Essay

Honour killings: a thematic analysis within European newspapers

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Abstract

Honour killings are considered by the perpetrators the only path to maintain theirs and their family honour, preventing other's to follow behaviours that move away from traditional patriarchal values. With the aim of exploring how honour killings are characterised, a qualitative study within three European newspapers, in three different languages, was conducted. The findings showed that often the victims are characterised as young women and girls that want to live independently from their birth cultures or that acted in a way considered to be a dishonour to their family culture. Perpetrators are often described as family members, mostly males to whom honour is worth more than life. However, some of the news articles launch the debate of the thin line that divides honour crimes and domestic violence making this not a cultural problem but a widespread cross-cultural reality.

Keywords: honour, honour crime, honour killings, patriarchal culture, culture, newspapers, Europe, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom, femicide.
Introduction

Honour killings can be defined as the homicide of a family member by other members of the same family, as a public statement with the intention of restore the family honour. Those acts are considered by the perpetrators as a way to promote shame to behaviours that are considered disrespectful and to prevent other's to follow the same behaviours moving away from traditional patriarchal values. In their essence, honour killings are matters of culture and tradition that do not belong to a particular religious set (Elakkary et al, 2014; Sadik, 2000; Sen, 2005; Sigal et al., 2016; Wikan, 2008) as "honor killing goes beyond ethnicity, class, and religion" (Elakkary et al, 2014).

In what concerns human rights, fundamental principles of equal value in rights and dignity are vastly acknowledge in several declarations and conventions (Smith, 2016). Distinctions, exclusions or restrictions based on gender, ethnicity or culture impair and pose a risk to the fundamental freedoms of each one of us, human beings, living in this planet.

Purpose and research questions

This research purpose is to explore how honour killings are characterised within three European newspapers. For the present study European online newspapers in three different languages will be considered. It is not the aim of this thesis to explore the rights and wrongs behind this phenomena.

RQ1: How are the victims of "honour killings" are portrayed within three European newspapers?
RQ2: How are the perpetrators of "honour killings" are portrayed within three European newspapers?
RQ3: How is the culture of the victims and perpetrators portrayed within three European newspapers?
Theoretical framework and previous research

Every year around 5000 girls and women are murdered worldwide, by members of their own families. Mostly reported crimes occurred in Middle East and South Asia regions, though there are also reports from other countries around the world such as: Brazil, Ecuador, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Morocco, Sweden, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States and Canada. (Amnesty International, 2012) This estimation is stated and agreed with in a wide number of academic papers and human rights related organisations, however there seems to be a lack of precise statistics that could characterise the phenomena occurrence in a worldwide scale.

These acts are often associated with the victims engaging in behaviours that are not approved by the family or the surrounding community and that are seen as a dishonour to the family. Those behaviours can range from talking with or dating a male outside the family approved circle, engaging in premarital sex, having sexual relations outside marriage, seeking a divorce, refusing to marry the man chosen by the family, wearing make-up, smoking, returning home late, expressing autonomous behaviour that goes against the will and rules of their families or even because they become pregnant as victims of incest and rape (Amnesty International, 2012; Abu-Lughod, 2011; Meetoo & Mirza, 2007). Or as Fadia Faqir (2001) defines it “…the killing of women for suspected deviation from sexual norms imposed by society”.

The honour killings are rooted in the belief that women are objects and commodities that belong to their male relatives, those beliefs are often related with patriarchal belief systems. Therefore the women respect for the rules, norms and domination of the patriarchal line is of utmost importance to preserve the honour of the family. Those traditional conceptions are often agreed with and considered as the only solution possible by the members of the community, preventing those girls and women from seeking support. Furthermore, that general acceptance can lead to the idea that it is a private matter and should not be punished by law (Amnesty International, 2012; Sen, 2005; Sigal et al., 2016).
The "other" in European identity

Orientalism is a concept coined by Edward Said, in his most known work, with the same name, first published in 1978. The concept refers to the binary cultural distinction between Orient and Occident present in the European media, scholar and literary discourses, and how that division shapes the Western representation of the Orient (Said, 1995).

Said argues that those Western representations or misrepresentations generated a collection of fantasies that both forged a collective identity and, in opposition, shaped the European identity. Helping to create artificial boundaries and justify political attitudes, such as the colonization (Said, 1995).

Europeans judged themselves as more civilized, morally superiors and modern in opposition to those from the barbaric, traditionalist and uncivilized world. That image was perpetuated in the European minds and discourses biasing their attitudes towards the Orientals. Moreover, there was an implicit idea that those strange and inferior culture were not to interfere with but solely to condemn. Those artificial boundaries were massified in the western world through scholar reports, literary works and other media sources modulating and biasing the European views and opinions (Delanty, 1995; Said, 1995).

Those dualistic and biased conceptions are also present in the perception and representation of Western women as liberated and independent and by opposition the Eastern as oppressed and subservient (Jiwani, 2014).

In the same line, the sociologist Gerard Delanty argues that European identity construction was based on the ideological construction of the "others" and thus built by contrast where the other is marginalized and misjudged. Furthermore, Delanty defends the idea that multiculturalism and postnational citizenship are the key ingredients for the construction of a realistic European collective identity (Delanty, 1995).

Not just women

Despite being recognised as a form of violence against women there are also cases of male
victims. In a 2010 study, within mostly the English media, from the 172 incidents with 230 victims around 7% were males (Chesler, 2010). Moreover, men are most often killed with their female companions by the woman family and only rarely by their own family. The behaviours that seem to lead to this acts are usually illicit relationships or sexual orientation (Chesler, 2010; Steinke, 2013).

**Honour killings**

Different nomenclatures have been used to define this form of violent acts. Some researchers defend that the terms "honour crimes" or "honour killings" gives emphasis to the honour and attributes a reason for the violent behaviour taking the focus of issues like the crime itself or the premeditation of the crime (Elakkary et al, 2014).

Honour killing can be defined as "an ancient practice in which men kill female relatives in the name of family 'honour'" (Tripathi & Yadav, 2004). Those female are usually held responsible to have brought dishonour to the family. Dishonour is thought to be brought for a variety of reasons, including: "refusing to enter into an arranged marriage, being the victim of a sexual assault, seeking a divorce – even from an abusive husband – or (allegedly) committing adultery." (HRW, 2014).

In a historical perspective Goldstein (2002) argue that this phenomena was already present in Ancient Rome where man were instructed to kill their women in case of adultery but the opposite was not allowed. In Roman society fathers had the right of life and death over their daughters life and, after marriage, that power was passed to the daughter's husband. Prior to that, the Babylonian law code - Code of Hammurabi - expressed the the belief that a woman's virginity was her family possession. As so, the women behaviour defines the honour for the entire family and if that fails another measures are to be taken to restore honour to the family.

This cultural and patriarchal perspective assumes 3 central aspects: the women as a belonging, the women engaging or be thought to have engaged in, what the family considers to be an inappropriate conduct and the punishment as a way to restore the family honour.
Moreover, some women feel the need to support and are active participants in violent acts against other women, such as daughters, due to the firm belief that there is the only way they can protect their own honour and position within their families (Aujla & Gill, 2014).

However, many researchers have been critical to this terms, stating that the focus on honour may be misleading to the fact that is a premeditate crime and pointing the reasons to the victim (Elakkary et al, 2014), and that it protects the social construction of honour as a value system or norm (Aujla & Gill, 2014; Gil, 2009).

The United Nation Secretary General, Kofi Annan in a 2000 speech stated that he prefers to call those harmful traditional practices as "shame killings" as their is nothing honourable in those acts.

**Femicide**

Under those circumstances, a more feminist perspective suggest the use of the term "femicide" and define it as "the misogynous killing of women by men". This term as is main focus on all murders of women by men motivated by the denigration of women (Elakkary et al, 2014).

The term "Femicide", coined in 1976, shifts from a more cultural to a more gendered perspective (Corradi, Marcuello-Servós, Boira, Weil, 2016). Aisha Gil (2009) argues that those crimes should not be connected with the notion of honour. Furthermore, Gil (2009) points out that this crimes are forms to retain the cultural, social, economic and political patriarchal power and domain. The proposed revision off the term, add the political intention to produce changes in the social view of the phenomena raising awareness to the crimes that were being committed against women (Corradi et al., 2016).

This feminist approach is being used by researchers and scholars to stress the notion that a male-dominated society is oppressive, with an unequal power distribution, and can therefore be lethal for women (Corradi et al., 2016). Using the term femicide cuts the boundaries of culture, religion and community transforming the phenomena in a global and transcultural issue, making it a matter of patriarchal violence (Meetoo & Mirza, 2007).
Are honour crimes domestic violence?

Domestic violence crimes can be defined as a form of violence perpetuated by a family member towards other member or members. Traditionally women and children were seen as the victims and men as the abusers. However, increasing awareness for this phenomena brought into the lights a large amount of cases were men and elderly persons were physically abused by women. And in both cases, there is a cultural background that in some ways can be seen as supportive of such acts. In Portugal there is a saying: "Entre marido e mulher não metas a colher!" [can be translated to: "No one should poke their nose into a husband-and-wife fight"] meaning that the domestic fights are not a community issue despite the law stating that domestic violence is considered to be a public crime in Portugal.

Some researchers interpret honour killings as a form of domestic violence (Elakkary et al, 2014) however others point out the existence of fundamental differences between domestic violence and honour crimes. Within those differences, the premisses that honour crimes often involve a collective decision and planning of the entire family, including other females that see the victim behaviour as shameful and also condemn it. Furthermore, domestic violence perpetrators often feel shame of their behaviour and do not have neither family or community support for their actions (Aujla & Gill, 2014; Chesler, 2009).

In the countries of the newspaper researched: England, Spain and Portugal, the category of "honour crimes" is not acknowledge by law. Consequently, any crime committed is to be judge under ordinary criminal law provisions (Pinheiro, 2006).

Method and methodology

The method chosen for the present study is qualitative thematic analysis. This analytical qualitative method allows the researcher to identify and organise the patterns - themes - that arise from the data, bringing forth a rich and detailed amount of data (Braun & Clark, 2006). Thematic analysis allows the research to have a bottom-up approach, starting to deal with the
data in an exploratory way. Data is read through and carefully analysed, allowing key-words, ideas, codes and themes to arise (Bryman, 2015; Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2011). This methodology is considered to be appropriate for large amounts of data, media materials and language-based texts (Bryman, 2015; Saldaña, 2009). Descriptive statistics are used, in the present study, to describe the basic features of the data analysed. The n represents the number of articles equivalent to the mentioned percentage.

**Sampling**

This paper started by a preliminary search within European newspapers with both paper and online edition. For the present study the following European newspapers were selected: The Guardian, Público, El País.

The Guardian is a British national daily newspaper, with both paper and three online editions - United Kingdom (UK), Australia and United States. Accordingly with an UK national survey, the UK online and paper editions were reported to have nearly 9 million readers in 2012. (Halliday, 2012)

Público is a Portuguese daily newspaper, with both paper and online edition. On the newspaper purpose it is declared that it is oriented towards criteria of rigour and editorial creativity, without any dependence of ideological, political and economic order. (Público, n.d) The online edition alone had 2,6 million readers in the first semester of 2013. (Público, 2013)

El País is a Spanish daily newspaper, with both paper and online edition in four idioms: Castilian, Catalan, English and Brazilian Portuguese. In April 2014, the printed edition reached 267000 copies. (Penketh, Oltermann, Burgen, 2014)
The research and analysis was conducted in three different languages: English, Portuguese and Spanish. Data was collected by using the keywords: In English: "honour crime". In Portuguese: "crimes de honra". In Spanish: "crimen de honor".

Newspapers are an important information tools. Although, they cannot be considered a source of scientific information newspapers play a crucial role in modulating the public discourses. Thus, they reflect social and cultural values of a settled time and spaces (Tanacković, Krtalić, & Lacović 2014). Newspapers are considered not only to shape the readers views and attitudes but also as a reflection of the public attitudes transforming them as important documents that reflect the society where they are embedded. (Adoni & Mane, 1984; Woodward, 1934) Furthermore, some researchers consider newspapers to be the most important mass media concerning the public interest to be informed in matters of state and society (Jensen, 2013).

In the English newspaper, The Guardian, the search for the keywords "honour crime" provided 1087 results related with the present subject. From those, 40 were selected and analysed. The selection of articles was based on the matching of the article with the topic, from wish the first 40 results were selected.

The research of the keywords "crimes de honra" provided around 2062 results in the Público newspaper. Despite that, only 47 were directly connected with the present subject. The others were related with "crimes contra a honra" [crimes against one's honour], those include, for example, defamation, verbal and public offences and injuries to one's integrity.

In the Spanish, El País, 2068 news articles were found, from those, 41 were selected. The selection was based on the matching percentage of the article with the keyword used, as the newspaper does that analysis, I selected articles that matched 60% or more.

Different choice methodology to each newspaper was used due to the search systems being widely different. Nevertheless, the matching between the keywords and the contents of the articles was respected.
A total of one hundred and twenty eight news articles were selected and carefully analysed. The articles considered for research were published between 1999 and 2016.

**Reliability, Trustworthiness and Validity**

Reliability is defined as the internal and external consistency of the research results (Bryman, 2008), to achieve internal consistency after a preliminary analysis of the material the news articles were again read through, analysed and the results compared.

In addition, triangulation with previous literature was used to ensure that the concepts were not biased or adulterated (Bryman, 2008). Theoretical concepts triangulation involves using multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data and relies on the idea that if different disciplines interpret the information in the same way that interpretation was some validity. For example, for the quote: "(...) morena de olhos claros e lábios volumosos." [brunette with bright eyes and fleshy lips.] (Público, 17 July 2016). The meanings behind the concepts of brunnnete, bright eyes and fleshy lips were research across different disciplines, such as literature and psychology to gain an understanding of what those could mean and if they were related with beautifulness.

Furthermore, the trustworthiness requirement is related to the process of conducting the study. In the present a rich and detailed description of the study is provided allowing others to replicate the study and obtain similar results (Bryman, 2008).

The study objectivity and validity is ensured by monitoring my own subjectivity, and preventing researcher bias. The news articles were coded in three different times, with several weeks between them and then compared to check for the consistency of the results. In addition, all the results are supported by quotes that allow the reader to easily follow the analysis back from the findings to the data.
Ethical considerations

The present research was conducted with an analytical approach to the subject. My main objective is to try to make an analysis free of values and to draw a plain and unbiased description of how the phenomena is portrayed by the media. Because it is a sensitive subject, during all research moments, I took in consideration the impact that it could have in the readers. The main purpose of this essay is to increase our understanding about how the media perceive and report report honour crimes to the main public.

Result analysis

The following analysis is divided in four sub-sections, the first three present the portrayals of victims, perpetuators and culture. The fourth presents the exceptions to those portrayals.

The victims portrait

Based on Orientalism theory, in the following portrays, victims are described as "Westernized" or occidental. As they are described as liberal, industrious or somehow against traditional rules. (Said, 1995)

In the three newspapers the victims are commonly described as girls or women, guiltless and usually blamed of some action that goes against the family or community norms. With the victims being described as women and girls in 72% (n= 92) of the news articles.

"(...)more than 1,000 women’s and girls’ lives are violently cut short" The Guardian, 4 March 2016.

"mulheres e raparigas são vítimas" [women and young girls are victims]. Público. 20 September 2009.

"(...)el asesinato de mujeres y niñas" [the murder of women and girls]. El País, 23 June 2016.

The victims are also described, in 61% (n=79) of the news articles, using one or more of the following adjectives: beautiful, independent, bright, calm, rebellious or modern persons.
"(...)uma linda morena de olhos claros e lábios volumosos." [a beautiful brunette with bright eyes and fleshy lips.] Público, 17 July 2016.

"(...)era admirada por muitos jovens por se exprimir livremente nas redes sociais." [she (the victim) was admired by many young people for expressing herself freely on social networks.] Público, 17 July 2016.

"Poco podía imaginar la desafiante Qandeel Baloch que este iba a ser uno de sus últimos mensajes en Twitter." [Little could imagine the defiant Qandeel Baloch that this was going to be one of his last messages on Twitter] El País, 23 July 2016.


" "She was a very calm and quiet person. She loved to see people happy and didn't like arguments, she didn't like people raising their voices, she hated it. She just wanted a happy life, she just wanted a family."" The Guardian, 22 September 2012.

In 48% (n= 61) of the cases, the victims are described as someone that lived, or wanted to live her life in a different way of their birth culture and rules.

... [the victims] usarem roupas que classificava [the perpetrator] como “imprópriias” e “em desafio” aos seus valores culturais e religiosos." [(the victims) wear clothes that (the perpetrator) classified as "improper" and "in defiance" to their cultural and religious values.] Público, 30 January 2012

"Aos olhos do irmão, Morsal usava roupas provocadoras, rejeitava a família e não se comportava como "uma jovem afegã faria"." ["In her brother's eyes, Morsal wore provocative clothes, rejected her family, and did not behave like a" young Afghan girl would."] Público, 13 February 2009

"El delito de estas mujeres es su valentía: la de contravenir la tradición y la costumbre, bien sea defendiendo su derecho a vestir de una manera, a estudiar una carrera, a dedicarse a un empleo mal visto entre los suyos, o eligiendo una vida sentimental y sexual libre, renegando
de los matrimonios forzados, de las alianzas que se tornan en palizas e insultos, de las expectativas de su comunidad." [The crime of these women is their courage: that of contravening tradition and custom, either by defending their right to dress in a certain way, to study a career, to engage in a "badly seen", among their own, job, or by choosing freely a sentimental and a sexual life, denying forced marriages, alliances that become beatings and insults, the expectations of their community.] El País, 06 May 2014.

The perpetrators portrait
Recalling Said's theory, the perpetrators are describe as the "oriental other", deeply rooted to traditionalist ways and capable of barbaric actions. (Said, 1995)

The perpetrators are often family members (fathers, mothers, brothers, cousins, uncles). That are reported in 91% (n= 116) of the news articles.

"Uma mulher paquistanesa queimou a filha viva." [A Pakistani woman burned her daughter alive] Público, 08 June 2016.

"...being strangled by her own brother." The Guardian, 18 July 2016.

"Un hombre ha matado a su hija, su yerno, dos nietos." [A man has killed his daughter, his son-in-law, two grandchildren.] El País, 23 July 2013.

"Her father and uncle planned her death." The Guardian, 22 September 2012.

In 60% (n= 77) of the news articles, the perpetrators are considered by the newspaper articles as uncivilised persons.

"Although we have some educated people, most are still living in semi-tribal societies in far-flung rural areas." The Guardian, 29 May 2014.

The news articles also tend to portray the perpetrators as persons to whom honour is everything. This is evident in 69% (n= 88) of the investigated news articles.
"The prosecution argued that for father Mohammad Shafia, honour was everything – quoting him as saying "even if they hoist me up on to the gallows ... nothing is more dear to me than my honour." "The Guardian, 1 February 2012.

In 52% (n= 77) of the investigated news articles, the perpetrator is presented as someone that do not regret his/her behaviour.

"Não me arrependo do que fiz, ela tinha um comportamento completamente intolerável” [I do not regret what I did, she had a completely intolerable behavior] Público, 17 July 2016.

"Gravações apresentadas em tribunal dão a ouvir o pai da família, Mohammad Shafia, a referir-se às filhas como "putas" e "pêrfidas" que "traíram" a família, e vociferando, já depois da morte destas, que o diabo devia "defecar nas campas" delas." [Recordings presented in court show the voice of the family's father, Mohammad Shafia, referring to his daughters as "whores" and "perfidious" who "betrayed" the family, and vociferating, after their death, that the devil should "Defecate in their graves." ] Público, 31 January 2012.

In some news articles, 26% (n= 33) it is mentioned that perpetrators can be instigated and supported by their communities.

"Por vezes, os agressores chegam mesmo a ser alvo da admiração da sua comunidade, por terem travado o mau comportamento de uma mulher desobediente e obliterado com sangue a desonra cometida." [Sometimes the aggressors even become the target of the admiration of their community, for having stopped the misbehaviour of a disobedient woman and obliterated the dishonour with blood. Público, 07 March 2010.

Those perpetrators are considered in some news articles, 10% (n= 13) as a danger to the whole society, thus capable of anything.

"Quem mata os seus mata qualquer um." [Who kills their own is capable of killing anyone]. Público, 30 January 2012.
Culture
Orientalism theory asserts that as Europeans we judge ourselves as more civilized, modern and morally superiors to those, that belong to barbaric, traditionalist and uncivilized cultures. (Said, 1995)

Honour crimes are described in nearly 80% (n=102) of the selected news articles as an "antiga e tenebrosa tradição" [dreadful and ancient tradition], not connected with a particular religion or culture "Estos actos, que 'no respetan ni la religión ni la legalidad"[This acts that do not respect the religion or the law]

They are also defined in those 80% (n=102) of the analysed news articles as "horrific murders", "domestic abuse", "elaborated, pre-planed" and often involving many suspects.

"The judge described the crimes as "cold-blooded, shameful murders" resulting from a "twisted concept of honour"" The Guardian, 1 February 2012.

“A razão aparente destes vergonhosos homicídios foi que as quatro [vítimas] ofenderam a sua noção distorcida de honra” [The apparent reason for this shameful murders was that the four [victims] offended his twisted notion of honour] Público, 30 January 2012.

"This was undoubtedly a brutal and heinous crime." The Guardian, 1 February 2012.

Additionally, it is not commonly considered by the news articles in the three European newspapers, to be an internal problem. Being something that is reported to happen mostly in central and south Asian countries, mostly in Pakistan and Afghanistan; some news articles refer to cases in Turkey, Canada and UK. However, the ones occurring in Canada and UK are pointed out to happen within families of Turkish and Afghan origin.

"Os crimes de honra não são exclusivos de países do Médio Oriente. Na Europa praticam-se cada vez mais, no seio de comunidades imigrantes." [Honor crimes are not exclusive to Middle Eastern countries. In Europe, they are increasingly rising within immigrant communities] Público, 09 May 2005.
Some exceptions

Although, there is a clear majority of newspapers articles pointing out that this is a problem happening in "minority communities with "outdated" notions of justice" others, around 10% (n=13) launch the debate of honour crimes being "despicable abuse towards women", not part of a specific culture and that the "concept of honour is being used to legitimate the continued oppression".

"(...)terning their victimisation "honour crime" skews the focus, turning what is a heinous crime into a cultural judgment against a homogenous group." The Guardian, 21 March 2012.

"Os autores deste tipo de crimes no Paquistão costumam geralmente escapar à justiça, fazendo uso de uma disposição controversa no direito islâmico, que permite que os familiares das vítimas perdoem os assassinos, em troca de uma quantia de dinheiro. Centenas de mulheres são mortas todos os anos no Paquistão por familiares acusadas de terem posto em causa a “honra” da família." [The perpetrators of such crimes in Pakistan usually escape justice by making use of a controversial provision in the Islamic law that allows the relatives of the victims to forgive the killers in return for an amount of money. Hundreds of women are killed every year in Pakistan by relatives accused of putting in question the "honor" of the family.] Público, 17 July 2016.

There are also some news articles, 6% (n=8) defending the idea that "honour crimes" are not just an "outside" reality as they are cross-cultural.

"In the UK, on average two women a week are killed by a current or former male partner. It is estimated that there are 10 to 12 honour killings a year. Both sets of statistics are equally horrific; the actions behind both equally unjustifiable and twisted. But when, or why, does an act of domestic abuse, bullying, stalking or violence against a woman become an honour crime? The answer, it seems, is when it occurs in an Asian household. When domestic abuse involves an Asian perpetrator and victim, it is almost always labelled an honour crime. Instead of focusing on the victim or the steps that need to be taken to prevent such a crime
from happening again, the crime becomes upheld as a reflection of the otherness of a disdainful culture." The Guardian, 21 March 2012.

"É simplista e enganador pensar que estas práticas pertencem a culturas retrógradas que desprezam a conduta civilizada. A verdade é que, em todos os países do mundo, as mulheres têm de suportar a violência em áreas que conhecem e em que deviam poder esperar estar seguras em vez de ser agredidas. As agressões em defesa da honra estão imbuidas da mesma atitude e decorrem da mesma mentalidade que geram a violência doméstica. Estas agressões nascem do desejo de controlar as mulheres e de reprimir as suas aspirações e a possibilidade de se exprimirem." [It is simplistic and misleading to think that these practices belong to retrograde cultures that despise civilized conduct. The truth is that in all countries of the world, women have to endure violence in areas they know and should expect to be safe rather than beaten. The aggressions in defense of honor are imbued with the same attitude and stem from the same mentality that generate domestic violence. These aggressions are born of the desire to control women and to suppress their aspirations and the possibility of expressing themselves.] Público, 07 March 2010.

Around 10% (n=12) of the analysed news articles, defend the idea that "honour crimes" are not confined to a particular culture, religion or social layer, they are widespread.

"There is a tendency in the west to see so-called honour killings as exclusively related to specific cultural traditions. They are often depicted as culturally specific to Muslim communities although they are not, in fact, restricted to any particular religion, culture, type of society or social stratum." The Guardian, 1 February 2012.

Furthermore, one of the news articles from The Guardian presents Katie's Pipper case as a possible example of "honour crime" between persons of English origin.

"But the senseless motives behind it are surely the same as in any other form of domestic abuse and violence against women, involving over-bearing men, hurt prides, wounded egos and uncontrollable, savage tempers (the shocking and sickening acid attack that was carried out on Katie Piper was never described as an honour crime, though her dangerous, jealous
and violent boyfriend was punishing her for having dared to try to leave him.)" The Guardian, 21 March 2012.

In the same line, the Público newspaper also presents one case between persons of Portuguese origin, in 2004, were the perpetrator claimed that was his intention to clear his honour.

"A defesa alegou que o arguido agiu sob "emoção violenta" e pretendeu "lavar a honra com sangue", por suspeitar que a mulher lhe poderia estar a ser infiel. A suspeita baseava-se num "afastamento progressivo do ponto de vista emocional e sexual", supostamente manifestado nos últimos meses de vida da vítima." [The defense claimed that the defendant acted under "violent emotion" and intended to "wash his honour with blood," on suspicion that the woman might be unfaithful to him. The suspicion was based on a "progressive emotional and sexual withdrawal," allegedly manifested in the last months of the victim's life.] Público, 07 June 2006.

Also, the newspaper El Pais some cases between persons of Spanish origin are pointed to be connected with honour and dishonour questions.

"El homicida asestó 20 puñaladas a su expareja, que se negaba a volver con él después de haber mantenido una relación de siete años" [The murderer dealt 20 stab wounds to his ex-partner, who refused to return with him after having maintained a seven-year relationship] El País, 18 February 2015.

Furthermore, one of the analysed news articles points out that there is a parental differential treatment between girls and boys, and that corporal punishment is still a reality in Portugal.

"Há jovens maltratadas pelos pais, espancadas e sequestradas em casa por quererem crescer e começar a descobrir a sua sexualidade"; há jovens expulsas de casa quando se descobre que estão grávidas, enuncia. Na sociedade portuguesa ainda "há jovens mulheres e adolescentes espancadas porque chegam mais tarde a casa", com um tratamento discriminatório em relação aos seus irmãos, a quem tudo é permitido, explica. Estas
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situações "não têm o nome e a visibilidade de um crime de honra", mas a tradição patriarcal faz com que estas raparigas sejam vistas pelos pais com sentimento de posse e que não tenham identidade própria." [(In Portugal) there are young girls mistreated by their parents, beaten and kidnapped at home because they want to grow up and start discovering their sexuality "; there are young girls who are expelled from their homes when they are found to be pregnant. In the Portuguese society there is still a reality "young women and girls beaten because they arrive home late", with a discriminatory treatment from their brothers, to whom everything is permitted, he explains. These situations" do not have the name and visibility of a honour crime, "but the patriarchal tradition makes these girls to be seen by parents with a sense of ownership and preventing then to develop their own identity.] Público, 09 May 2005.

Additionally, in all the three newspapers there are news reports that mention some statistical occurrences intrinsically connected with English, Portuguese and Spanish women being killed by a current or former partner.

"In the UK, on average two women a week are killed by a current or former male partner. It is estimated that there are 10 to 12 honour killings a year." The Guardian, 21 March 2012.

"[Em Portugal] entre Janeiro e Dezembro de 2015, das 29 mulheres assassinadas em contexto familiar em 2015, 25 foram-no por ex-maridos ou maridos e companheiros." [(In Portugal) between January and December 2015, of the 29 women murdered in a family context in 2015, 25 were by ex-husbands, husbands or partners.] Público, 03 March 2016.

"Entre noviembre de 2013 y octubre de 2014, fueron asesinadas 49 mujeres en todo el país [Spain] De esa cifra, 24 mujeres hallaron la muerte por causas atribuidas a “violencia doméstica” (...) En el mismo período, se produjeron 15 intentos de asesinato de mujeres por violencia doméstica. Por lo que, sumando las tentativas y los homicidios consumados, cada 9 días se mató o intentó matar a una mujer." [Between November 2013 and October 2014, 49 women were killed nationwide (Spain) Of that number, 24 women were found to have died from causes attributed to "domestic violence" (...) In the same period, there were 15 attempt murder of women for domestic violence. So, summing up the attempts and the killings
consummated, every 9 days a woman was killed or tried to be killed. ] El País, 11 February 2015.

Moreover, 4% (n= 5) of the news articles the perpetrators are presented as someone that is not proud of their actions, or to not have premeditated the crime.

"[No Paquistão] O pai disse que agiu sem pensar e que lamentava profundamente as suas acções." [(In Pakistan) the father said that he acted without thinking and that profoundly regret his actions.] Público, 08 July 2016.

"He added that after the killing they [the parents] concealed the body and not only did they lie to mislead people, including the coroner, but "you also made your surviving children put forward an account which was intended to hide what you did". The Guardian, 3 August 2012.

In one of the reported cases, a later perpetrator became a victim.

"A Pakistani man demanding justice after his pregnant wife was murdered outside Lahore's high court this week admitted on Thursday to strangling his first wife." The Guardian, 29 May 2014.

The victims are not only women as male victims are also reported, although not so often as women.

"Ahmed Bashir died after he was attacked with a sword and a machete in the garden of his own west London home (...) for being in a relationship with Afsar's younger sister." The Guardian, 3 December 2011.

"los parientes de un hombre asesinado tienen derecho a vengar su honor matando a un varón de la familia del asesino" [the family of a murdered man have the right to revenge his honor killing the first born male of the assassins' family]. El País, 21 October 2012.
Discussion

The aim of this study was to explore how three European newspapers reported "honour killings". The results indicate that there are plural views on the subject, mainly views that depart from a cultural or alternatively gender perspective. The majority assumes that is an outside problem, from other cultures and communities. The relative increasing number of cases in Europe are thought to be due to increasing number the migrant communities. The victims are seen as innocent women and girls that are subjugated to an oppressive patriarchal culture and cannot expressed their will freely.

Relating to the empirical concepts on Orientalism from Said (1995), it seems that the present results also perpetuate the dichotomy between the European and the others. Others that are considered to be less developed and capable of barbaric behaviours. Also, the present results assume the "oriental" women as "Westernized", to whom their birth culture denies acts of liberation and independency. This views on the different culture of the "others" are used both to judge and to justify their acts and ways of living.

However, some news articles capture our attention to the resemblance between those so-called "honour crimes" and domestic violence. When in Portugal, Spain or UK a man murders his wife, ex-wife or daughter in the eyes of the newspapers that is a murder and labelled as domestic violence. The murder is judge by his actions and his beliefs or religion are not acknowledged. If the murder is co-planed both perpetrator and accomplice are to be judge accordingly.

Previous literature and research, argues that honour killings do not belong to a particular religious set, ethnicity, class or religion (Elakkary et al, 2014; Sadik, 2000; Sen, 2005; Sigal et al., 2016; Wikan, 2008). Also, that honour killings and domestic violence are very distinct phenomena. That honour killing is a murder carried out by the extended family after the family as been dishonoured by a female family member and that domestic violence is usually an intimate matter between 2 persons (Chesler, 2009). However, the news articles seem to classify all murders from Asian and Middle Eastern countries or communities as honour
crimes and all from European communities as domestic violence. Using the birth culture of
victims and perpetrators as landmarks of the definition, creating a dichotomy between a
modern Europe and a primitive, uncivilized other.

Concluding remarks

Violence is a serious problem that should not be interpret the phenomena by the lens of
culture, religion, honour or shame. Violence against women, and against those that engage in
behaviours that go against the prevailing and established rules, is a worldwide reality. A
murder is a murder, regardless of their motivations. Newspapers have an important role in the
public opinion and behaviour thus reflecting and creating social realities. A dichotomic
discourse could have some social influence in matters such as integration and segregation. By
portraying honour killings as an "outside" problem and specific to certain cultures we are
putting aside fundamental principles of equal value in rights and dignity.
References


**Newspapers articles:**


MacVeigh, Tracy. 2012. 'They're following me': chilling words of girl who was 'honour killing' victim. *The Guardian*. 22 September.


APPENDIX I - Newspaper articles

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