

Outputs, outcomes and impact

The main (tangible) outputs of the ESRC 'Justice' project will include:

1. Datasets (to be logged with ESRC and Bristol RDSF)
2. A series of at least 7 academic papers, including
 - I. Quantitative paper on domestic violence case trajectories through the criminal justice system
 - II. Quantitative paper on sexual violence case trajectories through the criminal justice system
 - III. Paper exploring the use of Protection Orders and DVA
 - IV. Paper exploring whether particular intersectionalities experienced by women from minority communities affect their experiences of justice.
 - V. Qualitative paper on how child contact and experiences regarding family justice impact on victim/survivor perceptions of justice
 - VI. Qualitative paper on perceptions and use of formal and informal justice in relation to different service users and forms of GBV
 - VII. Methods paper discussing intersecting recruitment and analysis
3. Further papers on substantive findings (and methods) presented to both academic and practitioner conferences (regional, national and international) e.g. European Network of Gender Violence; European Society of Criminology; British Criminological Society; British Sociological Association; American Society of Criminology
4. A final dissemination conference held in Bristol (15 May 2018) plus other dissemination events in the North East of England (April 2018) and elsewhere
5. Targeted blogs through PolicyBristol

Emerging key findings

What does the literature say about justice, inequality and GBV?

Most of the literature - identified through our extensive literature search and mapping exercise conducted in the early stages of the project - focused on domestic violence and abuse (including 'family violence', including adult child to parent abuse, and mother in law to daughter in law violence), followed by sexual violence and abuse, and more general pieces on gender-based violence. The bulk is focused on the criminal justice system, with only a small proportion looking at civil measures or restorative approaches. As expected there was relatively little research on specific or 'alternative' forms of justice, such as faith-based interventions and individual or group retaliatory justice mechanisms; and or how victims-survivors of gender-based violence-and practitioners in the field- understand and experience justice. Much of the literature focused on primarily women's gendered position, as adversely affecting these experiences, and on being a parent or pregnant, or being an offender. There are gaps in research on other inequalities affecting survivors' experiences including age (with older and younger women being particularly vulnerable), sexuality, mental health, religion, immigration status. The mapping exercise also revealed the still under-researched areas, e.g. the quest for justice by adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse which is an area we would expect to grow in the coming years - or the justice challenges presented by the emergence of newer or more recently recognised forms of GBV, such as acid violence, stalking and harassment and abuse mediated through the different forms of social media. The literature has been/is being used across the wider project team and partners (e.g. Women's Aid) to inform analysis and publications as well as national and regional consultations/reports regarding GBV / VAWG issues. The reading and classification of the literature in stage 1 resulted in the identification of 19 theoretical models of justice (including community justice, economic/financial/distributive justice, effective / affective justice, interactional justice, parallel justice, social justice and therapeutic justice /jurisprudence) which have been used as part of a framework to explore the stage 3 interview data.

What does ‘justice’ mean for victims-survivors of GBV?

Our literature search and mapping exercise confirmed that while there is much theoretical and conceptual work on justice, there is very little research on the meanings of justice for victims-survivors of, and practitioners in the field of, gender-based violence. The qualitative data collected via interviews with 251 victims-survivors and 40 practitioners – analysed using a socio-ecological framework - offers a vast amount of knowledge about the meaning of justice to individual and groups of victims-survivors and also valuable insight into the particular barriers and triggers to help or justice seeking for these groups. Interview data suggests that for many ‘justice’ means much more than a formal or even informal criminal/civil outcome. In addition to freedom and safety, for many, justice relates to recovery. It relates to becoming politicised and helping others. It is fundamentally about recognition and validation.

Victim/survivors’ experiences grid

Victims’ experiences seeking justice

| | Individual | | Micro / Interpersonal | | Meso / Community | | Macro / Society | |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| | Enablers | Barriers | Enablers | Barriers | Enablers | Barriers | Enablers | Barriers |
| Awareness | Light bulb moment, naming the abuse | Lack of education/ awareness | Friends/family believing the disclosure | Not being believed, especially by parents | Professionals not ignoring abuse | Professional incompetence, Not following policy | Awareness raising through education | Stigma associated with ‘being a victim’ |
| Emotions | Emotional strength/ resilience | Self-blame Childhood abuse | Emotional support from family/ friends | Isolation/ being shunned No support network | Supportive demeanour from professionals | Routine discourtesy from professionals | Women’s empowerment | Blame culture |
| Services | Help-seeking Knowledge of services | Didn’t know where to get help/ couldn’t access help | Friends/family helping to access services | Perp manipulating services | Availability of specialist services | Inadequate provision of services | Woman-centred services Activism | Male-dominated institutions |
| Finances | Employment Own financial resources | No resources Negative equity | Friends/family lending money or place to stay | Being kicked out Financial abuse by perp | Availability of legal aid | Legal/ court costs | Class position and resources | Poverty & benefits system Property laws |

BME and justice

In terms of ethnicity, the data shows that while there are commonalities between BME victims and White mainstream victims e.g. similar rates of domestic abuse experienced, of reporting to police and of civil injunctions accessed, there are differences in terms of types of abuse reported or in justice system outcome for BME victims. Accessing and seeking

justice can be further complicated by economic status, patriarchal norms and legal systems and, for example, immigration status is vital and can affect a victim/survivor's use of or access to (formal) criminal justice.

The theory of 'interactional justice' has also been applied to the experiences of victims-survivors of so called 'honour'-based violence (HBV), exploring how the victim's encounter with police can inform their experience of justice overall. We found that a key dimension of interpersonal justice is the intersection of gender, ethnicity, culture and faith identities both from the victim perspective and within the dynamic of the victim-police interaction overall. Timely contact and updates as well as the provision of information on the justice options available were important to victims and the method of delivering information to victims and the way in which information is deployed can affect both their sense of safety and of receiving justice.

Faith and justice

Through the interviews with victims-survivors and practitioners we have learnt more about how justice is mediated through religious based arbitration and how faith may influence personal and institutional conceptions of justice, with examples from Sharia Councils, Catholic and Anglican churches and Jewish community. We have identified a number of barriers to accessing help and/or justice at the individual level (e.g. shame, reputation, not conceptualising the abuse or internalised blame); the community level (e.g. fear of exclusion from the faith community); institutional level (e.g. a reluctance to disclose or get involved with secular agencies who may not respect or understand culture or traditions); and even at a higher (spiritual) level (e.g. some victim/survivor's perceptions that justice comes from G_d alone).

Sexual violence and (formal) criminal justice

Our analysis of the criminal justice (police data) as part of stage 2 of the project enhances the existing knowledge base regarding the progression of individual rape and domestic violence cases from report to court in the UK, by disaggregating cases to explore the intersections between age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability and other vulnerability factors. Analysis of the police case file data collected for stage 2 of the Justice project provides further understanding about the impact / influence of age, gender and mental

health and how it impacts on rape victims-survivors' access to, and the response of, the formal (criminal) justice system in England. We found inequality in terms of criminal justice response to sexual violence, for example, where our analysis suggests case trajectories are significantly impacted by age, gender and mental health meaning that some victims-survivors are more likely to achieve this type of justice than others e.g. younger victims compared to older victims or victims without mental health issues compared to those with poor mental health. The data also highlighted the relative invisibility of BAME, same-sex and transgender victims of sexual violence in the criminal justice system.

Role of advocacy in seeking or achieving justice

Another key finding (based on police and non-criminal agency data) is the significant role that specialist support agencies play in helping victims to achieve criminal justice (e.g. in reducing attrition or increasing the use of protection measures available etc). Using theoretical frameworks of justice identified in stage 1, analysis of the stage 3 interviews with practitioners and victims-survivors also suggests that the role of specialist NGO's and advocates, such as ISVAs/ IDVAs and other advocates, traverses a number of these 'models' at different levels when applying a socio- ecological model of analysis (ontological/ micro/ meso/ macro). These varying frameworks or 'models' of justice reflect the different ways that justice might be understood and experienced by victims-survivors and our data suggests there is a spectrum of perceptions of 'justice' amongst victims-survivors of sexual violence and domestic abuse that transcends the criminal justice process, one that can change depending on where a victim/survivor is in their 'journey' to recovery.

Other findings

Data analysis will enable us to close other knowledge gaps e.g. regarding the particular challenges and barriers to help and/or justice seeking faced by adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse, in Family courts, victims of financial abuse and victims of the more recently recognised forms of GBV such as stalking, harassment and abuse mediated through the different forms of social media, mobile phones or the internet.

Dissemination

Bristol Conference 15 May 2018

NE dissemination events April 2018

Publications

Briefing papers

Migrant women

Protection orders

Specialist advocacy

Articles

Hester, M; Gangoli, G.; Lilley, S-J; Mulvihill, N, Turner, W. (2017) Research: Justice, inequalities and gender-based violence. *Safe: The Domestic Violence Quarterly*, (58): 22-25. Available via <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/research-and-publications>

Hester, M and Lilley S-J (2017) More than support to court: rape victims and specialist sexual violence services. *International Review of Victimology* 1-16. Available online at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0269758017742717>

Mulvihill, N., Walker, S.J., Hester, M., and Gangoli, G., 2018. 2018. How is 'justice' understood, sought, and experienced by victims-survivors of gender-based violence? A review of the literature. [pdf] Bristol: University of Bristol.

Gangoli, G., Gill, A.K., Mulvihill, N., and Hester, M., 2018. Perception and barriers: reporting female genital mutilation. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*. Available online at: <https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/full/10.1108/JACPR-09-2017-0323>

Mulvihill, N., Gangoli, G., Gill, A.K., and Hester, M., 2018. The experience of interactional justice for victims of 'honour'-based violence and abuse reporting to the police in England and Wales. *Policing and Society*. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10439463.2018.1427745>

Blogs

<https://policystudies.blogs.bristol.ac.uk/>

<https://policystudies.blogs.bristol.ac.uk/2016/11/17/gender-violence-and-justice-what-does-justice-look-like/>

Impact to date

The vast amount of knowledge generated by the Justice project has already been / is currently being used by a range of key third sector, justice and government agencies and organisations to potentially inform policy development and practice at the regional and national level and even internationally. To date, the findings have provided evidence that has been used in: a judiciary review of family court child contact procedures (2016, https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/jan/20/uk-judges-change-court-rules-on-child-contact-for-violent-fathers-domestic-abuse?CMP=share_btn_tw); a Justice Select Committee (2016) on sexual violence and the use of Restorative Justice; a Home Office review of the use of Protection Orders to protect victims of domestic abuse (2017); a meeting with experts and politicians in the Houses of Parliament to discuss gender discrimination and the operation of Sharia Councils in the UK (2017); the development of the first ever Lebanese national Gender Equality Strategy in 2017 (where the research was flagged as good international practice for research on GBV); the development of the North East VAWG strategy (2017); Parliamentary briefings fed into the UK Government's landmark Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill (2018); the North East CEDAW shadow report consultation (2018) and a targeted report for Jewish Women's Aid (2018). As part of the research process academics, politicians, practitioners and members of the public (citizen jury) including victims-survivors were engaged early on to share specialist knowledge on GBV, discuss the research and elicit debate about how society could help in seeking justice for GBV victims-survivors. As part of that event positive and supportive messages were also provided directly to victims-survivors.

The findings, particularly findings regarding survivor's perspectives, have also started to be used by third sector agencies. For example, engagement with SARSAS (<https://www.sarsas.org.uk>) prompted a request for more information about the research findings from a specialist support worker from the new SARSAS/ Barnardos' project working with children and young people in Somerset. They are involved in training for crime agencies around working in a trauma informed way with children and young people and are interested in taking on board the findings from the research that could support their training development.