however, they were also blamed for failing to practice militant motherhood, where CPVA was thought to be connected to being 'soft', permissive and allowing children to usurp maternal authority. Based on their deviation from the hegemonic standard of White, middle-class intensive mothering ideals, this thesis

found that Black single mothers experienced CPVA were particularly pathologised. The existence of racial tropes like the 'Baby Mama', 'Strong Black Woman' and 'Angry Black woman' not only intensify the rhetoric of maternal blame but add a component of racial pains to the experience of CPVA (Chapter 3 and 7). The ideology that good intensive mothering produces good children compounds with the stigmatisation and heightened scrutiny of Black women and their children. By highlighting the complex relationship between the internal idealisation of Black motherhood within their communities and the external pathologisation they experience within Western society, this thesis shows how CPVA intersects with these racialised realities. The symbiotic relationship between mother-blame and maternal guilt implied that Black mothers felt entrapped in web of guilt, judgment and condemnation, often placing responsibility within themselves for the abuse and they encountered from their children.

Finally, this thesis found that the perceptions Black mothers held around the underlying causes of the CPVA framed their coping strategies and approach to help-seeking. Chapter 8 indicates that Black mothers can use euphemistic language to categorise their child's use of violence and abuse as 'misbehaviour', 'disrespectful' or 'rudeness' and by so doing undermine the severity and extent of harm endured. At times this was linked to limited recognition among Black mothers of the factors underlying CPVA. For example, not knowing a child was being bullied at school, a victim of crime or experiencing mental health challenges. One mother was unaware that her son was experiencing anxiety and chronic fatigue as symptoms of depression, rather, she misinterpreted his behaviour as laziness. Due to this lack of recognition, she was unable to seek mental health support for him which resulted in escalations of violent and aggressive outbursts. These findings align with previous studies that examine parental help-seeking

pathways and establish a clear link between their awareness of underlying causes and the use of available support services (Thurston et al. 2018:162; Williams et al. 2022).

Moreover, this thesis found that Black maternal perceptions of CPVA can also be framed by cultural and religious understandings of maternity. For example, the concept of ‘Sacred Maternity’ emerges from this thesis to encapsulate the belief that motherhood within Black communities is a spiritual privilege and divine assignment. Their belief in the existence of a spiritual world contributed to the ideology that evil spiritual entities could cause problem for their children. When a child was displaying abusive behaviour, some mother-victims felt that spiritual attacks, demonic possessions or evil spirits from one’s ancestral village were the underlying cause for CPVA. This perception encouraged the use of spiritually-centred and collective coping strategies to navigate experiences of abuse. However, though informal support pathways were a preferred means of navigating CPVA, this thesis found three notable barriers. Namely: the role of shame as a silencer, the internalization of strength, and the fear that disclosure within collective spaces could trigger further abuse. The occurrence of CPVA to Black mothers was irreconcilable to cultural idealisation of motherhood as a position of spiritual honour, dignity and reverence (Akujobi, 2011; Emecheta, 1979; Madunagu, 2008). The phenomenon not only violated cultural understandings of mother-child dynamic within Black communities but exposed a perception of failure in motherhood. Thus, disclosing their experience brought risk of collective shaming and a sense of isolation.

Chapter 8 also explored the barriers to Black mothers using formal support pathways following CPVA. Embedded throughout the thesis is an acknowledgment of the oppressive and racist structures Black mothers navigate alongside their children. Not only does this understanding assist with contextualising the unique impact of CPVA and mother-blaming discourses, it

provides a premise to understanding how these prejudicial perceptions of Black motherhood work to create institutional distrust and (dis)engagement with services following CPVA. The role of nurturer and protector is a common experience in motherhood, regardless of race, ethnicity or class. However, this thesis found that advocacy and maternal activism formed essential parts of the Black mothering practice due to the realities of raising racialised children in Western societies. For example, the findings of this thesis depart from existing research which suggests that following CPVA, clinical diagnosis is desired by mothers and contributes towards increased empathy towards their child and advocacy for their access to professional treatment (Holt, 2012; Edenborough et al. 2008; Stewart and Leonard, 2007).

Rather, the research data suggests evidence of some Black mothers actively resisting what they perceived to be the pathologising of their children through professional diagnosis around mental illness or special education needs. Moreover, there were maternal concerns that disclosing CPVA may give a false sense of legitimacy to racist stereotypes of Black children and youth as violent, that their child would be perceived stereotypically, as opposed to being seen as vulnerable and in need of help. These trepidations are echoed through research which suggests that societal perceptions around childhood innocence and vulnerability do not apply to young Black people (Davis, 2022; Roberts, 1993; 1994; 2014). Nonetheless, when it came to physically abusive elements of CPVA, this thesis found there were varying perspectives among community attitudes as to whether Black mother-victims should seek formal support including criminal legal processes.

For example, when presented with a vignette of CPVA, the majority of focus group mothers (seven out of eleven) said they would advise a mother-victim to engage with justice authorities and report the abusive behaviour of her child. Though recognising the internal conflict around

reporting and possible concerns of how engagement with authorities may engender state surveillance and intervention to the family, the majority shared the view that very occurrence of violence within the home indicated that higher level intervention was required to prevent CPVA escalating to grave crimes such as homicide. These divergent responses indicate that Black mothers do not have monolithic perspectives towards service engagement following this form of abuse and suggest that community attitudes may differ from those of victims as to the threshold of abuse that warrants engagement with formal support pathways. Ultimately, this study illustrates how the multi-layered ways the intersecting social identities of Black women and their children can significantly shape their access to formal and informal support following CPVA.

## **Limitations**

While this thesis empirical and theoretical advances understanding of CPVA and discourses around Black motherhood, it has clear limitations such as the small sample size of mother-victims that participated in the study. Although it engaged a total of 19 Black African and Caribbean mothers, the victim sample consisted of only eight Black women. Three of the mother-victims agreed to in-depth interviews, while the remaining five mothers chose to share their experiences via the victim questionnaire. Nevertheless, it must be noted that obtaining a large sample size was unlikely due to the under-reported and highly stigmatised nature of CPVA. The small sample of participants reflect the sensitive nature of the phenomenon and perhaps an unwillingness to discuss such experiences with a ‘researcher’ and ‘outsider’. There is also the reluctance of Black women to engage in empirical research, which may be connected to their racialisation as ethnic minorities in Western societies and their categorisation as ‘hard-to-reach population’ (Darko, 2021; Ekong et al. 2022; Schwarz et al. 2023).

Due to its small sample size, the limited generalisability of the study's findings cannot be denied. However, it must be reiterated that the aim of this study was not to disseminate generalisable results but to undertake an in-depth and intersectional exploration of CPVA from the vantage point of Black mothers. The literature around this phenomenon, though fast developing, is yet to account for how categories of race, ethnicity, culture, class and religion intersect to shape parent experiences and navigation of this phenomenon. The aim of this exploratory project was to disaggregate Black maternal perceptions and experiences of CPVA and to highlight possible barriers to engaging with formal and informal support. Despite its limitations, the study achieves this aim. The depth of qualitative data produced provide key insights into the complex and dynamic experience of Black motherhood and showcase the interweaving of family violence with wider systems of racialisation underwhich Black mothers and their children simultaneously endure and resist.

### **Black motherhood, Feminism and Intersectionality**

At the time of writing, the role of intersecting social identities in shaping parent experiences of CPVA is yet to be considered within academic research. By centring Black mother's narratives and disaggregating their experience of this phenomenon, this qualitative research provides rich insight into how the pains of racialised and stigmatised motherhood intersect with CPVA within the contemporary British context. In recognising that motherhood is not a universal experience but shaped by the structural forces of racism, sexism and classism (Arendell 2000), this thesis draws from theoretical and conceptual tools rooted in Black feminist epistemology to contextualise the lived experiences of Black mothers. Though gendered power dynamics can contribute to the subordination of mothers, this thesis found that mothering experiences of Black women cannot be disconnected from the inequities that mark their lives by virtue of their intersecting identities.

One of the challenges of using intersectionality is the epistemological ambiguity that leads to questions about its substantive function (Hill-Collins, 2015; Knapp, 2005). For example, unanswered ontological questions abound as to how many social identities are to be considered in an empirical enquiry and in what combination (Yuval-Davis, 2006; Mirza, 2015: 59). The subjective inclination of researchers towards some inequalities may result in favouritism of some social categories to the exclusion of others, which may risk perpetuating the ‘myth of homogeneity’ within certain groups (Nash, 2008: 12). In this thesis, I acknowledged the need for Black mothering discourses to go beyond a reliance on the aesthetic representations of Blackness to interrogate how differences in ethnicity, culture, class and religion can distinguish Black maternal experiences.

As the mothers participating in this research project are of African and Caribbean descent, there was need to interrogate cultural nuances and intra-ethnic differences that exist between Black women. Where relevant, I have drawn upon the categories of ethnicity, religion, class and migration status to acknowledge and contextualise the individual differences. However, when it came to the perception, experience and navigation of CPVA, this thesis found that the structural implications of their Blackness were an overarching consideration and significantly framed their perception, experience and navigation of CPVA. I chose to use the categorisation of ‘Black’ to acknowledge that the mothers who participated in this study navigated England as a visibly Black ethnic group. Thus, while the nuances of culture, nationality, and religion may exist and ought to be factored into understanding each mother’s experience, the societal perception of these mothers and response to their collective identity as Black women became central this thesis.

## **The Phenomenology of Motherhood: Mapping Black Maternal Identities**

By expanding the study of matricentric feminism to account for intersectional discourses and prioritise the perceptions and lived experiences of Black and working-class women, this thesis has contributed to scholarly work on motherhood and the phenomenology (experiences and understandings) of mothering (Arendell, 2000). I have expanded theorisations of Black motherhood by providing a conceptual model of six maternal identities practiced by Black women living in contemporary Britain (see Chapter 5, page 127 for discussion). *Maternal Might*: Linked to the ‘Strong Black Woman’ trope, this concept reveals that respectability and status are not automatically afforded to all Black mothers but reserved to those who demonstrate strength in the face of life’s hardships and use their maternal power to advance the ecosystem of Black family life. This concept is the foundation on which future typologies of Black maternal identity are built. For example, Black women utilise their maternal might to become matriarchal providers, engage in the collective nurturership of other Black children, remain sacrificial in disposition, militant in their use of discipline, spiritually discerning and dogged in their resistance of oppressive racial structures.

*Militant Motherhood*: Aligned with the concept of maternal might is the expectation that Black mothers raise their children within cultures of strength and fortitude. This thesis found the use of militant mothering techniques, particularly physical chastisement, was observed as a common practice among some Black mothers. While the enforcement of discipline is not unique to Black mothers, the concept of militant motherhood encapsulates the Black maternal commission to use discipline as a means of eradicating weakness and instilling within their child the strength to survive and contend with the racist realities of the world. To some degree, the practice of militant motherhood particularly physical discipline is understood through a

framework of care. However, the extent to which militant maternal regimes are implemented differ across Black women.

*Matriarchal Providers:* This concept establishes the centrality of labour and financial provision in the carework of Black women. Recognising that unlike White, Middle Class mothers, Black women were not historically confined by subordination in domestic spheres, but due to the socioeconomic disadvantage were expected to perform the ‘worker/mother’ role across the public/private spheres (Jenkins, 2005: 106; Benin and Keith, 1995; Reynolds, 2005). Here, the concept of maternal might resurges as the means by which Black mothers discharge their duties as matriarchal providers, financially providing for their families while still performing the conventionally maternal role of nurturing.

*Sacrificial Motherhood:* Discharging the dual burden and cultural expectation of the ‘worker/mother’ role induces much strain. The concept of sacrificial motherhood advances rhetoric that sacrifice is the price mothers pay and that cycles of maternal sacrifice not only evidence good mothering but will yield the rewards of well-behaved and compliant children.

*Sacred Maternity:* The mystical and sacred enjoin in the mothering practices of Black women. Not only is becoming a mother considered a spiritual privilege permitted by a divine being (Devi, 2017: 37; Oyewumi, 2003: 13), spirituality in Black motherhood is found to serve two distinct purposes. Firstly, there was a perception of motherhood as a place of divine assignment, where women are tasked with helping their children self-actualise, attain independence and achieve what one mother described as a ‘God-given destiny’. Secondly, Black mothers upheld the sacredness of their maternity by deploying spiritual practices and rituals towards the protection of their children as they navigated the world.

*Collective Nurturers*: Black mothers rear and socialise their own children alongside their broader role as moral guardians to all children in their communities as they perceive their mothering to be a collective nurturing effort. Mothering in non-white communities extends beyond the realm of biological boundaries or nuclear family constructions to incorporate ‘non-traditional’ forms of motherhood (Lara-Villanueva, 2018). This study found that Black women who reared children in the diaspora grieved the loss of collective nurturing practices post-migrating, and sought out othermothers, matriarchal mentors and community fathers through informal support pathways including faith-based organisations, Black parenting groups and community networks.

By acknowledging the intersections of gender, race, culture and religion, this conceptual model of six maternal identities move beyond a Eurocentric phenomenology of motherhood. They provide critical insight into how mothering is idealised within Black communities by highlighting their dynamic and complex nature, maternal practices, priorities and collectivist cultural orientations. These critical concepts also advance maternal scholarship by redressing the empirical dearth of research exploring the lived experiences of Black mothers in contemporary Britain (Reynolds, 2020: 3).

### **Dialectic Tensions within Idealised Motherhood**

The conceptual models provided by this thesis contribute to the phenomenology of motherhood by highlighting the ‘dialectical tensions’ inherent in the mothering experiences of Black women (Arendell, 2000: 1196). Following the logic that the mother role is a social identity that bestows power, dignity and privilege to Black women (McAdoo, 1993; Emecheta, 1979; Madunagu, 2008; Akujobi, 2011; Oyewumi, 2003; Jenkins, 2005: 49) the reverse is also the case. For Black women in Western nations, the ‘core’ of their motherhood is power, survival

and identity as maternity empowers them to become a voice and catalyst for social activism (Hill-Collins, 1994;1990; Jenkins, 2005: 47). However, Black women without children can be considered ‘failed women’, ‘sterile women’, ‘a non-being’ forced to endure the vexation of infertility and perceived to be the ‘dead end of human life’ (Mbiti, 1970; Ngcobo, 1988; 1999; Akujobi, 2011; Wilson-Tagoe, 2017:18). The ‘privileging of motherhood’ within Black communities (Oyewumi, 2003: 13) denotes a woman’s value is expressed through her reproductive abilities, thus motherhood can be experienced in ways that are exploitative, burdensome and oppressive.

Despite the idealised conceptualisations of maternity, Black motherhood is also experienced as complex and paradoxical institutions filled with dialectic tensions (Jenkins, 2005: 47; Hill-Collins, 1990; McMahan, 1995; Arendell, 2000). This thesis revealed that Black women encountered tensions when navigating the reality of motherhood in light of these venerated expectations. One dialectic tension emerges within the concept of ‘collective nurturers’. Though encapsulating a cultural expectation on Black mothers to nurture their own children and act as moral guardians to all Black children (Chapter 5), this thesis found that tensions emerged with the application of this concept in the context of CPVA (Chapter 8). When Black mothers attempted to rely on their collective nurturing networks and share the pains of CPVA, their disclosure to othermothers, matriarchal mentors and community fathers (and their subsequent involvement) was found in some cases to trigger to further incidents. A mother’s decision to call upon the collective nurturers within her community could be perceived as a shaming tactic by the child instigating CPVA who may amplify their behaviour as a punitive response.

Moreover, despite the perception of mothering and the socialisation of children to be a shared and collective responsibility, this thesis found that the tensions that emerged when Black mothers encountered CPVA were linked to the privatisation of their mothering. Through this privatisation process, a child's outcome (and behaviour) was constructed as the sole responsibility of the mother-victims and evidence of their maternal inadequacy. Linked to the concept of 'sacrificial motherhood', this thesis found evidence of the ideology among Black mothers that good mothering is rewarded with good children. The intertwining of sacrifice and maternity, though idealised as a symbol of good maternal practice, perpetuates the reductive parenting philosophy that inadequate mothers are to blame for the delinquent or negative outcomes of their children (Surrency, 2021; Femi-Ajao, 2016: 161; Adeloje, 2013). While it is an idealised practice within Black communities to raise children collectively, I found that dialectic tensions occurred when the practicality of collective nurturing conflicted with the privatisation and blaming of Black mothering when children instigated CPVA.

Another dialectic disjuncture this thesis highlights is in the idealisation and yet subsequent weaponisation of the concept of 'maternal might'. Despite long-standing cultural scripts around Black women as matriarchs and wielders of strength in their homes (sometimes through the practice of a militant motherhood detailed in chapter 5), this thesis found that when CPVA occurred, mother-blame was directed towards strong and authoritative mothers, perceived to have normalised the use of physical force within their homes by modelling the negative use of strength through corporal punishment. Moreover, the joint concept of maternal might and militant motherhood work to endorse the ideology that Black mothers should be strong enough to control the behaviour of their children and thus, the occurrence of CPVA evidences to their maternal shortcomings. This ideology also countersigns the privatisation of Black mothering by dismissing the external limitations placed on Black mothers that can negatively impact their

mothering by increasing their burdens while restricting their resources (Elliott et al. 2015: 367; Surrency, 2021: 55). Thus, in addition to advancing new conceptual models of Black maternal identity, this thesis further contributes to scholarly work on motherhood by highlighting disjunctures inherent in ideologies of Black motherhood (Arendell, 2000) and the tensions that manifest within real maternal experiences impacted by abuse.

## **Racial Tropes, Stigmatised Motherhood and Deviancy Discourses**

This thesis advances scholarly critiques of maternal deviancy discourses by using a Black epistemological reworking of stigma (Tyler, 2018; 2022) to illuminate the racialised undertones of maternal stigmatisation and the racial vilification of Black mothers in Western societies through tropes, myths and stereotypes. This thesis found Goffman's (1963) seminal work on stigma and the management of spoiled identity was useful to some extent in explaining the emotional and psychological effects CPVA may have on 'spoiling' a woman's maternal identity. Due to the gendered socialisation of women as primary caregivers, a 'guilt gap' is formed where mothers experience increased levels of guilt than fathers about the impact of their choices, actions and inactions on their children (Li, 2022: 88; Hays, 1996). In addition to their internal feelings of maternal guilt, externally women are held responsible for the decisions, behaviour and offences of children through mother-blaming discourses (Hunter et al. 2010; Nguyen-Phan, 2024; Peck et al. 2023).

In the context of CPVA, mother-victims could be said to experience a 'double' stigma: first for parenting a problematic child and secondly for being a victim of family violence (Holt and Retford, 2013). However, Goffman's (1963) original conceptualisation – now over sixty years old - does not sufficiently address the pre-existing, and unconcealable stigmatisation associated to Black bodies. Tyler argues that Stigma is a machinery of inequality, using classism and

racism, amongst other overt and covert forms of discrimination as a form of power (Tyler and Slater, 2018; Tyler, 2022). To examine the pathologisation of Black motherhood and its impact on those affected by CPVA, this thesis drew on Tyler's reworking of Goffman's apolitical conceptualisation of Stigma into dialogue with a Black epistemology of stigma (Tyler, 2018).

This thesis deepens understanding of the racialised undertones of mother-blame and maternal-guilt by highlighting how stigma and deviancy discourses are imposed on Black women who deviate from idealised intensive mothering standards. It acknowledges that within Western society, racism is used as a form of governance, where members of ethnic groups are constructed as deviant and abnormal, while the practices of the White majority remain universal, dominant and unquestioned (Hesse, 1997; Reynolds, 2005). Due to the pre-eminence placed on motherhood as a major milestone and crucial aspect of female identity, the maternal institution is subject to much attention and regulation (Constantinou et al. 2021; Rúdólfsdóttir and Auðardóttir, 2024). Maternal identity and practices are socio-political constructs guided by cultural standards which not only perpetuate an ideal but act as a 'regulatory force', imposing blame on mothers whose children deviate from the norm (Rúdólfsdóttir and Auðardóttir, 2024: 2736).

Within maternal theory, 'good mothers' are conceptualised through hegemonic intensive mothering ideals which perpetuate the privileges and experiences of the White, middle-class as the foundation for normal child development and the standard by which 'all mothers' are judged (Minnotte, 2023; Dow 2019; Verduzco-Baker, 2017; Henderson et al. 2016: 513; Allen and Taylor, 2012; Arendell, 2000: 1195). Thus, mothers who fail to herald a maternal practice that is 'child-centered', 'self-sacrificing' and 'all-absorbing' are subject to deviancy discourses (Arendell, 1999; 2000; Hays, 1996; Sutherland, 2010a). However, going beyond gender

considerations, this thesis deepens an understanding of how deviancy discourses attack ethnically minoritised mothers, single mothers and those reliant on welfare (Arendell, 2000: 1195; Fineman, 1995). It contributes to critical studies on motherhood by identifying six sites across which Black women are perceived to deviate from Western ideals and practice a 'failed motherhood' (Chapter 7). Namely, these are: the failure to moralise children, to protect, to practice sacred maternity, and to change negative family environments. Black mother-victims also experienced blame for failing through physical punishment and not exuding traditionally feminine qualities like maternal tenderness. Paradoxically however, they were also blamed for failing to practice militant motherhood, where CPVA was thought to be connected to being 'soft', permissive and allowing children to usurp maternal authority.

Moreover, through its focus on three dichotomised racial tropes: the Strong Black Woman (SBW), Angry Black Woman (ABW) and Baby Mama (BM) this thesis demonstrates how stigma is used to demonstrate the failed femininity and spoiled maternity of Black mothers. By introducing the aforementioned concepts of maternal might and militant motherhood (Chapter 5 and 7), this thesis illuminates the dynamic operation of the SBW trope, and how it harms the disclosure and help-seeking practices of Black women perceived within the imagination of Western society and their own communities as being supernaturally pre-disposed to strength (Chapter 8). The weaponisation of strength against marginalised mothers, evident in the SBW trope, is a form of systematic oppression that denies their vulnerability and limits their access to resources while forcing them to rely on internal strength to survive (Hill-Collins, 1994; Laio et al. 2020: 85).

Interlinked with the idealised expectation on Black mothers to demonstrate strength is the policing of their emotions through the trope of the ABW which depicts them as hostile and aggressive (Walley-Jean, 2009; Ashley, 2014; Motro et al. 2022; Salerno et al. 2017). One example in thesis was the experience of Oyinka, who was compelled to open her home to the police, wanting to investigate the legitimacy of her daughter's claims. Navigating police presence in the homeplace was a challenging experience as a Black mother and to convince them against the likelihood that any child abuse was occurring, Oyinka shared having to intentionally present a calm demeanour to contrast the erratic behaviour of her daughter and accuser. She also relied on the presentation of her other children as well-mannered and 'calm'. Contrastingly, this thesis found instances where Black mothers, particularly single mothers, who did not present as 'calm' had their anger and emotions constructed as evidence of their failed motherhood (Chapter 7). The anger Black mothers expressed about challenging life circumstances, parenting alone, the behaviour or departure of their male partners was problematised by some professionals as a potential trigger of CPVA.

This leads to consideration of the third racial trope, the Baby Mama. A racialised archetype and 'public identity' existing at the social locations of race, gender and class, the BM trope is used to justify the racist, sexist and classist assumptions about the failures of Black single mothers of low-income status (Foster, 2008; Hancock, 2004). Through this racial trope Black women are presented and perceived as irresponsible, lazy, greedy and unfit to mother (Hill-Collins, 1998; Gilens, 1995; Reynolds, 2005). This thesis deepens understanding of the pathologisation of Black single motherhood through the BM trope by illustrating how Black women are made to pay for the sins of men perceived to be failing in fatherhood through the interconnected processes of mother-blaming and responsibility transference.

I found that the so-called deviancy of Black single mothers occurred around four ‘failings’, three of which were increasingly male-centred. Namely, failing to be present, failing to detect unscrupulous men, failing to placate unfaithful fathers and failing to identify paternal identity (Chapter 7). By vilifying their choice of male partners, there is a transfer of responsibility away from Black fathers (who were absent, abusive or unfaithful) to Black mother-victims. The findings of this thesis further evidence the intersectional shaming processes that incorporates the so-called moral flaws of race, gender and class to construct a stigmatised and failed motherhood (Allen and Taylor, 2012). This thesis expands discourses around socio-politics of maternal guilt and mother-blaming and enhances the literature on deviancy discourses in relation to Black motherhood.

### **Motherwork: Navigating the Parallels of Power, Survival and Victimhood**

Ascertaining the scope of maternal practice is fundamental to scholarly and theoretical explorations of motherhood (Arendell, 2000: 1194). However, the maternal practice of nurturing, training and protecting children is not determined by a unitary approach but shaped by the ‘interlocking structures’ of race, gender and class and reflective of cultural, historical and economic contexts (Arendell, 2000: 1194; Glenn, 1994; Hill-Collins, 1994). An important aspect of Black feminist epistemologies of intersectionality is centring Black female experiences within socio-historical contexts of oppression (Tucker, 2016: 230). This thesis showed how Black mothers engaged in strategies to resist the racial tropes and caricatures used to denigrate their maternity. It provides evidence of the psychological and physical labour Black women undertake to counter negative conceptualisations of their motherhood. For example, becoming ‘matriarchal providers’ to evidence their financial independence and access respect from society and their communities. However, their engagement in labour was

later problematised as ‘failing to be present’ for their children, which was considered to negatively impact their welfare and behaviour.

According to Hill-Collins, the maternal practice or ‘motherwork’ of Black women is framed by the pillars of survival, identity and power (1990;1994: 199). The reproductive labour of Black women is underpinned by the ideology that ‘individual survival, empowerment and identity require group survival, empowerment and identity’ (Hill-Collins 1994:199). Motherwork is pertinent to understanding how Black women resist racism while raising racialised children within oppressive systems. It speaks to their determination to keep their children despite systematic efforts to disempower racial communities by separating mothers and children (Hill-Collins, 1994: 205). The interconnected themes of survival, power and identity were observed in maternal identities and practices of participants in this study.

This thesis drew on the theoretical concept of motherwork to consider the additional labour on Black mothers to navigate CPVA in ways that advanced the survival and protection of their children and family unit. Seeking support by formally disclosing their abuse experiences was seen to be counterintuitive to the maternal responsibility to protect Black children, who are routinely racialised, criminalised and pathologised violent and aggressive (Davis and Mash, 2020; Lammy, 2017; Davis, 2022). Rather, this thesis found the ‘motherwork’ of Black women entailed using informal and collective support pathways to manage CPVA and avoid the involvement of services as a means of ensuring the survival of their child’s future prospects. Drawing on the power of family, faith and community, Black mothers were willing to recalibrate their livelihoods, rely on transnational family networks and mother across borders to ensure the survival of their children (Chapter 8).

This thesis found that Black mothers, who were referred into services following CPVA or those who willingly engaged in search of formal diagnosis, experienced an expanding of their motherwork to include the tripartite role of ‘mother-advocate-victim’. Though the criminalisation of Black childhood and the pathologisation of Black motherhood are considered as separate issues, this thesis found that the participation of mother and child in the shared struggle against systemic racism implicated their navigation of CPVA. Thus, despite experiencing their child’s abusive and violent behaviours, Black mother-victims utilised their power to ensure the survival and protection of children from the racial inequality, discrimination and pathologisation that can occur within health, social care, education and justice services (Wallace and Joseph-Salisbury, 2022; Davis, 2022). In drawing these connections, this thesis expands the concept of motherwork to include Black maternal navigation of victimhood caused by their children. In highlighting the emerging tripartite role of ‘mother-advocate-victim’, this thesis evidences how the themes of power, survival and identity remain salient to the maternal practice of Black women, even when experiencing CPVA.

## **Policy Implications**

Although an academic exploration of CPVA, this thesis has identified barriers to Black mother-victims disclosing their abuse experiences. Practitioners and policy makers may consider its findings useful in designing interventions to support women who are marginalised in society. One identified barrier to service engagement was a limited awareness of factors underlying abusive conduct. Due to perceptions around permissiveness in the West, mothers expressed concerns about whether their child's behaviour would be addressed within services or attention would turn to vilifying their mothering practices. Special attention should be paid to their choice of euphemistic language when describing CPVA, as there is some tendency for Black mothers to minimise the severity of their experiences.

Black women and their children participate in a shared struggle against racism and racialisation. As such, they are likely to deploy strategies of survival and resistance to limit state intervention into their homes (Rodriguez, 2016: 6). This thesis found in spite of CPVA, mothers were primarily concerned that their disclosure and use of services would confirm racialised views of Black youth as aggressive. In light of their fears around their children being perceived prejudicially as opposed to receiving help, professionals must sensitively handle to knowledge that Black mothers who engage with services (either willingly or through referral) are prepared to navigate their victimhood and motherhood alongside their maternal advocacy efforts.

Consideration should also be given to the cultural differences around how emotions are displayed and the messages they communicate. Racial tropes such as 'The Angry Black Woman' and 'The Strong Black Woman' were found to impede professional ability to see the vulnerability, suffering and acknowledge the victimhood of Black mothers. The overestimation

of their maternal strength creates a barrier to seeing Black mothers as deserving of help and protection. Without caution, these attitudes perpetuate the dismissal and minimisation of Black maternal suffering, which is already commonplace across criminal legal processes and health services.

Finally, in order to minimise barriers to formal support pathways, it is important for practitioners and policy makers to recognise the role of matriarchal mentors, othermothers, and community fathers in the lives of Black women. Following incidents of CPVA, these community leaders are often first responders and providers of informal support. In this study, mothers who confided in faith leaders did so believing their child's behaviour would be considered the problem, as opposed to their mothering practice. Therefore, in addition to adopting non-judgmental attitudes, practitioners must also acknowledge the pre-eminence of faith and spirituality to Black mothers. Successful engagement with so-called 'hard to reach' populations will require collaborative engagement with community and faith leaders.

## **Future research**

The findings of this thesis generate further areas for future research to explore. A complex relationship was found to exist between CPVA, youth offending and child criminal exploitation. While there is a growing acknowledgment of this connection, there is limited empirical consideration of how CPVA intersects with other forms of exploitation, nor is there sufficient documentation of how Black mothers experience justice services. Future research can build on the preliminary findings of this study to further explore these intersections. This thesis has found that hostile school experiences including bullying by peers and unfair treatment by teachers can trigger frustration within children who display abusive behaviours within the home. Moreover, through racialised school encounters, Black children can be

misrepresented as having severe behavioural issues or learning differences considered deficits (Wallace, 2018; Wallace and Joseph-Salisbury, 2021). Future research may go beyond the observations noted in this study to explore the adequacy of school responses to Black families experiencing CPVA.

Through focus group discussions with Black mothers, this study presented preliminary findings of the diverse perspectives and attitudes that exist within the Black community towards CPVA. Due to cultural idealisations around Black maternity and expectations governing parent-child relationships, CPVA presents as an enigma which can lead to the ostracization and shaming of parents experiencing this issue. Another possible direction for future research could be engaging with collective community attitudes and cultural perceptions of this phenomenon. Moreover, while this thesis has focus on Black maternal experiences, future research can explore where race and masculinity intersect in the perspective of Black fathers that experience CPVA.

### **Concluding remarks**

This study enriches scholarship on matricentric feminism, intersectional approaches to violence against women and girls and culturally sensitive research on Black families. This thesis has shown the prominence of racial tropes in shaping narratives around Black maternal identity (Chapter 5), framing perceptions of CPVA (Chapter 6), underpinning mother blaming discourses (Chapter 7) and forming barriers to formal and informal support (Chapter 8). Through the use of racialised stereotypes, the maternal identity of Black women endures symbolic attack and is excluded from White motherhood (Elliot and Reid, 2016; McCormack, 2005). The myth of the ‘bad Black mother’ (Charlton, 2014) exists through pathologised social constructions of Black women in media, news and socio-political debates as the cause behind

youth crime, juvenile delinquency or teenage pregnancy (Reynolds, 2005; Song and Edwards, 1997; Reynolds, 1997; Richie, 2003). By highlighting the multi-layered, complex and intersecting experience of Black motherhood and childhood, I have sought to develop a culturally inclusive and contextual understanding of CPVA and deviancy discourses around maternal guilt and mother-blame. By advancing academic conceptualisation of Black motherhood, this thesis illustrates that the dynamic and dialectic way Black women interpret, and practice motherhood is foundational to understanding their perception, experience and navigation of CPVA.

## APPENDIX: VIGNETTE

Fola is a married mother of twin 16-year-old boys, Samson and Samuel. Her husband, Bayo, has been travelling for work since the boys were young, and is not around much. Fola has largely shouldered the responsibility of parenting them herself. The boys began using her credit card to make online purchases for trainers and games. When Fola confronted them, they accused her of lying, called her a witch and threatened to leave the home.

Since turning 14, they have become verbally and physically abusive towards her. At the beginning they would tell Fola to 'shut up' and throw chairs whenever she asked them to do their chores or reprimanded them for returning home late. Recently, Fola refused for her sons to attend a rave at night. She decided to withhold the keys to the front door and that was the first time Samson slapped her.

- How can you describe what's happening to Fola?
- How common do you think these situations are?
- Who or what is responsible for what's happening?
- This experience is isolating and Fola wants to speak out but is unsure who she can speak to. What would you advise

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abrams, J. A., Hill, A. A. and Maxwell, M. (2019) Underneath the mask of the strong Black woman schema: Disentangling influences of strength and self-silencing on depressive symptoms among US Black women, *Sex roles*, 80, pp. 517-526.

Abrams, J.A., Maxwell, M., Pope, M. and Belgrave, F.Z. (2014) Carrying the world with the grace of a lady and the grit of a warrior: Deepening our understanding of the “Strong Black Woman” schema’, *Psychology of women quarterly*, 38(4), pp. 503-518.

Abrams, M. (2004) Faith and feminism: How African American women from a storefront church resist oppression in healthcare. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 27(3), pp.187-201.

Adams, N.B., McGuire, S.N., Meadan, H., Loya, M.R.M., Terol, A.K., Haidar, B. and Fanta, A.S. (2024) Impact of challenging behaviour on marginalized and minoritized caregivers of children with disabilities. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 44(2), pp.76-88.

Adeloye, A. (2013) *My Secondary school saga: Christ’s School, Ado-Ekiti, 1947-1952*, Ibadan: BookBuilders-Editions Africa.

Adepoju, A. (1997) *Family, population and development in Africa*. Zed Books.

Aderinto, A. (1999) The Girl-Child Situation in South Western Nigeria: An Assessment. *Journal of social sciences*, 3, pp.97-108.

Adinkrah, J. and Bhakta, D. (2013) Utilising the Black Churches in the UK for health promotion: a nutrition intervention for first generation Ghanaian migrants in London, *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 72.

Adoption legal Centre (2020) *Child on Parent Violence in adoptive families; “The new kind of abuse”*. Available at: <https://adoptionlegalcentre.co.uk/2020/05/child-on-parent-violence-in-adoptive-families-the-new-kind-of-abuse/> [Accessed 17 May 2021].

Adoption UK (2018) *Toby Perkins MP: “We must tackle the issue of child to parent violence”*. Available at: <https://www.adoptionuk.org/News/toby-perkins-we-must-tackle-the-issue-of-child-to-parent-violence> [Accessed 17 May 2021].

Afary, J. (1997) The War against feminism in the name of the almighty: making sense of gender and Muslim fundamentalism, *New Left Review*, pp. 89-110.

Afruca (2012) Manual on child protection for African parents in the UK: A step-by-step guide to help prevent abuse towards children. Available at: <https://www.scie-socialcareonline.org.uk/manual-on-child-protection-for-african-parents-in-the-uk-a-step-by-step-guide-to-help-prevent-abuse-towards-children/r/a11G0000017xzPIAQ> [Accessed 2 May 2021]

Afruca (2020) *Covid-19 and Domestic Abuse*. [pdf] Available at: <https://afruca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/DOMESTIC-VIOLENCE-IN-BLACK-FAMILIES-DURING-COVID.pdf> [Accessed 02 May 2021].

Afshar, H. and Maynard, M. (1994) *The Dynamics of ‘Race’ and Gender: Some feminist interventions*, Taylor & Francis.

Agnew, R. and Huguley, S. (1989) Adolescent violence toward parents. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, pp.699-711.

Ahmad, F., Driver, N., McNally, M.J. and Stewart, D.E. (2009) “Why doesn't she seek help for partner abuse?” An exploratory study with South Asian immigrant women’, *Social science and Medicine*, 69(4), pp.613-622.

Aina, O. I. (2012) *Two halves make a whole: Gender at the crossroads of the Nigerian development agenda*. Obafemi Awolowo University Press Limited.

Ainsworth, M. and Bowlby, J. (1991) An ethological approach to personality development. *American psychologist*, 46(4), pp.333-341.

Ajayi, J.O. and Owumi, B. (2013) Socialization and child rearing practices among Nigerian ethnic groups. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2(2), pp.249-249.

Akhilomen, D. (2006) Addressing child abuse in Southern Nigeria: The role of the church. *Studies in world Christianity*, 12(3), pp.235-248.

Akujobi, R. (2009) Yesterday you were divorced. Today I am a widow: An appraisal of widowhood practices and the effects on the psyche of widows in Africa. *Journal of Gender and Behaviour* 7(2), pp. 245-246.

Akujobi, R. (2011) Motherhood in African literature and culture. *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, 13(1), pp. 1-7.

Alameen-Shavers, A. (2019) “‘Black Women Are Genius!’: The Image of Celebrated Black Motherhood in Stand-Up Comedy’ in Gammage, M. M., and Alameen-Shavers, A. (eds) *Challenging Misrepresentations of Black Womanhood: Media, Literature and Theory*. Anthem Press. pp.53-74.

Alber, E. (2003) Denying biological parenthood: fosterage in Northern Benin. *Ethnos*, 68(4), pp.487-506.

Albrecht, A.K., Galambos, N.L. and Jansson, S.M. (2007) Adolescents’ internalizing and aggressive behaviours and perceptions of parents’ psychological control: A panel study examining direction of effects. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 36, pp.673-684.

Alemoru, K. (2019) *Amid Rising Gentrification, London’s African Churches Find a Way to Thrive*. *Time*. Available at: <https://time.com/longform/african-churches-christianity-london/> [Accessed 17 January 2020].

Algorani, E.B. and Gupta, V. (2023) *Coping mechanisms*. In *StatPearls [Internet]*. StatPearls Publishing.

Allen, K. and Taylor, Y. (2012) Placed Parenting, locating unrest: failed femininities, troubled mothers and rioting subjects. *Studies in the Maternal*, 4(2), pp.1-25.

- Allen, Q. and White-Smith, K. (2018) "That's why I say stay in school": Black mothers' parental involvement, cultural wealth, and exclusion in their son's schooling. *Urban Education*, 53, pp.409-435.
- Alliyu, N. (2016) Patriarchy, Women's Triple Roles and Development in Southwest Nigeria. *AFRREV IJAH: An International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 5(4), pp.94-110.
- Aluko, Y.A. (2015) Patriarchy and property rights among Yoruba women in Nigeria. *Feminist Economics*, 21(3), pp.56-81.
- Amankwaa, L.C. (2003) Postpartum depression among African-American women. *Issues In Mental Health Nursing*, 24(3), pp.297-316.
- Ambert, A.M. (1999) The effect of male delinquency on mothers and fathers: A heuristic study. *Sociological inquiry*, 69(4), pp.621-640.
- Ameh, N., Kene, T., Onuh, S., Okohue, J., Umeora, D. and Onozie, O. (2007) Burden of domestic violence amongst infertile women attending infertility clinics in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Medicine*, 16, pp.375-377.
- Amos, V. and Parmar, P. (1984) Challenging imperial feminism. *Feminist Review*, 17, pp. 3-19.
- Anand, A.S. and Cochrane, R. (2005) The mental health status of South Asian women in Britain: A review of the UK literature. *Psychology and developing societies*, 17(2), pp.195-214.
- Anderson, B. (1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso.
- Anim-Addo, J. (2000) *Windrush children and broken attachments*. Separation and Reunion Forum and Goldsmith's College Joint Conference. Serefo, pp.2-14.
- Anthias, F. (1990) Race and Class Revisited: Conceptualising Race and Racisms. *Sociological Review*, 38, pp.19-42.

- Anthias, F. and Yuval-Davis, N. (1992) *Racialized Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour and Class and the Anti-racist Struggle*. Routledge.
- Archibong, P. E., Enang, E. E. and Bassey, G. E. (2017) Witchcraft beliefs in diseases causation and health-seeking behaviour in pregnancy of women in Calabar South-Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and social Science*, 22(6), pp.24-28.
- Arcia, E. and Fernández, M.C. (2003) From awareness to acknowledgment: The development of concern among Latina mothers of children with disruptive behaviors. *Journal of Attention Disorders*, 6(4), pp.163-175.
- Arcia, E., Fernández, M.C. and Jáquez, M. (2005) Latina mothers' characterizations of their young children with disruptive behaviors. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 14, pp.111-125.
- Arendell, T. (1999) Hegemonic motherhood: Deviancy discourses and employed mothers' accounts of out-of-school time issues. *Center for Working Families Working Paper*, 9(1).
- Arendell, T. (2000) Conceiving and investigating motherhood: The decade's scholarship. *Journal of marriage and family*, 62, pp.1192-1207.
- Armstrong, G.S., Cain, C.M., Wylie, L.E., Muftić, L.R. and Bouffard, L.A. (2018) Risk factor profile of youth incarcerated for child to parent violence: A nationally representative sample. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 58, pp.1-9.
- Armstrong, M. (2023) *An Intersectional Analysis of the Narratives of Black Single Mother-son dyads*. PhD thesis, Goldsmiths, University of London.
- Arnez, J. and Condry, R. (2021) Criminological perspectives on school exclusion and youth offending. *Emotional and behavioural difficulties*. 26, pp.87-100.
- AROCA-MONTOLÍO, C., LORENZO-MOLEDO, M. and MIRÓ-PÉREZ, C. (2014) La violencia filio-parental: un análisis de sus claves. *Anales de Psicología/Annals of Psychology*, 30, pp.157-170.

Arpino, B., Bordone, V. and Balbo, N. (2018) Grandparenting, education and subjective well-being of older Europeans. *European Journal of Ageing*, 15, pp.251-263.

Arthur, J. (2008) *The African diaspora in the United States and Europe: The Ghanaian Experience*. Aldershot UK, Ashgate Publishing Group.

Arthur, J.A. (2016) *The African diaspora in the United States and Europe: the Ghanaian experience*. Routledge.

Artiles, A., Kozleski, E., Trent, S., Osher, D. and Ortiz A. (2010) Justifying and explaining disproportionality 1968–2008: A critique of underlying views of culture. *Exceptional Children*, 76(3), pp.279-299.

Ashley, W. (2014) The Angry Black Woman: The Impact of Pejorative Stereotypes on psychotherapy with black women. *Social work in public health*, 29, pp.27-34.

Asima, P.P.D (2018) 'Transnational fosterage: The experiences of the second generation sent back home to Ghana by Ghanaian Migrant Parents in London' in M. Awumbila, D. Badasu, and J. Teye. (eds) *Migration in a Globalizing World: Perspectives from Ghana*. Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, pp. 190-205.

Austin, N. (2019) *Motherhood so white: A memoir of race, gender, and parenting in America*. Naperville, Illinois. Sourcebooks.

Avishai, O., Jafar, A. and Rinaldo, R. (2015) A Gender Lens on Religion. *Gender & Society*, 29(1), pp.5-25.

Ayres, Lioness. (2008) 'Semi-Structured Interview', in Given. M.L. (eds) *The Sage Encyclopaedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Ayyub, R. (2000) Domestic violence in the South Asian Muslim immigrant population in the United States. *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, 9(3), pp.237-248.

- Azuah U. N. (2005) The emerging lesbian voice in Nigerian feminist literature. *Matatu*, 29-30(1), pp. 129-142.
- Azungah, T. (2018) Qualitative research: deductive and inductive approaches to data analysis. *Qualitative research journal*, 18, pp.383-400.
- Azzopardi, C. (2022) Gendered attributions of blame and failure to protect in child welfare responses to sexual abuse: A feminist critical discourse analysis. *Violence against women*, 28, pp.1631-1658.
- Babbie, R. E. (1995) *The Practice of Social Research*. Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Baffoe, M. (2010) The social reconstruction of 'home' among African immigrants in Canada. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 41(3), pp.157-173.
- Bainham, A., Sclater, S.D. and Richards, M. (1999) *What is a Parent: A Socio-Legal Analysis*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Bakare-Yusuf, B. (2003) Yorubas Don't Do Gender: A Critical Review of Oyeronke Oyewumi's The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses. *African Identities*, 1, pp.121-142.
- Baker, H. (2012) Problematizing the relationship between teenage boys and parent abuse: Constructions of masculinity and violence. *Social Policy and Society*, 11(2), pp.265-276.
- Baker, V. (2021) *Exploring adolescent violence and abuse towards parents: the experiences and perceptions of young people*. Ph. D Thesis. University of Central Lancashire. Available at: [https://holesinthewall.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/baker\\_victoria\\_phdthesis\\_final\\_august2021.pdf](https://holesinthewall.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/baker_victoria_phdthesis_final_august2021.pdf) [Accessed 20 May 2022].
- Baker, V. and Bonnick, H. (2021) Understanding CAPVA: A rapid literature review on child and adolescent to parent violence and abuse for the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office. Domestic Abuse Commissioner/Respect London. Available at:

<https://domesticabusecommissioner.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CAPVA-Rapid-Literature-Review-Exec-Summary-November-2021-Baker-and-Bonnick.pdf> [Accessed 20 May 2020].

Baloyi, M.E. and Manala, M.J. (2019) Reflections on challenges of preferring the male child in an African marriage—A practical theological observation. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, 40(1), pp.1-9.

Bandura, A. (1973) *Aggression: A social learning analysis*. Prentice-hall.

Banks, I. (2000) *Hair matters: Beauty, power, and black women's consciousness*. New York University Press.

Banks, M. A (2019) *Black Women cracking 'stained-glass ceilings with Jesus' 7 last words*. Available at: <https://religionnews.com/2019/04/18/black-women-cracking-stained-glass-ceilings-with-jesus-7-last-words/> [Accessed 04 May 2021].

Baraitser, L. (2009). Redundant Groupings and the Ethico-Political Subject: Mothers Who Make Things Public. *Feminist Review*, 93, pp.8-23.

Barnes Bey, S. V. (2020) *African American women's use of spirituality to cope with intimate partner violence*. Ph.D. Thesis Walden University. Available at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/8359/> [Accessed: 20 May 2021].

Barrow, C. (1996). *Family in the Caribbean: Themes and perspectives*. London. James Currey.

Barrow, C. (2008) *Early Childhood in the Caribbean. Working Papers in Early Childhood Development, No. 47*, ERIC.

Bass, L. E. (2015). Uneven Integration among African Immigrant Women in France. In Rodriguez, C. (eds) *Transatlantic Feminisms: women and gender studies in Africa and the diaspora*. Lanham: Lexington Books.

Basto-Pereira, M., Gouveia-Pereira, M., Pereira, C. R., Barrett, E. L., Lawler, S., Newton, N., Stapinski, L., Prior, K., Costa, M. S. A. and Ximenes, J. M. (2022). The global impact of adverse childhood experiences on criminal behaviour: A cross-continental study. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 124.

Batsleer, J., Burman, E., Chantler, K., McIntosh, S.H., Pantling, K., Smailes, S. and Warner, S. (2002) Domestic violence and minoritisation: Supporting women to independence. *Manchester: Women's Studies Research Centre, Manchester Metropolitan University.*

Bauer, E. and Thompson, P. (2006) *Jamaican Hands Across the Atlantic*, Ian Randle Publishers.

BBC (2008a) Violent Sons Turned in by Mother [online]. Available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/7427624.stm> [Accessed 06 May 2021].

BBC (2008b) Killer Shopped by Mother Jailed <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/lancashire/7716096.stm> [Accessed 06 May 2021].

BBC (2015a) *No Further Action Over FGM arrest at Heathrow Airport*. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-31491324> [Accessed 13 June 2019].

Beauboeuf-Lafontant, T. (2005). Keeping up appearances, getting fed up: The embodiment of strength among African American women. *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism*, 5(2), pp.104-123.

Beauboeuf-Lafontant, T. (2007). You have to show strength: An exploration of gender, race, and depression. *Gender and Society*, 21, pp.28-51.

Beck, U., Lash, S. and Wynne, B. (1992) *Risk society: Towards a new modernity*. Sage.

Beckmann, L. (2020). Family relationships as risks and buffers in the link between parent-to-child physical violence and adolescent-to-parent physical violence. *Journal of family violence*, 35, pp.131-141.

Beckmann, L., Bergmann, M.C., Fischer, F. and Mößle, T., 2021. Risk and protective factors of child-to-parent violence: A comparison between physical and verbal aggression. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 36(3-4).

Being built Together (2013) A Story of New Black Majority Churches in the London Borough of Southwark. Available at:  
<https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/globalassets/documents/humanities/being20built20togethersb203-7-13.pdf> [Accessed 29 April 2021].

Benin, M. and Keith, V.M. (1995) The social support of employed African American and Anglo mothers. *Journal of Family Issues*, 16(3), pp.275-297.

Benita, A. (2018) Bonds and burdens of motherhood in Perumal Murugan's one part woman and Ayobami Adebayo's stay with me: A Comparative Study. *Literary Endeavour*, 4(3), pp.234-236.

Bent-Goodley, T., St Vil, N. and Hubbert, P., 2012. A spirit unbroken: The Black Church's evolving response to domestic violence. *Social Work and Christianity*, 39(1), p.52.

Berleant-Schiller, R. and Maurer, W. (1993). Women's Place is Every Place: Merging Domains & Women's Roles. *Women & Change in the Caribbean: A Pan-Caribbean Perspective*, 65.

Bernard, C. and Gupta, A., (2008) Black African children and the child protection system. *British Journal of Social Work*, 38(3), pp.476-492.

Bevan, M. T. (2014) A method of Phenomenological Interviewing. *Qualitative health research*, 24, pp.136-144.

Bhopal, K. (2014). Race, rurality and representation: Black and minority ethnic mothers' experiences of their children's education in rural primary schools in England, UK. *Gender and Education*, 26, pp.490-504.

Bickford, J. and Nisker, J. (2015) Tensions between anonymity and thick description when “studying up” in genetics research. *Qualitative health research*, 25, pp.276-282.

Biehal, N. (2012). Parent abuse by young people on the edge of care: A child welfare perspective. *Social Policy and Society*, 11, pp.251-263.

Bishop, D.M., Leiber, M. and Johnson, J. (2010) Contexts of decision making in the juvenile justice system: An organizational approach to understanding minority overrepresentation. *Youth violence and juvenile justice*, 8(3), pp.213-233.

Black Ballad (2021). *It Takes A Village: Black Women Explain How They've Found Support Amongst The Pressures of Modern Parenthood* [Online]. Available at: <https://blackballad.co.uk/views-voices/it-takes-a-village-mums-mental-health?listIds=605376e5f24df005d63304c7> [Accessed 19 May 2023].

Black History Month (2021) UK's black majority churches unite in support of the covid-19 vaccine rollout. Available at <https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/article/section/news/uks-black-majority-churches-unite-in-support-of-covid-19-vaccine-rollout/> [Accessed 05 May 2021].

Blaikie, N. (2010) *Designing Social Research. The Logic of Anticipation*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

Bledsoe, C. H., and Sow, P. (2011) Back to Africa: Second chances for the children of West African immigrants. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 73, pp.747-762.

Bledsoe, C.H. and Robey, K.M. (1986) ‘Arabic literacy and secrecy among the Mende of Sierra Leone. *Man*, 21(2) pp.202-226.

Bledsoe, C.H. and Sow, P. (2013) ‘Back to Africa: Second chances for the children of West African immigrants’ In Oso, L. and Ribas-Mateos, N. (eds.), *Reprinted in International Handbook on Gender, Migration and Transnationalism: Global and Development Perspectives*. Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc, pp. 185-207.

Bledsoe, C.H. and Sow, P., 2013. 'Back to Africa: Second chances for the children of West African immigrants', in L. Oso, L.O Casas, and N.R Mateos. (eds) *The International Handbook on Gender, Migration and Transnationalism*. Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 185-207.

Blum, M. L (1999) *At the Breast: Ideologies of Breastfeeding and Motherhood in Contemporary United States*, Beacon Press.

Bobo, L. (2009) Crime, urban poverty, and social science. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 6(2), pp.273-278.

Bogle, D. (2001) *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, and Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Bloomsbury Academic.

Bonnick, H. (2012a) Connecting the dots. *Professional Social Work*, pp.26-27.

Bonnick, H. (2012b) The violence without a name. *Professional Social Work*, pp. 14-15.

Bonnick, H., and Griffiths, J (2019) 'Child to Parent Violence' Podcast. Available at: <https://www.communitycare.co.uk/2019/11/07/child-parent-violence-abuse-new-podcast/> [Accessed 05 May 2021].

Bonnington, O. and Rose, D. (2014) Exploring stigmatisation among people diagnosed with either bipolar disorder or borderline personality disorder: A critical realist analysis. *Social Science and Medicine*, 123, pp.7-17.

Bordone, V. and Devalk, H. A. (2016) Intergenerational support among migrant families in Europe. *European Journal of Ageing*, 13, pp.259-270.

Borelli, J.L., Nelson, S.K., River, L.M., Birken, S.A. and Moss-Racusin, C. (2017) Gender differences in work-family guilt in parents of young children. *Sex Roles*, 76, pp.356-368.

Bowers, L. (2002) Unrecognised victims: The parents of child and adolescent offenders. *Issues in Forensic Psychology*, pp.49-58.

- Bowlby, J. and Robertson, J. (1953) *A Two-year-old goes to Hospital*. SAGE Publications.
- Bowles, J. (1990). Natural hair styling: a symbol and function of African American women's self-creation. M.A Thesis. College of William and Mary. Available at: <https://scholarworks.wm.edu/etd/1539625574/> [Accessed: 21 May 2025].
- Bowling, B. and Phillips, C. (2002). *Racism, Crime and Justice*. Harlow. Pearson Education.
- Boxer, P., Gullan, R.L. and Mahoney, A. (2009) Adolescents' physical aggression toward parents in a clinic-referred sample. *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*, 38(1), pp.106-116.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Sage.
- Brah, A. (1992) Difference, diversity, differentiation. in Donald J., and Rattansi, A. (eds) *Culture and Difference*. London: Sage Publications, pp. 126-148.
- Brah, A., Hickman, M. J. and Mac an Ghail, M. (1999) *Thinking identities: ethnicity, racism and culture*. United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Brathwaite, C. (2020) *I am Not your Baby Mother: What it's like to be a Black British mother*, United Kingdom, Quercus Publishing.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3, pp.77-101.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2016) (Mis) conceptualising themes, thematic analysis, and other problems with Fugard and Potts' (2015) sample-size tool for thematic analysis. *International Journal of social research methodology*, 19, pp.739-743.
- Braun, V., Clarke, V. and Weate, P. (2016) Using thematic analysis in sport and exercise research. *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise*. Routledge.

Braxton, N.D., Lang, D.L., Sales, J.M., Wingood, G.M. and DiClemente, R.J. (2007) The role of spirituality in sustaining the psychological well-being of HIV-positive black women. *Women & health*, 46(2-3), pp.113-129.

Bredström, A. (2006). Intersectionality: A challenge for feminist HIV/AIDS research? *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 13, pp.229-243.

Breland-Noble, A.M., Wong, M.J., Childers, T., Hankerson, S. and Sotomayor, J. (2015) Spirituality and religious coping in African-American youth with depressive illness. *Mental health, religion & culture*, 18(5), pp.330-341.

Brennan, I., Burnley, N., Cutmore, M., Holt, A., Lillis, J., Llewellyn, J., MacLeod, S., Shah, M., Van Zanten, R. and Vicentini, L. (2022). Comprehensive needs assessment of Child/Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse in London (online). Available at: [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/comprehensive\\_needs\\_assessment\\_of\\_child-adolescent\\_to\\_parent\\_violence\\_and\\_abuse\\_in\\_london.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/comprehensive_needs_assessment_of_child-adolescent_to_parent_violence_and_abuse_in_london.pdf) [Accessed: 17 March 2025].

Brezina, T. (1999) 'Teenage violence toward parents as an adaptation to family strain: Evidence from a national survey of male adolescents', *Youth & Society*, 30(4), pp.416-444.

Bridges, J.S. and Orza, A.M. (1992). The effects of employment role and motive for employment on the perceptions of mothers. *Sex Roles*, 27(7), pp.331-343.

Bridges, J.S. and Orza, A.M. (1993) 'Effects of Maternal Employment-Childrearing Pattern on College students' Perceptions of A Mother and her Child', *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 17(1), pp.103-117.

Brierley, P., (2011) *UK church statistics, 2005-2015: being a fresh compilation of the number of members, churches and ministers in the many denominations in the UK, with summary tables, explanatory articles and other data*. Tonbridge: ADBC Publishers.

Brierley, P.W. (2006) *Pulling Out of the Nosedive: A Contemporary Picture of Churchgoing; what the 2005 English Church Census Reveals*. London, Christian Research.

Brodsky, A.E. (2000) The role of religion in the lives of resilient, urban, African American, single mothers. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 28(2), pp.199-219.

Bronsard, G., Lançon C., Loundou, A., Auquier, P., Rufo, M.& Simeoni, M.C. (2011) Prevalence rate of DSM mental disorders among adolescents living in residential group homes of the French Child welfare system. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(10), pp.1886–1890.

Brown, G. (2015) Ethical and Moral Courage is Distress among Professional Nurses: A Workplace Issue. *ABNF Journal*, 26.

Brown, G. (2020). Let's Talk: African Caribbean Women, Mothering Motherhood, and Well-Being. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 4, 88.

Brown, J. B., Ryan, B. L., Thorpe, C., Markle, E. K., Hutchinson, B. and Glazier, R. H. (2015) Measuring teamwork in primary care: Triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data. *Families, Systems, & Health*, 33, pp.193-202.

Browne, I. and Misra, J. (2003). The intersection of gender and race in the labor market. *Annual review of sociology*, 29, pp.487-513.

Bryan, B., Dadzie, S. and Scafe, S. (2018) *The heart of the race: Black women's lives in Britain*. Verso Books.

Bryant, L.S., Leath, S., Billingsley, J. and Moseley, S. (2024) “She Has a Village”: The Intergenerational Benefits of Social Support Networks for Black Mothers and Daughters. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 48(3), pp.390-410.

Bryceson, D. and Vuorela, U. (2002) *The transnational family: New European frontiers and global networks*. Routledge.

Bryceson, D.F. (2019) Transnational families negotiating migration and care life cycles across nation-state borders. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45(16), pp.3042-3064.

Bryman, A. (2016) *Social research methods*, Oxford University Press.

- Bucher, J. and Manasse, M. (2011). When screams are not released: A study of communication and consent in acquaintance rape situations. *Women and Criminal Justice*, 21(2), pp.123-140.
- Bunn, C. (2021) Black Churches have become indispensable in Covid-10 vaccination effort. Available at: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/black-churches-become-indispensable-covid-19-vaccination-effort-rcna364> [Accessed 06 May 2021].
- Burgess, G. R. (1984). *In the Field: An Introduction to Field Research (Contemporary Social Research)*, George Allen and Unwin Ltd.
- Burman, E., Smailes, S. L. and Chantler, K. (2004). ‘Culture’ as a barrier to service provision and delivery: domestic violence services for minoritized women. *Critical social policy*, 24, pp.332-357.
- Burnette, D. (1997). Grandparents raising grandchildren in the inner city. *Families in Society*, 78, pp.489-501.
- Burney, E. and Gelsthorpe, L. (2008) Do we need a ‘naughty step’? Rethinking the parenting order after ten years. *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 47(5), pp.470-485.
- Burrow, R. (1999) Toward womanist theology and ethics. *Journal of feminist studies in Religion*, 15(1), pp.77-95.
- Burton, L. M., Dilworth-Anderson, P. and Merriwether-de Vries, C. (1994). Context and surrogate parenting among contemporary grandparents. *Marriage and Family Review*, 20(3-4), pp.349-366.
- Burton, P.R., Murtagh, M.J., Boyd, A., Williams, J.B., Dove, E.S., Wallace, S.E., Tasse, A.M., Little, J., Chisholm, R.L., Gaye, A. and Hveem, K. (2015) Data Safe Havens in health research and healthcare. *Bioinformatics*, 31(20), pp.3241-3248.
- Busia, A. P. and James M. S (1993). *Theorizing Black feminisms: The visionary pragmatism of Black women*. Psychology Press.

Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*, New York. Routledge.

Butler, P. (2020) Boomerang Trend of young adults living with parents is rising. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/oct/18/boomerang-trend-of-young-adults-living-with-parents-is-rising-study> [Accessed 06 May 2021].

Byrd, A. and Tharps, L. (2014). *Hair story: Untangling the roots of Black hair in America*, Macmillan.

Bywaters, P., Kwhali, J., Brady, G., Sparks, T., Bos, E. (2017) Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Ethnic Inequalities in Child Protection and Out-of-Home Care Intervention Rates. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 47(7), pp.1884–1902.

Calvete, E., Orue, I. and Gámez-Guadix, M. (2013) Child-to-parent violence: Emotional and behavioral predictors. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 28(4), pp.755-772.

Calvete, E., Orue, I. and Gámez-Guadix, M. (2015a). Reciprocal longitudinal associations between substance use and child-to-parent violence in adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence*, 44, pp.124-133.

Calvete, E., Orue, I., Bertino, L., Gonzalez, Z., Montes, Y., Padilla, P. and Pereira, R. (2014) Child-to-parent violence in adolescents: The perspectives of the parents, children, and professionals in a sample of Spanish focus group participants. *Journal of family violence*, 29, pp.343-352.

Calvete, E., Orue, I., Fernández-González, L., Chang, R. and Little, T.D. (2020) Longitudinal trajectories of child-to-parent violence through adolescence. *Journal of family violence*, 35(2), pp.107-116.

Calvete, E., Orue, I., Gámez-Guadix, M., del Hoyo-Bilbao, J. and de Arroyabe, E.L. (2015b) Child-to-parent violence: An exploratory study of the roles of family violence and parental

discipline through the stories told by Spanish children and their parents. *Violence and victims*, 30(6), pp.935-947.

Cammett, A. (2016) Welfare Queens Redux: Criminalizing black mothers in the age of neoliberalism. *Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal*, 25, pp.363-394.

Cao, R.X., Xia, M.P., Chen, H.C., Chen, X.Y., Zhang, L.L., Cai, X.L., Gao, Y.P. and Yang, L. (2010) Noncompliant behavior in toddlerhood predicted social adaptation at 4 to 11 years of age. *Acta Psychologica Sinica*.

Caporael, L. R. (1999) Warrior values and social identity. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 22, pp.220-221.

Carbado, D. W. (2013). Colorblind intersectionality. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 38, pp.811-845.

Carlson, B.E., (2000) Children exposed to intimate partner violence: Research findings and implications for intervention. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 1(4), pp.321-342.

Carroll, R. and Prickett, S. (ed) (2008) *The Bible: Authorized King James Version*.

Caspani, M. (2013) *A male child is still important for some Nigerian women*. Available at: <https://news.trust.org/item/20131106185517-tdnqi> [Accessed 26 March 2025].

Castro, N. (2019) *The rise of the 'disobedient mother': towards a feminist vision of motherhood*. Equal Times. Available at: <https://www.equaltimes.org/the-rise-of-the-disobedient-mother?lang=en> [Accessed 21 May 2021].

Cazenave, N.A. and Straus, M.A. (1979) Race, class, network embeddedness and family violence: A search for potent support systems. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 10(3), pp.281-300.

Chand, A. (2000) The over-representation of black children in the child protection system: possible causes, consequences and solutions. *Child and family social work*, 5(1), pp.67-78.

Chaney, C. and Brown, A. (2016) Representations and Discourses of Black Motherhood in Hip Hop and R&B over time. *Journal of Hip Hop Studies*, 3(1), pp.12-46.

Chaney, C., (2011) The character of womanhood: How African American women's perceptions of womanhood influence marriage and motherhood. *Ethnicities*, 11(4), pp.512-535.

Chang, L., Schwartz, D., Dodge, K.A. and McBride-Chang, C. (2003) Harsh parenting in relation to child emotion regulation and aggression. *Journal of family psychology*, 17(4), p.598.

Charles, A. V. (1986). Physically abused parents. *Journal of family violence*, 1, pp.343-355.

Charlton, T. F. (2014). The Impossibility of The Good Black Mother. *TIME [online]*  
Available at: <https://time.com/1311/the-impossibility-of-the-good-black-mother/#:~:text=I%20could%20tell%20you%20that,self%2Ddenying%20nurture%20and%20devotion>. [Accessed 8 February 2022].

Child Mind Institute (n.d) ADHD and Behaviour Problems. Available at: <https://childmind.org/article/adhd-behavior-problems/> [Accessed 30 April 2021].

Children and Young Persons Act 1933

Children's Act 2004

Children's Commissioner (2024). Waiting times for assessment and support for autism, ADHD and other neurodevelopmental conditions. Available at: [https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2024/10/CCo-report-on-ND-waiting-times\\_final.pdf](https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2024/10/CCo-report-on-ND-waiting-times_final.pdf) [Accessed 21 December 2024]

Chinn, C.B. (2014) From the pew to the pulpit-African American women's struggle to gain and maintain leadership positions within the church. Master's thesis. Wright State University. Available at: <https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/humanities/13/> [Accessed 21 May 2024].

Chisholm, J. (1996) 'Mental health issues in African-American women', in J. Sechzer, S. Pfafflin, F. Denmark, A. Griffin, and S. Blumenthal (eds.) *Women and Mental Health: Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, pp. 161–179.

Cho, S., Crenshaw, K.W. and McCall, L. (2013) Toward a field of intersectionality studies: Theory, applications, and praxis. *Signs: Journal of women in culture and society*, 38(4), pp.785-810.

Chodorow, N. (1977). Considerations on a biosocial perspective on parenting. *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, 22, pp.179-197.

Chodorow, N. (1979). *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*. University of California Press.

Chodorow, N. and Contratto, S. (1982) 'The Fantasy of the Perfect Mother', in Thorne, B., and Yalom, M. (eds) *Rethinking the Family*. New York: Longman, pp.54-75.

Chong, K.H. (2008) *Deliverance and submission: Evangelical women and the negotiation of patriarchy in South Korea*. Harvard University Asia Center Publications Program.

Chow, E.N.L. (1992) The feminist movement: Where are all the Asian American women? *US-Japan Women's Journal. English Supplement*, (2), pp.96-111.

Christie, N. (1986) 'The ideal victim' in Fattah, E.A (eds) *From crime policy to victim policy*. Palgrave Macmillan, London, pp. 17-30.

Clarke, A., Williams, J. and Wydall, S. (2016) 'Access to Justice for Victims/Survivors of Elder Abuse: A Qualitative Study', *Social Policy and Society*, 15(2), pp. 207–220.

Clarke, K. R. (2016) Parents' experiences of being abused by their adolescent children: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Study of Adolescent-to-Parent Violence and Abuse. Ph.D. Thesis. University of Hertfordshire. Available at: <https://uhra.herts.ac.uk/handle/2299/17092> [Accessed 21 May 2021].

Clarke, K., Holt, A., Norris, C. and Nel, P. W. (2017) Adolescent-to-parent violence and abuse: Parents' management of tension and ambiguity—An interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Child & Family Social Work*, 22, pp.1423-1430.

Clarke, N.J., Willis, M.E., Barnes, J.S., Caddick, N., Cromby, J., McDermott, H. and Wiltshire, G. (2015) Analytical pluralism in qualitative research: A meta-study. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 12(2), pp.182-201.

Clarke, V. and Braun, V. (2017) Thematic analysis. *The journal of positive psychology*, 12, pp.297-298.

Coard, B. (1971) *How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System: The Scandal of the Black Child in Schools in Britain*. New Beacon for the Caribbean Education and Community Workers' Association.

Coe, C. (2013) *The scattered family: Parenting, African migrants, and global inequality*. University of Chicago Press.

Coleman-King, C., Brown, T.T.C., Haynes-Thoby, L. and Dowie-Chin, T. (2023) "Reclaiming our time": Black mothers cultivating the homeplace during times of crisis. *Journal of Social Issues*, 79(3), pp.1022-1034.

Coley, R. L. (2001). Invisible Men: Emerging Research on Low-Income, Unmarried and Minority Fathers. *American Psychologist*, 56, pp.743-753.

Collins, C. (2021) Is maternal guilt a cross-national experience? *Qualitative Sociology*, 44, pp.1-29.

Collins, P.H. and Bilge, S. (2020) *Intersectionality*. 2nd edition. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Colman, M. A (2008) *Oxford Dictionary of Psychology*. Oxford University Press.

Condry, R. (2007) *Families Shamed: The Consequences of Crime for Relatives of Serious Offenders*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing.

Condry, R. (2013). *Families shamed: The Consequences of Crime for Relatives of Serious Offenders*, Routledge.

Condry, R. and Miles, C. (2012) Adolescent to parent violence and youth justice in England and Wales. *Social policy and society*, 11(2), p.241-250.

Condry, R. and Miles, C. (2014) Adolescent to parent violence: Framing and mapping a hidden problem. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 14(3), pp.257-275.

Condry, R., Miles, C., Brunton-Douglas, T. and Oladapo, A. (2020) Experiences of child and adolescent to parent violence in the covid-19 pandemic. *University of Oxford: Oxford, UK*.

Available at:

[https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/migrated/final\\_report\\_capv\\_in\\_covid-19\\_aug20.pdf](https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/migrated/final_report_capv_in_covid-19_aug20.pdf) [Accessed 21 May 2021].

Connor, M. and White, J. (2011). *Black Fathers: An Invisible Presence in America*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York, Routledge.

Constantinou, G., Varela, S. and Buckby, B. (2021) 'Reviewing the experiences of maternal guilt—the "Motherhood Myth" influence', *Health Care for Women International*, 42(4-6), pp.852-876.

Contreras, L. and del Carmen Cano, M. (2016) Child-to-parent violence: The role of exposure to violence and its relationship to social-cognitive processing. *The European Journal of Psychology Applied to Legal Context*, 8(2), pp.43-50.

Cook, E. (2018). *Bereaved Family Activism in the Aftermath of Lethal Violence*. Ph. D. thesis, University of Manchester. Available at:

<https://research.manchester.ac.uk/en/studentTheses/bereaved-family-activism-in-the-aftermath-of-lethal-violence> [Accessed 21 May 2021].

Cook, E. (2021). Motherhood, moral authority and the charismatic matriarch in the aftermath of lethal violence. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 21, pp.353-368.

Cook, E. (2022) *Family activism in the aftermath of fatal violence*. New York: Routledge.

Cooke A. N. and Halberstadt, A. G. (2021) Adultification, anger bias, and adults' different perceptions of Black and White children. *Cognition and Emotion*, 35, pp.1416-1422.

Coquery-Vidrovitch, C., and Raps, B. G. (2018). *African women: A modern history*.  
Routledge.

Cornell, C. P. and Gelles, R. J. (1982a) Adolescent to parent violence. Paper presented at the annual meetings of the American Society of Criminology, Washington, DC.

Cornell, C.P. and Gelles, R.J. (1982b) Adolescent to parent violence. *Urban and social change review*, 15(1), pp.8-14.

Cottrell, B. (2001) *Parent abuse: The abuse of parents by their teenage children*. Ottawa, Canada: Family Violence Prevention Unit, Health Canada.

Cottrell, B. (2005) *When teens abuse their parents*. Fernwood Publishing Company.

Cottrell, B. and Monk, P. (2004) Adolescent-to-parent abuse: A qualitative overview of common themes. *Journal of family Issues*, 25(8), pp.1072-1095.

Cowles, K. V (1988) Issues in qualitative research on sensitive topics. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 10, pp.163-179.

Crane, C. and Christopher, K. (2018) "Parenting Like a White Person": Race and Maternal Support Among Marginalized Mothers. In Taylor, T., and Block, K. (eds) *Marginalized Mothers, Mothering from the Margins*. Emerald Publishing Limited, pp.177-193.

Crawford, C. (2018) Decolonizing Reproductive Labor: Caribbean Women, Migration and Domestic Work in the Global Economy. *The Global South*, 12, pp.33-55.

Crenshaw, K. (1989) Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, p.139.

- Crenshaw, K. (1989) Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1(8), pp. 139-167.
- Crenshaw, K. (1990) Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43, pp.1241-1299.
- Crenshaw, K. (2013) ‘Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics’ in K. Maschke (eds) *Feminist legal theories*. New York: Routledge, pp. 23-51.
- Creppy-Hetherington, G.A. (2011) *Impact of linguistic and cultural differences on immigrant parents of new English language learner students*. Walden University.
- Cummings, M.S. and Latta, J.M. (2010) When they honor the voice: Centering African American women’s call stories. *Journal of Black Studies*, 40(4), pp.666-682.
- Cutrufelli, M. R. (1983) *Women of Africa: Roots of oppression*. Zed Press.
- Daly, K. and Nancarrow, H. (2010) Restorative justice and youth violence toward parents. *Restorative Justice and Violence Against Women*, pp.150-174.
- Daly, K. and Nancarrow, H. (2010) Restorative justice and youth violence toward parents. In Ptacek, J. eds. *Restorative Justice and Violence against Women*. Interpersonal Violence Series, New York: Oxford Academic, pp.150-174.
- Darko, N. (2021) ‘Case study: “We are not hard to reach, you are just not reaching us!” Understanding intersectionality and the prevention and management of Type 2 diabetes among British African-Caribbean women’, in N. Darko (eds) *Engaging Black and Minority Ethnic Groups in Health Research*. Policy Press, pp. 53-92.
- Davies, B. C. (1986). ‘Motherhood in the Works of Male and Female Igbo Writers: Achebe, Emecheta, Nwapa, and Nzekwu’ In Davies, B. C., and Graves A, A. (eds) *Ngambike*:

*Studies of Women in African Literature*. Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press Inc, pp.241-256.

Davies, P.T. and Sturge-Apple, M.L. (2007) The impact of domestic violence on children's development. *Family interventions in domestic violence: A handbook of gender inclusive theory and treatment*, pp.165-190.

Davis, A. (1971) The Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves. *The Black Scholar*, pp.1-14.

Davis, J. (2022) *Adultification bias within child protection and safeguarding*. United Kingdom: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. [online] Available from: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2022/06/Academic-Insights-Adultification-bias-within-child-protection-and-safeguarding.pdf> [Accessed 20 May 2022].

Davis, J., and Marsh. N. (2020) Boys to men: the cost of 'adultification' in safeguarding responses to Black boys. *Critical and Radical Social Work*, 8, pp.255-259.

Davis, S. and McClain, W.L. (2023) Interpretations of Black, Indigenous, and Women of Color (BIWOC) Leaders: Examining Identity, Response Styles, and Coping Mechanisms. *The Journal of Business Diversity*, 23(1), pp.31-39.

Dawson, H. (2021) *An exploration of the personality characteristics and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) of non-offending mothers*. University of Nottingham. Available at: <https://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/65451/> [Accessed 21 May 2024].

Dawson, S. (2019) *African churches boom in London's backstreets*. Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/african-churches-boom-london-backstreets-southend-baptism-christian-photos-a8779071.html> [Accessed 17 January 2020].

De Andrade, L. L. (2000) Negotiating from the inside: Constructing racial and ethnic identity in qualitative research. *Journal of contemporary ethnography*, 29, pp.268-290.

de Heer, B. and Jones, L. (2017) Investigating the self-protective potential of immobility in victims of rape. *Violence and victims*, 32(2), pp.210-229.

De Lange, N. and Olivier, M.A.J. (2004) Mothers' experiences of aggression in their Tourette's syndrome children. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 26(1), pp.65-77.

de le Rey, C., Mama A., and Magubane, Z. (1997). Beyond the Masks. *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity*, 32, pp.17-23.

Degni, F., Pöntinen, S. and Mölsä, M. (2006) Somali Parents' Experiences of Bringing Up Children in Finland: Exploring social-cultural Change within Migrant Households. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung*, 7(3).

DeGruy, J. (2005) *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing*, Joy DeGruy Publications Inc.

DeHaven, M.J., Hunter, I.B., Wilder, L., Walton, J.W. and Berry, J. (2004) Health programs in faith-based organizations: are they effective? *American journal of public health*, 94(6), pp.1030-1036.

Dei, J. G. (2018). "Black like me": Reframing blackness for decolonial politics. *Educational Studies*, 54, pp.117-142.

DeMeis, D.K. and Perkins, H.W. (1996) "Supermoms" of the nineties: Homemaker and employed mothers' performance and perceptions of the motherhood role. *Journal of Family Issues*, 17(6), pp.776-792.

Demie, F. (2019) Raising Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Good Practice for Developing Leadership Capacity and Workforce Diversity in Schools. *School Leadership and Management*, 39(1) pp.427-446

Demo, D.H. and Acock, A.C. (1996) Singlehood, marriage, and remarriage: The effects of family structure and family relationships on mothers' well-being. *Journal of family issues*, 17(3), pp.388-407.

Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (1995) Transforming qualitative research methods: Is it a revolution? *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 24, pp.349-358.

Department for Communities and Local Government, Faith Communities and Pandemic Flu: Guidance for faith communities and local influenza pandemic committees (2009) Department for Communities and Local Government: London (page 5). Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7618/1219379.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7618/1219379.pdf) [Accessed 06 May 2021].

Department of Health and Social Care (2011) A Diagnostic Framework for Addressing Inequalities in Outcome at Population Level from Evidence-based Alcohol Harm Reduction Interventions. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/215394/dh\\_130530.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/215394/dh_130530.pdf) [Accessed 06 May 2021].

Derrida, J. (1990) Some statements and truisms about neologisms, newisms, postisms, parasitisms, and other small seismisms. *The States of 'Theory': History, Art, and Critical Discourse*, pp.63-94.

Devi, T. (2017) The treatment of motherhood in African culture and literature. *DJ Journal of English Language and Literature*, 2(2), p.37-42.

Dill, T B. (1988) Our mothers' grief: Racial ethnic women and the maintenance of families. *Journal of Family History*, 13, pp.415-431.

Dillaway, H.E. (2006) 'Good mothers never wane: Mothering at menopause', *Journal of Women & Aging*, 18(2), pp.41-53.

Dinham, A., Farnell, R., Finneron, D. and Furbey, R. (2006) Faith as social capital: Connecting or dividing?. Available at:

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/9781861348388.pdf> [Accessed 06 May 2021].

Dinnerstein, D. (1976) *The mermaid and the minotaur: Sexual arrangements and the human malaise*. New York, Harper and Row.

Dinnerstein, D. (1999) *The mermaid and the minotaur: Sexual arrangements and human malaise*, Other Press, LLC.

Dodgson, E. (1984) From oral history to drama. *Oral History*, 12, pp. 47-53.

Dodson, J.E. and Gilkes, C.T. (1986) Something within: Social change and collective endurance in the sacred world of Black Christian women. *Women and religion in America*, 3, pp.1900-1968.

Dodson, L. and Schmalzbauer, L. (2005) Poor mothers and habits of hiding: Participatory methods in poverty research. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67(4), pp.949-959.

Donath, O. (2015) Regretting motherhood: A sociopolitical analysis. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 40, pp.343-367.

Donovan, R. A. and West. L. M. (2015). Stress and mental health: Moderating role of the strong Black woman stereotype. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 41, pp.384-396.

Donovan, R.A., 2011. Tough or Tender: (Dis) Similarities in White College Students' Perceptions of Black and White Women. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 35(3), pp.458-468.

Dorkenoo, E. (1994) *Cutting the Rose: Female Genital Mutilation: The Practice and its Prevention*. Minority Rights Group Publication.

Dosekun, S. (2007) Defending African feminism. *Postamble*, 3, pp.41-47.

Douglas, S. and Michaels, M. (2005) *The Mommy Myth: The idealization of motherhood and how it has undermined all women*. Simon and Schuster.

Dove, N. (2002) Defining a mother-centered matrix to analyze the status of women. *Journal of Black Studies*, 33, pp.3-24.

Dow, D.M. (2019) *Mothering while black: Boundaries and burdens of middle-class parenthood*. University of California Press.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1908) *The Negro Family*. New York New America Library.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1909) *The Negro American Family: Report of a Social Study made principally by the College Classes of 1909 and 1910 of Atlanta University, under the patronage of the Trustees of the John F. Slater Fund; together with the Proceedings of the 13th Annual Conference for the Study of the Negro Problems, held at Atlanta University on Tuesday, May the 26th, 1908*, Atlanta University Press.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1920). The Souls of White Folk. In Du Bois, W. E. B. (eds) *Darkwater: Voices from within the Veil*. New York: Washington Square Press.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1940/2007). *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay Toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept. Volume 8*, Oxford University Press.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (2007) *The Philadelphia negro*, Cosimo, Inc.

Duberry, C. (2021). The Duberry Report: Decades of exclusions by the Elite class has created a fractured system that benefits them. United Kingdom.

Duncan, S. and Edwards, R. (1999) *Lone Mothers, Paid Work and Gendered Moral Rationalitie*, Springer.

Duncan, S., Edwards, R., Reynolds, T. and Alldred, P. (2004). Mothers and childcare: Policies, values and theories. *Children & Society*, 18, pp.254-265.

Dupuis, A. and Thorns, D. C. (1998) Home, home ownership and the search for ontological security. *The Sociological Review*, 46, pp.24-47.

Dutton, M.A., Orloff, L.E. and Hass, G.A. (2000) Characteristics of help-seeking behaviours, resources and service needs of battered immigrant Latinas: legal and policy implications. *Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy*, 2(2), pp.245-305.

Eaton, K., Ohan, J. L., Stritzke W. G. and Corrigan, P. W. (2016) Failing to meet the good parent ideal: Self-stigma in parents of children with mental health disorders. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 25, pp.3109-3123.

Eaton, K., Ohan, J. L., Stritzke W. G. and Corrigan, P. W. (2019) The parents' self-stigma scale: development, factor analysis, reliability, and validity. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development*, 50, pp.83-94.

Eckstein, N. J. (2004). Emergent issues in families experiencing adolescent-to-parent abuse. *Western Journal of Communication (includes Communication Reports)*, 68, pp.365-388.

Edenborough, M., Jackson, D., Mannix, J. and Wilkes, L. M. (2008). Living in the red zone: the experience of child-to-mother violence. *Child & Family Social Work*, 13, pp.464-473.

Edge, D. (2013) Why are you cast down, o my soul? Exploring intersections of ethnicity, gender, depression, spirituality and implications for Black British Caribbean women's mental health. *Critical Public Health*, 23(1), pp.39-48.

Edin, K. and Kefalas, M. (2005) Unmarried with children. *Contexts*, 4(2), pp.16-22.

Edleson, J.L. (1999) The Overlap Between Child Maltreatment and Woman Battering. *Violence against women*, 5(2), pp.134–154.

Ekong, A., Adesina, N., Regmi, P., Tsofliou, F., Wood, J. and Taylor, J. (2022) 'Barriers and Facilitators to the recruitment of Black African women for research in the UK: Hard to engage and not hard to reach', *Midwifery Digest*, 32(2), pp.153-159.

Elliot, J. (2005) Using narrative in social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches. Sage Publications Ltd.

Elliot, S. and Aseltine, E. (2013). Raising teenagers in hostile environments: How race, class, and gender matter for mothers' protective carework. *Journal of Family Issues*, 34, pp.719-744.

Elliott, S. (2012). Not my kid. *Not My Kid*. New York University Press.

Elliott, S. and Aseltine, E. (2013) Raising teenagers in hostile environments: How race, class, and gender matter for mothers' protective carework. *Journal of Family Issues*, 34(6), pp.719-744.

Elliott, S. and Reid, M. (2016). The Superstrong Black mother. *Contexts*, 15, pp.48-53.

Elliott, S. and Reid, M. (2019) Low-income Black mothers parenting adolescents in the mass incarceration era: The long reach of criminalization. *American sociological review*, 84, pp.197-219.

Elliott, S., Powell, R. and Brenton, J. (2015) Being a good mom: Low-income, black single mothers negotiate intensive mothering. *Journal of family issues*, 36, pp.351-370.

Ellsberg, M., Jansen, H.A., Heise, L., Watts, C.H. and Garcia-Moreno, C. (2008) Intimate partner violence and women's physical and mental health in the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence: an observational study. *The lancet*, 371(9619), pp.1165-1172.

Emecheta, B. (1979). *The Joys of Motherhood*, London, Allison and Busby.

Emmel, N. (2017) Empowerment in the relational longitudinal space of vulnerability. *Social Policy and Society*, 16, pp.457-467.

Emmel, N., Hughes, K., Greenhalgh, J. and Sales, A. (2007) Accessing socially excluded people—Trust and the gatekeeper in the researcher-participant relationship. *Sociological research online*, 12, pp.43-55

Emmerson, O. (2020) *Childhood and the emotion of corporal punishment in Britain: 1938-1986*. University of Sussex. Ph. D Thesis. Available at:

[https://sussex.figshare.com/articles/thesis/Childhood\\_and\\_the\\_emotion\\_of\\_corporal\\_punishment\\_in\\_Britain\\_1938-1986/23477093?file=41186309](https://sussex.figshare.com/articles/thesis/Childhood_and_the_emotion_of_corporal_punishment_in_Britain_1938-1986/23477093?file=41186309) [Accessed 2 April 2025].

Enabulele, A.B. (1991) Modernization, Child Rearing and the Working Mother in Nigeria. *International Journal of Sociology of the Family*, pp.213-227.

Englander, M. (2012) The interview: Data collection in descriptive phenomenological human scientific research. *Journal of phenomenological psychology*, 43, pp.13-35.

Ennis, L.R. (2014) *Intensive mothering: The cultural contradictions of modern motherhood*. Demeter Press.

Enweremadu, D.U. (2019) 'Understanding Police Corruption and Its Effect on Internal Security in Nigeria' In Oshita, O, O., Alumona, M, I., and Onuoha, C. F (eds) *Internal Security Management in Nigeria* Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore, pp. 327-350.

Epstein, C.F. (2007) Great divides: The cultural, cognitive, and social bases of the global subordination of women. *American Sociological Review*, 72(1), pp.1-22.

Epstein, R. (1999) Our kids in the hall: lesbian families negotiate the public school system. *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement*.

Epstein, R., Blake, J. and González, T. (2017) *Girlhood Interrupted: The Erasure of Black Girls' Childhood*. Centre on Poverty and Inequality, Georgetown Law. Available at: <file:///Users/ano./Downloads/ssrn-3000695.pdf> [Accessed 25th April 2025].

Essien, I. and Wood, L. (2021) I love my hair: The weaponizing of Black girls' hair by educators in early childhood education. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 49, pp.401-412.

Essof, S. (2001) African feminisms: histories, applications and prospects. *Agenda*, 16, pp.124-127.

Etikan, I., Musa, S.A. and Alkassim, R.S. (2016) Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American journal of theoretical and applied statistics*, 5(1), pp.1-4.

Evans, S.M. (1980) *Personal politics: The roots of women's liberation in the civil rights movement and the new left* (Vol. 228). Vintage.

Evwierhoma, M. and Itohanosa. E. (2007) Scripting women into the mainstream?: The women of tomorrow in “The angel” and “The sisters”. In Adeoti, G. (eds) *Muse and mimesis critical: Perspectives on Ahmed Yerima’s Drama*, pp.313-320.

Fakim, N. and Macaulay, C. (2020) ‘Don’t call me BAME’: Why some people are rejecting the term. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53194376> [Accessed 06 May 2021].

Family Based Solutions (n.d) *Child to Parent Abuse*. Available at: <https://familybasedsolutions.org.uk/paars/> [Accessed 10 March 2021].

Farmer, C.A. and Aman, M.G. (2011) Aggressive behavior in a sample of children with autism spectrum disorders. *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*, 5(1), pp.317-323.

Faugier, J. and Sergeant, M. (1997). Sampling hard to reach populations. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 26, pp.790-797.

Fawzi, M.H., Fawzi, M.M. and Fouad, A.A. (2013) Parent abuse by adolescents with first-episode psychosis in Egypt. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 53(6), pp.730-735.

Feldstein, R. (2000) *Motherhood in Black and White: Race and sex in American liberalism, 1930-1965*. Cornell University Press.

Femi-Ajao, I. O (2016). *Factors influencing disclosure and help-seeking practices of Nigerian women resident in England with lived experience of domestic violence and abuse*. Ph. D. thesis. The University of Manchester. Available at: <https://research.manchester.ac.uk/en/studentTheses/factors-influencing-disclosure-and-help-seeking-practices-of-nige> [Accessed 21 May 2023].

Femi-Ajao, O. (2018) Intimate partner violence and abuse against Nigerian women resident in England, UK: a cross-sectional qualitative study. *BMC women's health*, 18(1), pp.1-13.

- Femi, T. (2011) The challenges of girl-child education and alternative jobs in Nigeria. *Corvinus Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, Vol 2(1), pp.101-121.
- Ferguson, H. (1997) Protecting children in new times: Child protection and the risk society. *Child & Family Social Work*, 2(4), pp.221-234.
- Finch, E. (2001) Issues of confidentiality in research into criminal activity: the legal and ethical dilemma. *Mountbatten Journal of Legal Studies*, 5, pp.34-50.
- Finch, H., and Lewis, J. (2003) Carrying out qualitative analysis. *In: Ritchie, J. and Lewis, J. (ed.) Qualitative research practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers.*
- Fineman, M. A. (1995) *The Neutered Mother, The Sexual Family and Other Twentieth Century Tragedies*. New York: Routledge.
- Finlay L., and Gough., B. (2003) *Reflexivity: A Practical Guide for Researchers in Health and Social Sciences*, John Wiley and Sons.
- Firestone, S. (1970) *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case For Feminist Revolution*, New York, Quill.
- Firmin, C. (2018) Contextual risk, individualised responses: An assessment of safeguarding responses to nine cases of peer-on-peer abuse. *Child Abuse Review*, 27, pp.42-57.
- Firmin, C. (2020) *Contextual safeguarding and child protection: Rewriting the rules.* Routledge.
- Flick, U. (2009). *An introduction to qualitative research*, Sage Publications Ltd.
- Folkman, S., Lazarus, R.S., Gruen, R.J. and DeLongis, A. (1986) Appraisal, coping, health status, and psychological symptoms. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 50(3), p.571.

Foster, C.H. (2008) 'The Welfare Queen: Race, Gender, Class, and Public Opinion. *Race, Gender & Class*, pp.162-179.

Freeman, T. (2006) 'Best practice' in focus group research: making sense of different views. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 56, pp.491-497.

Furstenberg, F.F., Cook, T.D., Eccles, J. and Elder, G.H. (2000) *Managing to make it: Urban families and adolescent success*. University of Chicago Press.

Gallagher, E. (2004a) Parents victimised by their children. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 25(1), pp.1-12.

Gallagher, E. (2004b) Youth who victimise their parents. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 25(2), pp.94-105.

Gallagher, S. and Francesoni (2012) Teaching phenomenology to qualitative researchers, cognitive scientists, and phenomenologists. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 12, pp.1-10.

Gallego, R., Novo, M., Fariña, F. and Arce, R. (2019) Child-to-parent violence and parent-to-child violence: A meta-analytic review. *European Journal of Psychology Applied to Legal Context*, 11(2), pp.51-59.

Galletta, A. (2013) 'The semi-structured interview as a repertoire of possibilities' In Galletta, A. (eds) *Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond*. New York University Press, pp. 45-72.

Galletta, A. and Cross, W.E. (2013) *Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond: From research design to analysis and publication* (Vol. 18). NYU press.

Galliano, G., Noble, L., Travis, L., and Puechl, C. (1993) Victim reactions during rape/sexual assault: A preliminary study of the immobility response and its correlates. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 8(1), pp.109-114.

- Gálvez, A. (2019) Transnational mother blame: Protecting and caring in a globalized context. *Medical Anthropology*, 38(7), pp.574-587.
- Gangoli, G., Gill, A., Mulvihill, N. and Hester, M. (2018) Perception and barriers: reporting female genital mutilation. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research* pp. 251-260.
- Gangoli, G., Gill, A., Mulvihill, N., and Hester, M. (2018) Perceptions and Barriers: Reporting Female Genital Mutilation. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, 10, pp.251-260.
- Gangoli, G., McCarry, M.J. and Razak, A. (2006) *Forced marriage and domestic violence among South Asian communities in North East England*. Bristol, UK: School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol and Northern Rock Foundation. Available at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/sps/migrated/documents/rj4334finalreport.pdf> [06 May 2021].
- Ganong, L.H. and Coleman, M. (2004) Stepfamily relationships. *Development, dynamics, and interventions*, 270.
- Garcia-Moreno, C., Jansen, H.A., Ellsberg, M., Heise, L. and Watts, C.H. (2006) Prevalence of intimate partner violence: findings from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence. *The lancet*, 368(9543), pp.1260-1269.
- Gatwiri, G. J. and McLaren, H. J. (2016) Discovering my own African feminism: Embarking on a journey to explore Kenyan women's oppression. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 17, pp.263-273.
- Gatwiri, K. and Anderson, L. (2021) Parenting Black children in White spaces: Skilled African migrants reflect on their parenting experiences in Australia. *Child & Family Social Work*, 26(1), pp.153-162.
- Geiger, B. and Fischer, M. (2005) Naming oneself criminal: Gender difference in offenders' identity negotiation. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 49(2), pp.194-209.

Gelsthorpe, L. (1999) Youth crime and parental responsibility. *What is a Parent*, pp.217-240.

Gentles, S.J., Charles, C., Ploeg, J. and McKibbin, K.A. (2015) Sampling In Qualitative research: Insights from an overview of the methods literature. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(11), pp.1772-1789.

Geraghty, H. (2019) *Nigerians in the United Kingdom: How to feel at home*. Available at: <https://www.worldremit.com/en/stories/story/2019/10/29/nigerians-in-the-uk> [Accessed 21 April 2021].

Germano, R. (2018) *Outsourcing welfare: How the money immigrants send home contributes to stability in developing countries*. Oxford University Press.

Gilens, M. (1995) Racial attitudes and opposition to welfare. *The Journal of Politics*, 57, pp. 994-1014.

Gilkes, C.T. (1983) Going up for the oppressed: The career mobility of Black women community workers. *Journal of Social Issues*, 39(3), pp.115-139.

Gillies, V. (2006) Working Class Mothers and School Life: Exploring the Role of Emotional Capital. *Gender and Education*, 18, pp.281-293.

Gillum, T. L. (2008) Community response and needs of African American female survivors of domestic violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 23, pp.39-57.

Gillum, T. L. (2009) Improving services to African American survivors of IPV: From the voices of recipients of culturally specific services. *Violence Against Women*, 15, pp.57-80.

Gilroy, P. (1987) *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*, London, Hutchinson.

Ging, D. (2019) Alphas, betas, and incels: Theorizing the masculinities of the manosphere. *Men and masculinities*, 22, pp.638-657

Gittins, D. (1985). *The Family in Question: Changing Households and Familiar Ideologies*, Basingstoke, Macmillan.

Glavin, P., Schieman, S. and Reid, S. (2011) Boundary-spanning work demands and their consequences for guilt and psychological distress. *Journal of Health and Social behavior*, 52(1), pp.43-57.

Glenn, E.N. (1985) Racial ethnic women's labor: The intersection of race, gender and class oppression. *Review of radical political economics*, 17(3), pp.86-108.

Glenn, N. E. (1994) 'Social constructions of mothering: A thematic overview', In Glenn, E. N., Chang, G., and Forcey, R. (eds) *Mothering: Ideology, experience, and agency*. New York: Routledge.

Glick, J.E., Hanish, L.D., Yabiku, S.T. and Bradley, R.H. (2012) Migration timing and parenting practices: Contributions to social development in pre-schoolers with foreign-born and native-born mothers. *Child development*, 83(5), pp.1527-1542.

Glinka, E. (2021) *Covid-10: Pastor urges black communities to take up vaccine*. BBC. Available at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-55747784> [Accessed 27 April 2021].

Goetz, K. (1993). *It Takes A Whole Village to Raise a Child: Special Focus African American Families*. Chicago. Family Resource Coalition.

Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, New York, Simon and Schuster.

Goldberg, J.M., Sklad, M., Elfrink, T.R., Schreurs, K.M., Bohlmeijer, E.T. and Clarke, A.M., (2019) Effectiveness of interventions adopting a whole school approach to enhancing social and emotional development: a meta-analysis. *European Journal of psychology of Education*, 34, pp.755-782.

Goldson, B. and Jamieson, J. (2002) Youth crime, the 'parenting deficit' and state intervention: A contextual critique. *Youth justice*, 2(2), pp.82-99.

- Goodhew, D. (2012) 'Conclusion: The Death and Resurrection of Christianity in Contemporary Britain' In Goodhew, D. (eds) *Church Growth in Britain: 1980 to the Present*, Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 253-257.
- Goodman, L., Dutton, M.A., Weinfurt, K. and Cook, S. (2003) The intimate partner violence strategies index: Development and application. *Violence against women*, 9(2), pp.163-186.
- Gordon, L. (1990) The welfare state: Towards a socialist-feminist perspective. *Socialist Register*, 26, pp.171-200.
- Gough, B., and Finlay (2003) *Reflexivity: A Practical Guide for Researchers in Health and Social Sciences.*, Blackwell Science.
- Government UK (2018) *Regional Ethnic Diversity*. Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/regional-ethnic-diversity/latest> [Accessed 17th January 2020].
- Greer, T.M. (2011) Coping strategies as moderators of the relation between individual race-related stress and mental health symptoms for African American women. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 35(2), pp.215-226.
- Griswold, W. (2017) *Writing African women: Gender, popular culture and literature in West Africa*, Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Grubb, W.N. and Lazerson, M. (1988) *Broken promises: How Americans fail their children*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M. & Namey, E. E. (2011) *Applied thematic analysis*. Sage.
- Guidroz, K. and Berger, M. T. (2009) A conversation with founding scholars of intersectionality: Kimberlé Crenshaw, Nira Yuval-Davis, and Michelle Fine. In: Berger, T. M., and Guidroz, K. (eds) *The intersectional approach: Transforming the academy through race, class, and gender*, University of North Carolina Press. pp.61-78.

Guillemin, M. and Gillam, L. (2004) Ethics, reflexivity, and “ethically important moments” in research. *Qualitative inquiry*, 10(2), pp.261-280.

Gunter, A. (2015) Keeping it real: the experiences of black youth beyond criminal (in) justice statistics. *Criminal Justice Matters*, 101, pp.14-17.

Gurusami, S. (2017) *Deprivation and Depravation: Moral Policing of Formerly Incarcerated Black Women*, University of California, Los Angeles.

Gurusami, S. (2017) Working for redemption: Formerly incarcerated black women and punishment in the labor market. *Gender & Society*, 31(4), pp.433-456.

Gurusami, S. (2019) Motherwork under the state: The maternal labor of formerly incarcerated Black women. *Social Problems*, 66(1), pp.128-143.

Hagan, R. (2024) Slippers, canes and hospitalisations: adult to child violence in 1970s UK comics. *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, 15(3), pp.359-378.

Hall, K. and Posel D. (2019) Fragmenting the family? The complexity of household migration strategies in post-apartheid South Africa. *IZA Journal of Development and Migration*, 10, pp.1-20.

Hall, S. (1992). The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power. In: Hall, S., and Gieben, B. (eds) *Formations of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Halpenny, A. M., Nixon, E. and Watson, D. (2010) *Parents' perspectives on parenting styles and disciplining children* (Dublin, The Stationery Office). Available at: <https://www.tcd.ie/tricc/assets/pdfs/crc-archive/2010-Halpenny-Nixon-Watson-Parents-Perspectives-on-parenting-styles.pdf> [Accessed 06 May 2021].

Hamilton, P. (2020) ‘From Scientific Motherhood to Intensive Mothering’, in Hamilton, P. (eds) *Black Mothers and Attachment Parenting*. Bristol University Press, pp. 9-22.

Hancock, A.M. (2007a). Intersectionality as a normative and empirical paradigm. *Politics & Gender*, 3, pp. 248-254.

Hancock, A.M. (2007b). When multiplication doesn't equal quick addition: Examining intersectionality as a research paradigm. *Perspectives on politics*, 5, pp.63-79.

Hancock, A.M. (2004) *The Politics of Disgust: The Public Identity of the Welfare Queen*. New York University Press.

Hanna, P. (2012) Using internet technologies (such as Skype) as a research medium: A research note. *Qualitative Research*, 12, pp.239-242.

Hannerz, U. (1969) Roots of black manhood. *Trans-action*, 6, pp.13-21.

Harbin, H.T. and Madden, D.J. (1979) Battered parents: a new syndrome. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 136 (10), pp.1288–1291.

Harbison, J. (2008) Stoic heroines or collaborators: Ageism, feminism and the provision of assistance to abused old women. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 22, pp.221-234.

Harrington, C. (2021) What is “toxic masculinity” and why does it matter? *Men and masculinities*, 24, pp.345-352.

Harrington, E. F., Crowther, J.H., and Shipherd, J.C. (2010) Trauma, binge eating, and the “Strong Black Woman”. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 78, pp.469-479.

Harris-Lacewell, M. (2001) No place to rest African American political attitudes and the myth of Black women's strength. *Women & Politics*, 23, pp.1-33.

Harris, J.L. (2019) Black women talking. *Michigan Sociological Review*, 33, pp.25-45.

Hastie, C. (1998) *Parental Abuse and its links to domestic violence*. Paper presented at the 2nd National Conference on Children, Young People and Domestic Violence, Brisbane.

Hawkins, A. J. (2010) *A Phenomenological exploration of feelings, thinking and learning: A practitioner action research investigation*. Ph.D Thesis. Manchester Metropolitan University

Division of Psychology and Social Change. Available at: <https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/129370/> [Accessed 21 May 2021].

Hawkins, A. K. (2015) The complexities of participatory action research and the problems of power, identity and influence. *Educational Action Research*, 23, pp.464-478.

Hays, S. (1996) *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*, Yale University Press.

Haywood, H. (1948) *Negro liberation*, New York, International Publishers.

Heaton, T. and Hirschl, T.A. (1999) The trajectory of family change in Nigeria. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 30(1), pp.35-55.

Heaton, T.B. and Darkwah, A. (2011) Religious differences in modernization of the family: Family demographics trends in Ghana. *Journal of Family Issues*, 32(12), pp.1576-1596.

Heinonen, K. (2015) van Manen's method and reduction in a phenomenological hermeneutic study. *Nurse researcher*, 22.

Henderson, A., Harmon, S. and Newman, H. (2016) The price mothers pay, even when they are not buying it: Mental health consequences of idealized motherhood. *Sex Roles*, 74, pp.512-526.

Henne, K. and Troshynski, E. (2013) Mapping the margins of intersectionality: Criminological possibilities in a transnational world. *Theoretical Criminology*, 17(4), pp.455-473.

Henry, T. (2018) Reimagining Religious Education for Young, Black, Christian Women: Womanist Resistance in the Form of Hip-Hop. *Religions*, 9(12), p.409.

Hesse-Biber, S.N. and Leavy, P. (2004) Analysis, interpretation, and the writing of qualitative data. *Approaches to qualitative research: A reader on theory and practice in* Hesse-Biber, S.N and Leavy, P. (eds) *Approaches to qualitative research: A reader on theory and practice*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp.409-425.

Hesse, B. (1997) White Governmentality: Urbanism, Nationalism, Racism in Westwood, S., and Williams, J. (eds) *Imagining Cities: Signs, Scripts, Memory*. London: Routledge.

Higginbotham, E. (2001) *Too much to ask: Black women in the era of integration*. Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press.

Hill-Collins P. (2000) *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. New York: Routledge.

Hill-Collins, P. (1987) The meaning of motherhood in Black culture and Black mother-daughter relationships. *Sage*, 4(2), pp.3-10.

Hill-Collins, P. (1990). *Black feminist thought in the matrix of domination*, Boston, Unwin Hyman.

Hill-Collins, P. (1994) 'Shifting the Center: Race, class, and feminist theorizing about motherhood' In Glenn, N. E., Chang, G., And Forcey, R.L (eds) *Mothering*. New York: Routledge.

Hill-Collins, P. (1995). Black Women and Motherhood in Held, V. (eds) *Justice and Care*. Routledge, pp. 117-136.

Hill-Collins, P. (1998) It's all in the family: Intersections of gender, race, and nation. *Hypatia*, 13, pp.62-82.

Hill-Collins, P. (1999) Reflections on the outsider within. *Journal of Career Development*, 26(1), pp.85-88.

Hill-Collins, P. (2000). Gender, Black feminism, and Black political economy. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 568, pp.41-53.

Hill-Collins, P. (2005) *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism*. New York: Routledge

Hill-Collins, P. (2015) Intersectionality's definitional dilemmas, *Annual Review of Sociology* 41, pp.1–20.

Hill, S. A. (1999) *African American children: Socialization and development in families*, Sage Publications.

Hinshaw, S. P. (2009) *The mark of shame: Stigma of mental illness and an agenda for change*. Oxford University Press.

Ho, J. (2010) Acculturation gaps in Vietnamese immigrant families: Impact on family relationships. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 34(1), pp.22-33.

Hoffman, B. and Vander Ven, T. (2007) Mother blame and delinquency claims: Juvenile delinquency and maternal responsibility. *Youth violence and delinquency*, pp.159-176.

Hoffman, K. M., Trawalter, S., Axt, J. R. and Oliver, M. N. (2016). Racial bias in pain assessment and treatment recommendations, and false beliefs about biological differences between blacks and whites. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 113, pp.4296-4301.

Holland, R. (2009) Perceptions of mate selection for marriage among African American, college-educated, single mothers. *Journal of Counselling and Development*, 87(2), pp.170-178.

Hollos, M. (2003) Profiles of infertility in southern Nigeria: women's voices from Amakiri. *African journal of reproductive health*, pp.46-56.

Holpuch, A. (2016) *Black patients half as likely to receive pain medication as white patients, study finds* [Online]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2016/aug/10/black-patients-bias-prescriptions-pain-management-medicine-opioids> [Accessed 20 May 2023].

Holt, A. (2009) Parent abuse: some reflections on the adequacy of a youth justice response. *Internet Journal of Criminology*, pp.1-9. Available at: <https://holesinthewall.co.uk/wp->

[content/uploads/2011/11/parent-abuse-some-reflections-on-the-adequacy-of-a-youth-justice-response-holt-2009.pdf](https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologist/responding-parent-abuse) [Accessed 22 April 2023].

Holt, A. (2011) 'Responding to 'parent abuse''. Available at: <https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologist/responding-parent-abuse> [Accessed 22 April 2025].

Holt, A. (2011) 'The terrorist in my home': teenagers' violence towards parents—constructions of parent experiences in public online message boards. *Child & Family Social Work*, 16(4), pp.454-463.

Holt, A. (2012) *Adolescent-to-parent abuse: Current understandings in research, policy and practice*. Policy Press.

Holt, A. (2013) *Adolescent-to-parent abuse: Current understandings in research, policy and practice*, Policy Press.

Holt, A. (2015) Adolescent-to-parent abuse as a form of “domestic violence” a conceptual review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 17(5), pp.490-499.

Holt, A. (2021). *Family Criminology: An Introduction*, Palgrave Macmillan.

Holt, A. (2022) Child to Parent Abuse. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. Available at: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2022/08/Academic-Insights-Child-to-Parent-Abuse-Dr-Amanda-Holt.pdf> [Accessed: 17 March 2025].

Holt, A. and Retford, S. (2013). Practitioner accounts of responding to parent abuse—a case study in ad hoc delivery, perverse outcomes and a policy silence. *Child & Family Social Work*, 18, pp.365-374.

Holt, A. and Shon, P. C. (2018) Exploring fatal and non-fatal violence against parents: Challenging the orthodoxy of abused adolescent perpetrators. *International journal of offender therapy and comparative criminology*, 62, pp.915-934.

Home Office (2015) *Information guide: adolescent to Parent violence and abuse (APVA)*

Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/732573/APVA.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/732573/APVA.pdf) [Accessed 06 May 2021].

Home Office. (2013) *Information for Local Areas on the change to the Definition of Domestic Violence and Abuse*. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/142701/guide-on-definition-of-dv.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/142701/guide-on-definition-of-dv.pdf) [Accessed 06 May 2021].

Home Office. (2014). *Strengthening the Law on Domestic Abuse Consultation–Summary of Responses*. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/389002/StrengtheningLawDomesticAbuseResponses.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389002/StrengtheningLawDomesticAbuseResponses.pdf) [Accessed 06 May 2021].

Home Office. (2015). *Information guide: adolescent to parent violence and abuse (APVA)* retrieved on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2015 Available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/420963/APVA.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/420963/APVA.pdf)

Hong, J.S., Kral, M.J., Espelage, D.L. and Allen-Meares, P. (2012) The social ecology of adolescent-initiated parent abuse: A review of the literature. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development*, 43, pp.431-454.

Hood, A.N. (2023) 'Dual Status and Adulthood: Black Girls' Lives in Context', *Journal of Family Strengths*, 23(1), pp.1-30.

hooks, B. (1990). Homeplace (a site of resistance). In: hooks, b. (eds) *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*. Boston, MA: South End Press.

hooks, B. (1993) A revolution of values: The promise of multi-cultural change. *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, 26(1), pp.4-11.

Horne, R.M. and Breitkreuz, R.S. (2018) The motherhood sacrifice: maternal experiences of child care in the Canadian context. *Journal of Family Studies*, 24(2), pp.126-145.

House of Commons, House of Lords, Joint Committee on Human Rights (2020) *Black People, Racism and Human Rights*. Eleventh Report of Session 2019-2021. Available at: <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/3376/documents/32359/default/> [Accessed 5 June 2025].

Houston-Kolnik, D. J., Todd, R. N., and Greeson, M. (2018) Overcoming the “Holy Hush”: A Qualitative Examination of Protestant Christian Leaders’ Responses to Intimate Partner Violence. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 63(3), pp. 135-152.

Howard, J. and Rottem, N. (2008) It all starts at home: Male adolescent violence to mothers. Available at: <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2008-09/apo-nid3995.pdf> [Accessed 21 May 2021].

Howell, E. A. (2018) Reducing disparities in severe maternal morbidity and mortality. *Clinical obstetrics and gynecology*, 61(2), pp.387-399.

Hron, M. (2008) "Ora Na-Azu Nwa": The Figure of the Child in Third-Generation Nigerian Novels. *Research in African Literatures*, 39(2), pp.27–48.

Hudson-Weems, C. (1998) Africana Womanism. In Nnaemeka O. (eds) *Sisterhood, Feminisms, and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora*. Africa World Press, pp. 149-162.

Humphreys, C. and Thiara, R. (2003) Mental health and domestic violence: ‘I call it symptoms of abuse’. *British journal of social work*, 33(2), pp.209-226.

Hunter, C. and Nixon, J. (2001) Taking the blame and losing the home: women and anti-social behaviour. *The Journal of Social Welfare & Family Law*, 23(4), pp.395-410.

Hunter, C., Nixon, J. and Parr, S. (2010) Mother Abuse: A Matter of Youth Justice, Child Welfare or Domestic Violence? *Journal of Law and Society*, 37(2), pp.264–284.

Ibabe, I. and Bentler, P. (2016) The Contribution of Family Relationships to Child-to-Parent Violence. *Journal of Family Violence*, 31(2), pp.259–269.

Ibabe, I. and Jaureguizar, J. (2010) Child-to-parent violence: Profile of abusive adolescents and their families. *Journal of criminal justice*, 38(4), pp.616–624.

Ibabe, I., Arnosó, A. and Elgorriaga, E. (2014) Behavioral problems and depressive symptomatology as predictors of child-to-parent violence. *The European journal of psychology applied to legal context*, 6(2), pp.53-61.

Ibabe, I., Jaureguizar, J. and Bentler, P., (2013) Risk Factors for Child-to-Parent Violence. *Journal of Family Violence*, 28(5), pp.523–534.

Ibabe, I., Jaureguizar, J. and Diaz, O. (2009) Adolescent Violence Against Parents. Is It a Consequence of Gender Inequality?, *European Journal of Psychology Applied To Legal Context*, 1(1), pp.3–24.

Igbelina-Igbokwe, N. (2013) Contextualizing gender based violence within patriarchy in Nigeria. *Pambzuka News: Voices for Freedom and Justice*, 12.

Igwe, S. (2022). *My Black Motherhood: Mental Health, Stigma, Racism and the System*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Ilabaca Baeza, P.A. and Gaete Fiscella, J.M. (2021) Adolescents who are violent toward their parents: An approach to the situation in Chile. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 36(11-12).

Imkaan (2018) From Survival to Sustainability. Available at:

[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/2f475d\\_9cab044d7d25404d85da289b70978237.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/2f475d_9cab044d7d25404d85da289b70978237.pdf)

[Accessed 08 May 2021].

Imkaan (2020) The Impact of the Dual Pandemics: Violence Against Women & Girls and COVID-19 on Black and Minoritised Women and Girls. Available at: [https://829ef90d-0745-49b2-b404-cbea85f15fda.filesusr.com/ugd/2f475d\\_2c6797da42c6454f933837a7290ffe21.pdf](https://829ef90d-0745-49b2-b404-cbea85f15fda.filesusr.com/ugd/2f475d_2c6797da42c6454f933837a7290ffe21.pdf)

[Accessed 08 May 2021].

Issac, A. (2020) *Investigating the association between an offender's sex and ethnicity and the sentence imposed at the Crown Court for drug offences*. London: Office of the Sentencing

Council for England and Wales. Available at: <https://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Sex-and-ethnicity-analysis-final-1.pdf> [Accessed 5 June 2025].

Ivey, S. and Mgonja Z. (2016) Cultural Crown of Glory: The significance of Hair to Black Women in Western Societies. *Florida International University*.

Jackson, D. and Mannix, J. (2004) Giving voice to the burden of blame: A feminist study of mothers' experiences of mother blaming. *International journal of nursing practice*, 10, pp.150-158.

Jackson, M. I. and Kihara, T. (2019) The educational gradient in health among children in immigrant families. *Population research and policy review*, 38, pp.869-897.

Jackson, M. I., Kiernan, K. and McLanahan, S. (2017). Maternal education, changing family circumstances, and children's skill development in the United States and UK. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 674, pp59-84.

Jagger, G. and Wright, C. (1999). *Changing Family Values*, London, Routledge.

James, M. S. (1993) Mothering: A possible Black feminist link to social transformation? In Busia, A. (eds) *Theorizing Black feminisms: The visionary pragmatism of Black women*. Routledge, pp.45.

Jarrett, R.L. and Jefferson, S.R. (2003) "A good mother got to fight for her kids": Maternal management strategies in a high-risk, African American neighborhood. *Journal of children and poverty*, 9(1), pp.21–39.

Jenkins, N. L. (2005) *Black mothers: understanding their lives: centering their experiences*. Ph. D. Thesis. University of Georgia. Available at: <https://esploro.libs.uga.edu/esploro/outputs/doctoral/Black-mothers-understanding-their-lives/9949334281902959> [Accessed 21 May 2021].

Jensen, T. (2010). Warmth and Wealth: Re-imagining Social Class in Taxonomies of Good Parenting. *Studies in the Maternal.*, 2(1-2), pp.1-13.

Jiménez-García, P., Pérez, B., Contreras, L. and Cano-Lozano, M.C. (2020) Analysing child or adolescent-to-parent violence and abuse in Chilean adolescents: prevalence and reasons. *Current Psychology*, pp.1-12

Johnson, K., and Shadd. M. (2019) *Doing justice to desistance narratives*, Taylor and Francis.

Johnson, S.P. and Sullivan, C.M. (2008) How child protection workers support or further victimize battered mothers. *Affilia*, 23(3), pp.242-258.

Jones, L. (2020) *Pain, anger and youth resistance: Police racial awareness training and the contemplations of a Black mother*. Trentham Books.

Jones, M.K., Hill-Jarrett, T.G., Latimer, K., Reynolds, A., Garrett, N., Harris, I., Joseph, S. and Jones, A. (2021) The role of coping in the relationship between endorsement of the strong Black woman schema and depressive symptoms among Black women. *Journal of Black psychology*, 47(7), pp.578-592.

Jones, S. (2015) Parents of Adolescents Who Have Sexually Offended: Providing Support and Coping With the Experience. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 30(8), pp.1299–1321.

Joseph-Salisbury, R. and Connelly, L. (2018) ‘If your hair is relaxed, white people are relaxed. If your hair is nappy, they’re not happy’: Black hair as a site of ‘post-racial’ social control in English schools. *Social Sciences*, 7(11), pp.1-13.

Joseph, G., and Lewis, G. (1980) *Common Differences: Conflicts in Black and White Feminist Perspectives.*, New York, Anchor Books Ltd.

Jules-Rosette, B. (1981) Women in Indigenous African Cults and Churches. In Steady, F. C. (eds) *The Black Woman Cross-Culturally*. Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing Company.

Junco-Guerrero, M., Ruiz-Fernández, A. and Cantón-Cortés, D. (2022) Family environment and child-to-parent violence: The role of emotional insecurity. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 37(15-16).

Justus, J. B. (1981) Women's Role in West Indian Society. In: Steady, F. C. eds. *The Black Woman Cross-Culturally*. Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing Company Inc, pp. 431-450.

Kabba, A. (2002) *Daddy, Don't Be a fool!* Gotham Gazette. Available at <https://www.gothamgazette.com/citizen/june02/african-aboard.shtml> [Accessed 08 May 2021].

Kabba, A. (2007) 'Difficulties raising African children in U.S. African Abroad!', USA, Voices that Must Be Heard, New York Media Alliance.

Kabba, A. (2008) 'Problems of raising African boys in America—A clash of culture? African Abroad!', USA, Voices that Must Be Heard, New York Media Alliance.

Kanne, S.M. and Mazurek, M.O. (2011) Aggression in children and adolescents with ASD: Prevalence and risk factors. *Journal of autism and developmental disorders*, 41, pp.926-937.

Karaba, F. (2024) "I Can Only Do My Best and Leave the Rest to God": Religious/Spiritual Coping Strategies of African Nurses in the UK. *Journal of Business Ethics*, pp.1-20.

Kasprzak, E. (2019) *Why are Black mothers at more risk of dying?* [Online]. BBC News. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-47115305> [Accessed 20 May 2023].

Kastner, K. (2010) Moving Relationships: Family Ties of Nigerian Migrants on Their Way to Europe. *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*, 3(1), pp.17– 34.

Katz, J. (2015). A theory of qualitative methodology: The social system of analytic fieldwork. *Methods: African Review of Social Sciences Methodology*, 1, pp.131-146.

Kea, P. and Maier, K. (2017) Challenging global geographies of power: sending children back to Nigeria from the United Kingdom for education. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 59(4), pp. 818-845.

Kearns, T., Ford, L. and Linney, J. (2005). African American student representation in special education programs. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 74(4), pp.297-310.

Kelly, U.A. (2009) “‘I’m a mother first’”: The influence of mothering in the decision-making processes of battered immigrant Latino women’, *Research in Nursing & Health*, 32(3), pp.286–297.

Kemdirim, P. (1998). African Culture and Womanhood: The Issue of Single-Parenthood. In: Nnaemeka, O. (eds) *Sisterhood, Feminisms and Power: From African to the Diaspora*. Africa World Press.

Kennedy, T.D., Edmonds, W.A., Dann, K.T. and Burnett, K.F. (2010) The clinical and adaptive features of young offenders with histories of child-parent violence. *Journal of family violence*, 25, pp.509-520.

Kent, B.V., Upenieks, L., Kanaya, A.M., Warner, E.T., Cozier, Y.C., Daviglus, M.L., Eliassen, H., Jang, D.Y. and Shields, A.E. (2023) Religion/spirituality and prevalent hypertension among ethnic cohorts in the study on stress, spirituality, and health. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 57(8), pp.649-661.

Kershner M, and Anderson E. J (2002) Barriers to disclosure of abuse among rural women. *Minnesota Medicine* 85(3), pp.32-37.

Kim, S.Y., Schwartz, S.J., Perreira, K.M. and Juang, L.P. (2018a) Culture's influence on stressors, parental socialization, and developmental processes in the mental health of children of immigrants. *Annual review of clinical psychology*, 14(1), pp.343-370.

Kim, Y.A., An, S., Kim, H.C.L. and Kim, J. (2018b). Meaning of parental involvement among Korean immigrant parents: A mixed-methods approach. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 111(2), pp.127-138.

King, G., Keohane, R.O. and Verba, S. (2021) *Designing social inquiry: Scientific inference in qualitative research*. Princeton university press.

Kirchherr, J. and Charles, K. (2018) Enhancing the sample diversity of snowball samples: Recommendations from a research project on anti-dam movements in Southeast Asia. *PloS one*, 13(8).

Klingorová Kamila & Havlíček Tomáš (2015) Religion and gender inequality: The status of women in the societies of world religions. *Moravian geographical reports*, 23(2), pp.2–11.

Knapp, G.A. (2005). Race, class, gender: Reclaiming baggage in fast travelling theories. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 12, pp.249-265.

Knight, M., Bunch, K., Tuffnell, D., Patel, R., Shakespeare J., Kotnis, R., Kenyon, S., Kurinczuk, J.J. (2021) *Saving Lives, Improving mothers' Care*. MBRRACE-UK. Available at: [https://hubble-live-assets.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/birth-companions/file\\_asset/file/452/MBRRACE-UK\\_Maternal\\_Report\\_2021\\_-\\_FINAL\\_-\\_WEB\\_VERSION.pdf](https://hubble-live-assets.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/birth-companions/file_asset/file/452/MBRRACE-UK_Maternal_Report_2021_-_FINAL_-_WEB_VERSION.pdf) [Accessed April 2025].

Koch, L.C., Niesz, T. and McCarthy, H. (2014) Understanding and reporting qualitative research: An analytical review and recommendations for submitting authors. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 57(3), pp.131-143.

Kolawole, M. M. (2002). Transcending incongruities: rethinking feminism and the dynamics of identity in Africa. *Agenda*, 17, pp.92-98.

König, R.S. and de Regt, M. (2010) Family dynamics in transnational African migration to Europe: an introduction. *African and black diaspora*, 3(1), pp.1–15.

Kulakiewicz, A., Gheera, M., and Harker, R. (2021). Black Maternal Health Week. United Kingdom: House of Commons Library. Available at: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2021-0141/CDP-2021-0141.pdf> [Accessed 20 May 2023].

Labuschagne, A. (2003) Qualitative research: Airy fairy or fundamental. *The qualitative report*, 8(1), pp.100-103.

Ladd-Taylor, M. (2004) Mother-worship/mother-blame: Politics and welfare in an uncertain age. *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement*, 6(1), pp.7-15.

Ladd-Taylor, M. and Umansky, L (1998) *"Bad" mothers: The politics of blame in twentieth-century America*, NYU Press.

Ladner, J. A. (1981) Racism and Tradition: Black Womanhood in Historical Perspective. In Steady, F. C. (eds) *The Black Woman Cross-culturally*, Schenkman Publishing Company. pp. 269.

Lammy, D. (2017) *The Lammy Review: An Independent Review into the treatment of and outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Individuals in the Criminal Justice System*.

Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf) [Accessed 4 March 2021].

Landon, B., Thomas, E.D., Orlando, L., Evans, R., Murray, T., Mohammed, L., Noel, J., Isaac, R. and Waechter, R. (2023) Spare the rod, spoil the child: measurement and learning from an intervention to shift corporal punishment attitudes and behaviours in Grenada, West Indies. *Frontiers in public health*, 11.

Lapadat, J. (2010). 'Thematic analysis' in Mills, A. J., Durepos, G., and Wiebe, E. (eds), *Encyclopaedia of case study research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 926–928.

Lara-Villanueva, M. (2018). *A (M)other Talks to White Women Teachers: A Critical Autoethnography*. Master of Arts, University of Toronto.

Lareau, A. (2011) *Unequal Childhoods: Race, Class and Family Life*, Berkeley CA, University of California Press.

Laub, J. and Sampson, R. (1993). Turning points in the life course: Why change matters to the study of crime. *Criminology*, 31(3), pp.301-325.

Laurent, A., and Derry, A. (1999). 'Violence of French adolescents toward their parents: Characteristics and contexts', *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 25(1), pp. 21–26.

Law Society (2023) *A guide to race and ethnicity terminology and language* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/ethnic-minority-lawyers/a-guide-to-race-and-ethnicity-terminology-and-language> [Accessed May 19 2023].

Layder, D. (1998) *Sociological practice: Linking theory and social research*, Sage.

Lazarus, R.S. and Folkman, S. (1987) Transactional theory and research on emotions and coping. *European Journal of personality*, 1(3), pp.141-169.

Learning Network (2024) *What Students Are Saying About Parents' Responsibility for the Harmful Actions of Their Children*. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/29/learning/what-students-are-saying-about-parents-responsibility-for-the-harmful-actions-of-their-children.html> [Accessed 26 March 2025].

Lee, E., Bristow, J., Faircloth, C. and Macvarish, J. (2014) *Parenting culture studies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lei, L., and South J, S., (2016) Racial and Ethnic differences in leaving and returning to parental home: The role of life course transitions, socioeconomic resources and family connectivity. *Demographic Research*, pp.109-142.

Letherby, G. (2003) *Feminist research in theory and practice*, McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Lewis-Oduntan, C. (2020). *Black British Mums On The Tough Reality Of Raising Sons In the UK* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.refinery29.com/en-gb/black-british-motherhood-son> [Accessed 19 May 2023].

Lewis, G. (2000). *Race, Gender and Social Welfare*. London, Polity Press.

Lewis, S., Holdsworth, E., and Pina-Sánchez, J. (2023) Developing the Police Response to Child-to-Parent Violence. N8 Policing Research Partnership. Available at: <https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=56475> [Accessed 05 June 2025].

Li, M., (2022) “Only mother is the best in the world”: Maternal guilt, migrant motherhood, and changing ideologies of childrearing in China. *Journal of Family Communication*, 22(2), pp.87-103.

Liang, B., Goodman, L., Tummala-Narra, P. and Weintraub, S. (2005) A theoretical framework for understanding help-seeking processes among survivors of intimate partner violence. *American journal of community psychology*, 36(1-2), pp.71-84.

Liao, Y.-H. K., Wei, M. and Yin, M. (2020) The misunderstood schema of the strong Black woman: Exploring its mental health consequences and coping responses among African American women. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 44, pp.84-104.

Lim, S. L., Yeh, M., Liang, J., Lau, A. S., and McCabe, K. (2009). Acculturation gap, intergenerational conflict, parenting style, and youth distress in immigrant Chinese-American families, *Marriage & Family Review*, 45(1), pp. 84–106.

Lincoln, Y. S. and Guba, E. G. (1985) *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage.

Lindley, A. (2011) Between a protracted and a crisis situation: Policy responses to Somali refugees in Kenya. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 30(4), pp.14-49.

Link, B. G. and Phelan, J. (2014). Stigma Power. *Social Science and Medicine*, 103, pp.24-32.

Link, B. G., Phelan, J. C. and Hatzenbuehler, M. L. (2014). Stigma and social inequality. *Handbook of the social psychology of inequality*, pp.49-64.

Link, B.G. and Phelan, J.C. (2001) Conceptualizing stigma. *Annual Review of Sociology* 27, pp. 363–385.

Litt, J.S. (2000) *Medicalized motherhood: Perspectives from the lives of African-American and Jewish women*. NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Loinaz, I., Barboni, L. and de Sousa, A.M. (2020) Gender differences in child to parent violence risk factors. *Anales de Psicología/Annals of Psychology*, 36(3), pp.408-417.

London Assembly Police and Crime Committee (2016) *Serious Youth Violence*. Available at: <https://meetings.london.gov.uk/documents/s59333/Appendix%201%20-%20Report%20on%20Serious%20Youth%20Violence.pdf> [Accessed: 1 April 2025].

Long, L. and Ullman, S.E. (2013) The impact of multiple traumatic victimization on disclosure and coping mechanisms for Black women. *Feminist Criminology*, 8(4), pp.295-319.

Long, T. and Johnson, M. (2007). *Research ethics in the real world: Issues and solutions for health and social care professionals*. Elsevier Health Sciences.

Lorber, M.F., Del Vecchio, T., Slep, A.M. and Scholer, S.J. (2019) Normative trends in physically aggressive behavior: Age-aggression curves from 6 to 24 months. *The Journal of pediatrics*, 206, pp.197-203.

Lyons, J., Bell, T., Fréchette, S., Romano, E. (2015) Child-to-Parent Violence: Frequency and Family Correlates. *Journal of Family Violence*, 30(6), 2015, pp. 729–742.

Mabatah, J. (2016) Blaming the Victim: The Intersections of Race, Domestic Violence, and Child Neglect Laws. *Geo. JL & Mod. Critical Race Persp.*, 8, p.355.

Macaulay, C., and Fakim, N. (2020) ‘Don’t call me BAME’: Why some people are rejecting the term [Online]. BBC News. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53194376> [Accessed 19 May 2023].

Macklin, A. (2006) ‘The Double-Edged Sword: Using the Criminal Law against Female Genital Mutilation’ In Abusharaf, M. R (eds) *Female Circumcision: Multicultural Perspectives*. University of Pennsylvania Press. Philadelphia, pp. 207-223.

MacLean, C.D., Susi, B., Phifer, N., Schultz, L., Bynum, D., Franco, M., Klioze, A., Monroe, M., Garrett, J. and Cykert, S. (2003) Patient preference for physician discussion and practice

of spirituality: results from a multicenter patient survey. *Journal of general internal medicine*, 18(1), pp.38-43.

Macpherson, W. (1999). *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*. Available at:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7c2af540f0b645ba3c7202/4262.pdf>

[Accessed 21 May 2021].

Macrotrends (2021) *Nigeria Population 1950-2021*. Available at:

<https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/NGA/nigeria/population> [Accessed 09 May 2021].

Madunagu, B. E. (2008). The Nigerian feminist movement: Lessons from women in Nigeria, *WIN. Review of African Political Economy*, 35, pp.666-673.

Madziva, R. and Zontini, E. (2012) Transnational mothering and forced migration: Understanding the experiences of Zimbabwean mothers in the UK. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 19(4), pp.428-443.

Maher, J., Fitz-Gibbon, K., Meyer, S., Roberts, S. and Pfitzner, N. (2021). Mothering through and in violence: Discourses of the 'good mother'. *Sociology*, 55(4), pp.659-676.

Majali, Z., Coetzee, J.K. and Rau, A. (2017). Everyday hair discourses of African Black women. *Qualitative Sociology Review*, 13(1), pp.158-172.

Makama, G. A. (2013) Patriarchy and Gender Inequality in Nigeria: The Way Forward. *European Scientific Journal*, 9(17).

Maldonado-Estrada, A. (2024) The Awkward Engagements of Material Religion/" The Stuff of Material Religion". *Material Religion*, 20(1), pp.102-104.

Malik, K. (1996). *The Meaning of Race: Race, History and Culture in Western society*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Malik, S., Ryder, M., Marsden S., Lawson, R., and Gee, M (2021). *BAME: A report on the use of the term and responses to it. United Kingdom: Birmingham City University*. Available at: <https://bcuassets.blob.core.windows.net/docs/csu2021325-lhc-report--bbchighres231121-132836254614117870.pdf> [Accessed 20 May 2023].

Mama, A. (1989) Violence against Black Women: Gender, Race and State Responses. *Feminist Review*, 32, pp.29-48.

Mama, A. (1995). *Beyond the Masks: Race, Gender and Subjectivity*, London, Routledge.

Mangoma, A. and Wilson-Prangle, A. (2019) Black Tax: Understanding the financial transfers of the emerging black middle class. *Development Southern Africa*, 36(4), pp.443-460.

Manning, J. (2010) The sociology of hair: Hair symbolism among college students. *Social Science Journal*, 10.

Mantovani, N. and Thomas, H. (2014). Stigma, intersectionality and motherhood: Exploring the relations of stigma in the accounts of black teenage mothers 'looked after' by the State. *Social Theory & Health*, 12, pp.45-62.

Mantovani, N., and Thomas, H., (2014) Stigma, Intersectionality and Motherhood: Exploring the Relations of Stigma in the Accounts of Black Teenage Mothers 'Looked after' by the State. *Social Theory & Health*, 12(1), pp. 45–62.

Margolin, G., and Baucom, B. R. (2014). Adolescents aggression to parents: Longitudinal links with parents' physical aggression. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 55, pp. 645–651.

Mason, J. (2002) *Qualitative Researching*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Sage Publications.

Masud, H., Ahmad, M.S., Cho, K.W. and Fakhr, Z. (2019) Parenting styles and aggression among young adolescents: A systematic review of literature. *Community mental health journal*, 55, pp.1015-1030.

Mattis, J.S. (2002) Religion and spirituality in the meaning-making and coping experiences of African American women: A qualitative analysis. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 26(4), pp.309-321.

May, H. (2000) "Murderers' relatives" managing stigma, negotiating identity. *Journal of contemporary ethnography*, 29(2), pp.198-221.

Mbiti S, J. (1970) *African Religion and Philosophy*, New York, Doubleday Anchor.

MBRRACE-UK (2021) *Saving Lives, Improving Mothers' Care: Lay Summary 2021*.

Available at: [https://www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/assets/downloads/mbrance-uk/reports/maternal-report-2021/MBRRACE-UK\\_Maternal\\_Report\\_2021\\_-\\_Lay\\_Summary\\_v10.pdf](https://www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/assets/downloads/mbrance-uk/reports/maternal-report-2021/MBRRACE-UK_Maternal_Report_2021_-_Lay_Summary_v10.pdf) [Accessed 20 May 2023].

McAdoo, H. P. (1993) 'Ethnic families: Strengths that are found in diversity', in H. McAdoo (eds), *Family ethnicity: Strength in Diversity*. NewburyPark, CA: Sage, pp. 3–14.

McAdoo, H.P. (2013) Stress levels, family help patterns, and religiosity in middle-and working-class African American single mothers. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 21, pp.424-449.

McCall, L. (2005) The complexity of intersectionality. *Signs: Journal of women in culture and society*, 30, pp.1771-1800.

McCloskey, L. A., and Lichter, E. L. (2003). The contribution of marital violence to adolescent aggression across different relationships. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 18(4), pp.390–412.

McCluney, C.L., Durkee, M.I., Smith II, R.E., Robotham, K.J. and Lee, S.S.L. (2021) To be, or not to be... Black: The effects of racial codeswitching on perceived professionalism in the workplace. *Journal of experimental social psychology*, 97.

McConnel, T. (2007) *African cane tames unruly British pupils*. Available at: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/african-cane-tames-unruly-british-pupils-czzmrhnqdkq> [Accessed 08 May 2021].

McCormack, K. (2005). Stratified reproduction and poor women's resistance. *Gender & Society*, 19, pp.660-679.

McCosker, H., Barnard, A., & Gerber, R. (2001) Undertaking Sensitive Research: Issues and Strategies for Meeting the Safety Needs of All Participants. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 2(1).

McDaniel, G., Akinwunmi, S., Brenya, V., Kidane, H. and Nydegger, L. (2023) Superwoman schema: Uncovering repercussions of coping strategies used among Black women at high risk for HIV. *Ethnicity & health*, 28(6), pp.874-894.

McFadden, P. (2007) African feminist perspectives of post-coloniality. *The Black Scholar*, 37, pp.36-42.

McGuire, S.N., Folkerts, R., Meadan, H., Adams, N.B., Lee, J.D. and Kaza, M. (2022) Cross cultural caregiver perceptions of challenging behaviors and responses. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 50(8), pp.1343-1354.

McInnis, L. (2021) *Undue blame: An exploration of the experiences, blame and stigma of the mothers of sons charged with violent crimes against women*. Toronto Metropolitan University. M.A Thesis. Available at: [https://rshare.library.torontomu.ca/articles/thesis/Undue\\_blame\\_An\\_exploration\\_of\\_the\\_experiences\\_blame\\_and\\_stigma\\_of\\_the\\_mothers\\_of\\_sons\\_charged\\_with\\_violent\\_crimes\\_against\\_women/25213148?file=44531597](https://rshare.library.torontomu.ca/articles/thesis/Undue_blame_An_exploration_of_the_experiences_blame_and_stigma_of_the_mothers_of_sons_charged_with_violent_crimes_against_women/25213148?file=44531597) [Accessed 21 May 2022].

McMahon, M. (1995). *Engendering motherhood: Identity and self-transformation in women's lives*, The Guilford Press.

McRae, E.M., Stoppelbein, L., O'Kelley, S.E., Fite, P. and Smith, S.B. (2021) An examination of post-traumatic stress symptoms and aggression among children with a history of adverse childhood experiences. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*, 43, pp.657-670.

MECH, L. D. (1999) Alpha status, dominance, and division of labor in wolf packs. *Canadian journal of zoology*, 77, pp.1196-1203.

Mekgwe, P. (2008) Theorizing African Feminism(s): the 'Colonial' Question. *Quest: An African Journal of Philosophy*, 20, pp.11-22.

Meng, L., Zhang, Y. and Zou, B. (2022). The labor market impacts of motherhood in China. Available at: [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=4070153](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4070153) [Accessed 21 May 2023].

- Merton, R.K. (1972) Insiders and outsiders: A chapter in the sociology of knowledge. *American journal of sociology*, 78(1), pp.9-47.
- Messina-Dysert, G. (2014) *The New Feminist Revolution in Religion*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMb1UkkZsR8&t=309s> [Accessed 25 April 2021].
- Mikell, G. (1997). *African feminism: The politics of survival in sub-Saharan Africa*, University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Miles, C. and Condry, R. (2015) Responding to adolescent to parent violence: Challenges for policy and practice. *British Journal of Criminology*, 55(6), pp.1076-1095.
- Miles, C., and Condry, R. (2016). Adolescent to Parent Violence: The Police Response to Parents Reporting Violence from Their Children. *Policing & Society*, 26(7), pp. 804–823.
- Miles, C., Condry, R., Adebogun, A. and Oldham, M. (2024). ‘Now there is no escape’: the impact of the COVID-19 social restrictions on parents experiencing violence and abuse from their children. *Journal of Gender-Based Violence*, pp.1-18.
- Miles, M. B. and Huberman, A. M. (1984) Drawing valid meaning from qualitative data: Toward a shared craft. *Educational researcher*, 13, pp.20-30.
- Miller, C., and Anderson, D. (2023). ADHD and Behaviour Problems [Online]. Child Mind Institute. Available at: <https://childmind.org/article/adhd-behavior-problems/> [Accessed 20 May 2023].
- Miller, J. and Glassner, B. (1997) The ‘inside’ and the ‘outside’: Finding realities in interviews. *Qualitative research*, 3, pp.99-112.
- Millet, K. (1970) *Sexual Politics*. New York, University of Illinois Press.
- Minnotte, K.L. (2023) ‘Decentering Intensive Mothering: More Fully Accounting for Race and Class in Motherhood Norms’, *Sociology Compass*, 17(8), pp.1-20.
- Mirza, H. (2009). *Race, Gender and Educational Desire: Why Black Women Succeed and Fail*. London: Routledge.

- Mirza, H. S. (1992). *Young, female and black*. Taylor & Francis.
- Mirza, H. S. (1997). *Black British feminism: A reader*. Taylor & Francis.
- Mirza, N. (2015). *Family abuse in Scotland: contesting Universalisations and reconceptualising agency*. Ph.D Thesis. The University of Edinburgh. Available at: <https://era.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/15938> [Accessed 21 May 2021].
- Mitrofan, O., Paul, M., Weich, S. and Spencer, N. (2014) Aggression in children with behavioural/emotional difficulties: seeing aggression on television and video games. *BMC psychiatry*, 14, pp.1-10.
- Mittal, S. and Singh, T. (2018) Victim or Survivor: Perceived identity. *Psyber News*, 9, pp.48-52.
- Mohanty, C. (1988) Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. *Feminist review*, 30, pp.61-88.
- Mohanty, C. (2003) *Feminism without borders*. *Feminism without Borders*. Duke University Press.
- Mohanty, C. (2005). *Feminism without borders: Decolonizing theory, practicing solidarity*, Zubaan.
- Montell, F. (1999) Focus group interviews: A new feminist method. *NWSA journal*, pp.44-71.
- Mooney, J. (2000) *Gender, violence and the social order*, Springer.
- Morales-Williams, E. M (2014). *Tough love: Young urban women of color as public pedagogues and their lessons on race, gender, and sexuality*. Ph.D. Temple University. Available at: <https://digital.library.temple.edu/digital/collection/p245801coll10/id/271903/> [Accessed 2 April 2024].

Morash, M., Bui, M., and Santiago, A. (2000) Gender specific ideology of domestic violence in Mexican origin families. *International Review of Victimology*, 1, pp. 67-91.

Morris, A. (2017). Book Review: The Souls of White Folk. *Sage Journal*, 4.

Moses, T. (2010a). Being treated differently: Stigma experiences with family, peers, and school staff among adolescents with mental health disorders. *Social Science and Medicine*, 70, pp.985-993.

Moses, T. (2010b). Adolescent mental health consumers' self-stigma: associations with parents' and adolescents' illness perceptions and parental stigma. *Journal of community psychology*, 38, pp.781-798.

Motro, D., Evans, J.B., Ellis, A.P. and Benson III, L (2022) Race and reactions to women's expressions of anger at work: Examining the effects of the "angry Black woman" stereotype. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 107(1), p.142.

Moulding, N.T., Buchanan, F. and Wendt, S. (2015) Untangling self-blame and mother-blame in women's and children's perspectives on maternal protectiveness in domestic violence: Implications for practice. *Child abuse review*, 24(4), pp.249-260.

Moulds, L. (2019) *An investigation of the Australian experience of adolescent violence towards parents and the potential links with youth justice*. Ph D. Deakin University. Available at: <https://scispace.com/pdf/an-investigation-of-the-australian-experience-of-adolescent-3ys7s8vl8r.pdf> [Accessed 21 May 2023].

Moulds, L.G., Mayshak, R., Mildred, H., Day, A. and Miller, P. (2019) Adolescent violence towards parents: A case of specialisation? *Youth Justice*, 19(3), pp.206-221.

Mullender, A., Imam, U.F. and Hague, G. (2002) Children's perspectives on domestic violence. Sage Publications Ltd.

Murphy, K. (2013). Policing at The Margins: Fostering Trust and Cooperation Among Ethnic Minority Groups. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter terrorism* 8, pp.184-199.

Nærde, A., Ogden, T., Janson, H. and Zachrisson, H.D. (2014) Normative development of physical aggression from 8 to 26 months. *Developmental Psychology*, 50(6), p.1710.

Nam, B., Kim, J.Y., Bright, C.L. and Jang, D. (2022) Exposure to Family Violence, Peer Attachment, and Adolescent-to-parent Violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(7-8), pp.4718-4739.

Naples N. (1992). Activist mothering: Cross-generational continuity in the community work of women from low-income urban neighbourhoods. *Gender and Society*, 6, pp.441-463.

Naples, N. (1998). *Grassroots Warriors: Activist Mothering, Community work, and the War on Poverty*, Routledge.

Nash, J. (2008) “Re-Thinking Intersectionality.” *Feminist Review*, 89(1), pp. 1–15.

Nash, J. (2019). *Black Feminism Reimagined: After Intersectionality*, Duke University Press.

Nash, T. S., Faulkner, C., and Abell, R. R. (2013) Abused Conservative Christian Wives: Treatment Considerations for Practitioners. *Counselling and Values*, 58, pp.205-220.

National Autistic Society (2023). *Autism assessment waiting times* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/news/autism-assessment-waiting-times-2023> [Accessed 16 May 2023].

National Crime Agency (2019) *Annual Report and Accounts*. Available at: <https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are/publications/329-nca-annual-report-accounts-2018-19/file> [Accessed 1 April 2025].

Nduka, C. A, Mansor, B. M and Talib, A. M. (2012) The Effects of Igbo cultural Importance and Participation in Cultural Events on the Parents’ Use of Physical Punishments on Their Children in Imo State of Nigeria. *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, 2(9), pp.1564–1578.

Neophytou, K., 2004. *ADHD, a social construct: the experiences of families who have a child diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*. Ph.D Australian Catholic University. Available at:

[https://acuresearchbank.acu.edu.au/download/beca8167f27556e71beafec88caebf15be86ad97980c75d7d364514e9a2be040/1047146/65025\\_downloaded\\_stream\\_250.pdf](https://acuresearchbank.acu.edu.au/download/beca8167f27556e71beafec88caebf15be86ad97980c75d7d364514e9a2be040/1047146/65025_downloaded_stream_250.pdf) [Accessed 1 April 2023].

Newell, S. and Griswold, W. (2017). *Writing African Women: Gender, Popular Culture and Literature in West Africa*, Zed Books.

Ngcobo, L. (1988) 'African Motherhood: Myth and Reality' In Peterson, H.K (eds) *Criticism and Ideology*. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, pp. 140–149.

Ngcobo, L. (1999). *And They Didn't Die*. New York, The Feminist Press.

Ngozi, E. and Okpoko, U. P. (2019) Promoting Faith-based Tourism in Nigeria: The Place of Ritual Actors and Activities. *Journal of Tourism and Heritage Studies*, 8(1), pp. 18-32.

Nguyen Phan, T.T. (2024) *'It's ruined me being a mother': mothers' experiences of abuse by their adult children*. Ph D. Anglia Ruskin University. Available at:

[https://aru.figshare.com/articles/thesis/It\\_s\\_ruined\\_me\\_being\\_a\\_mother\\_mothers\\_experiences\\_of\\_abuse\\_by\\_their\\_adult\\_children/26148694?file=47997994](https://aru.figshare.com/articles/thesis/It_s_ruined_me_being_a_mother_mothers_experiences_of_abuse_by_their_adult_children/26148694?file=47997994) [Accessed 1 May 2025].

Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (2013) available at:

<https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/sr213/sr213.pdf> [Accessed 29 April 2021].

Nixon, E., Greene, S. and Hogan, D.M. (2012) Negotiating relationships in single-mother households: Perspectives of children and mothers. *Family Relations*, 61(1), pp.142-156.

Nnaemeka, O. (1997). *The Politics of (m)othering: Womanhood, identity, and resistance in African literature.*, London & New York., Routledge.

Nnaemeka, O. (1998) Mapping African feminisms. In: Cornwall, A. eds. *Readings in gender in Africa*. Bloomington, Indian University Press.

- Nnaemeka, O. (1998) *Sisterhood, Feminisms, and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora*, Africa World Press.
- Nnaemeka, O. (2004) Nego-feminism: Theorizing, practicing and pruning Africa's way. *Signs*, 29, pp.357-385.
- Nock, K. M. and Kazdin, E. A (2002) Parent-Directed Physical Aggression by Clinic-Referred Youths. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 31(2) pp. 193–205.
- November, L. (2014) *The Impact of faith-Based Organisations on Public Health and Social Capital*. Available at: <https://www.faithaction.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/FaithAction-Public-Health-Report.pdf> [Accessed 26 April 2021].
- Nowakowski-Sims, E. and Rowe, A., (2017) The relationship between childhood adversity, attachment, and internalizing behaviors in a diversion program for child-to-mother violence. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 72, pp.266-275.
- NSPCC LEARNING. (2022) *Safeguarding children who come from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities* [Online]. Available at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/children-from-black-asian-minoritised-ethnic-communities> [Accessed 19 May 2023].
- Nzegwu, U. N (2012) *Family matters: Feminist concepts in African philosophy of culture*. State University of New York Press.
- O. Leary, Z. (2010) *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project*. London, Sage.
- O'Hara L, K., Duchschere, E, J., Beck, A. J. C., and Lawrence, E. (2017) Adolescent-to-Parent Violence: Translating Research into Effective Practice. *Adolescent Research Review*, 2(3), pp. 181–198.
- O'Hara, K.L., Duchschere, J.E., Beck, C.J. and Lawrence, E. (2017) Adolescent-to-parent violence: Translating research into effective practice. *Adolescent Research Review*, 2, pp.181-198.

O'Reilly, A. (2004) *Toni Morrison and Motherhood: A Politics of the Heart*. State University of New York Press.

O'Shea, B., Feicht, R., Brown, M. and Numer, M. (2024) Rethinking sexual violence labels: exploring the impact of 'victim' and 'survivor' discourse. *European journal of psychotraumatology*, 15(1), pp.1-13.

Oakley, A. (1979). *Becoming a Mother*. Schocken Books.

Obayan, I. and Aize, O. (1995) Changing Perspectives in the Extended Family System in Nigeria: Implications for Family Dynamics and Counselling. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 8(3), pp. 253–257.

Obie, B. (2015) *Op-Ed: Radical Black Christians in the New Civil Rights Movements*. NBC news. Available at: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/radical-black-christians-new-civil-rights-movement-n417871> [Accessed 31 December 2019].

Ochocka, J. and Janzen, R. (2008) Immigrant parenting: a new framework of understanding. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 6, pp.85–111.

Odok, G.E. (2020) Disruption of Patriarchy in Northern Islamic Nigeria. *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 27(12), pp. 1663–1681.

Odum, C. T. (2017) *Our Journey, Our Voice: Conceptualizing Motherhood and Reproductive Agency in African American Communities*. PhD, University of Cincinnati. Available at: [https://etd.ohiolink.edu/acprod/odb\\_etd/etd/r/1501/10?clear=10&p10\\_accession\\_num=ucin1505148678895392](https://etd.ohiolink.edu/acprod/odb_etd/etd/r/1501/10?clear=10&p10_accession_num=ucin1505148678895392) [Accessed 21 May 2022].

Offences Against Person Act 1861

Office for National Statistics (2021) *Population of the UK by country of birth and nationality: individual country data*. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/datasets/populationoftheunitedkingdombycountryofbirthandnationalityunderlyingdatasheets> [Accessed 21 April 2021].

Office for National Statistics (2021) *Young Adults living with their parents*. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/datasets/youngadultslivingwiththeirparents> [Accessed 04 May 2021].

Office National Statistics (2019). *Domestic abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: year ending March 2019*. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabuseprevalenceandtrendsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2019> [Accessed 17 March 2025].

Office of National Statistics (2021) *Proportion of children in lone parent families by ethnic group, England and Wales 2019. United Kingdom*. Available from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/adhocs/12947proportionofchildreninloneparentfamiliesbyethnicgroupenglandandwales2019> [Accessed 20 May 2023].

Ofoha, D., Ogidan, R. and Saidu, R. (2019) Child discipline and violence in Nigeria: A community-based intervention programme to reduce violent discipline and other forms of negative parenting practices. *Review of Education*, 7(3), pp.455-492.

Ogbu, J. (1981) Origins of human competence: A cultural-ecological perspective. *Child development*, 52(2), pp.413-429.

Ogundipe-Leslie, M. (1994) *Recreating Ourselves: African Women and Critical Transformations*, Trenton: Africa World.

Ogunnaike, A. O., and Houser, F. R. (2002) Yoruba toddlers' engagement in errands and cognitive performance on the Yoruba mental subscale. *International Journal of Behavioural Development*, Vol 26(2), pp.145-153.

Ogunyemi, O. C. (1985) Womanism: The dynamics of the contemporary black female novel in English. *Signs: Journal of women in Culture and Society*, 11, pp.63-80.

Oh, I. (2009). The performativity of motherhood: Embodying theology and political agency. *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, pp.3-17.

Ohuche, M. N. (1986) The ideal pupil as perceived by Nigerian (Igbo) teachers and Torrance's creativity personality. *International Review of Education*, 32(2), pp.191-196.

Okimoto, T.G. and Heilman, M.E. (2012) The "bad parent" assumption: How gender stereotypes affect reactions to working mothers. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68(4), pp.704-724.

Okoli, C. B. R, and Cree, E. V. (2012) Children's work: Experiences of street-vending children and young people in Enugu Nigeria. *British Journal of Social Work*, 42, pp.58-73.

Okolosie, L., Harker, J., Green, L. and Dabiri, E. (2015) *Is it time to ditch the term 'Black, Asian and minority ethnic' (BAME)?* [Online]. The Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/may/22/black-asian-minority-ethnic-bame-bme-trevor-phillips-racial-minorities> [Accessed 19 May 2023].

Okolosie, L., Harker, J., Green, L., and Dabiri, E. (2015) *Is it time to ditch the term 'black, Asian and minority ethnic' (BAME)* Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/may/22/black-asian-minority-ethnic-bame-bme-trevor-phillips-racial-minorities> [Accessed 01 May 2021].

Okpokiri (2021) *Nigerian parents have fears of 'parenting-while-black in Britain*. *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/nigerian-parents-have-fears-of-parenting-while-black-in-britain-152197> [Accessed 22 March 2021].

Okpokiri, C. (2017) *First-generation Nigerian Immigrant Parents and Child Welfare Issues in Britain*. PhD, University of Sussex. Available at: [https://sussex.figshare.com/articles/thesis/First-generation\\_Nigerian\\_immigrant\\_parents\\_and\\_child\\_welfare\\_issues\\_in\\_Britain/23448428](https://sussex.figshare.com/articles/thesis/First-generation_Nigerian_immigrant_parents_and_child_welfare_issues_in_Britain/23448428) [Accessed 21 March 2023].

Okpokiri, C. (2021a) Parenting in fear: Child welfare micro strategies of Nigerian parents in Britain. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 51, pp.427-444.

- Okpokiri, C. (2021b) *Nigerian parents have fears of 'parenting-while-Black' in Britain* [Online]. Available from: <https://theconversation.com/nigerian-parents-have-fears-of-parenting-while-black-in-britain-152197> [Accessed 19 May 2023].
- Olajubu, O. (2012). *Women in the Yoruba religious sphere*. Sunny Press.
- Olasupo, A. F., Kikelomo, V. O and Adeniran, A. J. (2012) Proverbs and gender equalities and equities in African cultures: Yoruba culture as a case study. *Global Journal of Human Social Science Arts & Humanifies* 12 (13), pp.11-26.
- Olayiwola, A. and Olowonmi, A. (2013). Mothering Children in Africa: Interrogating single parenthood in African literature. *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos*, pp.141-159.
- Olson, S.L., Kashiwagi, K. and Crystal, D. (2001) Concepts of adaptive and maladaptive child behavior: A comparison of US and Japanese mothers of preschool-age children. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 32(1), pp.43-57.
- Oluwaniyi, O. (2011) Police and the Institution of Corruption in Nigeria. *Policing & Society*, 21(1), pp. 67–83.
- Olwig, K. F. (1999) Narratives of the children left behind: Home and identity in globalised Caribbean families. *Journal of ethnic and migration studies*, 25, pp.267-284.
- Onigbogi O, M., Odeyemi A, K., and Onigbogi O. O. (2015) Prevalence and Factors Associated with Intimate Partner Violence among Married Women in an Urban Community in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Africa Journal of Reproductive Health*, 19(1), 2015, pp. 91–100.
- Onwujuba, C. (2015) *A Tale of Two Cultures: A Qualitative Narrative of Nigerian Immigrant Parenting in the United States*, PhD. Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College. Available at: [https://repository.lsu.edu/gradschool\\_dissertations/2091/](https://repository.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations/2091/) [Accessed 21 March 2024].

Onwujuba, C., Marks, L. and Nesteruk, O. (2015) 'Why We Do What We Do: Reflections of Educated Nigerian Immigrants on their Changing Parenting Attitudes and Practices', *Family Science Review*, 20(2), pp23-46.

Oparah, C. J. and Bonaparte D. A. (2015). *Birthing justice: Black women, pregnancy, and childbirth*. Routledge.

Oparah, J.C. and Bonaparte, A. (2015) *Birthing Justice: Black women, Pregnancy and Childbirth*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. New York: Routledge.

Orloff, E. L., Jang, D., and Klein, F. C. (1995) With no place to turn: Improving legal advocacy for battered immigrant women. *Family Law Quarterly*, 29, pp.313-329.

Orue, I., Bushman, B.J., Calvete, E., Thomaes, S., de Castro, B.O. and Hutteman, R. (2011) Monkey see, monkey do, monkey hurt: Longitudinal effects of exposure to violence on children's aggressive behavior. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 2(4), pp.432-437.

Oyewumi, O. (2003). *African women and feminism: Reflecting on the politics of sisterhood*. African Research and Publications.

Oyewuwo-Gassikia, O.B. (2020) Black Muslim women's domestic violence help-seeking strategies: Types, motivations, and outcomes. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 29(7), pp.856-875.

Pagani, L., Larocque, D., Vitaro, F. and Tremblay, E. R. (2003) Verbal and physical abuse toward mothers: The role of family configuration, environment, and coping strategies. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 32, pp.215-222.

Pagani, L., Tremblay, R., Nagin, D., Zoccolillo, M., Vitaro, F., and McDuff, P. (2004) 'Risk factor models for adolescent verbal and physical aggression toward mothers', *International Journal of Behavioural Development*, 28(6), pp. 528–537.

Pagani, L., Tremblay, R.E., Nagin, D., Zoccolillo, M., Vitaro, F. and McDuff, P. (2009) Risk factor models for adolescent verbal and physical aggression toward fathers. *Journal of Family Violence*, 24, pp.173-182.

Paris, J. P. (1993) From Womanist Thought to Womanist Action. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 9 (1/2), pp. 115-125.

Parker, R. and Aggleton, P. (2003). HIV and AIDS-related stigma and discrimination: a conceptual framework and implications for action. *Social Science and Medicine*, 57, pp.13-24.

Parker, S. (2010) Working Capital: Ownership and (Some) Means of Production. In: Taylor, Y. (eds) *Classed Intersections: Spaces, Selves, Knowledges*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Parkes, B. (2012) Exclusion of Pupils from School in the UK. *The Equal rights review*, 8, pp.113-129.

Parks, A.K. and Hayman, L.L. (2024) Unveiling the Strong Black Woman schema— evolution and impact: A systematic review. *Clinical Nursing Research*, 33(5), pp.395-404.

Parmar A. (2011) Stop and Search in London: Counter-terrorist or counter-productive? *Policing and Society*, 21(4), pp.369–382.

Parmar, A. (2014) ‘Ethnicities, Racism and Crime in England and Wales’ In Bucerius, M. S., and Tonry, H. M (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Ethnicity, Crime and Immigration*. Oxford University Press.

Parmar, A. (2017) Intersectionality, British criminology and race: Are we there yet? *Theoretical Criminology*, 21(1), pp. 35–45.

Parnell, R.N., Lacey, K.K. and Wood, M. (2022) Coping and protective factors of mental health: an examination of African American and US Caribbean Black women exposed to IPV from a nationally representative sample. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(22), p.15343.

- Parris, M. (2016). 'BME' is racist and misleading. Let's drop it [Online]. Available at: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/bme-is-racist-and-misleading-lets-drop-it-d3q87mxj9zz> [Accessed 19 May 2023].
- Paterson, R., Luntz, H., Perlesz, A. and Cotton, S. (2002) Adolescent violence towards parents: maintaining family connections when the going gets tough. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 23(2), pp. 90–100.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, SAGE Publications.
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage.
- Patton, T. O. (2006) Hey girl, am I more than my hair?: African American women and their struggles with beauty, body image, and hair. *NWSA journal*, pp.24-51.
- Pearce, O. T. (2014). Dispelling the myth of pre-colonial gender equality in Yoruba culture. *Canadian Journal of African Studies/La Revue canadienne des études africaines*, 48, pp.315-331.
- Peck, A., Hutchinson, M. and Provost, S. (2023) Young person-to-mother violence: An integrative review of evidence from Australia and New Zealand. *Australian Social Work*, 76, pp.245-258.
- Pederson, A.B. (2023) Management of depression in black people: effects of cultural issues. *Psychiatric annals*, 53(3), pp.122-125.
- Pederson, A.B. and Pederson, N. (2023) Black people, spirituality, and mental health. *Psychiatric Annals*, 53(12), pp.540-544.
- Peek, C.W., Fischer, J.L. and Kidwell, J.S. (1985) Teenage violence toward parents: A neglected dimension of family violence. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, pp.1051-1058.
- Pence, E. and Paymar, M. (1986) *Power and Control: Tactics of men who batter*, Minnesota Program Development Inc.

- Perera, H. (2006) Parent battering and the psychiatric and family correlates in children and adolescents. *Sri Lanka Journal of Child Health*, 35(4), pp.128-132.
- Perera, J. (2020) *How Black Working-Class Youth are Criminalised and Excluded in the English School System: A London Case Study*. London: Institute of Race Relations. Available at: <https://irr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/How-Black-Working-Class-Youth-are-Criminalised-and-Excluded-in-the-English-School-System.pdf> [Accessed October 2021].
- Peters, M. F. (1988). Parenting in Black families with young children: A historical perspective. In McAdoo, P.H (eds) *Black families*. Sage Publishing.
- Peterson, D. R. (2012) The central place of race in crime and justice—the American Society of Criminology's 2011 Sutherland Address. *Criminology*, 50, pp.303-328.
- Peterson, J.A., Reisinger, H.S., Schwartz, R.P., Mitchell, S.G., Kelly, S.M., Brown, B.S. and Agar, M.H. (2008). Targeted sampling in drug abuse research: A review and case study. *Field Methods*, 20(2), pp.155-170.
- Peterson, T. L. (2018) Grandparents raising grandchildren in the African American community. *Generations*, 42, pp.30-36.
- Phillips, C. and Bowling, B. (2003) Racism, ethnicity and Criminology: Developing Minority Perspectives. *British Journal for Criminology* 43, pp. 269-290.
- Phillips, C. and Bowling, B. (2017) 'Ethnicities, Racism, Crime and Criminal justice' in Liebling, A., Maruna, S and McAra, L. (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 190-207.
- Phillips, M. (2011). *Britain's Liberal Intelligentsia Has Smashed Virtually Every Social Value* [Online]. The Daily Mail. Available at: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2024690/UK-riots-2011-Britains-liberal-intelligentsia-smashed-virtually-social-value.html> [Accessed 19 May 2023].

- Phoenix, A. (1991) Anti-Racism and Research Workshop. *Women and Social Research*. London: British Sociological Association, pp.44-46.
- Phoenix, A. (2003) 'Social Constructions of lone motherhood: a case of competing discourses' in Silva, B, E. (eds) *Good Enough Mothering?: Feminist Perspectives on Lone Motherhood*. London Routledge.
- Phoenix, A. and Husain, F. (2007) *Parenting and Ethnicity*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/parenting-ethnicity.pdf> [Accessed 08 May 2021].
- Phoenix, Ann and Woollett, A. (1991) 'Motherhood: Social construction, politics and psychology', in Phoenix, A., Woollett, A., and Lloyd, E. (eds) *Motherhood: Meanings, practices and ideologies*. SAGE, pp. 13–27
- Pickett, J.T. (2017) Blame their mothers: Public opinion about maternal employment as a cause of juvenile delinquency. *Feminist Criminology*, 12(4), pp.361-383.
- Pieterse, N. J. (1992) *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*. Yale University Press.
- Pinker, R. (2017) 'Stigma and social welfare' in Offer, J., and Pinker, R. (eds) *Social Policy and Welfare Pluralism*. Policy Press.
- Pinquart, M. (2017) Associations of parenting dimensions and styles with externalizing problems of children and adolescents: An updated meta-analysis. *Developmental psychology*, 53, pp.873.
- Platt, D.E. (2009) *The protective factors of youth first involved in the justice system who desist*. Arizona State University.
- Polgar, S., and Thomas, S. (2013) *Introduction to Research in the Health Sciences*, Churchill Livingstone.

- Polit, D. F. and Beck, C. T. (2004) *Nursing research: Principles and methods*, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- Pope, C., Ziebland, S. and Mays, N. (2000) Analysing qualitative data. *Bmj*, 320, pp.114-116.
- Potter, H. (2008) *Battle Cries: Black Women in Intimate Partner Violence*. New York University Press.
- Potter, H. (2015) *Intersectionality and Criminology: Disrupting and Revolutionizing Studies of Crime*. Routledge.
- Providence (2018) *Shattering the Holy Hush: Domestic Violence and Christianity*. Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_3OOGIz5n8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_3OOGIz5n8) [Accessed 2 January 2020].
- Purtle, J., Nelson, K.L. and Gollust, S.E. (2022) Public opinion about adverse childhood experiences: Social stigma, attribution of blame, and government intervention. *Child maltreatment*, 27(3), pp.344-355.
- Radford, L., Lombard, N., Meinck, F., Katz, E. and Mahati, S.T. (2017) Researching violence with children: Experiences and lessons from the UK and South Africa. *Families, relationships and societies*, 6(2), pp.239-256.
- Raj A and Silverman J. (2002) Violence against immigrant women the roles of culture, context, and legal immigrant status on intimate partner violence. *Violence Against Women*, 8(3), pp.367–98.
- Raj, A. and Silverman, J.G. (2003) Immigrant South Asian women at greater risk for injury from intimate partner violence. *American journal of public health*, 93(3), pp.435-437.
- Rakoczy, S. (2004) Religion and Violence: The Suffering of Women. *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity. Religion and Spirituality*, 61, pp. 29-35.
- Ramazanoglu, C. (1986) Ethnocentrism and socialist-feminist theory: a response to Barrett and McIntosh. *Feminist Review*, 22, pp.83-86.

- Rampton, A. (1981) *The Rampton Report (1981). West Indian Children in our Schools*. Available at: <https://www.education-uk.org/documents/rampton/rampton1981.html> [Accessed date: 1 April 2025].
- Rasool, S. (2015) The Influence of Social Constructions of Family on Abused Women's Help-seeking after Domestic Violence. *South African Review of Sociology*, 46(4), pp.24-38.
- Rasool, S. and Suleman, M. (2016) Muslim women overcoming marital violence: breaking through 'structural and cultural prisons' created by religious leaders. *Agenda*, 30(3), pp.39-49.
- Ratlebjane, M. (2015) *How 'black tax' cripples our youth's aspirations*. Available at <https://mg.co.za/article/2015-10-29-how-black-tax-cripples-our-youths-aspirations/> [Accessed 28 October 2024].
- Ray, R. (2022) School as a hostile institution: How Black and immigrant girls of color experience the classroom. *Gender & Society*, 36(1), pp.88-111.
- Reavis, J. A., Looman, J., Franco, K. A. and Rojas, B. (2013) Adverse childhood experiences and adult criminality: how long must we live before we possess our own lives? *The Permanente Journal*, 17(2), pp.44-48.
- Reece, H (2009) 'The degradation of parental responsibility' In Rebecca, P., Gilmore, S., and Herring, J (eds) *Responsible Parents and Parental Responsibility*. Hart Publishing, Oxford, UK, pp. 85-102.
- Reid, M. (2004) *The Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Sector: A Literature Review*. Available: <https://cemvoscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/bme-voluntary-and-community-sector-literature-review-1.pdf> [Accessed 21 May 2024].
- Reimer, V., and Sahagian, S. (2015) *The mother blame game*. Demeter Press.
- Renzaho, A., Green, J., Mellor, D. and Swinburn, B. (2011) Parenting, Family Functioning and Lifestyle in a New Culture: The Case of African Migrants in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. *Child and Family Social Work*, 16(2), pp. 228–240.

Renzaho, A.M. and Vignjevic, S. (2011) The impact of a parenting intervention in Australia among migrants and refugees from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Congo, and Burundi: Results from the African Migrant Parenting Program. *Journal of family studies*, 17(1), pp.71-79.

Retz W and Rösler M. (2010) Association of ADHD with reactive and proactive violent behaviour in a forensic population. *ADHD Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorders*, 2, pp.195-202.

Reynolds T., (2020) Studies of the Maternal: Black Mothering 10 Years On. *Studies in the Maternal*, 13(1), pp.1-11.

Reynolds, T. (1997) '(Mis)representing the Black (Super)woman' In Mirza, H. S. (eds.) *Black British Feminism: A Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 97–112.

Reynolds, T. (1999). *African-Caribbean Mothering: Reconstructing a "New" Identity*'. PhD, South Bank University.

Reynolds, T. (2005). *Caribbean mothers: identity and experience in the UK*. Tufnell Press.

Reynolds, T. (2006). Caribbean families, social capital and young people's diasporic identities. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 29, pp.1087-1103.

Reynolds, T., Callender, C. and Edwards, R. (2003). *Caring and Counting: The Impact of Mothers' Employment on Family Relationships*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available from: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/impact-mothers-employment-family-relationships> [Accessed 20 May 2023].

Ribbens, J. (1994) *Mothers and their Children: A Feminist Sociology of Childrearing*. London: Sage.

Rich, A. (1976) *Of woman born: Motherhood as experience and institution*, New York: Virago Press.

- Rich, A. (2021) *Of woman born: Motherhood as experience and institution*, WW Norton & Company.
- Rich, C. A. (1977) *Women and Honor: Some notes on lying*. Motherroot Publications.
- Rich, C. A. (1996) *Of Woman Born - Motherhood as Experience and Institution*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- Richardson, D. (1993) *Women, Motherhood and Childrearing*. London, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Richardson, H. (2019) *The Stay-at-home sons and daughters of the housing crisis*. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-47162010> [Accessed 04 May 2021].
- Richie, B. (2003) *Understanding the Links Between Violence Against women and Women's Participation in Illegal Activity. United States of America: US Department of Justice*. Available at: <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/199370.pdf> [Accessed 20 May 2023].
- Richie, B. E. (2012). *Arrested Justice: Black Women, Violence, and America's Prison Nation*, United States of America, New York University Press.
- Richie, B. E. (2017) Selected Reading: Women and Drug Use: The Case for a Justice Analysis. *Toward Justice*. Routledge.
- Riedle, J.E. (1991) Exploring the subcategories of stereotypes: Not all mothers are the same. *Sex Roles*, 24, pp.711-723.
- Riessman, K. C. (1987) When gender is not enough: Women interviewing women. *Gender & society*, 1, pp.172-207.
- Riessman, K. C. (2008) *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Sage Publications.

- Riessman, K.C. (2005) 'Narrative Analysis' In Nancy, K., Horrocks, C., Milnes, K., Roberts, B., and Robinson, D. (eds) *Narrative, memory and everyday life*. University of Huddersfield.
- Rigueur, L. W. (2021) The persistent joy of Black Mothers. *The Atlantic, Atlantic Media Company*, 11.
- Ritchie, J., Ormston, R., McNaughton Nicholls, C. and Lewis, J. (2013) *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Sage Ltd.
- Roberts, D. (2002) *Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare*. New York: Civitas Books.
- Roberts, D. (2014). *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*, Vintage.
- Roberts, D.E. (1993) Racism and Patriarchy in the Meaning of Motherhood. *Am. UJ Gender & L., 1*, p.1.
- Roberts, E. D. (1994) The Value of Black Mothers' Work. *Faculty Scholarship at Pennsylvania Carey Law School*, 26, pp.871-878.
- Roberts, E. D. (1997) Spiritual and Medial Housework. *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism*, 9, pp.51-80.
- Roberts, J., Noden, P, West, A., Lewis, J. (2015) Living with the Parents: the Purpose of Young Graduates' Return to the Parental Home in England. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 19(3), pp. 319–337.
- Robinson, A.L. and Chandek, M.S. (2000) The domestic violence arrest decision: Examining demographic, attitudinal, and situational variables. *Crime & delinquency*, 46(1), pp.18-37.
- Robinson, W.T., Risser, J.M., McGoy, S., Becker, A.B., Rehman, H., Jefferson, M., Griffin, V., Wolverton, M. and Tortu, S., (2006) Recruiting injection drug users: a three-site comparison of results and experiences with respondent-driven and targeted sampling procedures. *Journal of Urban Health*, 83(Suppl 1), pp.29-38.

- Rochelle, A. R. (1997) *No more kind: Exploring race, class and gender in family networks*, Thousand Oaks, CA., Sage.
- Röder A, and Mühlau P. (2012) What determines the trust of immigrants in criminal justice institutions in Europe? *European Journal of Criminology*, 9(4) pp.370-387.
- Rodriguez, C. (2006) We came with truth: black women's struggles against public housing policy. *Homing Devices: Poor People and Public Housing Policies*, Lexington Books, Lanham, MD, pp.81-98.
- Rodriguez, C. (2016) Mothering while black: Feminist thought on maternal loss, mourning and agency in the African diaspora. *Transforming Anthropology*, 24, pp.61-69.
- Rodriguez, J. K., Holvino, E., Fletcher, J. K. and Nkomo, S. M. (2016) The theory and praxis of intersectionality in work and organisations: Where do we go from here? *Gender, Work and Organization*, 23(3), pp. 201-222.
- Rodriguez, R. C., Dzodzi, T., Akosua A.A. (2015) *Transatlantic Feminisms: women and gender studies in Africa and the diaspora*, Lanham. Lexington Books.
- Rogers, A. (2016) *How are black majority churches growing in the UK? A London borough case study*. Available at: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/religionglobalsociety/2016/12/how-are-black-majority-churches-growing-in-the-uk-a-london-borough-case-study/> [Accessed 17 January 2020].
- Romero, E. R. (2000) The icon of the strong Black woman: The paradox of strength. In Jackson, C. L. and Greene, B. (eds) *Psychotherapy with African American women: Innovations in psychodynamic perspective and practice*. The Guildford Press. pp. 225-238.
- Romero, M. (2013) Nany Diaries and Other Stories: Immigrant Women's Labour in the Social Reproduction of American Families. *Revista de estudios sociales (Bogotá, Colombia)*, 45, pp.186-197.

- Rosenblatt, P., and DeLuca, S. (2012) 'We Don't Live Outside, We Live in Here': Neighborhood and Residential Mobility Decisions among Low- Income Families. *City & Community*, 11(3), pp.254–84.
- Roulston, K. and Shelton, S. A. (2015) Reconceptualizing bias in teaching qualitative research methods. *Qualitative inquiry*, 21, pp.332-342.
- Routt, G., and Anderson, L. (2011) Adolescent Violence towards Parents. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 20(1), pp. 1–19.
- Ruddick, S. (1982) 'Maternal Thinking' in Cafagna, A. C., Peterson, R.T., Staudenbaur, C.A. (eds) *Philosophy, Children, and the Family*. Boston, MA.: Springer, pp.101-126.
- Ruddick, S. (1989) *Maternal Thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace*, London: The Women's Press.
- Rúðólfssdóttir, A.G. and Auðardóttir, A.M. (2024) "I feel like I am betraying my child": The socio-politics of maternal guilt and shame', *Gender, Work & Organization*, 31(6), pp.2733-2748.
- Ruiz, D. and Zhu, C. (2004) Families Maintained by African American Grandmothers: Household Composition and Childcare Experiences. *Western Journal of Black Studies*, 28(3), pp.415-423.
- Runnymede Trust (1996) *This is Where I Live: Stories and Pressures in Brixton*. London: Runnymede Trust. Available at: [https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/61488f992b58e687f1108c7c/617bf912a78818c39305355f\\_Tiwil.pdf](https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/61488f992b58e687f1108c7c/617bf912a78818c39305355f_Tiwil.pdf) [Accessed 21 May 2023].
- Rushing, A. B. (1981) Images of Black Women in Afro-American Poetry in Steady, F. C. (eds) *The Black Woman Cross-Culturally*. Schenkman Publishing Company Inc, pp. 403-416.
- Rutter, N. (2022) *It's like living in a house with constant tremors, and every so often, there's an earthquake" A glaserian grounded theory study into harm to parents, caused by the*

*explosive and controlling impulses of their pre-adolescent children*. PhD Durham University. Available at: <https://etheses.dur.ac.uk/14682/> [Accessed 1 May 2023].

Saddiq, A., Tolhurst, R., Lalloo, D., and Theobald, S. (2010) Promoting Vulnerability or Resilience to HIV? A Qualitative Study on Polygamy in Maiduguri, Nigeria. *AIDS Care*, 22(2), pp. 146–151.

Salerno, J.M., Peter-Hagene, L.C. and Jay, A.C. (2017) Women and African Americans are less influential when they express anger during group decision making. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 22(1), pp.57-79.

Salo, E. and Mama, A. (2001). Talking about Feminism in Africa. *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity*, pp.58-63.

San Kuay, H., Lee, S., Centifanti, L.C., Parnis, A.C., Mrozik, J.H. and Tiffin, P.A. (2016) Adolescents as perpetrators of aggression within the family. *International journal of law and psychiatry*, 47, pp.60-67.

Sasaki, Y., Usami, M., Sasaki, S., Sunakawa, H., Toguchi, Y., Tanese, S., Saito, K., Shinohara, R., Kurokouchi, T., Sugimoto, K. and Hakoshima, Y. (2021) Case–control study on clinical characteristics of child and adolescent psychiatric outpatients with child-to-parent violence. *BMJ open*, 11(12).

Saylor E K., and Amann B, H (2016) Impulsive Aggression as a Comorbidity of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder in Children and Adolescents. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology*, 26, pp.19-25.

Saylor, E.K., and Amann B, H. (2016) Impulsive Aggression as a Comorbidity of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder in Children and Adolescents. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology*, 26(1), pp. 19-25.

Scharp, K.M. and Thomas, L.J. (2017) “What would a loving mom do today?”: Exploring the meaning of motherhood in stories of prenatal and postpartum depression. *Journal of Family Communication*, 17(4), pp.401-414.

Schonfeld, J. (2021) *Faith and the Covid-19 Vaccine: Using the Black Church to Get the Word Out*. Available at: <https://ifyc.org/article/faith-and-covid-19-vaccine-using-black-church-get-word-out> [Accessed 08 May 2021].

Schostak, J.F (2002) *Understanding, designing and conducting qualitative research in education: Framing the project*, Open University Press.

Schreiber, R. (1996) (Re)defining myself: Women's process of recovery from depression. *Qualitative Health Research*, 6(4), pp.469-491.

Schwarz, S.B., Nydegger, L. and Hill, M.J. (2023) 'Hard-to-Reach or Hardly Reached? The "Difficulty" of Engaging Cisgender Black Females in Sexual Health Research', *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*, 10(6), pp.2615-2619.

Scott, J.L (2000) *English Language and Communication: Issues for African and Caribbean Immigrant Youth in Toronto*. Coalition of Visible Minority Women (Ontario) Inc. Available at [http://atwork.settlement.org/downloads/cvmw\\_immigrant\\_youth\\_research.pdf](http://atwork.settlement.org/downloads/cvmw_immigrant_youth_research.pdf) [Accessed 09 May 2021].

Scott, K.A., Britton, L. and McLemore, M.R. (2019) The ethics of perinatal care for Black women: dismantling the structural racism in "mother blame" narratives. *The Journal of perinatal & neonatal nursing*, 33(2), pp.108-115.

Seballo, B, Y. (2007) *Religion as a Protective Factor in Resilience: A Phenomenological Study of The Influence of Christianity*. Barry University.

Seguera D. (1994). Working at Motherhood: Chicana and Mexican Immigrant Mothers and Employment. In Glenn, N. E., Chang, G. and Forcey, L. (eds) *Mothering: Ideology, Experiences and Agency*. California: Routledge.

Seijo, D., Vázquez, M.J., Gallego, R., Gancedo, Y. and Novo, M., (2020) Adolescent-to-parent violence: Psychological and family adjustment. *Frontiers in psychology*, 11.

Selwyn, J. and Meakings, S. (2016) Adolescent-to-parent violence in adoptive families. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 46(5), pp.1224-1240.

Sesanti, S. (2010) The concept of 'respect' in African culture in the context of journalism practice: An Afrocentric intervention. *Communicatio: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research*, 36, pp.343-358.

Shaghghi, A., Bhopal, R.S. and Sheikh, A. (2011) Approaches to recruiting 'hard-to-reach' populations into research: a review of the literature. *Health promotion perspectives*, 1(2), p.86.

Shalin H-J. (2023) 'Navigating Inequitable (Mis)Treatment and Racist Harassment in Higher Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Self-Decentered Autoethnographic Case', in J-H. Shalin (eds) *Handbook of Research on Revisioning and Reconstructing Higher Education After Global Crises*. IGI global Scientific Publishing, pp. 205-259.

Shandy, D.J. and Fennelly, K. (2006) A comparison of the integration experiences of two African immigrant populations in a rural community. *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought*, 25(1), pp.23-45.

Shankar, J. (2011) The Battered Parents Syndrome—An Indian Perspective, pp.1-22.

Sharp, D. and Atherton, S. (2007) 'To serve and protect? The experiences of policing in the community of young people from black and other ethnic minority groups' *The British Journal of Criminology*, 47(5), pp.746-763.

Sharp, E.B. and Johnson, P.E. (2009) 'Accounting for variation in distrust of local police', *Justice Quarterly*, 26(1), pp.157-182.

Shaw, A.R., Enriquez, M., Bloom, T., Berkley-Patton, J. and Vidoni, E.D. (2022) We are our sister's keeper: The experience of Black female clergy responding to intimate partner violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(1-2), pp.968-990.

Shelton, N. and Johnson, S. (2006) 'I think motherhood for me was a bit like a double-edged sword': the narratives of older mothers. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 16, pp.316-330.

Shen, Y., Kim, S.Y., Wang, Y. and Chao, R.K. (2014) Language brokering and adjustment among Chinese and Korean American adolescents: A moderated mediation model of

perceived maternal sacrifice, respect for the mother, and mother–child open communication. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, 5(2), p.86.

Shildrick, T. and MacDonald, R. (2008) Understanding youth exclusion: critical moments, social networks and social capital. *Youth and policy*, 99.

Shome, R. (2011) “‘Global motherhood’”: The transnational intimacies of white femininity’, *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 28(5), pp.388-406.

Shorter-Gooden, K. (2004) Multiple resistance strategies: How African American women cope with racism and sexism. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 30(3), pp.406-425.

Sibiya, B. (2018) *Black tax and the vulnerability of the emerging middle class*. MBA.

University of Pretoria (South Africa). Available at:

[https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/68803/Sibiya\\_Black\\_2019.pdf?sequence=1](https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/68803/Sibiya_Black_2019.pdf?sequence=1)

[Accessed 1 April 2024].

Siddiqui, H. (2018) Counting the Cost: BME women and gender-based violence in the UK. *IPPR Progressive Review*, 24(4), pp. 361-368.

Sidel, R. (1996) *Keeping Women and Children Last*. New York: Penguin Book.

Silva, E. and Smart, C. (1999). The ‘New’ Practices and Politics of Family Life. In: Silva, E., and Smart., C. (eds) *The New Family?* London: Sage, pp. 1-12.

Silva, E., and Smart., C. (1999). *The New Family?* London: Sage.

Silverman, D. (2013) What counts as qualitative research? Some cautionary comments. *Qualitative sociology review*, 9, pp.48-55.

Simmons, A. (2020) Why Are We So Mad? The Truth behind " Angry" Black Women and Their Legal Invisibility as Victims of Domestic Violence. *Harvard Black Letter Law Journal*, 36, pp.47-71.

Simmons, M., McEwan, T.E., Purcell, R. and Ogloff, J.R. (2018) Sixty years of child-to-parent abuse research: what we know and where to go. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, pp.31-52.

Simmons, M.L., McEwan, T.E. and Purcell, R. (2019) “But All Kids Yell at Their Parents, Don’t They?”: Social Norms About Child-to-Parent Abuse in Australia. *Journal of family issues*, 40(11), pp.1486-1508.

Simms, R. (1981) The African Woman as Entrepreneur: Problems and Perspectives on Their Roles. In: Steady, F. C. (eds) *The Black Woman Cross-culturally*. Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing Company Inc, pp.141-168.

Simon, J. (1995) Inevitable Dependencies: A Comment on Martha A. Fineman, The Neutered Mother, the Sexual Family, and Other Twentieth Century Tragedies. *Columbia Journal of Gender and the Law*, 5(1), p.152.

Simon, R.W. and Nath, L.E. (2004) Gender and emotion in the United States: Do men and women differ in self-reports of feelings and expressive behavior?. *American journal of sociology*, 109(5), pp.1137-1176.

Simonelli, C.J., Mullis, T., Elliott, A.N. and Pierce, T.W. (2002) Abuse by siblings and subsequent experiences of violence within the dating relationship. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 17(2), pp.103-121.

Sinclair, R. and Franklin, A. (2000) A Quality Protects Research Briefing: young people’s participation. *Department of Health, Research in Practice and Making Research Count: London*.

Singh, S. (2017) *Book Review: Criminalized Mothers, Criminalizing Mothering*. SAGE Publications Sage UK: London, England.

Sisters for Change (2019) *Unequal regard, unequal protection 2: Spotlight on Manchester*. [online] Available at: [https://www.sistersforchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/SFC\\_URUP2-Manchester\\_June2019.pdf](https://www.sistersforchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/SFC_URUP2-Manchester_June2019.pdf) [Accessed January 2020].

- Skeggs, B. (1997) *Formations of Class and Gender*. London: Sage.
- Skeggs, B. (2005) The making of class and gender through visualizing moral subject formation. *Sociology*, 39, pp.965-982.
- Skiba, R., Simmons, A., Ritter, S., Gibb, A., Rausch, K., Cuadrado, J. and Chung, C-G. (2008) Achieving equity in special education: History, status, and current challenges. *Exceptional Children*, 74(3), pp.264-288.
- Sleath, E. and Woodhams, J. (2014) Expectations about victim and offender behaviour during stranger rape. *Psychology, Crime and Law*, 20(8), pp.798-820.
- Slobodin, O., Cohen, R., Arden, A. and Katz, I. (2020) Mothers' need frustration and controlling parenting: The moderating role of maternal guilt. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 29, pp.1914-1926.
- Smith J.A., Flowers. P., and Larkin, M (2009) *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*, London, United Kingdom, Sage.
- Smith-Ruiz, D. (2008) African American grandmothers providing extensive care to their grandchildren: Socio-demographic and health determinants of life satisfaction. *The Journal of sociology and Social Welfare*, 35(4), pp.29-52.
- Smith, J. A. and Osborn, M. (2015) Interpretative phenomenological analysis as a useful methodology for research on the lived experience of pain. *British journal of pain*, 9, pp.41-42.
- Smith, J. A., and Osborn, M. (2003) 'Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis' In J. A. Smith (eds) *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Methods*, pp. 53-80.
- Smith, J., and Noble, H. (2014) Bias in research. *Evidence-based nursing*. 17.
- Smith, K. O. B. (2020) *How Interagency Collaboration Serves Women and Children Survivors of Domestic Violence*. Ph.D Capella University. Available at:

<https://www.proquest.com/openview/bab1023a31f912e55581f78cc84ce96d/1?cbl=18750&diss=y&pq-origsite=gscholar> [Accessed 21 May 2023].

Smith, O. (2018) *Rape trials in England and Wales: Observing justice and rethinking rape myths*, Springer.

Smith, O. and Skinner, T. (2012) Observing court responses to victims of rape and sexual assault. *Feminist Criminology*, 7, pp.298-326.

Snyder, H.N. and McCurley, C. (2008) *Domestic assaults by juvenile offenders*. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Available: <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/219180.pdf> [Accessed 21 May 2024].

Sobande, F. (2020) 'Black Women and the Media in Britain', In Sobande, F. (eds) *The Digital Lives of Black Women in Britain*. Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 29-64.

Sofola, Z. (1998) 'Feminism and African Womanhood' in Nnaemeka, O. (eds) *Sisterhood, Feminisms and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora*. Africa World Press, pp. 51-64.

Sokoloff, J. N., and Dupont, I. (2005) Domestic Violence at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender: Challenges and Contributions to Understanding Violence Against Marginalized Women in Diverse Communities. *Violence against Women*, 11(1), pp. 38–64.

Solomos, J. (1989). *Race and racism in contemporary Britain*, Springer.

Song, M. and Edwards, R. (1997) Comment: raising questions about perspectives on black lone motherhood. *Journal of Social Policy*, 26, pp.233-244.

South, S.J. and Lei, L. (2015) Failures-to-launch and boomerang kids: Contemporary determinants of leaving and returning to the parental home. *Social Forces*, 94(2), pp.863-890.

Spangler, D. and Brandl, B. (2007) Abuse in later life: Power and control dynamics and a victim-centered response. *Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association*, 12, pp.322-331.

Sparkes, A. C. and Smith, B. (2013) *Qualitative research methods in sport, exercise and health: From process to product*. Routledge.

Sparkes, A. C. and Smith, B. (2014) Inhabiting different bodies over time: Narrative and pedagogical challenges. *New directions in social theory, education and embodiment*. Routledge, pp. 95-108.

Sparrman, A. (2014) Access and gatekeeping in researching children's sexuality: Mess in ethics and methods. *Sexuality & Culture*, 18, pp.291-309.

Spillers, H. (2003) *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

St. Pierre, E. A. and Jackson, A. Y. (2014) *Qualitative data analysis after coding*. Sage Publications.

Stack, C. (1974) *All our kind: Strategies for survival in a Black community*. New York, Harper & Row.

Stack, C. and Burton, L. (1993). Kinscripts. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 24(2), pp.157-170.

Standing Together (n.d) *Faith and VAWG Coalition*. Available at:  
<https://www.standingtogether.org.uk/faith-vawg> [Accessed 26 April 2021].

Stanley, L. and Wise, S. (1990) 'Method, methodology and epistemology in feminist research processes', in Stanley, L. (eds) *Feminist Praxis: Research, Theory and Epistemology in Feminist Sociology*. Routledge, pp.20-60.

Stanley, L. and Wise, S. (1993) *Breaking out Again: Feminist Ontology and Epistemology*. London, Routledge.

Stanton, A.G., Jerald, M.C., Ward, L.M. and Avery, L.R. (2017) Social media contributions to strong Black woman ideal endorsement and Black women's mental health. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 41(4), pp.465-478.

Staples, R. (1981) 'The Myth of Black Matriarchy' In: Steady, C. (eds) *The Black Woman Cross-culturally*. Schenkman Publishing. pp. 335-348.

Statista (2021) *Fertility rate in Nigeria*. Available at <https://www.statista.com/statistics/382212/fertility-rate-in-nigeria/> [Accessed 21 April 2021].

Steady, C. (1981). *The Black Woman Cross-culturally*. Schenkman Publishing Company Inc.

Steinberg, S. (2007). *Race Relations*. Stanford University Press.

Stewart, D.M. (2004) Womanist theology in the Caribbean context: critiquing culture, rethinking doctrine, and expanding boundaries. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 20(1), pp.61-82.

Stewart, M., Burns, A. and Leonard, R. (2007) Dark side of the mothering role: Abuse of mothers by adolescent and adult children. *Sex Roles*, 56(3), pp.183-191.

Stewart, S. (2021) A mother's love knows no bounds: Exploring 'good mother' expectations for mothers involved with children's services due to their partner violence. *Qualitative Social Work*, 20, pp.681-702.

Story, A. K. (2014) *Patricia Hill Collins; Reconceiving Motherhood*. Demeter Press.

Strand, S. and Lindorff, A. (2018). *Ethnic disproportionality in the identification of Special Educational Needs (SEN) in England: Extent, causes and consequences*. Available from: [https://www.education.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Executive-Summary\\_2018-12-20.pdf](https://www.education.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Executive-Summary_2018-12-20.pdf) [Accessed 20 April 2023].

Strand, S. and Lindorff, A. (2021). Ethnic disproportionality in the identification of high-incidence special educational needs: A National Longitudinal Study ages 5 to 11. *Exceptional Children*, 87(3), pp.344-368.

Straus, A. M., Gelles J. R., and Steinmetz, K. S (1980) Behind Closed Doors: Violence in the American Family and Family Violence. *Social Work*, 26 (4), pp.353.

Strid, S., Walby, S. and Armstrong, J. (2013) Intersectionality and multiple inequalities: Visibility in British policy on violence against women. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 20, pp.558-581.

Strid, S., Walby, S. and Armstrong, J., (2013) Intersectionality and multiple inequalities: Visibility in British policy on violence against women. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 20(4), pp.558-581.

Strom, K.J., Warner, T.D., Tichavsky, L. and Zahn, M.A., (2014) Policing juveniles: Domestic violence arrest policies, gender, and police response to child–parent violence. *Crime & delinquency*, 60(3), pp.427-450.

Sudakasa, N. (1996) *The Strength of our mothers: African and African American women and families*, Routledge.

Sudbury, J. (1998). *Other Kinds of Dreams’: Black Women’s Organisations and the Politics of Transformation*. Routledge.

Summers, H. (2020) *Ngozi Fulani: ‘Black Women don’t want to risk their abusers being murdered’* Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/sep/22/ngozi-fulani-black-women-domestic-violence-police> [Accessed 08 May 2021].

Sumra, M. K. (2019) *The human alpha female: social and biological perspectives*. PhD. University of Toronto. Available at: <https://utoronto.scholaris.ca/server/api/core/bitstreams/ece27942-83e6-42c4-8bba-bcc911b61682/content> [Accessed 21 May 2024].

Surrency, Y. E. (2021) *Mothering Through our Pain: Single Black Mothers' Narratives*. Ed.D. Georgia Southern University. Available at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3507&context=etd> [Accessed 21 May 2024].

Sutherland, J. A. (2010). Mothering, guilt and shame. *Sociology Compass*, 4, pp.310-321.

Swaab, L., Goodwin, J., Wroe, J., Woolard, A., McCormack, L. and Campbell, L. (2021) Stigma associated with parenting an autistic child with aggressive behaviour: A systematic review. *Review Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, pp.1-14.

Taiwo, O. (2003). Feminism and Africa: Reflections on the Poverty of Theory. in Oyewumi, O. (eds) *African Women and Feminism: Reflecting on the Politics of Sisterhood*. Africa World Press Inc, pp. 45-66.

Taylor, J., Cheers, B., Weetra, C. and Gentle, I. (2004) 'Supporting community solutions to family violence. *Australian Social Work*', 57, pp.71–83.

Taylor, R.J. and Chatters, L.M. (2010) Importance of religion and spirituality in the lives of African Americans, Caribbean Blacks and non-Hispanic Whites. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 79(3) pp.280-294.

Taylor, T. and Bloch, K. (2018) *Marginalized Mothers, Mothering from the Margins*. Emerald Group Publishing.

Terrance, C., Plumm, K. and Little, B. (2008) Maternal blame: Battered women and abused children. *Violence against women*, 14(8), pp.870-885.

Tew, J. and Nixon, J. (2010) Parent abuse: Opening up a discussion of a complex instance of family power relations. *Social Policy and Society*, 9, pp.579-589.

The Guardian (2024). *UK's black children 'face cultural barriers' in accessing help for autism and ADHD*. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2024/mar/31/uk-black-children-cultural-barriers-accessing-help-autism-adhd>. [Accessed 1 April 2025]

The Telegraph (2001) *Christians accused over domestic violence*. Available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1330731/Christians-accused-over-domestic-violence.html> [Accessed 17 January 2020].

The Underwood Report (1955) *Report of the Committee on Maladjusted Children*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office 1995. Available at: <https://www.education-uk.org/documents/underwood/underwood1955.html> [Accessed 21 May 2023].

Thiara R. and Harrison C. (2021) *Reframing the Links: Black and minoritised women, domestic violence and abuse, and mental health—A Review of the Literature*. *Women's Aid*. Available at: <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/FINAL-Reframing-the-links.pdf> [Accessed 11 March 2025].

Thiara, K. R. (2011) 'Hard, Feisty Women'-'Coping on Your Own': African-Caribbean Women and Domestic Violence' In Thiara, K. R., Condon, A. S., and Schröttle, M (eds) *Violence against Women and Ethnicity: Commonalities and Differences across Europe*. Verlag Barbara Budrich, pp. 226-240.

Thomas, L. (2003) *Politics of the Womb: Women, reproduction, and the state in Kenya*. University of California Press.

Thompson, L. and Walker, A. J. (1989) Gender in families: Women and men in marriage, work, and parenthood. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, pp.845-871.

Thorley, W. and Coates, AI (2018) *Let's Talk About Child to Parent Violence*. Available at [file:///Users/ano./Downloads/Lets Talk About Child to Parent Violence.pdf](file:///Users/ano./Downloads/Lets%20Talk%20About%20Child%20to%20Parent%20Violence.pdf) [Accessed 17 March 2025].

Thurston, I.B., Hardin, R., Decker, K., Arnold, T., Howell, K.H. and Phares, V. (2018) Black and white parents' willingness to seek help for children's internalizing and externalizing symptoms. *Journal of clinical psychology*, 74(1), pp.161-177.

Tisdall, E. K. M., Gallagher, M. and Davis, J. E. (2008) *Researching with children and young people: Research design, methods and analysis*. Sage Publishing.

Tisdall, K. (2008) Is the honeymoon over? Children and young people's participation in public decision-making. *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 16(3), pp.419-429.

Toews, K., Cummings, J.A. and Williamson, L.E. (2021) Warmth, competence, and blame: examining mothers of sexually abused children within the stereotype content model. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 36(11-12), pp.5334-5359.

Toews, K., Cummings, J.A. and Zagrodney, J.L. (2019) Mother blame and the just world theory in child sexual abuse cases. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 34(21-22), pp.4661-4686.

Tucker, A. (2016) *Talkin'back and shifting black: Black motherhood, identity development and doctoral study*. PhD thesis. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Turner, J. H. and Stets, J. E. (2005) *The sociology of emotions*, Cambridge University Press.

Tyler, I. (2008) Chav Mum, Chav Scum': Class Disgust in Contemporary Britain. *Feminist Media Studies*, 8, pp.17-34.

Tyler, I. (2013) *Revolting subjects: Social abjection and resistance in neoliberal Britain*, Bloomsbury Publishing.

Tyler, I. (2018) Resituating Erving Goffman: From stigma power to black power. *The Sociological Review*, 66, pp.744-765.

Tyler, I. (2022) *Stigma. The Machinery of Inequality*, Bloomsbury Publishing.

Tyler, I. and Slater, T. (2018) *Rethinking the sociology of stigma*. Sage publications.

U.S Department for Justice (n.d) *Behind Closed Doors: Violence in the American Family*. Available at: <https://www.ojp.gov/library/abstracts/behind-closed-doors-violence-american-family> [Accessed 1 March 2021].

UK Government. (2022). *Unemployment* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/work-pay-and-benefits/unemployment-and-economic-inactivity/unemployment/latest#main-facts-and-figures> [Accessed 20 May 2023].

Ulman, A. and Straus, M. A. (2003). Violence by children against mothers in relation to violence between parents and corporal punishment by parents. *Journal of comparative family studies*, 34, pp.41-60.

Umeh, M.A. (1982) The Joys of Motherhood: Myth or Reality? *Colby Quarterly*, 18(1), p.5.

Understood (n.d) *ADHD And Aggression*. Available at: <https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/add-adhd/adhd-and-aggression-what-you-need-to-know> [Accessed 30 April 2021].

UNICEF (2018) *Child Marriage in West and Central Africa*  
<https://www.unicef.org/wca/media/2596/file> [Accessed 22 April 2021].

*University of Birmingham – Nigeria Country Profile*.  
<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-artslaw/ptr/ciforb/resources/Nigeria.pdf>  
[Accessed 21 April 2021].

Unnever, J. D. and Gabbidon, S. L. (2011) *A Theory of African American offending: Race, racism, and crime*. Taylor & Francis.

Utsey, S.O., Brown, C. and Bolden, M.A. (2004) Testing the structural invariance of the Africultural Coping Systems Inventory across three samples of African descent populations. *Educational and psychological measurement*, 64(1), pp.185-195.

Utsey, S.O., Ponterotto, J.G., Reynolds, A.L. and Cancelli, A.A. (2000) Racial discrimination, coping, life satisfaction, and self-esteem among African Americans. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 78(1), pp.72-80.

Uwechia, N. (2011). Sisterhood. *JENdA: A Journal of Culture and African Women Studies*.

Valentine, C. (1971). Deficit difference, and bicultural models of Afro-American behavior. *Harvard Educational Review*, 41, pp.137-157.

Veiga, A., Pina-Sánchez, J., and Lewis, S. (2023) Racial and ethnic disparities in sentencing: What do we know, and where should we go? *Howard Journal of Crime and Justice*, 62(2), pp.167-182.

Verduzco-Baker, L. (2017) “I Don’t Want Them to Be a Statistic” Mothering Practices of Low-Income Mothers’, *Journal of Family Issues*, 38(7), pp.1010-1038.

Walker, L.E. (1977) Battered women and learned helplessness. *Victimology*, 2, pp.525-534.

Wallace, D. (2018) Safe routes to school? Black Caribbean youth negotiating police surveillance in London and New York City. *Harvard Educational Review*, 88(3), pp.261-286.

Wallace, D. and Joseph-Salisbury, R. (2022) How, still, is the Black Caribbean child made educationally subnormal in the English school system? *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 45, pp.1426-1452.

Walley-Jean, J. C. (2009) Debunking the myth of the “angry Black woman”: An exploration of anger in young African American women. *Black Women, Gender & Families*, 3, pp.68-86.

Walsh, J.A. and Krienert, J.L. (2007) Child–parent violence: An empirical analysis of offender, victim, and event characteristics in a national sample of reported incidents. *Journal of family violence*, 22(7), pp.563-574.

Walsh, J.A. and Krienert, J.L. (2009) A decade of child-initiated family violence: Comparative analysis of child—parent violence and parricide examining offender, victim, and event characteristics in a national sample of reported incidents, 1995-2005. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 24(9), pp.1450-1477.

Wardle, H. and Obermuller, L. (2019) “Windrush generation” and “hostile environment”: symbols and lived experiences in Caribbean migration to the UK. *Migration and Society*, 2(1), pp.81-89.

Warner, M. (2024) Not a victim, not a survivor. *Contexts*, 23, pp.12-17.

Warren, C.A., Andrews, D.J.C. and Flenbaugh, T.K. (2022) Connection, antiblackness, and positive relationships that (re) humanize Black boys' experience of school. *Teachers College Record*, 124(1), pp.111-142.

Watson-Singleton, N.N., Florez, I.A., Clunie, A.M., Silverman, A.L., Dunn, S.E. and Kaslow, N.J. (2020) Psychosocial mediators between intimate partner violence and alcohol abuse in low-income African American women. *Violence against women*, 26(9), pp.915-934.

Watters, J. K. and Biernacki, P. (1989) Targeted sampling: Options for the study of hidden populations. *Social problems*, 36, pp.416-430.

Weaver, J. J. and Ussher, J. M. (1997) How motherhood changes life a discourse analytic study with mothers of young children. *Journal of reproductive and infant psychology*, 15, pp.51-68.

Webster, C. and Kingston, S. (2014) *Anti-Poverty Strategies for the UK: Poverty and Crime Review*. Available at: <https://eprints.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/id/eprint/849/7/> [Accessed 20 May 2023].

Wells, J. (1998) Maternal Politics in Organizing Black South African Women: The Historical Lessons. in Nnaemeka, O. (eds) *Sisterhood, Feminisms, and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora*. Africa World Press, pp. 251-262.

West, E. and Knight, R. J. (2017) Mothers' milk: Slavery, wet-nursing, and black and white women in the antebellum south. *Journal of Southern History*, 83, pp.37-68.

Wilcox, P. (2012) Is Parent Abuse a Form of Domestic Violence? *Social Policy and Society*, 11(2), pp.277-288.

Wilcox, P. and Pooley, M. (2015) Responding to Child to Parent Violence and Abuse in Europe: Research and Data Mapping—Workstream 1. Available at: <https://holesinthewall.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/rcpv-ws1-report-final-1-may-pdf.pdf> [Accessed 22 April 2025].

Wilcox, P., Pooley, M., Ferrando, M., Coogan, D., Lauster, E., Assenova, A., Mortensen, U., and Chrisoffersson, I. (2015) *Responding to Child to Parent Violence: Executive Summary*.

Available at:

[http://www.childandfamilyresearch.ie/media/unescochildandfamilyresearchcentre/RCPV-Executive-Summary-May-2015\\_English.pdf](http://www.childandfamilyresearch.ie/media/unescochildandfamilyresearchcentre/RCPV-Executive-Summary-May-2015_English.pdf) [Accessed 15 March 2021]

Williams, A.D., Banerjee, M., Lozada-Smith, F., Lambouths III, D. and Rowley, S.J. (2017a) Black mothers' perceptions of the role of race in children's education. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 79(4), pp.932-946.

Williams, A.G. and Finlay, F. (2019) County lines: how gang crime is affecting our young people. *Archives of disease in childhood*, 104(8), pp.730-732.

Williams, J.M. and Bryan, J. (2013) Overcoming adversity: High-achieving African American youth's perspectives on educational resilience. *Journal of Counselling & development*, 91(3), pp.291-300.

Williams, K.D. (2007) Ostracism. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.*, 58(1), pp.425-452.

Williams, L.R. and Steinberg, L. (2011) Reciprocal relations between parenting and adjustment in a sample of juvenile offenders. *Child development*, 82(2), pp.633-645.

Williams, M., Tuffin, K. and Niland, P. (2017b) "It's like he just goes off, BOOM!": mothers and grandmothers make sense of child-to-parent violence. *Child & Family Social Work*, 22(2), pp.597-606.

Williams, M.E., Foran, H.M., Hutchings, J., Frantz, I., Taut, D., Lachman, J.M., Ward, C.L. and Heinrichs, N. (2022) Exploring factors associated with parent engagement in a parenting program in southeastern Europe. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 31(11), pp.3097-3112.

Williams, O. and Jenkins, E. (2019) A survey of Black Churches' responses to domestic violence. *Social Work and Christianity*, 46(4), pp.21-38.

Williams, P. (1965) "The Ascertainment of Educationally Subnormal Children." *Educational Research* 7 (2), pp.136–146.

Willis, D.G., Sullivan-Bolyai, S., Knafl, K. and Cohen, M.Z. (2016) Distinguishing features and similarities between descriptive phenomenological and qualitative description research. *Western journal of nursing research*, 38(9), pp.1185-1204.

Willis, R. (2019) The use of composite narratives to present interview findings. *Qualitative research*, 19, pp.471-480.

Wilson-Tagoe, N. (2017) Reading towards a theorisation of African women's writing: African women writers within feminist gynocriticism. In: Newell, S. and Griswold, W. *Writing African Women: Gender, Popular Culture and Literature in West Africa*, Zed Books, pp.11-28.

Wójtowicz, B. (2021) Cultural norms of greetings in the African context. *Roczniki Humanistyczne*, 69(6), pp.171-187.

Wolfe-Robinson, M. (2019) *Female BAME domestic violence victims 'being failed' in Manchester*. *The Guardian*. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/jun/26/female-bame-domestic-violence-victims-being-failed-in-manchester> [Accessed 18 January 2020].

Womanist Institute, (2012) *What Manner of Woman – A Short documentary Film*. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUlc6L1Z9-k> [Accessed 2 January 2020].

Women Against Homelessness and Abuse (WAHA). (2019) A Roof not a Home. The Housing Experiences of Black and Minoritised Women Survivors of Gender Violence. Available at: [https://lawadv.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/WAHA\\_A-roof-not-a-home-report\\_WEB-min.pdf](https://lawadv.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/WAHA_A-roof-not-a-home-report_WEB-min.pdf) [Accessed 1 May 2024].

Woodiwiss, J., Smith, K. and Lockwood, K. (2017) *Feminist narrative research*. Springer. Pp.1-12.

Woods-Giscombé, C. L. (2010) Superwoman schema: African American women's views on stress, strength, and health. *Qualitative health research*, 20(5), pp.668-683.

Worldometer (2021) *Nigeria Demographics*

<https://www.worldometers.info/demographics/nigeria-demographics/> [21 April 2021].

Wright, M. M. (2004) *Becoming black: Creating identity in the African diaspora*. Duke University Press.

Wyatt, J. (2008) Patricia Hill Collins's *Black sexual politics* and the genealogy of the Strong Black Woman. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 9(1), pp.52–67.

Yang, Y., Emmen, R.A., Van Veen, D. and Mesman, J. (2022) Perceived discrimination, ethnic identity, and ethnic-racial socialization in Chinese immigrant families before and after the COVID-19 outbreak: An exploratory natural experiment. *International journal of intercultural relations*, 91, pp.27-37.

Yeo, A., Legard, R., Keegan, J., Ward, K., Nicholls, C. M., and Lewis, C. (2013) In-Depth Interviews. In J. Ritchie, J. Lewis, C. M. Nicholls, and R. Ormston (eds), *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. SAGE, pp. 177-208.

YMCA (2020) *Young and Black. The Young Black Experience of Institutional Racism in the UK*. Available at: <https://ymca.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/ymca-young-and-black-2020.pdf> [Accessed 21 March 2024].

Young, L. (2000) *What Is Black British Feminism?* Taylor and Francis, 11(1-2), pp. 45–60.

Young, V. H. (1974) A Black American socialization pattern. *American ethnologist*, 1(2), pp. 405-413.

Youth justice Board (2022) *Youth Justice Statistics 2020/21*. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1054236/Youth\\_Justice\\_Statistics\\_2020-21.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1054236/Youth_Justice_Statistics_2020-21.pdf) [Accessed: 26 March 2025].

Youth Justice Legal Centre (2020) *Child Criminal Exploitation*. Available at:  
<https://yjl.c.uk/resources/legal-guides-and-toolkits/child-criminal-exploitation#:~:text=Footnotes,1> [Accessed 1 April 2025].

Yuval-Davis, N. (2006) Intersectionality and feminist politics. *European journal of women's studies*, 13, pp.193-209.

Yuval-Davis, N. (2012) Dialogical epistemology—an intersectional resistance to the “oppression Olympics”. *Gender and Society*, 26, pp.46-54.

Zakama, A.K., Mengesha, M., Momplaisir, F., Lewey, J. and Debbink, M.P. (2025) Black Women's Mental Health Needs and Recommendations After Spontaneous Preterm Birth: A Qualitative Study. *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics & Gynaecology*, 230(1), pp. 361-362.

Zimbalist, A. (1998) *Children's Accountability for Their Crimes*. Available at:  
<https://archive.nytimes.com/learning.blogs.nytimes.com/1998/08/17/childrens-accountability-for-their-crimes/> [Accessed 26 March 2025].

