THE NEWSPAPER PORTRAYAL OF MOTHERS ACCESSING FOOD BANKS IN THE UK

Portfolio Volume 1: Major Research Project

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Abstract

Aim: This study investigated the newspaper portrayal of mothers' accessing food banks in the UK. Specifically, how their identities were portrayed, how their experiences were portrayed and how the impact of this was portrayed.

Method: Forty-five national online newspaper articles, focusing on mothers' who had accessed food banks, were analysed from the 1st of October 2019 to the 1st of November 2020. The articles were analysed using Thematic Analysis six-phase framework developed by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Results: Three themes were identified following the analysis. The first theme identified was 'lives stolen by poverty', subthemes 'pushed down the ladder by political choices', 'narrowing opportunities', 'the odds are stacked against them' and 'morality'. The second theme was 'struggling to survive', followed by subthemes 'mothering under scarcity', 'not knowing where to turn' and the 'impact on self-hood'. The third and final theme was 'struggling to provide', which was followed by subthemes 'cycles of love and protection' and 'spilling over.'

Considerations and implications: This study placed a psychological lens to the portrayal of mothers' accessing food banks. Consideration was provided to the implications of newspaper portrayals for mothers', the support available to them and how these portrayals impact their wellbeing.

Key words: mothers, food bank, identity, help, distress, clinical psychology

1 Chapter 1: Introduction

This section will begin by outlining the personal and epistemological positions that have contributed to the understanding of distress, as contextualised within socio-political systems. Following this, an overview will be provided of the historical and socio-political structures and media depictions and stereotypes, which impact on people's daily lives. Finally, consideration will be provided as to how these structures impact on the lived experiences of mothers who attend food banks and the implications as portrayed by newspapers on mothers' mental health and the profession of Clinical Psychology.

1.1 Personal and Epistemological Position

1.1.1 Positioning myself as a researcher

Several influences drew me towards this topic. I studied Human Geography at undergraduate level and led a project for women and children living in temporary accommodation. These experiences developed my understanding of the layers of oppression, such as classism, sexism and racism faced by mothers which lead to personal distress and exclusion.

Classes on the Clinical Psychology Doctorate introduced concepts such as Bateson's (1979) ecosystem approach. These approaches suggest that to understand the world, you need to understand the patterns within a system, integrating different elements into a coherent whole (Pasikowski, 2017). Therefore, I think that as a clinical psychologist in a position of relative power and privilege working with people from different socio-demographic areas, I believe it is our responsibility to be shining a light on the socioeconomic determinants of distress. This paper aims to increase understanding around how wider systemic structures, with a focus on newspapers, represent mothers in relation to food insufficiency, and the implications this has for mothers' mental wellbeing (Freedman & Combs, 1996).

1.1.2 Epistemological position

This project has adopted a Critical Realist perspective, due to its ability to hold a 'both and' position between the two poles of essentialism and constructionism (Parr, 2015: Sayer, 1992: Willig, 1999). This means the world is viewed as both socially constructed and 'real', enabling a focus on the constative and discursive role and meaning of language (Sayer, 1992: Parr, 2015). All this, whilst maintaining a position that actions, texts, and institutions are entities that exist regardless of people's interpretation of them as 'real' (Mathews, 2009). A critique

of this position is that social processes, institutions, or mechanisms are not physically 'real' and cannot be empirically tested. However, Critical Realists argue that social structures/mechanisms lead to events that constitute the empirical world (Sayer, 2000: Danermark et al., 1997: Collier, 1994). Therefore, whilst these social mechanisms may not be directly observable physical entities, they are viewed as 'real' because they have causal powers which are observable, leading to the multi-layered and complex

outcomes that people experience empirically in the everyday world (Sayer, 2000: Collier, 1994: Parr, 2015: Mathews, 2009).

1.2 Current socio-political context and the use of food banks

This section defines food deprivation and food banks, it will outline the historical and current socio-political context, including policies and the impact of the COVID-19 health pandemic on food deprivation. These factors undoubtedly impact whole families, however women are thought to be disproportionately impacted due to the accumulation of inequalities, such as economic disparity, and the construction of government policies which may leave them feeling vulnerable.

This paper will adopt the United Nations' definition of food deprivation as "…synonymous with individual malnutrition" and something that "…will inevitably occur if there is food shortage or food poverty, but deprivation also affects individuals in household whose food supply would be adequate if it were distributed evenly." (p.1, Millman & DeRose, 1998). The Cambridge University Press (2013) definition of food bank will be adopted, as a "place where food is given to people who do not have enough money to buy it (for example, by a charity)." Food banks exist within a socio-political context, which I will now describe, starting with the historical context.

1.2.1 Historical context

This first subsection provides a brief overview of how deprivation has been constructed over time. This is important as the way in which a problem is constructed can shape how society responds to people whose needs are not being met, having implications for individual and societies wellbeing (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010; Gilbert, 2019).

In different contexts across time, people have lived in impoverished situations with different constructions of the problem of poverty, leading to variations in help-seeking behaviour

(Tarasuk & Davis, 1996). From the Tudor to Thatcher's era, the problem of poverty was constructed as an individual's failure to conform, seek employment, or contribute to society (Nadler, 1990; DePaullo, 1999). In 1536, Tudor Laws were created to differentiate between the able-bodied versus non-able-bodied beggars, devaluing, labelling and criminalising the able-bodied poor as 'vagabonds' (Nadler, 1990). Following this, during the Victorian period, a time of rapid economic development, the unworking and 'immoral' poor were placed in a workhouse and segregated from society, the motive was about placing blame on individuals for their poverty (Thane, 1978). These constructions of poverty over time are thought to be mediating factors to help-seeking behaviour, as research indicates that help seeking behaviour is impacted by perceived cost of help seeking, a loss of control, the character of the helper, and the ego-centrality of the problem. This means if deprivation is viewed as a problem of self, it is likely to impact societal responses and inhibit help-seeking behaviour (Nadler, 1990; Wills & DePaulo, 1991). This is concerning as narratives of 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor continue to this day and underpin constructs such as 'ideal' victim. This means that only those who meet a certain criterion such as being weak or vulnerable, involved in a respectable activity and blameless in the circumstances of their victimisation are deemed worthy of help (Christie, 1986).

In contrast, during World War Two (WW2), the entire population was united in the face of food scarcity, cutting across all sections of society, i.e., it cut across social class (Addison, 1994). The UK Government's Department of Food created the rationing scheme to distribute resources equally to the population (Clampin, 2009). Government propaganda, such as posters, were used to send messages to the public, to respond to, reflect, shape, and reinforce the social attitude and everyday life of cooperation and sharing (Clampin, 2009). A special exception was made to expectant mothers, who were provided additional milk and meals. After WW2, the return of soldiers who had fought for the country stimulated public support for social reform, underpinning the Beveridge Report and development of the Welfare State (Abel-Smith, 1992; Knight, 2011). This section highlights how the different constructions of people living in deprivation can lead to different social attitudes, shaping the understanding and treatment of people who are living in impoverished conditions.

To conclude this sub-section, there appears to have always been deprivation in general, which would include food deprivation. Since these early times, there have been constructs about

those living in such deprivation. World War Two (WW2) showed an alternative way to approach scarcity which gave unity. However, despite this pocket in time of unity, historical constructions appear to underpin present day policy in the UK, where constructions linked to individual failure appear to underpin modern day policy, government policy and practices. I will go on to link that to the use of food deprivation and food banks.

1.2.2 Government policies and legislation: United Kingdom (UK)

This sub-section outlines what the government has done in terms of policy, including the introduction of austerity, Universal Credit (UC), sanctions, benefit-freezes, and their response to COVID-19 and how these policies impact food deprivation and food banks. It should be noted that constructions of individual failure that underpin policy and practice are nuanced and that these constructions have varied across time and government contexts. However, more recently, constructions of individual failure appear to have underpinned the policies that operate, and these are focused on within this next section.

1.2.2.1 'Austerity Britain'

In 2010, in response to the 2008 banking crisis, the Conservative government introduced the model of 'austerity' to decrease the national deficit via reduced national spending (Grimshaw & Rubery, 2012). Reductions in spending were focused on government services, social care and welfare benefits (Glennerster, 2011). In 2010, a government white paper on welfare benefit reform introduced UC, a scheme aimed to reduce spending by returning people to work by "…ensur [ing] that work always pays and is seen to pay" (Department for Work and Pensions, 2010, p.14). The reform included the tapering away of benefits as an individual's employment income increased, the introduction of work capability assessments, targeted payments, sanctions, benefit caps and freezes. Alongside these planned changes, there were implementation difficulties and systemic failings, leading to delayed payments and reports of unfair practice (Butler, 2015). The film "I Daniel Blake" (2016) provided a portrayal of the impact of these processes and limited support available to people who were unable to buy sufficient food and needed to turn to a food bank (May et al., 2019).

1.2.2.2 The introduction of Universal Credit

1.2.2.2.1 DELAYS IN PAYMENTS

Universal Credit (UC) was first introduced in four pilot sites. Local councils sent claimants letters giving them just over a month to make the switch, in a process called managed

migration. In 2010, the Department for Work and Pensions aimed to support claimants during the managed migration, by topping up claimants' UC during the transition period. However, in 2018, this scheme only covered certain groups, such as those who were severely disabled (House of Commons, 2018). The plan was for this to be more accessible by July 2019. However, the first managed migration started in 2013, when over one million claimants experienced a five-week delay before receiving their first payment (Beatty & Povey, 2018), meaning recipients were left with no income (Department for Work and Pensions, 2010). Data from The Trussell Trust charity (TT) showed an increase in food bank users following managed migration, from 129,000 in 2011 to 1.1 million in 2014/15 (Loopstra et al., 2016).

1.2.2.2.2 SANCTIONS

In 2012, the Welfare Reform Act, put the 2010 white paper's proposal into law, seeing the introduction of more stringent measures to incentivise people to be in employment. This meant claimants had to complete a work capability assessment to determine eligibility and meet conditions to receive Job Seeker Allowance. Conditions included, attending weekly meetings, evidencing application of employment, and accepting all employment offers. This increased welfare conditionality and job-related commitments, were extended to lone parents who had a child above the age of five (Millar, 2019). Increased penalties and sanctions were introduced for vulnerable people who did not meet these commitments (Reeves & Loopstra, 2017). Sanctions included decreasing funds for a minimum of four weeks (Welfare Reform Act, 2012; Loopstra, 2016). A study in the US found that mothers whose benefits were reduced or eliminated by sanctions were more likely to report food insecurity for themselves and their children (Reichman et al., 2005) and concerns have been raised that disadvantaged groups are at higher risk of being sanctioned which have been imposed unfairly (Reeves & Loopstra, 2017; Webster, 2016: Butler, 2015).

In the UK, framing of welfare to work policy has characterised worklessness as being due to individual choices and can therefore be addressed by increasingly harsh activation of policies (Wright, 2016). In 2015 the Minister for Employment, Priti Patel, denied any systematic relationship between sanctions and food bank use, reporting "there is no robust evidence that directly links sanctions and food bank use" (Patel, 2015). This meant that policy change to support individuals living in food insecurity was denied. The impact of this policy was evidenced by Loopstra, Fledderjohann & Reeves (2018) who systematically analysed the

complex relationship between welfare form, sanctions, and food bank use. They used TT food parcel data within local authority areas and compared this with sanctions in the area and found that when sanctions increased and decreased within a local area so did reliance on food banks (Loopstra, Fledderjohann & Reeves, 2018).

1.2.2.2.3 BENEFIT-FREEZE

In 2016 the government *Welfare Reform and Work Act* imposed a four-year benefit freeze, to encourage people back into work. However, the government appeared to overlook several relevant factors. That 82% of claimants who received benefits did so because they were unable or unexpected to work, such as, being a single mother with a newborn baby (Butler, 2019). That a lack of available employment, a result of the austerity agenda implemented in 2010, meant many people could not access full time paid employment (Tinson et al., 2016) and that the cost of living had increased, in terms of food prices, childcare and fuel (Heykoop et al., 2018).

As the government made changes to the welfare system, they introduced the narrative of the 'Big Society', arguably positioning communities as responsible for finding solutions for health and social problems (Blond, 2010). In 2012 the Prime Minister praised volunteers at a food bank in the UK parliament (Cameron, 2012), by 2016, the government had withdrawn funding for school meals (Staufenberg, 2016), suggesting a continued shift from government to charity/social responsibility for supporting vulnerable people within the UK. In 2020, public figures such as Marcus Rashford (footballer), used campaigns and public petitions to challenge Conservative Government policy. This has led to a U-turn in plans to cut free school meals for children of families on UC or equivalent benefits, with free school meals continuing through the summer of 2020, until Easter 2021 (Department for Education, 2020: Lawrie, 2020).

1.2.3 COVID-19 pandemic

In March 2020, in response to the Global Health Pandemic, the UK government declared a nationwide lockdown. People who were not key workers were expected to stay at home and isolate, leading to redundancies and business closures. The government introduced schemes, including: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) paying 80% of salary to self-employed people and those on furlough, and statutory sick pay for those who have to self-isolate. However, a survey from the 7th April 2020, found that 28% of adults reported losing income

due to COVID-19 and that 16.9% of adults had experienced food insecurity since Britain entered lockdown. The impact of this was observed by the TT and Food Aid Network compared data from March 2019 with 2020 who found an 129% increase of parcels being provided to children, of 129% (TT, 2020b).

Individualistic constructions of food deprivation are understood to have contributed to people's insufficient access to food, placing the problem of food insecurity and solutions with the individual and overlooking governments responsibility to provide adequate conditions and food for their citizens (Dowler & O'Connor, 2011). Powers, et al., (2020), highlighted that the COVID-19 pandemic, exposed pre-existing food inequalities in the UK, as health fears and panic buying led to shortages of food in supermarkets. People already impoverished and impacted by austerity had previously utilised food management and shopping strategies such as purchasing food which is sold at a decreased price when going out of date. However, due to COVID-19, these ways of coping were redundant as people with sufficient food engaged in bulk buying, meaning a lack of availability of access to lower priced goods for those with low income. Alongside this, access to food via food banks during COVID-19 was impacted by food shortages and a reduction in volunteers (Loopstra, 2020). The impact of COVID-19 has highlighted the inadequacy of a food system that relies on public donations (Loopstra, 2020).

Research has found that UC reforms contradict therapeutic principles causing further harm to people with pre-existing mental health problems (Barnes, et al., 2017; Barr et al., 2016). The British Psychological Society (2018) has publicly opposed benefit sanctions for people with mental health problems. More recently, COVID-19 appears to have placed additional pressure on people and food supplies, particularly women who were already at risk from pre-existing gender disparities. This will be discussed further in the next sub section.

1.2.4 Gender socio-economic situation

Women are thought to be more vulnerable economically due to the social structures and limited opportunities provided to them. Predictors of pay structure include, age of children, number of children, number of years spent in school, whether parents have caring responsibilities and the highest level of qualification (Office for National Statistics, 2018). Evidence suggests women are highly represented in non-standard employment (Aassve, Burgress, Propper, & Dickenson, 2006) and frequently employed in feminised and low-paid roles such as cleaning, catering or caring (Kamerade & Richardson, 2018; Pilcher, 2000).

Beatty et al., (2021) concluded that these structural challenges and government policy placed women at increased risk of food deprivation and accessing a food bank. They found that most food bank users were experiencing in-work poverty because of non-standard work (e.g. zero hour contracts), having low paid roles often in hospitals and care work and needing to travel long distances. Women lacked financial resilience due to cuts in local authority services and welfare conditionality, driving them to accept cycles of low pay and precarious employment. Furthermore, welfare systems and services did not consider the costs of childcare at short notice or travelling costs or time.

Of further concern was a finding from research with front line workers in Scotland that women were less likely to use food banks, despite women and children being perceived as a group of emergency concern (Douglas et al., 2018). This suggests that women most impacted by food deprivation were not willing to access food banks until it is a last resort. This could be linked to the stigma around accessing food banks and fear of how this could be perceived by others and services (Powers, 2005; Kruger & Lourens, 2016).

To conclude, this section outlines how the socio-political context in the UK, including the historical constructions of deprivation, government policies and COVID-19, disproportionately impact women who may already feel vulnerable. Overall, these government reforms appear to be punitive, and the social construction of failure seems to be apparent in the way these policies operate. The implication is that women attending food banks encounter the practical struggles of food deprivation, alongside denigrating constructions which impact their mental health.

1.3 Media

As outlined in the previous section, certain people are disproportionately affected by government policy and the impact of this is that certain groups of people are at increased risk of food deprivation and attending a food bank. In addition to the constructions of individual failure apparent in government policies, the media portrays seemingly similar constructions. This section will talk about how the media portrays individual groups and people, and how the media influences class relations, whose voice is valued, identities and stereotypes. This section then narrows down to how people are portrayed in the media who access food banks and the impact this has on mental health.

1.3.1 Representations of users of food banks in the media

Recent sociocultural and political trends have resulted in the social construction of food bank reliance as a failure of personal responsibility, as individuals are positioned as 'deviant', through media headlines such as "No ID, no checks" and "vouchers for sob stories: The truth behind those shock food bank claims" (p.1 Murphy & Manning, 2014). Research into how UK press coverage of people accessing food banks found that newspaper articles had limited critical analysis of the reasons why a person would need to attend a food bank and lacked users' voices or perspectives (Wells & Caraher, 2014). In addition, Knight et al. (2018) found that children's experiences of food poverty, were absent from newspaper articles. The content of articles shapes how citizens and policy makers think about these issues, where they assign responsibility and how they decide to intervene (Iyengar, 1990; Barnett, 2016; Entman, 1993).

Wider deregulation of free market policies, impacting institutional systems and structures are thought to have psycho-social implications on the daily lives of people and mothers accessing food banks. In 2016 Garthwaite's explored the psycho-social implications of the UK TV programme 'Benefits Street', a documentary which portrayed the lives of several people dependent on welfare, who attended the local food bank. They found that affluent people living nearby reported popular political messages for why people may access a food bank, such as alcohol, drugs, poor cooking skills, poor financial management'. Food bank users reported increased levels of embarrassment, shame, and anxiety about attending the food bank since the production had been broadcast. This suggests that media contributes to stigma production, by increasing co-constructed stigma and shame, a term used to describe how people are made to feel in certain social interactions, for those accessing the food bank (Chase & Walker, 2013; Garthwaite, 2016). Shame has been implicated in several psychological disorders, including self-injurious behaviour (Gilbert et al., 2010), anxiety (Harder, Cutler, & Rockert, 1992), depression (Cheung, Gilbert, & Irons, 2004), and posttraumatic-stress disorder (Dyer et al., 2009).

Parallel to this increased focus by the media on food bank users, the TT food banks have found that 35% of users reported a mental health condition, the most common being depression, followed by anxiety (Loopstra, 2017). One way of understanding the implications of social narratives in the media and how this can impact an individuals' lived experiences and mental

health is by drawing on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological systems model in (Figure 1, Bronfenbrenner, 2005: Sayers, 2000). Interactions between outer sections of the model highlight how individuals in the centre are affected by multiple levels of their surrounding relationships. The macrosystem captures the social and cultural values which act upon the exosystem, which is made up of the mass media, school system, and community. These wider systems shape the mesosystem and microsystem, such as family, classroom and religion, impacting people's daily lives. The fifth and final system is the chronosystem which captures all the experiences a person has had during his or her lifetime, including life transitions, environmental events, and historical events. How the media can impact psychosocially on the experiences of people attending food banks has been observed in qualitative studies (Garthwaite et al., 2016: Thompson et al., 2018). These are discussed further in later sections.

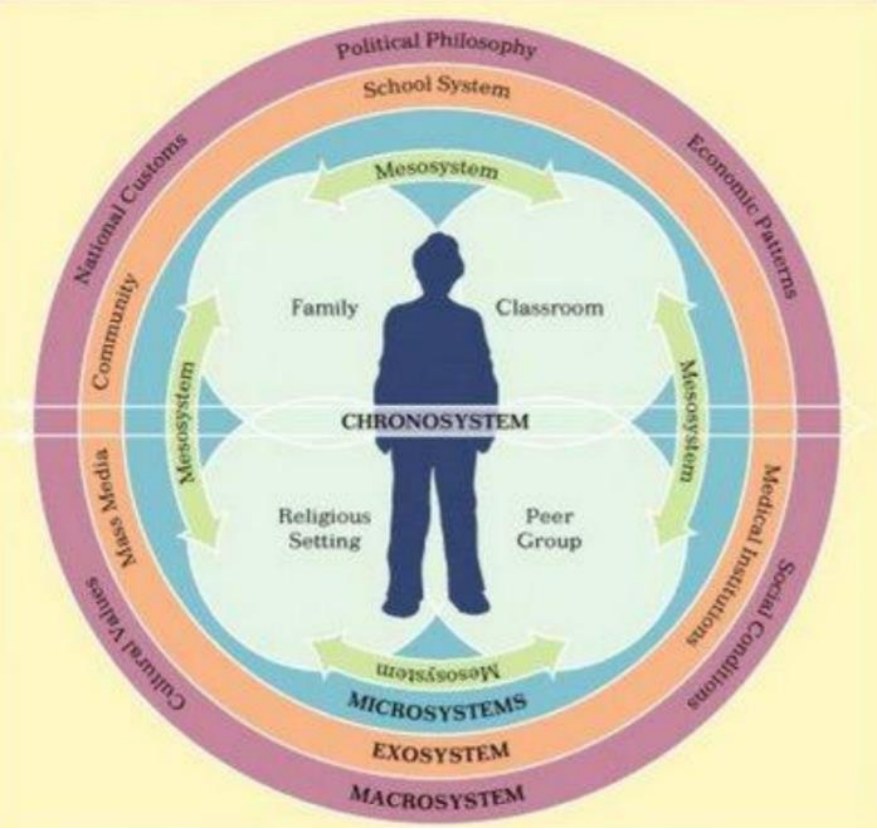

FIGURE 1: BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY (BRIDGES, 2001, P1)

1.3.2 The development of the media and class

During the Victorian era Marx (1818-1883) put forward his critical theory, arguing that society was structured via the economy and class conflict. He postulated that a person's value, within the hierarchy, was determined by their role in the production process and ownership of capital (Marx, 1865). Thatcherism saw rapid de-industrialisation and the problem of poverty was re-constructed as an individual's failure to conform or adapt to structural changes (Engels, 2012). Across time the media became a tool to communicate with the public, critiquing or reinforcing political messages and constructions of deprivation and government responses (Dean, 2013).

Moving into the postmodern era, it has been argued that class boundaries have disintegrated, as society is no longer structured around roles in production processes (Hall & Hubbard, 1996). Developments in technology increased access to the media leading to a diffusion of power and increased diversity of views (Critcher, 2002; Cox, 1993; However, others have rebutted this view stating that to maintain profits and meet customer satisfaction, media companies have become more sensationalized and less critical leading to polarisation and echo chambers (Chalif, 2011). Such trends are visible in the British media, where right-leaning newspapers in contrast to left-leaning papers, provide far greater coverage to the 'undeserving poor', who were constructed as 'irresponsible', 'unhealthy', 'antisocial', preoccupied with 'instant-gratification' and 'scrounging' (Tihelkova, 2015). Of particular concern is that the National Statistics Socio-economic classification which studies and reports on, employment relations and conditions of occupation, continues to outline eight class categories (Office for National Statistics, 2020) highlighting that it is only a privileged few who have the economic opportunity to become an editor, journalist, or owner of media or tech company. This means that the media could be reinforcing the world view of the elite of the powerful (Skeggs, 2008), whilst a narrative that minimizes the existence of class structures enables dominant narratives to be perpetuated without critique (Hill, 2015). There is continuing debate if the media/newspapers lead, follow or reflect the public opinion (YouGovernment, 2017).

The increasing focus on the consumer saw the development of new understanding and theories regarding poverty, inequality, and class structures. Townsend (1979) argued that modern-day poverty is when people's resources are below those to be expected by the

average individual or family resulting in them being excluded from ordinary patterns, customs, and activities. Narayan (1995) looked specifically at how food consumption had become an important signifier of identity, society, and culture, used to distinguish those that are considered 'insiders' versus 'outsiders'. Skeggs (2008) added to thinking around food, adding the concept of 'morality', which can determine a woman's cultural value. She outlined how food and class become embodied in people's personhood, impacting upon their value, and ability to take part in symbolic exchange systems. One example of this was the cooking programs in the 1990s, such as, 'You are what you eat', which constructed and pathologised white lower-class women as unhealthy and overweight consumers, who eat and binge high fat and sugar foods (Skeggs, 2008; Kelly & Morar, 2018). It is argued that these media portrayals enable categorisation, elicit disgust, increased state regulation, middle class authority and the ability to recognise and avoid the 'immoral' and 'tasteless other' (Probyn, 2000; Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986).

To conclude, the media portrayals of women appear to shape constructions that denigrate them for living in deprivation generally and food deprivation more specifically. They appear to be positioned as responsible and to blame for being unable to 'contribute' economically or engage in 'healthy' consumption practices. The media appears to overlook the context they live within or resources available to them positioning their food 'choices' as immoral, which is thought to have implications for their mental health.

1.3.3 Whose voice is valued?

A range of research has highlighted that males are the main producers of media stories, meaning that they decide what females see, hear and read about themselves (North, 2016; Ross et al., 2018). The implications of this can be seen from research in the 1980's (Ferguson) and 2016 (Ross et al., 2018) when women in the media were mainly portrayed in stereotypical feminine roles, such as family, mother and caring for others (Ross et al., 2018). When they were portrayed in professional roles, they were mostly associated with roles in healthcare, childcare, office, or service work (Ross et al., 20018). Feminists argue that benevolent sexism, can characterise some women as pure creatures to be protected and supported in contrast to others, who deserve to be punished (Glick & Fiske, 2001; Barnett, 2015). This can be detrimental preventing women from pursuing education, training, or other choices that bring individuals into a position of power (Tuchman, 1978; Barnett, 2015). Furthermore, this

differentiation of gender roles can act as a feedback loop, 'justifying' the position of women in the social hierarchy (Glick & Fiske, 2001; Tajfel, 1981).

To conclude, this section highlights that generally women are unlikely to have resources or access to shape the constructions of themselves in the media. It is therefore likely that women living in food deprivation or attending food banks are also unlikely to be able to shape the constructions of themselves in the media. The impact of this, is that others can shape the constructions they see of themselves in the media, which can have implications for their self-concept, daily lives and mental health.

1.3.4 Identity

Identity is critical to understanding the impact of food deprivation on mental health because it has implications for how people accessing food banks are positioned in relation to others. Processes of identity construction can contribute to deprivation, inequality and marginalisation in society, but can also impact on women living in deprivation and attending food banks own self-concepts, behaviour and mental health. This sub-section will first provide an overview of what identity is, then consider why a Critical Realist (CR) approach has been chosen and finally reflect on the role of identity construction in group processes.

The dictionary defines identity as: "…qualities of a person or group that make them different from others" (Cambridge dictionary, 2019). Critical realists' definition of identity suggests that people's placement in society, reverts upon them, affecting the person they become and the social identities they can achieve (Archer, 2001). From this perspective the external structures of the social world become internalised, structuring individuals' cognition (Husserl, 1983) and perceptions (Bourdieu, 1986). This contributes to people in disadvantaged positions, internalising this position, perpetuating inequality (Bourdieu, 1986). This self-concept of identity can impact behaviour and health (Haslam, Jetten, Postmes, & Haslan, 2009). This definition was chosen because the social constructionist definition of identity being constructed between subject positions, overlooks the structural context and individual agency (Musson & Du Berley, 2007). Whilst the positivist frame has a focus on internal processes has been critiqued as being reductionist for looking at humans in isolation. The CR definition of identity will enable this paper to consider how existing social structures shape the physical reality of food deprivation, and constructions of food deprivation that impact on people using food banks and their mental health.

From a CR perspective when faced with empirical data regarding identity, they would ask "what must the world be like in order for these findings to be possible?" (O'Mahoney & Marks, 2014, p.81). Bourdieu (1989) postulated, that the construction of identity relies on people's access to resources, such as power, economic, cultural and social capital. He believed unequal access to resources, influenced people's opportunities, and therefore tastes or habits, leading to schemes of classification. People can choose (depending on their level of capital) to conform to tastes of their classification, which suit their position, via symbols such as food, clothes, transport, etc (Bourdieu, 1989). This has implications for people living in food deprivation who have limited access to resources as they are unable to choose what food they eat or how they access it, meaning they have limited options regarding the identity they can present, having implications for their mental health.

Personal and social identity are viewed as independent of each other yet in a dialectical relationship between social structures and self, a key site of identity change (Archer, Hutchings & Leathwood, 2001). As part of this, individuals can not reveal part of their identity and use impression management, to present a certain self in social situations (Goffman, 1978). This process is completed in Goffman's terms via sign vehicles, which are: managing personal space, areas surrounding their body, appearance, social settings, and status symbols. However, Goffman (1978) outlined that if individuals possess a characteristic that causes them to lose prestige in the eyes of others, and this cannot be redeemed, such as deprivation, the individual might be cast in a negative light and have a 'spoiled identity'. In response to this the group may exclude that member and strip them of their group identity.

1.3.5 Stereotypes

Thinking about how women living with food deprivation are separated from others' links into stereotypes. This section highlights how the stereotyping of social groups, could impact interpersonal dynamics, decision making, resource allocation, availability of power and help-seeking behaviour impacting people's daily lives (Hagan & Smail, 1997; Raviv et al., 2003; Fiske, 2010). Several psychologists have put forward theories to understand the relationship between stereotyping, power, social class, status and subordination and how these comparisons can divide groups of people (Fiske, 2010). The Stereotype Content Model (Fiske, 2010) suggests that groups can be stereotyped by warmth, signalling if the group intends to harm or benefit, and competence signalling if the group can enact that intention. It is argued

that middle-class social groups become associated with positive attributes, such as warmth and competence, leading to feelings of admiration and cooperative behaviour, whereas working class groups are seen as hostile and/or incompetent leading to disgust, contempt, passive neglect, active harm and social exclusion (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2004). It is suggested that these comparison processes lead to envy towards people viewed as higher status and scorn towards individuals who are viewed as lower status (Fiske, 2010). Those experiencing scorn may feel that a person or group is unworthy of attention enabling them to make tough decisions towards that 'out' group without feeling emotions (Fraser, 1995; Williams, 1991; Lammers & Stapel, 2011). Whereas those experiencing envy may feel humiliated or angry towards a group in a higher position, resulting in increased depression, unhappiness and low self-esteem (Fiske, 2010).

To conclude, this sub section highlights how comparison between social groups can lead to the stereotyping of people living in deprivation, which impacts upon how that group is viewed and treated by a higher status group, having implications for their mental health. The media is considered to play a role in this process through how they depict people who have attended a food bank, having implications on food bank users' interactions and experiences (Garthwaite, 2016).

1.4 Experiences of mothers

This next section captures the unique depictions, stereotypes and experiences of low-income women and mothers living in deprivation, and as part of that food deprivation. Followed by the contextual challenges they face when trying to feed their children and the implications of these lived experiences on their mental wellbeing.

1.4.1 Mothering under Marginalisation

Tyler (2008) looked across multiple media sources to investigate how working-class single mothers are represented in the UK media. They identified the figure of the 'chav' emerging in the news from 2003 onwards, being described as "… the dole-scroungers, petty criminals, football hooligans and teenage pram-pushers" (Tyler, 2008, p.14). What distinguished the 'chav' or 'chavette', associated with social deprivation, from previous 'underclass' was her vulgar, bad, and excessive consumer choices (Tyler, 2008: Hayward & Yar, 2006). Broadsheets, such as The Times and The Daily Telegraph, fell into two categories, either being highly critical and vilifying 'chavs' or celebrating the new snobbery of TV characters such as

Vicky Pollard, as an opportunity for humour and class disgust (Tyler, 2008). Adopting metaphors of disease, invasion and excessive breeding, mobilised fear in the white middle class (Nayak, 2003). The creation of the Little Britain character, Vicky Pollard, was a white economically deprived single mother, represented as "sexually excessive, immoral, filthy, ignorant, vulgar, tasteless, drunken, overweight, working-class whore", becoming a target of social stigma, hatred, anxiety and sexist class disgust (Tyler, 2008, p.26). This elicitation of disgust is viewed as a contemporary means of classifying women's reproduction as more or less desirable (Tyler, 2008).

McIntyre, Officer & Robinson (2003) and Kruger and Lourens (2015) have investigated how neo-liberal discourses impact the wellbeing of mothers who are unable to provide food for their children. McIntyre et al., (2003), investigated the subjective lived distress of mothers in the US with a diagnosis of depression. Thematic analysis found that mothers experienced anger, pain, desperation and shame, their distress was not linked to poverty directly, but being unable to provide for their children and live up to the ideal of what a 'good' mother should be. The paper by Kruger and Lourens (2015), used a psychological and political lens to understand mothers' responses to their children's hunger. Women in South Africa reported being emotionally distressed by their children's hunger children and described their depression as feelings of hopelessness, sadness, and guilt, alongside emotions not necessarily associated with depression, including anger, anxiety and anomie. They postulated that neo-liberal and gender discourses positioned mothers as responsible to care for their children and evoked a kind of 'madness' and cycle of shame in low-income mothers being seen in acts of verbal or physical aggression or passive withdrawal. This is particularly problematic as shame has been identified as an emotion that inhibits help-seeking behaviour and leads to attacking others, attacking the self, withdrawing, or avoidance (Nathanson, 1992).

1.4.2 Challenges faced by mothers when accessing food assistance programmes

Qualitative research in the US, Netherlands and the UK has highlighted that mothers' may experience several challenges, when trying to access food for themselves and their children (Caherer et al., 2014b; Purdam, Garrett & Esmail, 2016). Lambie-Mumford (2017) found that the food bank referral system in the UK positions people as recipients, not consumers. This means access to food is based on need not right, placing them in a position where they have to convince professionals they are in genuine need, these professionals of make the moralistic

judgement of deserving or underserving in determining eligibility of receiving a voucher and food packages. A discourse analysis paper in Canada highlighted how this being positioned as 'needy' can be a conflict and barrier for mothers seeking help who can be fearful of how others, including social care services, may evaluate and perceive them as a mother (Powers, 2005). This role conflict is thought to be magnified for women and mothers whose identities as a 'good mother' have traditionally been forged around food, providing, nurturing and caretaking (Galef, 1994; Burman, 1994), and could contribute to the prevalence of mothers sacrificing meals to feed their children (Carter et al., 2011; Tarasuk & Beaton, 1999; Purdam et al., 2016).

Of those women who do access food banks, some report viewing them as a safe place (Garthwaite et al., 2015), while others report strained experiences (Thompson, et al., 2018: Caherer et al., 2014b; Purdam et al., 2016). One example of this is a study in London, where volunteers were most concerned about mothers being unable to provide healthy food for their children, due to short term employment, as a result of zero-hour contracts, potential eviction, and fractured relationships (Thompson et al., 2018). Mothers' reported anxiety and depression about trying to provide, they described additional challenges when attending food banks, such as the food packages being spoilt and feeling interrogated by workers in relation to their parenting (Purdam et al., 2016; Thompson et al., 2018). Evidence suggests that gendered role conflict, of being a mother unable to "provide" for her children, alongside the fear or reality of being judged, impacts mothers' self-esteem, help-seeking behaviour and mental wellbeing (Raviv et al., 2003; Horst et al., 2014).

To summarise, it is likely that mothers living in deprivation and needing to access food via food banks experience several additional challenges within society, including increased discrimination and stigma. Investigating how mothers are represented in the media, will help gain further insight into what contributes to challenging interactions in food banks and daily experiences of distress.

1.4.3 Mothers' Wellbeing

There is a gap in the research focusing specifically on mothers, however research into women attending food banks appears to have a high level of participants who are mothers, such papers are included in this section. There is an emerging body of literature finding that females visiting a food bank, are more likely to have been exposed to traumatic events and

have a higher prevalence of eating disorder pathology (Becker et al., 2018; Becker et al., 2017). This means that in the US some of the most vulnerable women attending food banks are struggling with the social stigma and shame of food insecurity, stigma and shame of eating disorder pathology (in particular binge eating due to distress, night eating, laxative use) and weight stigma, whilst trying to provide for their children (Becker et al., 2017). Furthermore, the self-conscious and internalising element of shame can be a particularly destructive emotion for mental health, and become a barrier to accessing professional or personal support (Bordin 1979; Black et al., 2013; McDonald & Morley, 2000). It is unclear if a similar pattern is emerging within the UK for mothers accessing food banks, due to a lack of research. However, initial research into food banks and mental health in Glasgow highlights that, for both males and females, accessing food banks has implications for their mental health, impacting their self-concept, relationships and plans for the future (Bonnar, 2018). In addition, there is a general finding of increased suicide rates in benefit claimants, it is therefore likely that this would also impact mothers struggling with food deprivation (Cowburn, 2016).

Despite this research, there continues to be a lack of psychological provision within community hubs, such as food banks. This means that a valuable opportunity to work in partnership and provide responsive mental health care to the needs of a population living with food deprivation is lost, as their unique needs are left unheard and unmet (Becker-Blease, 2017).

1.5 Clinical implications

It is considered important to explore the newspaper portrayal of mothers accessing food banks in the UK, for several reasons. Dominant psychological models often view psychological distress from an individualised perspective. This has led to the development of a public health system that 'treats' distress in a decontextualized manner, difficulties, such as through Improving Access to Psychological Therapy Services (IAPTS) providing Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) (Binnie, 2015). This public health system leads to several problems as the socio-economic determinants of distress are not acknowledged, while people receiving weekly CBT can remain living in 'toxic' environments, such as the inability to access food, which has been linked to increased mental health problems (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; Conger & Donnellan, 2007). This focus on 'treating' the individual as separate to the context they live in could

explain why over 50% of low-intensity CBT cases relapse after twelve months (Jarrett, 2017). By overlooking the socio-economic determinants of psychological distress, the mental health system is not able to meet the needs of certain populations.

The group Psychologists for Social Change (PSC) believe that people's social, political, and material context are central to their experience as individuals and their mental health and wellbeing. PSC and community psychology approaches view mental health problems as the result of systematic oppression, social inequality, and marginalisation (Zlotowitz & Williams, 2013; Johnson et al., 2018). Johnson et al., (2018), have argued that Clinical Psychologists have a responsibility to contribute to both micro and macro-level changes in public health delivery, at service and policy level, to ensure that we are providing proactive and preventative care that meets the needs of the general population (Lamb, 2014; DoH, 2014).

1.6 Conclusion

To conclude, a CR perspective has been adopted to validate individuals who attend food banks lived experiences of the reality of food deprivation, whilst also considering the constructs that impact upon them. Individuals who live in food deprivation and attend food banks can be constructed in different ways and this impacts on these peoples experiences and their mental health. The reality of not being able to access food is stressful and painful in itself. Yet, in addition to this, people attending food banks are denigrated by media constructions which impact their mental health and is relevant to the profession of clinical psychology.

2 Chapter 2: Literature Review

Initially this review aimed to build an understanding of how mothers accessing food banks were portrayed in the media. During investigation of the literature, different combinations of terms were used, focusing on relevant concepts and synonyms such as mother, media, & food bank. No papers met this search criteria, highlighting the limited research in this area within the UK. In response to this the review was broadened out to women, thus maintaining attention on the gendered portrayal of mothers accessing food banks. Media as a concept was removed to provide a broad overview of all previous literature on women and food banks.

Therefore, the literature search question was "*What is the wellbeing of women accessing food banks?*" It is important to understand the pre-existing literature on women accessing food banks, to understand their portrayal in the media, identify gaps in the literature and inform the research question.

This section will outline the search strategy adopted. An overview and critical evaluation of identified papers will be provided, with a focus on methods and results. The main points from these papers will be outlined, as well as assessed for quality. This information will be used to provide a rationale for the current research and its principle aims.

2.1 Search strategy

An initial review of the literature produced was carried out from 2019 to 2020 and this was an evolving process carried out over 16 months. The data bases were then checked in April 2021 for the addition of recent articles to include, using the search terms in Table 1.

TABLE 1: SEARCH TERMS

Terms relating to participant group	AND	Terms relating to food banks
Mother OR mum OR female OR women OR single mother OR maternal		"Food bank" OR food bank OR "food pantr*"

Databases Scopus, Pubmed, EBSco, Social Care online, were utilised, including the use of authors' references. Moreover, discussions with research advisors took place to increase

awareness of any relevant papers. Grey literature was identified through search engines included Google scholar, the Clinical Psychology Forum and University of Hertfordshire Library.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria, that reduced the number of articles to those most relevant is outlined in Table 2. It was determined not to make peer-reviewed papers a necessary criterion, due to the salience of a nursing thesis found in a grey search engine.

TABLE 2: INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Inclusion	Exclusion criteria
Published in English	Published in other languages (practical barrier due to researcher's limited language skills)
Recruitment via food banks or proportion of sample accessing food bank	Focus is on food insecurity and no mention of food banks
Focus on food bank or similar food outlet, such as food pantry	Food outlet is too dissimilar to food banks so that experience will be different e.g. food delivery service - as this means not entering a food bank environment
Focus on female food bank users	Focus on food bank volunteers or managers'
Research located internationally	Focus on issues associated with food banks use, without addressing the use of food banks directly, such as substance misuse and homelessness
Taking papers from any time span. However, there will be a natural limitation to accessing some previous research due to it being published in books and not accessible online.	Focus on operations strategy and business models of food banks
Looking at mental wellbeing, this could range in an approach from more medical model diagnosis to social sciences emotions and distress. And/or include comorbid physical and mental health concerns	Focus solely on physical health/nutritional intake of service users.

2.1.1 Results

The combined searches of online databases were therefore completed and yielded four hundred and fifty-six articles. Two hundred and thirty-six were excluded according to the title not meeting inclusion criteria. Two hundred and twenty abstracts were screened and one hundred and eighty-eight did not meet the inclusion criteria. Thirty-two papers remained for

full text screening and nine articles met the inclusion criteria for the systematic literature review. From these nine remaining articles, the reference list and grey literature were screened, providing an additional two relevant articles. The final number of articles that met the inclusion and exclusion criteria was eleven, these are displayed in Table 3.

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF JOURNAL ARTICLES FOUND WITHIN EACH DATABASE SEARCH, PRE- AND PRO-SCREENING

Search engine	Total number of journals including Gray literature	
	Pre-screening	Post-screening
Scopus	301	9
Pubmed	155	0
Ebesco	0	0
Social care online	0	0
Duplicates		2
Total from Databases	456	9
Google		1
University of Hertfordshire Library Search Engine		1
Total		11

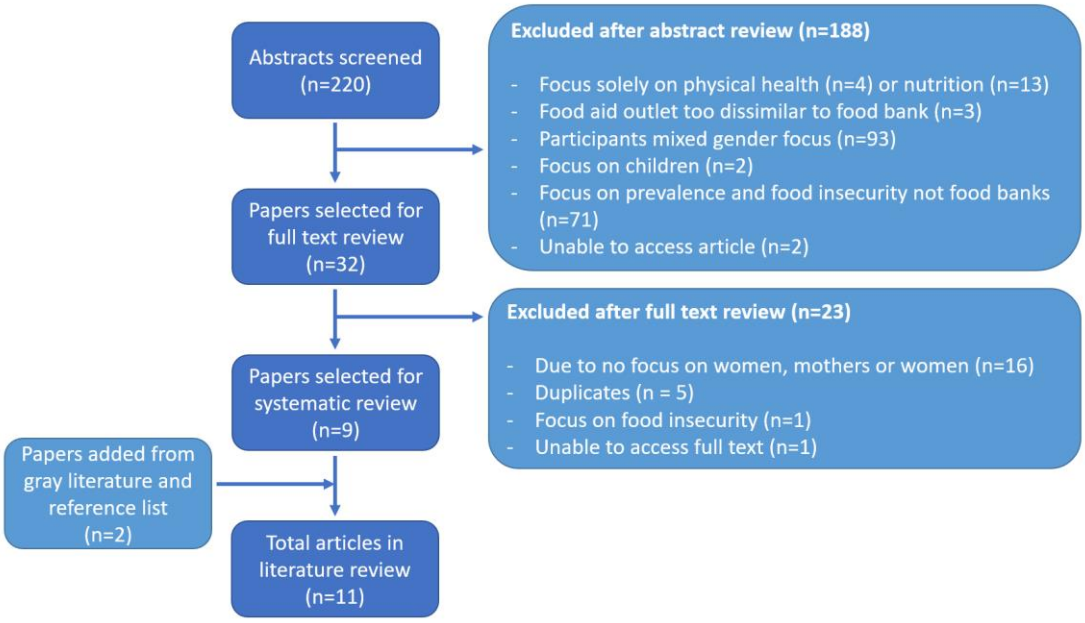

FIGURE 2: FLOW DIAGRAM OF THE PROCESS OF INCLUSION OF REVIEWED LITERATURE

2.1.2 Quality of papers

To check the quality of the literature under review, three frameworks were used. For quantitative research, Critical Appraisal Skills Program (2018) was used (Table 5 & Table 6). For mixed methods research, Pluye et al. (2010) the Mixed Method Appraisal Tool research criteria (Table 8) was used and for qualitative research, Tracey's (2010) Big Tent Criteria (Table 9) was used. There was a range in the quality of the papers. One paper had not been peer reviewed (Hicks-Stratton, 2004). Two studies included low participant samples (Hicks-Stratton, 2004; Buck-McFadyen, 2015), whereas other papers provided depth and rigour through larger participant numbers, yet recruited in specific local contexts, meaning that their findings may not be generalisable to other locations or populations (Chilton & Booth, 2007; Papan & Clow, 2015; Baskin et al, 2009; Power, 2018; Power et al., 2020). This next section will provide a comprehensive overview of the relevant papers, highlighting relevant strengths and weaknesses, which are then reviewed and combined at the end of this chapter (in line with CASP systematic literature review checklist: Singh, 2013).

TABLE 4: SUMMARY OF RELEVANT RESEARCH PAPERS USED FOR THIS LITERATURE REVIEW

Author, Title, Location and Discipline	Participants and Aims	Research methodology	Key findings and implications
Zekeri, A. (2007) Livelihood Strategies of Food Insecure Poor Female-Headed Families in Rural Alabama	Participants: 100 single mothers who met the USDA criteria for food insecurity Aims: To examine how food insecure, poor, single mothers get food for themselves and their children	Quantitative descriptive cross-sectional study design Methods: three surveys; food insecurity USDA measure, depression and coping measure and demographic information. Data analysis: Percentages	Key findings: Single mothers use multiple formal (government and employment) and informal (community networks and organisations) strategies to feed their children. This can impact on them psychologically, leading to symptoms of depression towards a clinical level. Symptoms measured were: sadness, loneliness, trouble with sleep and high levels of worry about food. Implications: To increase employment and job availability for single mothers. Recommendation for psychological counselling to support single mothers' ability to cope and live with food insecurity.

Papan, A., & Clow, B. (2015) **The food insecurity-obesity paradox as a vicious cycle for women: inequalities and health**	Participants: 27 women, with self-reported BMI 25 or above, over the age of 18, identifying as food insecure on two-question-pre-screen. 80% of the sample had children, and 1/3 were lone mothers. 2/3 had an annual income of below $14,530 (Canadian dollars). Aims: To understand women's experience of food security, obesity, and chronic disease in Atlantic Canada	Mixed methods design (embedded approach) Quantitative: Demographic questionnaire and a food security questionnaire. To understand characteristics of sample and level/experience of food insecurity (FI). FI measure from previous national health surveys. Descriptive data analysed using percentages. Qualitative: Six focus groups premised on indigenous, participatory framework, to hear from and document women's experience of food insecurity. Unclear how themes identified, however some quotes included in results section.	Key findings: Quantitative section: Showed that 55% of women were receiving income support and just 15% had paid employment. They evidenced that most of these women could not afford balanced meals and worried about affording food. Qualitative section: Women experienced food insecurity, gendered constructs of maternal food scarcity, eating less and last, stress (due to lone parenting and social isolation), weight gain, chronic disease, obesity, and poverty. These factors/themes and experiences interacted, trapping women in a vicious cycle and impacting on their mood. Implications: The results support the need for social and economic policy to be rooted in commitment to address women's fallback and bargaining positions. For example, improving social welfare and minimum wage levels, to protect women and mothers.

Dressler, H., & Smith, C. (2013) Environment, Personal and Behavioural Factors are Related to Body Mass Index in a Group of Multi-Ethnic, Low Income Women	Participants: 330 urban women recruited via food pantries, homeless shelters, and community centres. Aged 18-64 years old. 40% were African American, 29% Indian American and 19% White American. Aims: The aim of this study was to understand factors which may impact on women's weight in obesogenic, low income environments, to shape individualised and effective interventions.	Mixed methods design Qualitative: Method: 16 formative focus groups, followed by survey. Thematically analysed. Quantitative: The surveys were created based on focus group themes and set within the Social Construct Theory (SCT) – personal, environmental, and behavioural. In addition, 20 self-identity questions were included. Existing measures were also used, including demographic information, US household food security questionnaire (pre-validated) and BMI of participants. Analysis included: Pearson's correlation to look at relationship between SCT factor – personal, environmental, and behavioural and self-identity questions in relation to BMI. Questions which correlated were placed into multiple regression model, to understand which constructs predicted BMI.	Key findings: Qualitative: Within the focus groups, women discussed emotional eating, health beliefs and physical activity as impacting on their diet and weight. Quantitative: Significant predictors of higher BMI in women included: Emotional factors Self-identifying as a stress eater or junk food eater Personal (31%), behavioural (20%) or environmental (3%) factors. Mothers with lower BMI were more likely to use food to soothe their children. Implications: Researchers discuss how knowledge may lead to self-identification as a healthy eater, reinforcing positive eating practice and BMI. They acknowledge how stressful living circumstances of low-income women may lead to increased emotional-eating tendencies. Suggesting future research should understand how women with healthy BMIs overcome these challenges, such as barriers to exercise.

Bartfeld, J (2003) Single mothers, emergency food assistance, and food stamps in the welfare reform era	Participants: 839 single mothers taken from wider survey data. Aims: To understand characteristics and circumstances of single mother food pantry clients and understand what factors predict use.	Quantitative: Survey method used across 27 Wisconsin states, recruitment via food pantries. Due to decentralized nature of food pantries, it is difficult to understand the representativeness of recruitment channels.	Key Findings: Single mothers are a disadvantaged group facing multiple hardships. Since welfare reform single mothers are more likely to access food pantries, as an alternative to food stamps. 50% of single mothers attending food pantries were employed. Accessing food pantries appeared to be a long term strategy to provide.

Hicks-Stratton, C. (2004). The Experience of Food Bank Usage Among Women: A Phenomenological Study. Master of Nursing Memorial	Participants: Three mothers who use food banks with children from the ages of 2 to 12. Aims: To increase the nursing professions knowledge of patients' lived experience of accessing food banks to improve patient care.	Qualitative method In-depth open-ended interviews Phenomenological analysis	Key findings: Women's experience of attending food banks was encapsulated in five themes: (1) that they had no other choice, (2) it is a visible reminder of poverty, (3) they have a lack of anonymity, (4) that it is the only way to feed your children and (5) that it never gets any easier. Mothers' strengths were highlighted, such as the determination to take control over their food shortage and increase their ability to feed their children. Implications: Participants' voices highlight how welfare systems can impact upon mothers' self-esteem. Researcher identifies the challenges in recruitment within this hard-to-reach population.

Chilton, M., & Booth, S. (2007) Hunger of the Body and Hunger of the Mind: African American Women's Perceptions of Food Insecurity, Health and Violence.	Participants: 34 women, of African American heritage. 16 participants (47%) were caring for one or more children Aims: To explore the relationship between health, hunger, and food insecurity among African American women in Philadelphia	Qualitative method Including 4 focus groups and 12 semi-structured interviews Analysis: Phenomenological analysis	Key findings: This research highlights that food insecurity has not only a physical dimension but a psychological one. They name this "Hunger of the body and hunger of the mind". "Hunger of the body" explains the physical experience of hunger pain, need in the body, impact upon health, sleep, and activities of daily living. "Hunger of the Mind" has several subthemes, including stress and depression, deliberate self-inflicted hunger and violence and inability to eat. Stress, depression and need for spiritual food were linked to hardships of being poor, such as welfare requirements, rude caseworkers, health difficulties and the stress of applying for food stamps, leading to ulcers. Deliberate hunger was purposeful non-eating due to stress, anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation. Violence, stress and hunger were when exposure to violence was linked to physical and mental consequences Implications: Future research should refine frameworks to examine the mental health effects of stress, anxiety, violence, or traumatic experiences of hunger, in different cultures.

Buck-McFadyen, E. V. (2015) Rural Food Insecurity: When Cooking Skills, Homegrown Food, and Perseverance aren't Enough to Feed a Family.	Participants: 7 mothers living in rural Canada Aims: To explore the experience of mothers who attend food banks in rural areas	Qualitative method Semi-structured interviews and content analysis adopted	Key findings: Demographics highlight that the historical context of mothers varied, from early life experience of poverty and trauma, to having been financially stable and then experiencing a job loss. Mothers discussed the emotional experience of food insecurity, such as high levels of stress and worry that kept them awake at night. For some, this stress led to self-harming behaviour and even hospitalization. A common perception was that women worried more than their partners when resources were low, leading to conflict. In addition, welfare stereotypes could evoke emotions such as shame. In relation to improving the situation, it was clear mothers were resilient and had a number of strategies to stretch resources, such as buying things on deal and placing them in the freezer, juggling bills. Implications: Firstly, food insecurity needs to be situated within broader social, political, historical and economic context. Secondly, income is important, however food insecurity is prevalent in both low- and middle-income families, therefore, food assistance programs should not discriminate on income alone. Thirdly, gender impacts the emotional experience of food insecurity, supporting previous research saying it can increase marital strain, depression, and self-injurious behaviour and women are more likely to take the burden and self-sacrifice as part of their mothering role. Fourthly, women have many strengths, however food insecurity cannot be tackled solely at an individual level and there is a

			need for broader public and health policy changes to prevent hunger.

Baskin, C., Guarisco, B., Koleszar-Green, R., Melanson, N., Osawamick, C., (2009) **Struggles, strengths and solutions: exploring food security with young urban aboriginal moms**	Participants: 16 Aboriginal mothers living in Toronto Aims: To explore aboriginal mothers food choices and access, relationships between food insecurity, housing and child welfare, strengths; and advocacy related to food policies.	Qualitative: Anti-colonial framework and theoretical lens to understand how to support Aboriginal mothers to live free from hunger in line with the UN Convention (1976). Data gathered through multiple methods: *Storytelling circles which included spiritual/cultural practices* *Anonymous secure internet sites* Mural workshops Notes by researchers and data gathered thematically analysed.	Key findings: Mothers reported that they become stressed when they do not have enough food to provide for their children. Some women accessed help from Aboriginal agencies and family, whereas others did not know where to go. Their income did not enable them to provide, and they had difficulties accessing services, or education due to the cost of childcare. Mothers tried to avoid accessing child welfare due concerns they would be judged and labelled responsible for not having enough. Single and young mothers discussed viewing themselves as resourceful, disciplined, and strong, however, that this could make it difficult for them to seek help. Implications: Recommendation for services to meet the specific needs of young Aboriginal mothers, including food banks dispersed across the city, to provide access to culturally appropriate foods, perinatal vitamins, baby formula and a home delivery service. In addition, for wider changes in terms of, metro passes to be provided, access to education and childcare to be subsidized. For benefits and access processes to be made transparent and rent to be subsidized.

Power, M., Small, N., Doherty, B., & Pickett, K. (2018) Hidden Hungry? Experiences of food insecurity amongst Pakistani and white British women	Participants: Eight Pakistani and eight White British mothers living in Bradford Aims: To understand why women in the UK are reluctant to access food banks when food insecure To understand the process of attending a food bank in the UK To understand differences in ethnic groups	Qualitative Three focus groups and one individual interview Thematic analysis completed using three stage process	Key findings: Women who were food insecure often did not access food banks. Reasons included: Not required – due to reliance on other networks of support Avoidance – due to shame and embarrassment. Mothers instead sacrifice their own wellbeing to provide for their children. Limited knowledge of services (Practical barriers such as language or lack of knowledge linked to Pakistani women only) Implications: Welfare benefits, particularly Child Benefit was viewed as important for mothers and women's autonomy. Recommends this to be unfrozen and uprated in line with inflation, after decades of austerity. In parallel, highlighted policy programs can only be effective alongside shifts in dominant narrative about why some people – and some do not – use food banks. For national monitoring of food insecurity in the UK to identify the extent of the hidden hunger in the UK.

Power, M., Small, N., Dohert, B., & Pickett, K. (2018) The incompatibility of System and Lifeworld Understandings of Food Insecurity and the Provision of Food Aid in an English City	Participants: 16 individuals who had attended food banks in Bradford UK 18 representatives of food aid providers Aims: To consider food insecurity using Habermans's distinction between the system and lifeworld	Qualitative Two focus groups and one interview with women attending food banks Eighteen interviews with representatives, including volunteers and paid employees, of organisations providing food aid	Key findings: In terms of the system analysis a large minority of food providers viewed food insecurity as self-inflicted. Service users were pathologised and virtue was characterised by personal responsibility. Emergency food aid providers colonised the subject's lifeworld, leading to shame, and undermining commonality, trust, or solidarity in food banks, attributing problems to personal failure. Implications: Need to foster opportunities for social solidarity, mobilise peers support and provide mutual care.

Power, M & Small, N (2021) Disciplinary and pastoral power, food and poverty in late modernity	Participants: 35 mothers, 16 from Bradford and 19 from York. Aims: To look at how power shapes the lived experiences of women in food poverty.	Qualitative Focus groups conducted with women in Bradford in 2016 and York in 2019. Focus groups were thematically analysed.	Key Findings: Mothers' daily lives were shaped by the disciplinary state through conditionality and surveyed through multiple sites, including schools, hospitals, food banks and the wider community. Low-income mothers were constructed and disciplined as the Other: as the negligent mother failing to feed her children because of her incompetence and selfishness. This narrative conflicted with structural obstacles to accessing food and undermined solidarity in disadvantaged mothers. Implications: Dominant discourses and accepted norms can be opposed by fostering coalitions of the marginalized to counter disciplinary power techniques of isolating and individualizing people amid a socioeconomic system of wage inequality and insecure employment.

TABLE 5: QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE QUANTITATIVE CROSS-SECTIONAL DESIGN STUDY

Livelihood Strategies of Food Insecure Poor Female-Headed Families in Rural Alabama (Zekeri, A. 2007) Quality measure for evaluation of quantitative methods: CASP (2018)			
Appraisal questions	**Yes**	**No**	**Cannot tell**
Did the study address a clearly focused question/issue?	Purpose: to understand how food insecure single mothers provide food for themselves and their children Clear population of study Clearly trying to detect harmful effect		
Was the cohort recruited in an acceptable way?	The study took a stratified approach, taking 20 families to represent each county		
Was the exposure accurately measured to minimise bias?	Validated food insecurity measures used		
Was the outcome accurately measured to minimise bias?	Validated measures used to minimise bias. Depression & coping measure, food insecurity questionnaire, BMI and objective demographic information e.g. salary		

Have the authors identified all important confounding factors? Have they considered the confounding factors in the design and/or analysis?		Author did not investigate the prevalence of violence (particularly domestic). This could be a confounding factor impacting on mental health.	
Was the follow up of subjects complete enough? **Long enough**	Yes Yes (1 year)		
What are the results of this study?	Results displayed via percentages, descriptive data only		
How precise are the results?			No confidence intervals provided
Do you believe the results?	Yes		
Will the results help locally?	Yes – number of recommendations made		
Do the results fit with other available evidence?	Yes		
What are the implications of this study for practice?	Recommendation therapy around coping for this population		

TABLE 6: QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF QUANTITATIVE STUDY

Single mothers, emergency food assistance, and food stamps in the welfare reform era. Bartfeld (2003). Quality measure for evaluation of quantitative methods: CASP (2018)			
Appraisal questions	**Yes**	**No**	**Cannot tell**
Did the study address a clearly focused question/issue?	Purpose: to understand circumstances, characteristics, and connection to public assistant among food pantry single mothers		
Was the cohort recruited in an acceptable way?	Data taken from pre-existing Wisconsin Survey of food pantry clients, then selected via inclusion/exclusion criteria based on gender and household composition.		
Was the exposure accurately measured to minimise bias?	All mothers had accessed food pantries		
Was the outcome accurately measured to minimise bias?	Self-reports of demographic information, income, education, access to food, and different hardships		

Have the authors identified all important confounding factors? **Have they considered the confounding factors in the design and/or analysis?**		x	
Was the follow up of subjects complete enough? **Long enough**	N/A		
What are the results of this study?	Results displayed via percentages.		
How precise are the results?			No confidence intervals provided
Do you believe the results?	Yes		
Will the results help locally?	Yes – number of recommendations made regarding barriers and how to overcome stigma		
Do the results fit with other available evidence?	Yes		

What are the implications of this study for practice?	Recommends increasing public support to families that have left the welfare system. Highlighting that these "success" cases of welfare reform are having to turn to private food banks for support.		

TABLE 7: QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE MIXED METHODS STUDY

The Food Insecurity-Obesity Paradox as a Vicious Cycle for Women: Inequalities and Health (Papan, A., & Clow, B., 2015) Quality measure for evaluation of mixed methods: Pluye et al (2011)					
Types of mixed methods study component or primary studies	**Methodological quality criteria**	**Responses**			
		Yes	**No**	**Cannot tell**	**Comments**
Screening questions (For all types)	Are there clear qualitative and quantitative research questions (or objectives*), or a clear mixed methods question (or objective*)?	x			
	Do the collected data address the research question (objective)? E.g. consider whether the follow up period is long enough for the outcome to occur (for longitudinal studies or study components).	x			
	Further appraisal may be not feasible or appropriate when the answer is 'No' or 'Cannot tell' to one or both screening questions.				
Qualitative	1.1. Are the sources of qualitative data (archives, documents, informants, observations) relevant to address the research question (objective)?	x			Focus group data

	1.2. Is the process for analysing qualitative data relevant to address the research question (objective)?		x		Not much information provided regarding the analysis chosen or how coding was done. Themes and quotes included in results sections.
	1.3. Is appropriate consideration given to how findings relate to the context, e.g. the setting, in which the data were collected?	x			Information regarding context outlined within the introduction. Conclusion recontextualizes findings within local socio-economic context.
	1.4. Is appropriate consideration given to how findings relate to researchers' influence, e.g. through their interactions with participants?		x		
Quantitative Randomized controlled trials	2.1. Is there a clear description of the randomization?	N/A			
	2.2. Is there a clear description of the allocation concealment (or blinding when applicable)?	N/A			
	2.3. Are there complete outcome data (80% or above)?	N/A			
	2.4. Is there low withdrawal/drop -out (below 20%)?	N/A			

Quantitative non-randomized	3.1. Are participants (organizations) recruited in a way that minimizes selection bias?	N/A			
	3.2. Are measurements appropriate (clear origin, or validity known, or standard instrument; and absence of contamination between groups when appropriate) regarding the exposure/intervention and outcomes?	N/A			
	3.3. In the groups being compared (exposed vs. non - exposed; with intervention vs. without; cases vs. controls), are the participants comparable, or do researchers take into account (control for) the difference between these groups?	N/A			
	3.4. Are there complete outcome data (80% or above), and, when applicable, an acceptable response rate (60% or above), or an acceptable follow -up rate for cohort studies (depending on the duration of follow -up)?	N/A			
Quantitative descriptive	4.1. Is the sampling strategy relevant to address the quantitative research question (quantitative aspect of the mixed methods question)?	x			Yes, inclusion of demographic questionnaire and food security questionnaire to provide further understanding regarding the experience of food insecurity and obesity.

	4.2. Is the sample representative of the population understudy?	x			Inclusion criteria outlined, individuals identified as BMI over 25 and two-question food insecurity pre-screening used.
	4.3. Are measurements appropriate (clear origin, or validity known, or standard instrument)?	x			Known validity of BMI and use of standardised food security questions from previous national health surveys.
	4.4. Is there an acceptable response rate (60% or above)?	x			
Mixed methods	5.1. Is the mixed methods research design relevant to address the qualitative and quantitative research questions (or objectives), or the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the mixed methods question (or objective)?	x			Focus group to understand participants view and experience. Quantitative section provides demographic information (including employment and welfare) and quantitative measure of food insecurity.
	5.2. Is the integration of qualitative and quantitative data (or results*) relevant to address the research question (objective)?	x			

	5.3. Is appropriate consideration given to the limitations associated with this integration, e.g., the divergence of qualitative and quantitative data (or results*) in a triangulation design?			x	No reflection on limitations included.
	Criteria for the qualitative component (1.1 to 1.4), and appropriate criteria for the quantitative component (2.1 to 2.4, or 3.1 to 3.4, or 4.1 to 4.4), must be also applied.				
*These two items are not considered as double-barrelled items since in mixed methods research, (1) there may be research questions (quantitative research) or research objectives (qualitative research), and (2) data may be integrated, and/or qualitative findings and quantitative results can be integrated					

TABLE 8: QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE MIXED METHODS STUDY

Environment, Personal and Behavioural Factors Are Related to Body Mass Index in a Group of Multi-Ethnic, Low Income Women. Dressler, H., & Smith, C. (2013). Quality measure for evaluation of mixed methods: Pluye et al (2011)					
Types of mixed methods study component or primary studies	**Methodological quality criteria**	**Responses**			
		Yes	**No**	**Cannot tell**	**Comments**
Screening questions (For all types)	Are there clear qualitative and quantitative research questions (or objectives*), or a clear mixed methods question (or objective*)?	x			
	Do the collected data allow address the research question (objective)? E.g., consider whether the follow up period is long enough for the outcome to occur (for longitudinal studies or study components).	x			
	Further appraisal may be not feasible or appropriate when the answer is 'No' or 'Can't tell' to one or both screening questions.				
Qualitative	1.1. Are the sources of qualitative data (archives, documents, informants, observations) relevant to address the research question (objective)?	x			Focus groups to understand groups' views and inform survey

	1.2. Is the process for analysing qualitative data relevant to address the research question (objective)?	x			Thematic analysis
	1.3. Is appropriate consideration given to how findings relate to the context, e.g., the setting, in which the data were collected?	x			Discuss this limitation at the end of the article
	1.4. Is appropriate consideration given to how findings relate to researchers' influence, e.g., through their interactions with participants?	x			Researchers acknowledge how previous research experience of working with low income women impacts on focus group design
Quantitative Randomized controlled trials	2.1. Is there a clear description of the randomization?				N/A
	2.2. Is there a clear description of the allocation concealment (or blinding when applicable)?				N/A
	2.3. Are there complete outcome data (80% or above)?				N/A
	2.4. Is there low withdrawal/drop -out (below 20%)?				N/A
Quantitative non-randomized	3.1. Are participants (organizations) recruited in a way that minimizes selection bias?			x	Not clear, appeared to be opt in recruitment via food pantry's, and churches, for small payment.

	3.2. Are measurements appropriate (clear origin, or validity known, or standard instrument; and absence of contamination between groups when appropriate) regarding the exposure/intervention and outcomes?	x			Creation of survey was reviewed by field experts knowledgeable in survey creation, piloted and tested for reliability with Cronbach's alpha. Other existing measures used, e.g. BMI
	3.3. In the groups being compared (exposed vs. non - exposed; with intervention vs. without; cases vs. controls), are the participants comparable, or do researchers take into account (control for) the difference between these groups?		x		Researchers appear to compare three constructs; environment, behavioural and personal – however, the questions are not balanced. Multiple regression and correlations used.
	3.4. Are there complete outcome data (80% or above), and, when applicable, an acceptable response rate (60% or above), or an acceptable follow -up rate for cohort studies (depending on the duration of follow -up)?	x			
Quantitative descriptive	4.1. Is the sampling strategy relevant to address the quantitative research question (quantitative aspect of the mixed methods question)?	N/A			
	4.2. Is the sample representative of the population understudy?	N/A			
	4.3. Are measurements appropriate (clear origin, or validity known, or standard instrument)?	N/A			

	4.4. Is there an acceptable response rate (60% or above)?	N/A			
Mixed methods	5.1. Is the mixed methods research design relevant to address the qualitative and quantitative research questions (or objectives), or the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the mixed methods question (or objective)?	x			Formative design focus groups used to underpin survey questions. To meet the goal of understanding factors that impact on women's weight.
	5.2. Is the integration of qualitative and quantitative data (or results*) relevant to address the research question (objective)?	x			
	5.3. Is appropriate consideration given to the limitations associated with this integration, e.g., the divergence of qualitative and quantitative data (or results*) in a triangulation design?	x			Discuss how findings are limited to women in this geographical area.
	Criteria for the qualitative component (1.1 to 1.4), and appropriate criteria for the quantitative component (2.1 to 2.4, or 3.1 to 3.4, or 4.1 to 4.4), must be also applied.				
*These two items are not considered as double-barrelled items since in mixed methods research, (1) there may be research questions (quantitative research) or research objectives (qualitative research), and (2) data may be integrated, and/or qualitative findings and quantitative results can be integrated					

TABLE 9: QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PAPERS

Appraisal questions for the qualitative papers	Hicks-Stratton, C. (2004). The Experience of Food Bank Usage Among Women: A Phenomenological Study. Master of Nursing Memorial.	Chilton, M., & Booth, S. (2007) Hunger of the Body and Hunger of The Mind: African American Women's Perceptions of Food Insecurity, Health and Violence.	Buck-McFadyen, E. V. (2015) Rural Food Insecurity: When Cooking Skills, Homegrown Food, and Perseverance Aren't Enough to Feed a Family.
Worthy topic	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rich rigor	Some (small number of interviews due to recruitment challenges) No evidence of time spent visiting food banks	Yes	Yes
Sincerity	Discussed challenges around recruitment. Limited self-reflexivity on one's own position.	Yes	Limited relational reflexivity
Credibility	Some, however, themes were not verified by participants	Focus groups with participants held to develop reciprocity around final themes	Yes – Themes are cross-verified with participants.
Resonance	Yes	Yes	Yes
Significant contribution	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ethical	Yes	Yes	Yes

Meaningful coherence	Meaningful coherence	Meaningful coherence	Meaningful coherence
Appraisal questions for the qualitative papers	**Baskin, C., Guarisco, B., Koleszar-Green, R., Melanson, N., Osawamick, C., (2009) Struggles, strengths and solutions: exploring food security with young urban aboriginal moms**	**Power, M., Small, N., Doherty, B., & Pickett, K. (2018) Hidden Hungry? Experiences of food insecurity amongst Pakistani and white British women**	**Power, M & Small, N (2021) Disciplinary and pastoral power, food and poverty in late modernity**
Worthy topic	Yes – timely due to displacement of marginalised group	Yes – yes investigating women's reluctance to attend food banks, despite being food insecure.	Yes
Rich rigor	Yes - Sixteen mothers included in the sample and outlines local context.	Sixteen participants, however splits them into two groups based on ethnicity, meaning that the samples to develop conclusions regarding similarities or differences based on ethnic groups could lack rigour.	Yes – high sample number, in two different contexts, providing depth and rigour.
Sincerity	Reflection on challenges and re	Reflects on interviewing one Pakistani women separately due to recruitment challenges.	

Credibility	Membership contributions via roles as research assistants	Lack of membership contributions and no evidence of cross-checking codes with participants or other researchers.	
Resonance	Themes remain quite practical potentially not capturing essence or emotion	Names of themes appear to develop a story and evoke emotions in reader.	
Significant contribution	Yes – first paper to use participatory anticolonial methods as part of their focus group.	Yes – aims to place a focus on understanding why mothers who are food insecure may or may not attend food banks.	Yes – first paper to take a discursive approach to understand how power may impact lives of women accessing food banks in the UK.
Ethical	Strength in procedural and cultural ethics, the anti-colonial stance underpins the methodology design and membership inclusion via a research assistant role.	Yes	Yes
Meaningful coherence	Aims to take a discursive approach, however limited evidence of this lens being applied in the results section.	Yes	Yes

Appraisal questions for the qualitative papers	Power, M., Small, N., Dohert, B., & Pickettet, K. (2018)b The incompatibility of System and Lifeworld Understandings of Food Insecurity and the Provision of Food Aid in an English City
Worthy topic	Yes – timely due to UK potentially following trend of USA regarding increasing privatisation of food aid
Rich rigor	High sample. However, theoretical constructs rely on one main theory to frame and underpin the research, despite using inductive thematic analysis
Sincerity	No reflection on challenges
Credibility	Provides quotes to highlight themes, however results section is framed by a theory, no reflection on this potential bias
Resonance	Themes are linked to the umbrella theory used throughout the paper
Significant contribution	Yes – first paper display findings from service providers alongside service users, providing useful contributions
Ethical	Limited reflection on ethics

Meaningful coherence	Aims to apply a theory to a context across different sample groups, through a three-phase approach. Very complex design, and presentation of information, making it hard to synthesis key points. In addition, lack of information on ontological or epistemological position and use of analysis choice/approach.

2.2 Overview of papers

Eleven papers were included in the final systematic review. Seven studies used qualitative design (Hicks-Stratton, 2004; Chilton & Booth, 2007; Baskin, Guarisco, Koleszar-Green, Melanson, Osawamick, 2009; Buck-McFadyen, 2015; Power, Small, Doherty & Pickett, 2018a; Power & Small, 2021; Powers, Small, Doherty & Pickett, 2018b), one used quantitative design (Bartfeld, 2003), and three used a mixed method approach (Zekeri, 2007; Dressler & Smith, 2013; Papan & Clow, 2015).

Five studies specifically focused on mothers, two recruited single mothers (Bartfeld, 2003; Zekeri, 2007), one recruited Canadian aboriginal mothers (Baskin et al., 2015), one British study recruited white mothers and mothers of Pakistani heritage (Powers et al, 2018b), and one study with mothers from a rural area of Canada (Buck-McFadyen, 2015). Five studies recruited women where demographic information highlighted that mothers' inadvertently contributed to most of the sample (Chilton & Booth, 2007; Dressler & Smith, 2013; Papan & Clow, 2015), and in two cases the whole sample (Hicks-Stratton, 2004; Power & Small, 2021). The eight papers published in 2015 and before, were all located in the USA and Canada and the three most recent papers from 2018-2021 were published in the North of England. Studies narrowed their recruitment processes to explore specific advantages or disadvantages mothers may face linked to relationship status, ethnicity, and geography.

Nine papers focused on the lived experiences of women and mothers (Hicks-Stratton, 2004; Chilton & Booth, 2007; Zekeri, 2007; Baskin, Guarisco, Koleszar-Green, Melanson, Osawamick, 2009; Buck-McFadyen, 2015; Papan & Clow, 2015; Power, Small, Doherty & Pickett, 2018; Powers & Small, 2021) and one paper solely focused on characteristics that precipitated mothers attending food banks (Bartfeld, 2003).

2.2.1 Synthesis of findings

This literature review will provide an overview of key findings and themes identified across the eleven articles. To systematically synthesise the findings across the articles, the researcher followed the process outlined by Siddaway, Wood & Hedges (2019). This included reading and re-reading each paper to gain familiarity with the content. During the third reading, the researcher identified the central concepts, aims, methods, findings, and implications of each paper. These were then placed onto A3 mind maps and placed so that

the researcher could view them all together and start to be able to notice links and begin to identify the key themes.

Once the themes were identified, the author returned to the quality criteria checks to be able to critically consider the findings and conclusions regarding sample, methodology, and theoretical and contextual issues. From a Critical Realist perspective, the themes which were identified in the text were likely to be biased, by the experiences and lens of the researcher. In an attempt to counter such biases, themes were discussed with a peer from clinical training.

Theme 1	Mental health and physical wellbeing of women and mothers attending food banks
Theme 2	Treatment of mothers and women, within food banks, welfare systems and wider society
Theme 3	Relationships and wellbeing

2.3 Themes

2.3.1 Theme One: Impact of attending food bank on mental and physical health

Several studies highlighted the impact of attending food banks on wellbeing. Despite just one paper aiming to focus on mental wellbeing (Zekeri, 2007), another three papers (Chilton & Booth, 2007; Papan & Clow, 2015) from health and nutritional backgrounds looking into the experiences of participants, found an overlap between the physical and mental health impacts for women and mothers accessing food banks. The final article (Dressler & Smith, 2013) has been included within this theme due to its focus on the impact on physical health. This paper does not explicitly mention mental health diagnosis; however, it does include the emotional component of food insecurity.

The paper by Zekeri (2007) used a quantitative survey design to assess food insecure single mothers' ways of coping and levels of depression. The sample included 100 African American single mothers whose survey data was taken from a pre-existing research pool, the United States Department of Agriculture annual survey. Within this sample, 44.3% of single mothers had no education beyond high school, and 49% were unemployed. A limitation of the study was that it did not specifically focus on food banks, instead the sample included food insecure women using the United States Department of Agriculture Food Insecurity scale. However,

43% of the sample who were food insecure did rely on informal food supports such as food banks and churches. The survey data identified a psychological component to food insecurity, finding that 48% of the overall sample of single mothers experienced a range of mental health symptoms indicative of depression; 48% reported feeling depressed, 57% reported feeling sad, 46% reported feeling lonely, 49% struggled to sleep, 48% had difficulties with concentration and 65% worried that food would run out before having money to buy more. As the survey data was analysed and portrayed as percentages, it was not possible to identify the relationship between attending food banks and mental health symptoms. They made several important recommendations that, to improve single mothers' mental wellbeing, there should be increased opportunities for local employment, to access food and referrals to psychological counselling to assist them to cope at difficult times. A critique of this study is that the research design meant there was limited information regarding single mother's unique experiences of trying to cope and provide for their children, further depth of information around the psychological needs of this sample could be useful to inform clinical and therapy referrals.

The paper by Buck-McFadyen (2015) aimed to explore how social, political, and economic factors impacted mother's experiences of poverty and food acquisition in a rural setting in Canada. It is included under this theme as four out of seven mothers attending food banks reported having a diagnosis of depression. Seven mothers participated in semi-structured interviews, recruited via food banks and stakeholders. Despite the small sample size and no direct interview questions about mental health, four participants disclosed that they had received a diagnosis of depression. Alongside this, all mothers described how food insecurity impacted on them emotionally, ranging from stress to worry that kept them awake at night, and in one case leading to self-injurious behaviour and hospitalisation. One mother discussed that she lay awake at night wondering how to feed her children and felt a failure, whereas another mother described how planning meals for the week, and budgeting could become an obsession due to the high levels of worry. It should be noted that these findings were based on a low sample size in a rural location, where there were reduced opportunities for employment and increased transport costs, making balancing childcare with work a greater challenge and placing further pressures on mothers. This study was unique in not providing practical recommendations, instead they contrasted the narratives of their sample, with

discourses about women in poverty as 'lazy' and on welfare, highlighting the importance of moving the discourse around health beyond individual behaviours or motivations, towards societal structure and the distribution of resources.

Several articles highlighted the link between physical health and mental wellbeing (Chilton & Booth, 2007; Papan & Clow, 2015: Dressler and Smith, 2013). Most pertinent in this dual focus was the paper by Chilton & Booth (2007) which explored African American women's perception and experience of food insecurity, health, and violence. They recruited 34 women in three food pantries, 16 out of the 34 women were mothers, 85% (29/34) did not work, and 47% (16/34) did not complete high school. Four focus groups and twelve individual interviews were provided and phenomenological analysis was used to understand what matters to women in their everyday worlds. A limitation of the study was that researchers took on a dual role of volunteer and researcher within the food pantries, this could have biased participants' responses and contributed to a gap in reporting around their experience of attending a food bank. Two themes were identified, hunger of the body and hunger of the mind. Participants reported that the physical experience of hunger impacted the body, interrupted sleep, and activities of daily living. They frequently experienced a desire to eat, a need for nourishment, and frustration at not being able to get their needs met due to the context of deprivation. The second theme, hunger of the mind, was linked to the stress of poverty, anxiety, violence, and trauma that made up the wider experience of food insecurity. Examples included the context of welfare work requirements, rude case workers, hardships of being poor, loss of loved ones and living in violent neighbourhoods. This paper was unique in highlighting the unhelpful coping mechanisms some women utilised to cope with hunger, such as sex work to access cash, and alcohol or drugs to cope with the trauma of being exposed to community and/or household violence and inability to eat due to high levels of anxiety and worry. This study portrayed both types of hunger as the physical manifestation of structural and interpersonal violence and made several recommendations; jobs with minimum wage, economic independence for women, family-centred interventions for at risk children, and a welfare system that supports women at risk of depression, violence and food insecurity.

The next two publications come from a physical health position, however, make several important discoveries in terms of mental health. The first study looks at how inequities contribute to the food insecurity-obesity paradox, inadvertently discovering the impact this

has on mental health. Whereas the second investigates the interaction between obesogenic environments (such as relying on food banks), self-identity, emotions and eating behaviour.

Papan & Clow's (2015) study collected information on demographics, food insecurity levels and physical health data to explore the impact of inequities on participant's weight, obesity and disease. Twenty-seven Canadian women were recruited via community organisations, 80% were mothers, and one third lone mothers. In terms of income, 55% were receiving income support through social assistance and 85% of women did not have paid work. For 41% of women the highest level of education was high school, and all women needed to access food banks. A limitation of this research is the limited information regarding the analysis of the focus group data, potentially signalling a lack of rigour and self-reflexivity, they described that they would "use multiple quotations from focus groups to give space to diversity of women's narratives" (p.305). From this process they found that in terms of poverty and accessing nutritional food, women felt "between a rock and a hard place" faced with rising living costs, such as childcare, transportation, and food costs, which limited their choices. Despite obstacles in accessing healthy food, health providers were identified as presuming women made bad choices, whilst they lived in fear or in many cases already had diabetes, high cholesterol, or asthma. The effects of poor diet and this constant stress were linked to 'dark times', depression, loneliness, sleep, binge eating and weight gain. Women discussed the impact of the intersection of being poor, of being a lone mother, of attending a food bank, of being obese, of coping with mental health problems and of interacting with bureaucratic government agencies. Stressors led to a complex web of feelings, such as depression, guilt, humiliation and isolation. The paper concludes that obesity in this sample of women was linked to a lack of choice rather than the absence of knowledge, and that social and economic policy needs to be committed to improving adequacy of welfare rates and minimum wage levels.

The next paper parallels the previous paper, focusing on physical health it investigates why women in 'obesogenic' environments have higher BMIs. In contrast to the previous paper (Papan & Clow, 2015), findings suggest that individual factors such as increased food intake (behavioural mechanisms) and self-identifying as a stress eater (personal factors) are the main predictors of obesity, rather than environment (Dressler & Smith, 2013). This study recruited low-income women via food pantries, libraries, and soup kitchens. This sample was

40% African American and 29% Indian American, and 14% White British. Of the sample, 15% were employed, and 26% had finished some years in high school. Researchers developed survey questions from focus group themes, administering these alongside other pre-validated measures for food insecurity, BMI, and identity. Results showed that 70% of the sample were overweight or obese, the majority being African-American 40%, followed by American Indian 29% and White American 19%. A limitation was that the survey used a higher number of questions for the personal and behavioural constructs, in contrast to the environmental construct. In addition, the personal and behavioural constructs included questions with an emotional component whereas the environmental construct did not. The linear regression found that all three factors predicted increased BMI in women, with personal and behavioural factors being the main contributor to high weight and obesity, and environmental factors the lowest contributor. However, the emotional component within the former two constructs, behavioural and personal, could be a confounding factor inflating the importance of these factors and women's high levels of stress may be linked to the context. Despite these limitations, the paper concludes that there is a link between self-identifying as a healthy eater, food related decisions, and behaviour and body weight. They also discuss that environmental barriers to physical exercise may not be the main obstacle to these women engaging in activity, who may also be impacted by health problems, labour intensive jobs or childcare issues. Despite these barriers, the researchers suggest a potentially reductionist solution that overweight women could benefit from access to low-impact, low-cost, culturally appropriate exercise for their health.

In summary, the papers in this theme highlighted a prevalence in mental and physical health difficulties in women accessing food banks. In terms of mental health, women reported high levels of depression and anxiety (Zekeri, 2007; Buck-McFadyen, 2015; Chilton & Booth, 2007). Quantitative papers found that women accessing food banks have high levels of depression, sadness, loneliness, lack of sleep, worry and preoccupation with money and food running out (Zekeri, 2007). Whereas qualitative papers highlighted how the context of hunger impacted on mental and physiological wellbeing, stress and depression (Buck-McFadyen, 2015; Papan & Clow, 2015; Chilton & Booth, 2007). Several women had experienced childhood trauma and, in some cases, presented with post-traumatic stress disorder (Chilton & Booth, 2007; Buck-McFadyen, 2015). Another important connection was the link between physical and

mental health, with emotional eating and self-identity being linked to weight gain and obesity (Dressler & Smith, 2005; Papan & Clow, 2015). This suggests that women accessing food banks are likely to display emotional and physiological indicators of stress and distress. Several papers discussed the coping strategies used by women, including self-harming, substance misuse, binge eating, starving themselves and the contemplation of suicide (Buck-McFadyen, 2015; Dressler & Smith, 2005; Chilton & Booth, 2007). Two papers outlined how these difficult experiences can increase resilience and community support networks (Papan & Clow, 2015; Zekeri, 2007).

2.3.2 Theme Two: Treatment of women within food banks, welfare systems and wider society

Several studies, in the USA, Canada and the UK, reported that women attended food banks as a last resort, (Bartfeld, 2003; Hicks-Stratton, 2004; Powers, 2018; Baskin et al, 2009).

Several papers investigated mothers' experiences of attending food banks (Hicks-Stratton, 2004; Powers, 2018; Hicks-Stratton, 2004; Baskin et al., 2009). Baskin et al (2009) found that for young lone Aboriginal mothers in Toronto, just getting to a food bank was a problem, due to being a lone mother on public transport, with a fussy baby, pram and being given dirty looks (Baskin et al., 2009). They discussed the challenges of carrying restless children down subway stairs, with prams and food bags, whilst other patrons bumped into them and did not offer to help. From this, they recommended a food truck delivery service to young mothers, subsidized childcare, and a community garden to grow vegetables and fruit (Baskin et al., 2009).

Hicks-Stratton (2004) completed a phenomenological analysis to understand the lived experiences of mothers attending food banks. A limitation of the study is that they interviewed just three mothers living in Canada, despite this contributing several important findings. Mothers shared that prior to attending a food bank they had to build courage, due to concerns that volunteers would be cold and fear around the questions they would be asked. They felt attending a food bank never got easier. This meant that, by the time they did ask for help, it was already an emergency (Hick-Stratton, 2004). Several mothers discussed that physically attending a food bank was a visible reminder that they did not have enough money to budget for the month or to buy adequate food, leading to embarrassment, confusion and frustration, they felt trapped in demoralising systems and internalised self-

blame. Mothers discussed the lack of anonymity when attending a food bank, such as, queuing in a public space, feeling a range of emotions, such as humiliation, self-consciousness, fear of being seen entering and worry that a neighbour would walk past. Mothers reported having to persuade themselves that they were deserving to attend (Hicks-Stratton, 2004).

Once at a food bank mothers reported the experience was unpleasant and undignified, volunteers could be condescending, and made them aware of their position in the hierarchy, for example greeting the donators or 'givers' happily, in contrast to themselves as 'takers' or 'scum' (Powers, 2018). In several articles women spoke of the systems, policies and interactions in food banks being inflexible, unresponsive, emotionally disconnecting and isolating (Hicks-Stratton, 2004; Powers, 2018; Powers, 2021). However, there were some accounts of moments of kindness when a volunteer would make a judgement on need and let a mother attend an additional time than what the policy permitted (Hicks-Stratton, 2004). Women had limited choice when they did attend, the contents or quality of the package were not tailored to their needs, for example childcare products (e.g. baby food or milk), cultural tastes or nutritional needs (not fresh food), (Hick-Stratton, 2004; Powers, 2018; Powers & Smail, 2021; Baskin et al., 2009; Papan & Clow, 2015).

A consistent finding in the USA and UK was that state and the Trussell Trust food banks required women to explain why they needed a food package. This was particularly challenging for mothers, who found sharing personal information intrusive and humiliating. These emotions were magnified by women's awareness of stereotypes and how they may be viewed at food banks, such as the poor will eat anything, and that food bank attendees are untrustworthy, unmotivated, and deceitful, impacting upon their self-esteem (Hicks-Stratton, 2004). Powers (2021) discussed how these referral processes provided moral distancing between staff and clients, within a moralised hierarchical form of service delivery, inculcating a moral code onto those it assists. In this process, women had to disclose extensive personal information, including household composition, age, and reason for accessing a food bank, to be evaluated and deemed eligible to receive a parcel. This process was compared to that of the church providing a form of pastoral power, appearing to sacrifice for their subjects yet requiring to know people's minds, souls and details of their actions, whilst remaining emotionally disconnected from the service users. In addition, self-improvement was an

essential part of receiving a parcel, with signposting to third party agencies, such as job centres, schools and GPs leading to mandatory supervision.

Powers (2021) investigated how systems of power shaped the lived experiences of low-income women. Despite some overlap with the research of Hick-Stratton (2004) investigating the lived experiences of women, this paper is discussed independently here due to its unique discursive, gendered approach, drawing upon Foucault's theory of power. Focus groups were completed with 35 low-income mothers in Bradford and York to explore the disciplinary and pastoral power networks within food banks. Despite several conclusions being made regarding women accessing food banks and this topic remaining the focus of the paper, researchers chose not to directly ask participants if they had attended a food bank due to concerns around stigma and shame within the focus group context. A strength of this is maintaining the dignity of participants, however a limitation is that the research design leads to ambiguity throughout the paper, as sixteen participants reporting accessing food aid and just nine of those reported using a food bank. Despite this they reported that the lives of low-income women were shaped by powers of the disciplinary state, as their daily activities were orientated around welfare systems, such as applying for sufficient job roles, trying to manage the household budget and care for their children. As part of this, mothers were subjected to unpredictable, unreliable, inflexible, and punitive systems, such as UC and benefit sanctions that forced them into destitution and eroded choice. Pastoral power was exercised in relation to the food bank, as individuals had to meet ideological constructs of 'deserving' to qualify for a referral and voucher at third party agencies and disclose personal information to receive a parcel at the food bank.

Control of the individual operated through the discourses, beliefs and behaviours of participants themselves. Shame was co-constructed between the individual's own internalised sense of inadequacy interacting with externally imposed disapproval for failing to satisfy societal expectations, such as economic self-reliance, leaving them condemned to failure as a parent. Despite this, low-income women often aligned themselves with individualising societal discourses that perpetuated stigma and shame. The paper reports that, mothers who had not experienced hunger yet and had anxieties of food insecurity, were most likely to construct a food poor 'other' who was culpable for their food poverty due to personal failings, playing the system, incompetent or selfish use of household income (e.g.,

buying clothes or alcohol) and poor cooking skills, which deprived their children of care and food. Due to the limitations of this paper previously discussed, it was unclear if these women had or had not attended a food bank. This apparently gendered stigma around food poverty was bound up with ideals of motherhood and induced guilt and shame in some mothers, unable to meet the standards of consumer society. Some low-income participants who had not attended food banks entered an inverted form of surveillance, surveying not state institutions but each other, such as neighbours or friends and intervening to correct deviant behaviour through social sanction. It is thought that this resentment and mistrust in communities maintains individualising and dominant discourses, dividing communities, undermining solidarity and space for resistance, and preventing change for low-income women and food bank users.

Powers et al., (2020) provided new contributions to the field on service users and food aid providers 'views on accessing food aid, with a focus on food banks. This paper was located in Bradford UK, completing interviews and focus groups with eighteen individuals who provided food aid and sixteen mothers who attended a food bank. This paper has several limitations, related to the complex, three-phase design, used to investigate Jurgen Habermas System and Lifeworld theory (Haberman, 1986). This theory outlines how political and economic worlds can impact on peoples social and private worlds. The complexity of this study lead to breadth over depth, and there was limited self-reflexivity regarding how the theoretically driven approach would have impacted on the inductive thematic analysis process. Despite this, Powers et al., (2018b) do provide new contributions to the field. In terms of Habermas system world, they found that service providers were hierarchical and ill-informed about food need, speculating that this was a self-inflicted choice, due to defective behavioural practices such as laziness, greed, fraud and financial mismanagement. This echoed discourses from the media and justified the scrutiny of service users in food banks to prevent the illegitimate and undeserving accessing food. Furthermore, food choice was moralised, into approved and virtuous behaviour such as managing the household budget, cooking skills, cooking from raw ingredients, whilst failure to perform these skills was linked to laziness, ignorance, and thoughtlessness. In stark contrast, mothers described structural obstacles causing food insecurity, including rising food prices, inadequate social security, time restraints on

employment, domestic or financial abuse from partners, and being solely responsible for providing for themselves and their children.

Mothers preferred to access family or community support for hardship and prevent isolation, rather than hierarchical food bank systems. However, in some families this transgressed ethics of independence, impacting on agency and self-esteem. Mothers encountered other discomfort, such as the experience of shame, which was linked to their inability to meet virtuous ideals of living within their means, leading to the co-constructed internalisation of inadequacies', and externally imposed disapproval and failure to meet social expectations.

To conclude, this second theme focused on the treatment of women within food banks, services and wider society, the research papers described that mothers discussed not wishing to be seen physically visiting the food bank due to perceived judgement and being disconnected from society (Hicks-Stratton, 2004: Papan & Clow, 2015; Powers at al., 2020). However, mothers would overcome this perceived stigma and attend food banks to provide for their children (Papan & Clow, 2015: Hicks-Stratton, 2004).

A key theme throughout this research (Powers, 2021; Hicks-Stratton, 2004) is how wider structural factors can contribute to the experience of and pressures placed on women and mothers. Important environmental stressors included living in rural areas and/or geographically located pockets of deprivation, leading to limited access to employment and being located within obesogenic environments (Dressler & Smith, 2005; Zekeri, 2007; Chilton & Booth, 2007). Socio-economic stressors identified included changes to national policy, such as Canada's decline in social safety net and lack of coordinated government policies to tackle food scarcity, alongside unemployment and low wages (Buck-McFadyen, 2015; Hicks-Stratton, 2004). This has led to increased inequality at all levels, within wider society and in individuals 'households, with women being placed in a position where they bear the burden.

2.3.3 Theme Three: Relationships and wellbeing

All papers considered networks of support available to women and mothers, including community, services, friends, neighbours, family, partners, or children. There appeared to be a myriad of factors which impacted women and mothers' relationships and access to informal support or placing them at increased risk of isolation, including geographical location, ethnicity, religion, culture, community figures, household structure and relationship status.

Powers et al. (2018a) completed research in the UK to investigate the "hidden hungry" to understand why some mothers did not access food banks. They used focus groups with White mothers, and mothers with Pakistani heritage and one interview with a mother with Pakistani heritage. A limitation of this study is that they provide information regarding mothers' with Pakistani heritage immigration status and ethnicity, which highlights variation within the sample, yet despite this throughout the paper link information to mothers' with Pakistani heritage as a homogenous group. White participants reported food insecurity, embarrassment, shame and a tendency to try and conceal food insecurity or using a food bank from the community and, on occasion, their family. Pakistani heritage women during focus groups reported that they did not attend food banks or experience food insecurity, attributing this to the unconditional support from extended families who lived in the same household providing free childcare and meal sharing and religious and cultural traditions meaning support in kind, not cash, was always circulating within their households, neighbours, and wider communities. However, one interview was completed with a mother with Pakistani heritage, who reported hiding her struggles with food insecurity from the local community and food banks due to stigma and shame. Powers et al., (2018a) concluded that mothers with Pakistani heritage denial of food insecurity or attending food banks within the focus groups, was an attempt to conceal due to stigma and shame. A critique of Powers et al.'s (2018a) is that they extrapolate the findings of an individual interview with a mother with Pakistani heritage to interpret the findings of a focus group with a group of mothers with Pakistani heritage women to conclude that the women in the focus group were "concealing the truth" due to stigma and shame in the group situation. This may or may not be the case; it is likely to be more complex than this, with different women with Pakistani heritage having some different and some similar experiences in relation to access to support, food insecurity and use of food banks. This paper could have benefited from membership involvement to provide more understanding into how support networks may or may not buffer against food insecurity and decrease the need to access food banks within different ethnic groups.

In some communities and families they have reciprocal relationships, these interactions of sharing were also highlighted in Buck-McFadyen's (2015) paper in rural Canada. Seven mothers found that, whilst there were challenges of the rural location such as limited transport or employment opportunities, a benefit was the strong sense of social support and

trust. Within this context women could rely on the support of family, friends, neighbours, and community members to share meals, carpool, and invite each other's children over to eat. The women in this sample discussed reciprocal relationships and felt that food insecurity and poverty was a common experience, attributing this to high levels of unemployment and the economic recession. An interesting juxtaposition is the paper previously discussed by Powers & Small (2021) which found that mothers intervened to feed others children, however the paper questioned if this was a means of protecting children from hunger or a surveillance role to correct 'deviant' parenting behaviour. This could explain why in Bucks-McFadyen's (2015) paper despite mothers 'access to rural community support, they were still more impacted by food insecurity than their partners, experiencing high levels of worry, stress, marital strain and the majority suffered from depression. These findings could highlight that woman were made to feel responsible for providing food wherever they live.

Another paper in Canada looked at how geographical location may impact on mothers 'access to support, impacting food insecurity and need to access food aid (Baskin et al, 2009). Focusing on Aboriginal mothers, they found many young mothers were being displaced from their home communities to cities such as Toronto, leaving them with no social network. Taking an anti-colonial gendered discursive approach, they implemented a participatory focus group with sixteen young lone Aboriginal mothers, to understand how they express food security through storytelling circles and art murals. A strength was the inclusion of two Aboriginal mothers living in Toronto as research assistants and sincerity around the challenges and rewards of this. The research team highlight the importance of being an experienced team to be able to provide these research assistants with the scaffolding and support needed for their input to be meaningful and support their personal development. Findings highlighted that some young mothers 'extended families followed them to Toronto to provide support, however, a few mothers felt too shy to ask for help or felt they should be able to handle things on their own. In addition, there was a fear of relying on support from extended families, such as in-laws and fathers of their children, as this could be ended at any point.

Single mothers being placed in a position where they were alone and must rely on ex-partners for support to feed their children was also picked up by Zekeri (2007). This theme is particularly concerning in the context of Chilton & Booth's (2007) paper which found that all

sixteen women interviewed discussed being exposed to violence and abusive relationships within the household which contributed to stress. Powers (2018) also picked up on mothers limited agency and control of household finances within the UK and recommended increasing child tax credits, which are paid directly to the mother, to increase their independence and autonomy (Powers, 2018).

Across all papers, mothers took responsibility for providing food and care for the family. In some papers this was because households were headed by single mothers, meaning that they were the only adult present to take responsibility (Zekeri, 2007; Bartfeld, 2003; Baskin, 2009). In other papers the partners were present, however, the mother took responsibility for providing and feeding the family (Powers, 2018; Buck-McFadyen, 2015; Papan & Clow, 2015). Several papers highlighted the strategies mothers used, such as sacrificing their own needs to feed their children. Buck-McFadyen (2015) found that 6 out of 7 mothers went without food or ate rice for four days so that their children could eat. Three mothers mentioned partners doing the same. Papan & Clow (2015) zoomed in on the gendered constructs of maternal food deprivation, highlighting that women in their sample in Atlanta Canada ate less and last, after their male partners and children. Mothers used humour to discuss this, invoking gender norms of the male as breadwinner to justify men eating before children and themselves. Several papers concluded that women had internalised this caregiving role and assumed the blame for poor health of other family members (Papan & Clow, 2015; Powers, 2021; Hicks-Stratton, 2004).

Mothers worried about the impact of accessing food banks on their children's wellbeing, (Baskin, 2009) however the idea of seeing their children hungry was profoundly overwhelming, distressing and painful for them (Hicks-Stratton, 2004). Mothers used multiple strategies to try and make ends meet, despite minimal resources, such as cooking from scratch, freezing items, looking for deals and offers, juggling food acquisition, management and prioritising which bills to pay (Buck-McFadyen, 2015; Powers, 2018). The motivator to attend a food bank was to feed their children, which enabled them to overcome the stigma and shame to attend, however the experience of attending a food bank never got easier (Hicks-Stratton, 2004). Some mothers who attended food banks tried to protect their children against the indignity of poverty by sacrificing their own material needs, to provide the most up to date designer clothes for their children (Hick-Stratton, 2004).

To conclude this theme, in terms of support within intimate relationships, three papers describe how mothers took the burden of responsibility and worry to feed their children (Buck-McFadyen, 2015: Hick-Stratton, 2004: Papan & Clow, 2015). One paper found this led to conflict with (male) partners and eating less, contributing to mothers decreased access to food (Papan & Clow, 2015; Buck-McFadyen, 2015). Whereas another study found that women who are unable to access food, are at increased risk of violence within relationships and the community (Chilton & Booth, 2007). Another paper presents how single mothers rely on informal support networks, including previous or present partners to feed their children (Zekeri, 2007).

2.3.4 Summary of themes

This systematic review has identified that whilst there have been few studies looking in depth at women accessing food banks, there are some consistencies within them. Just one study (Zekeri, 2007) set out to investigate mental health, all other papers (that spoke to food bank users) reported links between attending a food bank, mental health and/or distress for women and mothers. Women and mothers' distress was linked to the referral system, difficulties in accessing a food bank, the public location of food banks, the policies and rules enforced by the systems, interactions with volunteers once in a food bank, and services not meeting their needs. These experiences appeared to be magnified by their awareness of stereotypes around them, as women felt responsible for providing food for their children and judged by others if they were unable to do this. This stigma and discrimination faced by women and mothers accessing food banks appeared to be internalised. Despite this, mothers showed remarkable strength, drawing on multiple strategies to feed their children, such as mutual networks of support, household budgeting and management and sacrificing their own needs to provide for their children. The uncertainty about where to go next, feelings of being trapped, unable to plan and out of control, appeared to impact on their own sense of agency, and mental and physical health. This could strain marital relationships, lead to binge eating and weight problems, alongside diagnosis of depression and anxiety.

2.3.4.1 Limitations of studies

The identified papers have several limitations. Firstly, the majority have very small sample sizes, for example three (Hicks-Stratton, 2004) or seven (Buck-McFadyen, 2015), in contrast to Chilton and Booth (2007) with 32 participants. Despite small numbers being accepted

within qualitative research to provide depth into each case, such a low number could impact the new or textured understanding of the phenomena under study (Sandelowski, 1996). No papers described how sample size was decided, however a few did discuss challenges in the recruitment process (Hicks-Stratton, 2004). Whilst several outlined using methods such as snowball technique to access hard to reach populations (Chilton & Booth, 2007). It could be that sample size was therefore determined by the availability of participants and there remains a gap in fully understanding the nuances of the topic of focus in these locations.

This brings us to the second critique of the research discussed in this systematic literature review. As would be expected of qualitative studies the data collected in these papers are from localised populations across several countries. This means that they reflect patterns and experiences, specific to those women, in those locations and may not be generalisable more broadly.

2.3.4.2 Gaps in the research literature

Within this systematic review, only one article explicitly investigated the impact of food insecurity, including food banks, on mental health in women (Zekeri, 2007). It appears that due to this topic being interdisciplinary in nature, falling between the intersection of public health, nutrition and physical health, that the psychological implications of accessing a food bank, for women and mothers, has been overlooked by researchers. Instead, research has been led by nutritionists, physical health nurses and economists. Most of the research completed is from Canada and USA, with research from the UK being based in Northern England.

Within several articles' participants displayed an awareness of negative stereotypes (such as playing the system, takers or "scum", incompetent and selfish), which caused them distress, impacting on their willingness to attend a food bank and interactions once there (Hicks-Stratton, 2004; Powers, 2018; Powers, 2021). Several articles outlined in their discussion that the discourses regarding women need to shift (Buck-McFadyen, 2015; Powers, 2021), however the majority did not discuss what maintains these discourses or how they can be shifted. The exception is Powers (2021) who recommended that discourses can be challenged via agency and resistance to accepted norms by fostering coalitions of the marginalised to highlight inadequacy of social security. However, it does not provide details of what maintains

these discourses, such as media, education, culture, or at what sites these discourses can be contested.

2.4 Overview

Two main gaps have been identified in the literature. The first gap involves the psychological impact of using food banks on mothers, just one study in the US explicitly focused on the impact of food insecurity on mental wellbeing (Zekeri, 2007). The second gap concerns how discourses are maintained and the role of the media. One study discussed these issues Powers (2021) investigating how systems of power shaped the lived experiences of low-income women. This paper plans to address these two gaps and build upon the aforementioned two studies by focusing on the portrayal of people living in deprivation who need to attend food banks and the impact of this on their mental wellbeing. However, by taking a Critical Realist perspective this paper aims to not only capture portrayals of the physical reality of food deprivation and the implications this has for mental wellbeing, but also consider how the media constructs people who attend food banks, and the implications of these constructions for their mental wellbeing. The initial research design was to address the first gap identified in the literature. However, after completion of an initial interview, COVID-19 restrictions impacted on the food bank attendees and researcher being able to visit the food bank in person and impacted the recruitment process. Attempts to recruit mothers online were unsuccessful, one reason could due their position in society already being pushed to the margins with minimal access to resources. Following this, the research design was amended to address the second gap in the literature. Consideration to how the initial interview with a mother and how her experiences of attending food banks linked to newspaper portrayals is provided in Appendices H.

2.5 Rationale for research aims and research questions

The present study will aim to fill this gap with the main research question: the newspaper portrayal of mothers accessing food banks in the UK. The three research sub questions are: how were their identities portrayed, how were their experiences portrayed and how was the impact portrayed. There will be a focus on mental distress (using a clinical psychology lens) and will use methods to identify how these different portrayals may contribute to discourses and stereotypes and the impact this may have on mothers, within their families, relationships,

food banks and wider services. The hope is this understanding will support clinical psychology, planning and implementation of mental health services and food bank policy.

3 Chapter 3: Methods

Drawing on the literature outlined above and through consultation with food bank workers and users (discussed later in this section), this research aimed to explore how the media (exosystem) in the context of austerity in the United Kingdom (macrosystem) portrayed mothers who access food banks (microsystem) (Bronfenbrenner, 2001). The present study will aim to fill this gap with the main research question: the newspaper portrayal of mothers accessing food banks in the UK. The three research sub questions are: how were their identities portrayed, how were their experiences portrayed, and how was the impact portrayed.

Research question 1	How were their identities portrayed?
Research question 2	How were their experiences portrayed?
Research question 3	How was the impact portrayed?

3.1 Overview

This section will begin by discussing the rationale for use of a qualitative design and thematic analysis to explore how mothers accessing food banks were portrayed in newspapers, with a focus on mental health and wellbeing. The research design including the process of data choice and collection will be discussed and followed by ethical considerations. An outline of data analysis is provided of the process and steps taken to ensure rigor in the quality of this research.

3.2 Design

This study is a thematic analysis of online newspapers, undertaken with data from Lexis Library, which focused on mothers accessing food banks.

3.2.1 Choice of qualitative design

To answer the research question, a qualitative and Critical Realist approach was chosen. A qualitative approach was considered most suitable due to its ability to consider controversial, contradictory, and ambiguous perspectives, over simple truths (Brennen, 2013). A critical realist perspective, combining ontological realism with epistemological constructivism meant

that reality or 'truth' is viewed as independent of knowledge of existence, however always experienced from a subjective position. From this perspective newspaper articles were analysed to understand a truth fixed in time and location, whilst valuing the subjectivity of multiple perspectives (Brennen, 2013; Williams, 1983). These portrayals in articles were thought to be dependent on the political, economic and social conditions embedded in a certain time, which is a continuous and connected process (Williams, 1983).

3.2.2 Choice of Analysis

To understand the portrayal of mothers' accessing food banks, several methods were considered, including Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), Narrative and Discourse Analysis.

Table 10 shows the different methodologies considered, and reasons for excluding other approaches to the analysis.

TABLE 10: METHODOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS

Methodology	Explanation	Reason for exclusion
Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)	This methodological approach provides a focus on understanding an individual's subjective experience and inner world, within the context they live.	This research method would have provided an interesting tool to understand the subjective experience of mother's accessing food banks.

Discourse Analysis (DA)	This methodological approach deconstructs language with a focus on understanding power relations. It is underpinned by a social constructionist ontological position, that there is no one truth, and language creates reality.	This approach was given consideration due to its strengths in deconstructing texts and language to uncover meanings and power relations. However, due to the limited research in the area, it was considered important to initially complete thematic analysis to identify overarching patterns and themes in the data.
Grounded Theory (GT)	This approach uses participant data to develop novel theory in new areas of study. A focus is placed on the impact of contexts within which people live.	This method was not chosen due to the current research relying on secondary sources of data collection, online newspapers. In addition, the data collection and sources, alongside feminist approach which values multiple perspectives, meant GT's focus on a single unifying theory was deemed unsuitable.
Narrative Analysis (NA)	This approach focuses on the lives of individuals as told through their own stores. Taking a curious approach to which stories are shared, preferred, given depth and why.	NA was not deemed suitable due to the content of online newspaper articles not providing an in depth or linear account or stories of people's lives, instead multiple quotes and perspectives are included within quotes.

A thematic analysis approach was selected for several reasons. This was preferred to IPA, due to the research questions focus on the external perspective of how mothers are portrayed in newspaper articles, instead of their lived experiences. In addition, thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) is known to be a diverse, flexible, nuanced approach with theoretical freedom enabling a critical realist stance to be taken (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Willig, 1999). This meant that online newspapers could be analysed to understand how wider cultural, economic, gendered structures and contexts, impact on people's 'real' experience of accessing food banks and mental health, whilst also considering the constructions they shape and the impact of this on mental health (McCulloch, 2004). This is important as by identifying media portrayals and the maintaining factors, this information can be shared with clinical

psychologists, services and food banks to start shifting these narratives, and support mothers to access the services and resources they need.

Thematic analysis was chosen over discourse analysis for several reasons. Firstly, on a practical basis, Braun & Clarke (2006) provided a six-step instruction on how to perform the analysis process, ensuring a well-structured and rigorous approach to guide the researcher when analysing a large amount of data and writing up the final report (King, 2004). The second reason was due to its focus on staying close to the data rather than adding an interpretative lens. This was considered optimal to try and minimise bias, which is an inherent and inevitable part of all qualitative methods.

3.2.3 Data source

This project used secondary data sources via the World Wide Web to understand how the media represents mothers accessing food banks in the UK. Articles were viewed as 'social facts' can be produced or shared and used in socially organised ways, to create and communicate meaning (Atkinson & Coffey, 1997; Garcia- Favaro & Gill, 2016). From a CR perspective, they act as a mirror to the 'observable' and lived experience of mothers accessing food banks, and as a window to explore the social mechanisms which constitute the formation of these articles and lived experiences (Sayers, 2000: Braun, Clark & Gray, 2017).

Online media sources were chosen as they were able to provide a pre-existing naturalistic record, providing limited researcher bias in understanding how mothers accessing food banks have been portrayed in the past 13-month period (Webb et al, 1966). Due to ethical issues regarding informed consent, newspaper articles were chosen as opposed to blogs, to protect the privacy of people (Markham, 2012). A decision was made to focus on national instead of local newspapers, to represent national discourses and capture plurality in accounts and perspectives, providing significant contribution to discussions around food-related welfare policy and clinical practice (Webb et al, 1966; Tracy, 2010). Online over printed newspapers were chosen due to a decline in newspaper sales and, because online articles were readily accessible (Favaro, Gill & Harvey, 2017; Rowe, 2011).

3.2.4 Insider and outsider researcher perspective

Accessing food banks is a sensitive topic as it will focus on 'vulnerable' people and groups who are disenfranchised, impoverished, and/or subject to discrimination, intolerance, stigma and subordination (Liamputtong, 2006). To mitigate against harm, feminist ideology have been

drawn on to work in solidarity with those who are oppressed (Van Dijk, 1995), by placing a focus on the way inequality in society is expressed, represented, legitimised or reproduced in text talk. In line with critiques of the feminist principles of 'giving voice' to others (Davis, 1994), I will be clear and transparent of the role of self within the production of knowledge (Skeggs, 1997; Tavris, 1994).

As an imperfect ally (Reynolds, 2013), I remained self-reflexive and transparent about my own position and privilege, and how this interacted with the production of knowledge (Jankowski, Braun & Clarke, 2017; Rose, 1997). On a practical level, I used tools such as a research journal and Burnham's (1992) Social Graces (Nolte, 2017), to remain self-reflexive and curious around how my position of intersectionality interacts with this topic. For example, reflecting on how my privileged position as a White British, educated, female, with lived experiences of mental health difficulties, could provide potential connection, with certain experiences of marginalisation, stigma and exclusion, alongside disconnection, in terms of social position and lived experiences of the researched (Reynolds, 2013; Beetham, 2019; Mercer, 2007). A critical lens was used to understand how impacted my views, thoughts, feelings, engagement, focus and understanding of the topic (Jankowski, Braun and Clark, 2017). It was hoped this reflection on difference and similarities would help to prevent the universalisation or 'spokesman' can lead to further silencing and oppression of marginalised groups (Gough, 2017).

3.3 Ethical considerations

3.3.1 Ethical approval

Ethical approval was received from The University of Hertfordshire, ethics number: LMS/PGT/UH/03904 (Appendix D: Ethics Approval D).

3.3.2 Ethics when using online data sources

The British Psychological Society (2009) recommends considering four main principles when planning and designing research; respect for scientific integrity, autonomy, social responsibility and minimising harm and maximising benefits. The BPS (2017), APA (2004) and Association of Internet Researchers provide additional guidance to support researchers to plan and evaluate studies utilising online resources (Holtz, Kronberger & Wagner. 2012). To mitigate against harm posed to individuals, data was accessed from public online newspaper outlets, where information is open to all without membership restrictions, and has a clear

outward focus (Holtz, Kronberger & Wagner, 2012). Data from sources was anonymised, to protect privacy and prevent traceability by online searches (Hewitt-Taylor Bond, 2012: Bond et al., 2013). In terms of social responsibility, consideration regarding how the online community was represented was critically reflected on throughout this research process (BPS, 2017: Roberts, 2015).

3.3.3 Inclusion

The present study will aim to fill this gap with the main research question: how mothers are mothers portrayed by the media in the UK. A postmodern approach was taken, meaning that sex and gender were viewed as a socially constructed category (Gergen, 1985). This would have included trans-gender and gender fluid individuals. In addition, a post-structuralist approach was taken, to highlight the differences within these groups. As Fraser & Nicholson (1990) put it, an important goal in research focused on women is to analyse the oppression of women "in its endless variety and monotonous similarity (p.28)."

3.3.3.1 Members' consultation

Service users and workers in this field were consulted to shape the focus of the project. On the 22.04.2019, an advert was placed on Facebook providing a brief overview of the area of research (Appendix A). This led to a telephone conversation with the manager of a food bank who reported that gender information is not systematically collected by the Trussell Trust food bank system and could be an important area of research as mothers frequently attend the food bank. She invited me to visit the food bank, to invite staff and people attending to share their views on this research who felt it was valuable (Please see Appendix B). I visited on four occasions, spending four hours in the food bank working alongside volunteers, this provided the opportunity to observe interactions, the environment organisational processes and invite food bank attendees and volunteers to share their views and shape the research. On all four occasions mothers attended the TT food bank to seek out emergency food packages with their children. When asked about the research mothers shared views that this was an important topic, one mother said "yes, it's needed, we're forgotten around here." These observations mirrored the feedback from frontline food bank workers in Scotland who identified mothers and their children as a group of emergency concern that are often overlooked (Douglas et al., 2018).

3.4 Data collection

3.4.1 Sample size

In a study of this kind, there is not a fixed number of secondary data documents that should be analysed (Bowen, 2009). In terms of thematic analysis, it has been argued that data should be small enough to be handled and large enough to provide rich and textured insight into the topic (Sandewloski, 1995) and that selection is transparent and unbiased (Yin, 1994). Forty-five articles were included, enabling depth and breadth of analysis (Sandelowski, 1996).

3.4.2 Sample selection

The data was accessed systematically from online national newspapers, including the Mirror, the Independent, The Telegraph, The Times, The Observer, The Sun, and the Daily Express. A diverse range of newspapers were selected to provide a breadth of views.

The data was accessed at a single point in time, selecting articles published between the 1st October 2019 and 1st November 2020, enabling the examination of trends in news presentation and content, pre and during COVID-19 (Li, 2013).

Information was found via Lexis Library News search engine, using the search terms “food bank”, and “mother”. The forty-five newspaper articles met the inclusion criteria and were coded and analysed.

3.5 Source information

There were distinct points of time when articles were being written and published. These differences in time and quantity, appeared to correspond with major events in the UK. More articles appeared in the run up to Christmas and through winter and as the population progressed through lockdown before decreasing again. In addition, most of the articles were published by The Guardian and The Independent and very few articles on this topic being published by other outlets. Please see Figure 3: Total articles published portraying mothers accessing food banks across 13-month period.

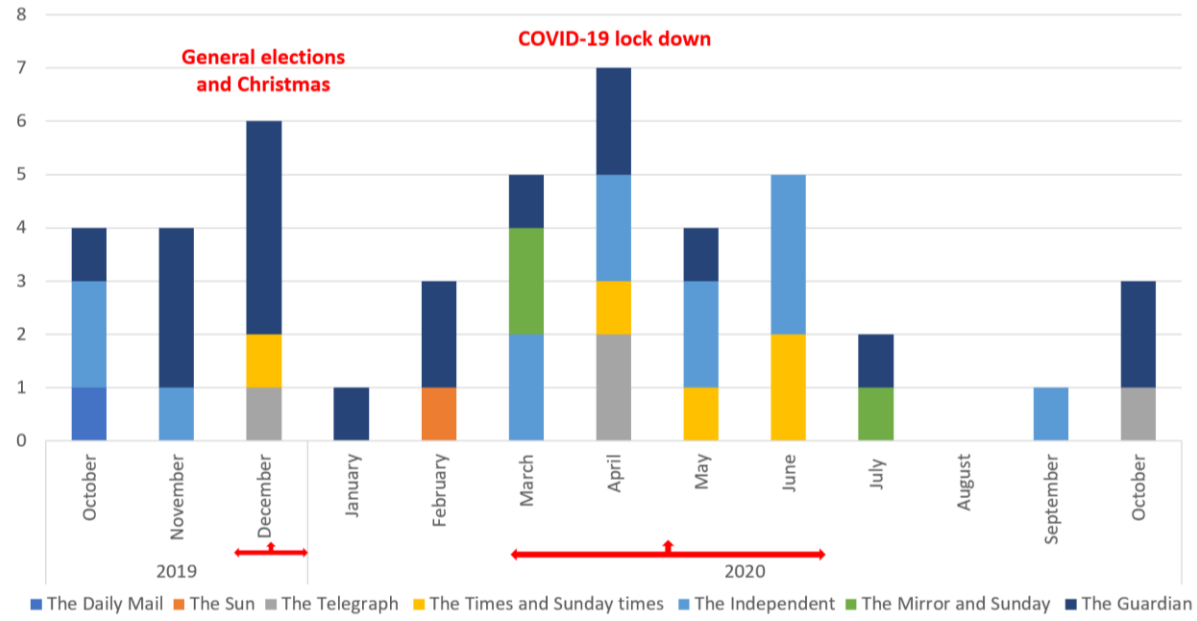

FIGURE 3: TOTAL ARTICLES PUBLISHED PORTRAYING MOTHERS ACCESSING FOOD BANKS ACROSS 13-MONTH PERIOD

3.6 Thematic analysis

This project aimed to identify how mothers accessing food banks in the UK are portrayed by newspapers. The data was thematically analysed (TA), with a Critical Realist lens, to understand how the identities and experiences of mothers accessing food banks were portrayed, and how the media portrays the impact on mothers' wellbeing (Sayers, 2000; Jawonski et al., 2017). The researcher took an active role in identifying patterns and themes in the data (inductive) whilst acknowledging the impact of the literature reviewed, personal experiences, contexts and beliefs on the analysis (Anzul et al., 1997).

There is no singular prescriptive approach to TA, as the theoretical framework and method allows for flexibility depending on the research question (Braun & Clark, 2006). For this research several analytical decisions were made. Firstly, to remain "true" to the data, a bottom up (inductive) approach to coding was adopted, drawing on the methodology outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Secondly, a latent approach to the analysis was adopted to identify implicit as well as explicit features of the text that gave a particular form and meaning. Drawing on Sayers (2000) CR ontology, the development of themes themselves

involved interpretative work as broader assumptions, structures and social mechanism were theorised as underpinning events and giving form to the surface level empirical data of lived experience (Burr, 1995; Singer & Hunter, 1999; Taylor & Ussher, 2001; Sayers, 2000). Finally, when selecting themes, a balance between "prevalence" and "keyness" was sought, this meant that themes were identified based on frequency yet also salience in relation to the research questions. In addition, a self-reflexive and transparent position was taken, about which pieces of the narrative were being selected, edited, deployed and why (Fine, 2002). The steps are outlined in detail in Table 11.

TABLE 11: THEMATIC ANALYSIS STEPS TO FOLLOW

Step 1	The articles were selected using the inclusion and exclusion criteria (Table 2), then organised into categories by newspaper source.
Step 2	Each article was read through initially to familiarise and 'immerse' the reader with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
Step 3	References to accessing food banks were identified. This was an inclusive and descriptive task, collecting instances from all the sources for re-reading and further examination (Braun & Clarke, 2006). After initial articles in each newspaper category/source were read in depth.
Step 4	Within the extracted data set, patterns of meaning and potential interest were identified. This was a circular process of analysis, reading data, analysing it, and returning to the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
Step 5	Maintaining a critical stance to the text, questioning what features could have given it that form and the meaning (Burr, 1995: Singer & Hunter, 1999: Taylor & Ussher, 2001).
Step 6	Working systematically through the data, initial codes were generated to segment the raw data in a meaningful way (Boyatzis, 1998: Tuckett, 2005). This was a circular process done by noting initial codes, and clusters in the margins of the articles, then returning to the data to check out the codes.
Step 7	Interrater coding was completed with an independent researcher, to establish rigour, trust, confidence, and reliability of coding. Due to the high number of Newspaper articles, interrater reliability was analysed using a 10% sample of the data (Belotto, 2018). The additional perspectives were incorporated into the analysis, adding depth and rigour.
Step 8	Reading and re-reading to make sense of the coded data to identify organisational features of the text and enable systematic patterns to be constructed (themes). Consideration was given to how codes formed into overarching themes. This was aided by cutting out the coded pieces of data and then organising these into piles and segments of the data. Coded parts of text which fall into multiple categories were duplicated and placed into both categories (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

Step 9	Once themes were identified, consideration was given to how they related to one another using mind maps. This included overarching themes and sub-themes, linked to significance. No themes were abandoned at this point. Attention was paid to the contradictions, nuances, areas of vagueness, what was said and written and what was missing. Patterns of similarities and differences and sections of data relating to these patterns were drawn out (Potter & Wetherell, 2010: Bryman, 2001).
Step 10	Themes were reviewed, with some collapsing into one another where there was insufficient data to support the theme. Other themes were separated into two themes. One way of evaluating themes was to question if the data within them cohered together meaningfully, while having clear and identifiable distinctions between themes (Patton's 1990). To support this process a thematic map of the data was created.
Step 11	Using the thematic map, themes were named and defined. Questions to support this process included; what is this theme about, what is its essence? Focus was placed on identifying what was interesting about the theme and why, not simply paraphrasing it.
Step 12	Throughout the analytic process self-reflexivity was employed to provide critical interrogation of presuppositions and unexamined ways of sense making (Ashmore, 1985) and indexicality (Crapanzo, 1981). This was done by asking questions such as *why am I reading the text in this way* (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The researcher was mindful of the topic, discursive strategies and linguistics used (McCulloch, 2004) and the pieces of text which were selected, edited and deployed and the reason for this (Fine, 2002)
Step 13	Themes were included or excluded from write up based on researcher's view of their relevance to the current research questions (Braun & Clark, 2006).
Step 14	Quotes included to highlight themes displayed publication source and date.

3.7 Quality assurance

Tracy's (2010) Big-Tent Criteria was selected to quality assess the research, as it provides a flexible means of assessing process and end goal from a Critical Realist perspective (Denzin, 2008). Table 12 details how the quality assurance measure was used to guide research process and quality.

TABLE 12: QUALITY ASSURANCE CRITERIA

Tracy (2010) Big Tent Criteria	How to achieve this criteria?	How this paper meets the criteria?
Worthy topic	The topic of research is: ● Relevant ● Timely ● Significant ● Interesting	The topic is relevant to clinical psychologists, due to the psycho-social impact of receiving food from food banks (Garthwaite et al, 2015) and implications for mothers and their children's health and wellbeing (Thompson, Smith & Cummins, 2018: Hicks-Stratton, 2004). This topic is timely and significant, being designed at a time when mothers are facing significant challenges around accessing food due to health, political and economic issues. Mothers have been identified as a group of people who access food banks of emergency concern (Hicks-Stratton, 2004: Powers, 2005). This topic aims to raise awareness of the social injustices faced by this marginalised group, via dissemination and publication.

Rich rigor	The study uses sufficient, abundant, appropriate and complex: ● Theoretical constructs ● Data and time in the field ● Sample ● Context ● Data collection and analysis processes	Time spent seeking out membership consultation, by shadowing in food banks and inviting people to share their views on the research. Data collection from sources spanning a one-year period, pre and during COVID-19 to provide significant level of richness and interesting data. Accessing a diverse range of data sources (different newspapers) to provide breadth of understanding of the topic and complexities. Analytical process – segmenting themes into smaller chunks, such as pre/during COVID-19 and into different newspapers, to enable understanding of complexities. Inclusion of reflective diary in appendices to provide insight into decision making around data collection process.
Sincerity	The study is characterised by: ● Self-reflexivity about subjective value ● Transparency about the methods and challenges	Self-reflexivity achieved by: Keeping a reflective diary, to identify any affective responses and make sense of the personal meaning of these and how they may impact the research process. Reflective discussions with critical friends, and research supervisors. Honesty and transparency: Research diary used to identify, reflect on and share challenges and difficulties, which can be seen in appendices. Outline of data analysis in appendices, with reflections on role of self in co-construction of themes.
Credibility	The research is marked by: ● Thick description, concrete detail, explication of tacit (non-textual knowledge) and showing rather than telling. ● Triangulation or crystallization ● Multivocality ● Member reflections	During the coding process thematic analysis Braun and Clarke (2005) method steps followed to analyse and categorise data, keeping it attached to dates and source. During the analysis section looking for similarities yet also differences – and making sure these alternative narratives are provided space in the write up. Concrete detail provided by inclusion of quotes in both results and analysis section. Eliciting feedback around themes from workers in the field.

Resonance	The research influences, affects or moves particular readers or a variety of audiences through: ● Aesthetic, evocative representation ● Naturalistic generalizations ● Transferable findings	Throughout design, results and analysis holding in mind own clinical relevance, how this can be meaningful for clinical psychologists and have mental wellbeing implications for food bank users. When choosing "essence" of themes – using language that will emotionally resonate with readers and is able to provide a bridge towards mental health perspective to understanding social determinants of distress.

Significant contribution	The research provides a significant contribution ● Conceptually/theoretically ● Practically ● Morally ● Methodologically ● Heuristically	Theoretically: There is no current research focusing solely on mothers accessing food banks in the UK, or their portrayal in the media. One research paper looking generally into food banks has flagged that they are a group of emergency concern, due to not accessing services until it is an emergency. Practically: On a practical basis, it is hoped that this paper can add to understanding of social narratives that exist which could help or hinder help-seeking behaviour, whilst stimulating further research in this area. This knowledge will be dispersed to front line workers and planned to be published. This, alongside other research, could start conversations around the provision of psychological services and/or consultancy within food banks to develop therapeutically informed environments. Morally: This paper hopes to start conversations around more creative and person-centred psychological provision to meet the needs of diverse and marginalised populations, and incorporated into current IAPTs provision.

Ethical	The research considers ● The procedural ethics (such as human subjects) ● Situational and culturally specific ethics ● Relational ethics ● Exiting ethics (leaving the scene and sharing the research)	Ethical approval was provided by The University of Hertfordshire ethics board. BPS (2009) and (2017) ethical guidelines were consulted, with particular attention provided to the challenges of accessing online data sources. Relational ethics considered via research diary, and reflection on own position of intersectionality of difference and similarity. Exiting ethics considered in terms of publishing the research and disseminating to stimulate further discussion and research into mothers accessing food banks. This will be done via an online journal. In addition, consideration will be provided to write up, language choices and representation of people being studied, to mitigate against further stigma or discrimination.

Meaningful coherence	The study: ● Achieves what it purports to be about ● Uses methods and procedures that fit its stated goals ● Meaningfully interconnects literature, research questions/foci, findings and interpretations with each other	Consideration provided to the inclusion and exclusion of literature Consideration provided to epistemological positioning, with particular focus on maintain this position throughout the entire research and to contextualise the findings.

4 Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Overview

In this chapter, I will be outlining the three main themes, and their subthemes. For each identified theme and subtheme, an extract from the newspaper articles has been chosen to provide an illustration to the reader. Selected text will be presented in quotation marks and, at times, parts of the text will be omitted, signposted by ellipses, to support clarity of communication within the project's word limit. To provide context, the source of the information including newspaper outlet and date of article will be referenced next to each quotation. There is a thread of morality, responsibility and blame running through all the themes and these will be described.

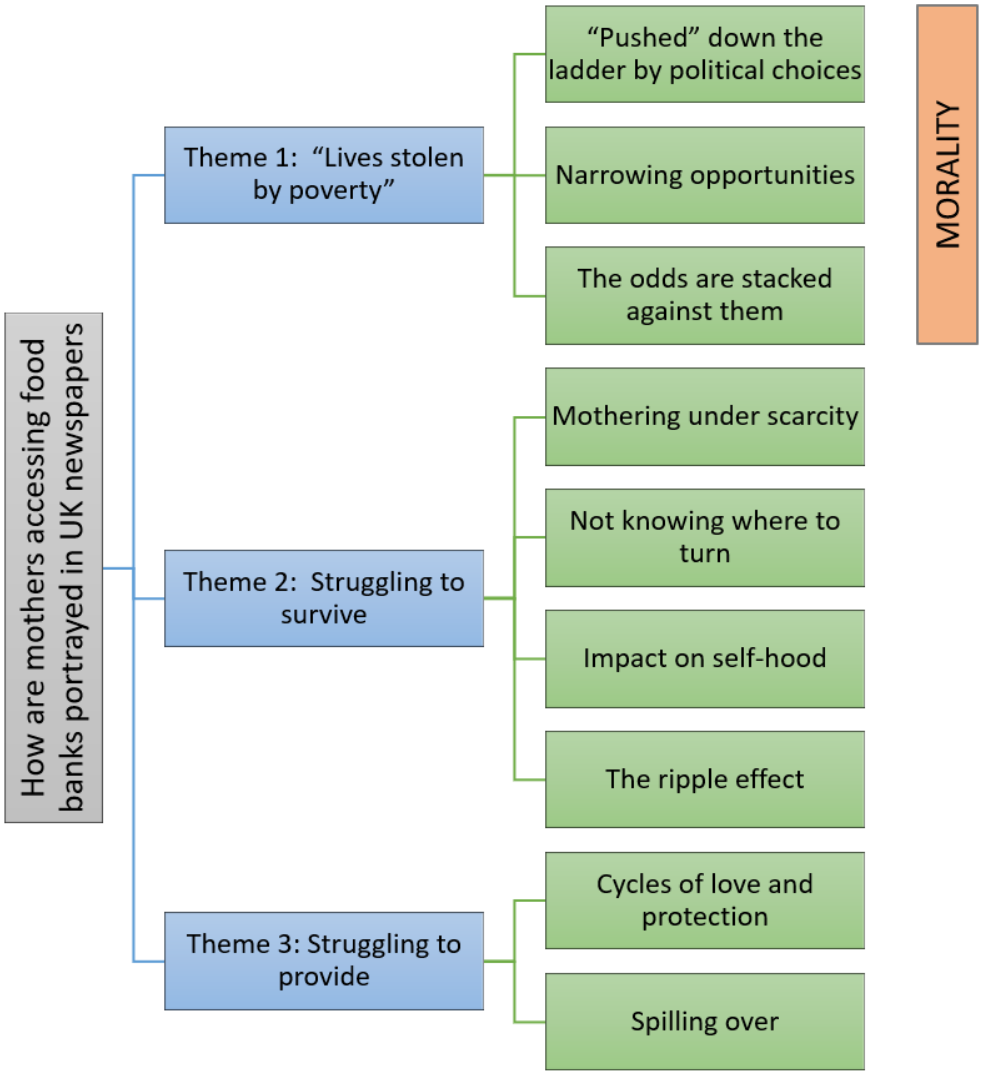

FIGURE 4: VISUAL OVERVIEW OF THEMES

4.2 Theme One: Lives stolen by poverty

4.2.1 Overview

Theme One captures how the articles portray the context and policy that narrow mothers' options cornering them into accessing a food bank. The theme includes an overview of how the media portrays the political context and the wider systems mothers situated within, such as political choices and changing policies. These structures are portrayed as cornering women, so that the odds are stacked against them. Several articles state that this is also related to the disparity of finances and attention in society portraying that this must be a problem,

otherwise food banks would not continue to exist. The overarching theme, and the three subthemes, will now be discussed in detail with relevant quotes included.

4.2.2 Subtheme A: "Pushed" down the ladder by political choices

This subtheme describes the media portrayal of different political choices that 'push 'mothers into destitution. Political choices include economic choices across the past and present, and in response to the global health pandemic COVID-19.

Mothers are portrayed at the sharp edge of political choices and, as result of these, being pushed off the ladder. The metaphor of a ladder speaks to the idea of a hierarchical society, what is done to mothers, and how they are located or valued within these structures.

> "People on the lowest rungs of the income ladder are pushed rapidly into destitution" The Guardian (05.11.2019)

Articles represent how low incomes are placing mothers in a position where they are unable to meet their own or their children's needs and must attend a food bank to do so.

> "So she is almost entirely dependent on school vouchers available for her oldest two children (£15 per child per week) to buy absolute essentials, and one weekly food package dropped off by the Sufra food bank" The Independent (03.06.2020).

Many articles portrayed mothers as suffering from a violent act. This portrayal by articles suggests that not meeting mothers' needs was an intentional form of punishment.

> "Lina will also be **hit** by the two-child limit on child benefits" The Guardian (23.12.2019)

Other media outlets portrayed mothers accessing food banks as subject to the words, actions, choices, and decisions of unpredictable and judgemental politicians. This portrayal of governments as punitive or punishing, could suggest that mothers are in some way bad and need to learn a lesson.

> "It's all very well promising… that Britain isn't going back to austerity. But governments are judged on actions, not words, and this one triggers a strong sense of deja vu, with its arguments for children to go hungry lest their parents fail to learn some greater moral lesson." The Guardian (22.10.2020)

Alongside this, journalists portrayed mothers as having grown up within geographical and community contexts of industrial and economic decline and exclusion. In these circumstances, mothers, wider families and local communities were represented by articles as subjected to the intentional intergenerational decision of conservative politicians and exclusion.

> "I grew up hearing the **horror** stories of the things the Tories had done to our town," The Guardian (21.11.2019)

In contrast, one article highlighted the role of private banks precipitating a mother accessing a food bank. This suggests a shift in the location of threat and/or responsibility from government to private corporations.

> "One mother told the BBC that she had been left unable to pay her rent, bills or buy food after the bank had shut down her account." The Daily Mail (23.11.2019)

Articles portrayed COVID-19 as placing additional pressure on mothers, specific to COVID-19 there were policy changes, yet this does not appear to be a general recognition of government responsibility for food deprivation.

> "…asked about reversing his decisions on providing free school meals during COVID-19…Boris Johnson revealed last night that he had personally congratulated Rashford on his campaign. "I do think it's right that we should be looking after families of the most vulnerable and the neediest right now" The Times (17.06.2020)

Several articles emphasised mothers and children as deserving to be prioritised, highlighting MPs commitment to fund the Eat-Out-to-Help-Out Scheme, contrasting this to their shifting views and faltering support for the children's free school meals initiative.

> "As political own goals go, it was a spectacular one. Feeding kids through the winter holidays would only have cost £20m: peanuts in public spending terms; piddling compared with subsidising fancy restaurant meals via the "eat out to help out" scheme" The Guardian (22.10.2020)

Articles frequently portrayed systems as inadequate for the task of meeting the needs of mothers, indicating the shameful and moral problem of the welfare system.

> "the safety net which is supposed to catch them, is a shamefully shabby thing" The Guardian (02.12.2019)

Whereas several journalists portrayed mothers attending food banks as subject to intentional punishment from systems, via policies, such as benefit caps, sanctions, cuts and deductions.

> "The people it was created to protect, and buoy are being slowly strangled in a web of failure and sanctions" The Independent (26.10.2019)

This representation of mothers being punished, could suggest they have done something wrong or are bad, connecting to wider ideas of morality in society, that is, who is good and who is bad.

> "UC, the austerity policy used to beat the most vulnerable in society…" The independent (26.10.2019)

This overarching theme captures the wider structural context, highlighting how the media presents political forces as harming mothers. Mothers were frequently portrayed in a disempowered position, subjected to changing political choices, and shifting policies and priorities across time. Government systems and policies were portrayed as incompetent, inadequate and even purposefully punitive, positioning mothers as bad or immoral in some way.

The next two sub-themes will describe in detail how this context, interacting with political choices, leads to a narrowing mothers' opportunities and contributes to a situation where the odds are stacked against them.

4.2.3 Subtheme B: Narrowing opportunities

This subtheme highlights how journalists present the wider structural context (outlined above), as setting up several conflicts and dilemmas for mothers, that narrows their opportunities, the options available to them and places them in a risky position in society where they are cornered into accessing a food bank.

On several occasions, mothers were portrayed by the media as having narrowing opportunities due to not being able to seek employment due to caring responsibilities and expenses.

> "…almost a third of mothers have had to cut working hours due to childcare expenses." The Independent (26.10.2019)

Mothers were frequently portrayed as being the main care provider for their children, however pay for employment was presented as too low, meaning they were unable to provide enough food.

> "One full-time teacher…told The Independent that she had to use the food bank ten times in the past year in order to feed her two children". The Independent (13.10.2019)

Articles highlighted that in some situations a mother's role was to look after their children, whilst a partner worked full-time, however, this wage was still not sufficient to provide for a family.

> "She raises the children, while he stacks shelves at a supermarket. When his wages hit their bank account, the money is all gone on bills the same afternoon." The Guardian (30.10.2019)

The media portrayed mothers accessing food banks as an at-risk group, due to the limited options available to them. These circumstances placed them emotionally and financially at significant risk from challenging life events, which could quickly tip them over the edge. Examples included the break-down of a relationship, mental or physical health problems in the family, bereavement of a child or partner and domestic abuse.

> "When her partner was unable to work after being involved in an accident, she was forced to go to the food bank to feed her children" The Guardian (26.10.2020)

The media highlighted that the new UC scheme narrowed mothers 'opportunities, making it difficult for them to access benefit support alongside education courses. This meant mothers were faced with the dilemma of working towards long term career development or educational goals, at the risk of having their UC allowance decreased, meaning to continue formal education they would need to attend a food bank to feed their children.

> "Ms Kiernan unenrolled from her course to be able to access the benefits. It took three months. She soon fell behind on rent and bills." The Daily Telegraph (24.10.2020)

The media portrayed the new UC scheme as narrowing mothers 'opportunities, making it difficult for mothers to access increased hours of employment alongside adequate benefit payment. These media portrayals, highlight the contradictions mothers faced, as employment, which is usually associated with having an income and pay, was instead, associated with a decreased income and not enough money to purchase food, due to the way policy is developed.

> "Rose's mother works part-time but the failings of UC system mean that the more overtime she does, the more steeply her benefits are cut until she ends up worse off." The Daily Telegraph (03.12.2019)

Just one article used irony to question the value or benefits of government initiatives aimed at returning single parent families back into the work force.

> "As inequality increases… the Department for Work and Pensions declares success as employment rates among single parents are at record high, with more female parents in work than those married or cohabiting" The Independent (26.10.2019)

In terms of the role's mothers did take, the media frequently portrayed mothers in a narrow range of roles. In professional roles, they were portrayed as teachers, NHS workers, and within the hospitality industry.

> " ... a mother struggling to feed her children, a nursing assistant who can no longer afford to put food on the table…" The Independent (03.06.2020)

It is unclear if mothers were portrayed in these roles because there is a limited range or types of professional roles available to them, or that the media has only captured and re-presented them within certain roles. Articles highlighted that some of the professional roles mothers were employed in as financially undervalued by society.

> "A study from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD0 last month concluded that teachers 'pay in the UK is below the international average." The Independent (13.10.2019)

The media portrayed single and young mothers as facing additional challenges due to stigma and ageism within higher education systems, healthcare services and wider society. This

discrimination was also mirrored in policy decisions, as age and relationship status was used as a factor to calculate UC payment to mothers and their children.

> "The majority of single parents have lost out under UC. Single parents under the age of 25 receive up to £790 less per year than older parents, despite entitlement being calculated against current household income and number of dependent children. For many on the bottom of our socio-economic gradient, £790 is the difference between a home and a hostel…a family fed and meals shared and skipped" The Independent (26.10.2019)

The COVID-19 pandemic is related to subthemes 1 and 2, as articles portrayed COVID-19 as placing additional pressures on mothers, such as, trying to juggle school closures, increased care demands and employment,

> "I am hoping when the kids go back to school later in the year I can go back to work…" The Independent (02.06.2020)

Alongside sudden loss of employment and a one size fits all policies such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

> "…31, single mother who lost her job in a chip shop because of the pandemic, said she was struggling to feed her children-" The Independent (01.05.2020)

Articles suggested that mothers 'options to provide were further limited by COVID-19 due to increased caring demands, loss of employment and school closures increasing household food demands.

> "The shopping I'm doing is costing a lot more with them at home" The Independent (02.06.2020)

In many articles 'mothers 'difficulties accessing food were represented as pre-existing COVID-19, but COVID-19 was portrayed as adding an extra pressure.

> "…it was not the first time using the food bank…she first visited a food bank after a change in her UC left her in dire financial straits…" The Independent (22.03.2020)

All the factors outlined above, were portrayed by articles as cornering mothers into a position where they had reduced options to survive. Journalists represented mothers 'opportunities

as limited by escalating debts, the role available to them, balancing caring responsibilities, low salaries and/or UC benefits. Articles suggested that these combined factors meant that both employed and unemployed mothers, single and married were frequently faced with a situation in which they were unable to pay the bills and have no other choice but to attend a food bank to provide meals for their children.

Overall, this sub-theme captures the diverse and complicated range of political choices and policies that journalists represent, acting upon mothers, narrowing their opportunities, cornering them into a risky situation and leaving them with no other option but to attend a food bank to feed their children. The macro-structures that act upon mothers, narrowing their opportunities, and limiting the options available to them are portrayed by journalists as pre-dating, yet being exacerbated by COVID-19.

4.2.4 Subtheme C: The odds are stacked against them

The previous sub-theme captures journalists' representation of the contextual and political choices that narrow mothers' opportunities cornering them into accessing a food bank. This sub-theme, builds upon the previous ones, highlighting how articles portray that the implications of these narrowing opportunities is that 'the odds are aggressively stacked against them'. Not only do articles represent this situation as limiting mothers' autonomy and agency, but also as enabling them to be blamed for their predicament. Some articles state that this is also related to the disparity and attention within society, portraying that this must be a problem, otherwise the food banks would not continue to exist.

Several articles portray mothers as trapped and helpless in the face of policies, and unable to escape.

> "It's just debt upon debt upon debt" The Guardian (30.10.2019)

Articles used language such as 'bad luck', highlighting the limited opportunities that are available to mothers.

> "A woman and her four-year-old child arrive at the Emmanuel church, where the food bank is held. They arrived the day before… after a run of bad luck, they have ended up sleeping in a car" The Guardian (04.12.2019)

Yet at the same time portraying how mothers are being blamed by society for the limited opportunities that have been made available to them.

> "…the injustice of being poor and with the humiliation of being blamed for circumstances beyond their control" The Guardian (26.02.2020)

As journalists presented politicians judging "sneer" and labelling mothers accessing food banks as "unable to manage their finances". This again speaks to the idea of morality, that rich if good and competent, and the impoverished, as bad and incompetent, overlooking contextual factors and the opportunities available to them.

> "…while Conservative cabinet ministers such as Michael Gove sneer at the impoverished for not being able to "manage their finances"." The Guardian (20.10.2019)

Articles portrayed mothers accessing food banks as self-critical, believing that other people's success was due to them working hard, not because they had better opportunities made available to them. This again speaks to the thread of morality, and an internalisation of mothers self-blame, highlighting views that wealthy people are good, and hardworking, and deserving and the poor, are bad.

> "I know they must be making a lot of money up there, but they must have worked very hard to get there and have good qualifications," she says. "Good luck to them, I say. Merry Christmas." The Guardian (23.12.2019)

Articles state that 'the odds being stacked against 'mothers is linked to disparity and attention in society, which must be a problem, otherwise food banks would not exist.

> "The food banks are papering over the cracks…." The Guardian (23.12.2019)

In several articles, two worlds in one city are used to portray the disparities of where attention is focused and where it is not. This juxtaposition suggested that in the UK issues of mothers accessing food banks have been physically side-lined into the shadows.

> "Jane hasn't really considered the gleaming towers of Canary Wharf that are literally casting shadows over the food bank as she makes her way home with a trolley full of food." The Guardian (23.12.2019)

The journalists also drew attention to how issues of mothers 'scarcity and access to food were silenced by other priorities.

> With one lady discussing how food banks are something that are not talked about: "There is no reason why we should be talking about anything other than how we feed and house people." The Guardian (28.11.2019)

Whilst articles represented how mothers 'problems continued to be denied or ignored by politicians, who were frequently positioned as rich and greedy.

> "Dealing with those causes would entail being winched out of the deep embrace of the TV studio sofas, tearing out the IV drip that feeds them the untreated bullshit of No 10 "sources"" The Guardian (30.10.2019)

This disparity was linked to broader ideas of morality, through articles reference to "First love" foundation, contrasting this to the lack of love in the unjust treatment of mothers and opportunities afforded to them.

> "The panoramic view from Quinn's luxurious office suite takes in the Salvation Army church, where Jane is telling her life story to case workers at the First Love Foundation food bank as other volunteers pack up bags of food to help her through the next month with no money coming in." The Guardian (23.12.2019)

The language used in articles frequently portrayed politicians as to blame, for being purposefully punitive towards mothers, leading to them needing to access a food bank.

> One journalist emphasising the impact of austerity and UC ended with: "You could wish that the people in charge were watching – but they know don't they?... And still, we have food banks opening in schools and communities clubbing together to make sure children don't go hungry in the holidays. Because if you have no conscience, knowing makes no difference." The Guardian (02.12.2019)

Several articles widened the narrative out from politician's treatment of mothers, and instead portrayed wider society, as putting negative moral judgements on people who attend food banks.

> "Poorer single parents are often vilified as irresponsible for choosing to have children before financially securing their place in society," The Independent (26.10.2019)

Articles portrayed mothers as helpless and falling victim to society's cruelty and inaction.

> "When did we become this way, when did we become so cruel?" The Guardian (28.11.2019)

As food banks were depicted as a badge of failure for British society.

> "Our failure as a society is making it permanent." The Guardian (30.10.2019)

This sub-theme captures the media portrayal of mothers as subject to policies and suggests that the impact of these policies is that 'the odds are stacked against them'. The problem of food banks was portrayed by journalists as continuing to exist, due to the disparity and the absence or presence of attention – that is where attention is focused and where it is not. The articles portray that the contextual factors, that is what has been done to mothers, provides a one-dimensional perspective. Many of the articles use language that portrays politicians as to blame for being purposefully punitive. However, other articles widen this out to wider society, asking why everybody, including the reader and wider society, is 'so cruel'.

4.2.5 Overall summary of theme

To conclude, theme one captures how the media portrays the political context and wider systems that mothers act within. These wider capitalist structures and political choices are portrayed as cornering mothers and narrowing their opportunities, so that the odds are stacked against them. The articles highlight that the consequence of this for mothers is that they must attend a food bank to survive.

4.3 Theme Two: Living on the edge – trying to survive

4.3.1 Overview

Theme two captures mothers as struggling to survive; that is the internal emotional experience of mothers who are trying to survive within the wider systems and political context. This theme focuses on journalists' portrayal of mothers as struggling to survive within a system where they are represented as discarded and abandoned yet, despite this, not worthy of help or support. These factors are portrayed by articles as placing mothers in a situation where they are unsure of where to turn to for help and support and are at increased risk of becoming isolated and alone. Articles suggest that mothering under scarcity and not knowing where to turn, can impact upon mothers 'personhood and sense of self, as both a

mother and a person. The final sub-theme focuses on how articles portray the ripple effect of accessing a food bank for mothers that is the impact this has on their mental health.

4.3.2 Subtheme A: Mothering under scarcity

This sub-theme captures how journalists represent mothers attending food banks as struggling to survive within a context of scarcity. Several articles represent mothers living in scarcity as being treated as disposable, having their requests and needs dismissed, and not being worthy of help.

In several articles, the use of language suggests that mothers are viewed by politicians and society as discardable.

> "To be dropped and dropped" The Guardian (30.10.2019)

Alongside this, journalists represent mothers as being abandoned, speaking to the idea that they are not worthy of help.

> "People who come here [food bank] have been abandoned" The Guardian (04.12.2019)

Journalists' choice of language suggests that for mothers struggling to survive in scarcity, being viewed as disposable, enables them to be treated as so.

> "Treated like dirt" The Guardian (30.10.2019)

Mothers attending food banks were frequently portrayed as having their needs and requests dismissed and ignored by healthcare and UC systems.

> "…she was unable to convince benefits officials that she had missed the appointment through illness" The Guardian (07.02.2020)

Mothers were portrayed as powerless, as they struggled to survive and access support in these unjust systems.

> "You have to wait five weeks for any money to turn up; and they mess you about." The Guardian (30.10.2019)

During COVID-19, articles represented mothers as victims to forces beyond their control. There was a clear differentiation between mothers who had been accessing food banks pre-

versus during COVID-19, positioning the former as 'risk takers', suggesting personal responsibility and poor decision making contributing to these mothers living in scarcity.

> "The coronavirus pandemic has spawned an economic disaster of its owns, but it's not so much exposing risk takers as dragging everyone, no matter how prepared they were, into the maelstrom…" The Daily Telegraph (25.04.2020)

This sub-theme captures how articles represent mothers struggling to survive in scarcity as perceived and positioned by society, politicians, and services, as disposable. The language in articles suggests that the treatment of mothers living in scarcity is an injustice. Yet, despite this, systems and services continue to ignore their requests and needs, placing them in a vulnerable position where they do not know where to seek support. Whilst COVID-19 may have shifted the narrative temporarily, this is only for certain mothers who have accessed food banks during COVID-19.

4.3.3 Subtheme B: Not knowing where to turn

This sub-theme builds upon the previous one, representing mothers as struggling to survive and unsure of where to turn to for support. Mothers were portrayed as facing the dilemma of finding trusted places to access support, whilst encountering services which may or may not meet their needs. Articles noted mothers 'experience of approaching a range of services, from government funded initiatives such as UC, physical and mental health services, charities, food banks and social enterprises.

Newspapers portrayed mothers 'fear towards state initiatives, such as the UC advance payment scheme, suggesting a lack of trust in the government initiatives intentions to work in their best interests and support them to feed themselves or their children.

> "People have started to hear about the UC advance payments, but many are too scared to take one. There is a lot of confusion over how much needs to be paid back and when." The Guardian (04.12.2019)

One journalist drew attention to a mother's harmful experience of accessing underfunded and inadequate mental health service provision.

> "Saskia Walsh 23, says she survived in spite of Norwich's mental health provision…" The Guardian (28.11.2019)

Whereas other articles concentrated on a single mother's experience of accessing physical healthcare support, being judged for her parenting ability. Here again, the media portrayals allude to the life of opposites and contradictions mothers are faced with, as ironically being older is associated with being a "good parent", despite their physiological peak being in their 20's.

> "Age and experience are viewed as "good parent" credentials, even among the medical profession...young single mothers suffer discrimination from conception to school" The Independent (26.10.2019)

Many articles portrayed grassroots, charities and community action initiatives as places mothers felt more able to access support. These were frequently being run by locals living within the same community, in churches, village halls or out of people's homes.

> "Jane, a 26-year-old mother of three, says Murphy and the centre provide an essential service, giving families food as well as blankets, and pillows." The Guardian (2610.2020)

Journalists used language to portray these as places where mothers felt able to trust and seek support, suggesting these initiatives were worthy of being celebrated.

> "Norwich North appears a divided, anxious place but it is also packed with heroic community action." The Guardian (28.11.2019)

Whilst remaining critical of the very need or existence of such initiatives to feed mothers and their children.

> "…where children must rely on a sick pensioner to keep them fed at term time" The Guardian (30.10.2019)

Several articles differentiated between food banks which work via a referral system through professional routes, with food banks that were ran by social enterprises. Reference to the former draws attention to how formal referral systems can push mothers into an insubordinate position, as they must prove to others that they deserve help.

> "…people do not need a referral from a doctor or social worker, nor is access rationed. "There are no questions asked apart from 'How are you?' People need to come and

> have a cry," says Silver. "I don't want proof of poverty - that's disgusting." The Guardian (28.11.2019)

A number of articles build upon this perception of who is trusted, linking this to the idea of what is needed by mothers struggling in scarcity. Articles highlighted that it is not simply the practical resources which are important to mothers, but the emotional support that is available, which has become harder to access during COVID-19.

> "…food banks pride themselves on their wrap around services – things like a cup of tea and a cake or chat – but that's unfortunately had to stop" The Independent (22.03.2020)

Many articles portrayed food banks as a potential point of contact, or a missed opportunity, to provide practical and emotional support to mothers struggling to survive.

> "The local Citizens Advice wrote to the DWP on her behalf to explain her situation, request another assessment and point out that it had given her a food bank voucher. Officials say they never got the letter. Her body was discovered by her mother six days later". The Guardian (07.02.2020)

Several articles highlighted that mothers accessed support from pre-existing trusted professionals, who may attend a food bank on their behalf.

> "A teacher has turned up to ask for a package for a young boy's family" The Guardian (04.12.2019)

Whereas, in other articles colleagues were portrayed as providing emotional support by accompanying them to the food bank.

> "She comes to the food bank with a manager from work because she needs some support… I broke down yesterday because I was so embarrassed about it all" The Guardian (04.12.2019)

Despite some variations in the services available, mothers were frequently portrayed as living in isolation and fear, and not getting their needs met.

> "I don't know where else to turn – I've never had to use a food bank before" The Independent (01.05.2020)

Mothers were presented by journalists as hesitant to reach out for support as they were concerned of being viewed as a burden by others.

> "You get tired of depending on people. You don't want to keep telling people your problems" The Independent (03.06.2020)

Journalists portrayed mothers as exhausting support networks and slipping into isolation.

> "The study found people attending food banks have either exhausted support from family and friends, are socially isolated, or do not have friends or family in a financial position to help" The Independent (05.11.2019)

This sub-theme captures how mothers were portrayed by articles as not knowing where to turn to for help and support. The media portrayed mothers fluctuating levels of trust in the services available to them, which may or may not meet their needs. The implications of this was that mothers lived in isolation and fear of not getting their needs met, whilst being concerned about becoming a burden to those around them and at increased risk of isolation.

4.3.4 Subtheme C: Impact on self-hood

This subtheme captures journalists' portrayal of how having nowhere trusted to turn to for help to survive (outlined above) can impact on mothers 'personhood and sense of self.

Mothers were portrayed by journalists as constantly worried and stressed about being unable to meet their own and their children's needs.

> "Thinking and worry about money all the time isn't easy" The Independent (02.06.2020)

Articles portrayed the additional worry placed on mothers at certain points of the year, such as birthdays, or Christmas, when they felt increased pressure to feed their children and provide gifts.

> "With not enough food to last them over the holiday period and their electricity meter about to run out they could not afford to buy their three children any gifts" The Guardian (10.12.2019)

In addition, during the summer holidays, there was increased pressure to meet children's additional needs, such as activities, and leisure.

> “Many of the parents are starting to worry about the summer holidays. Before they even think about the cost of entertaining their children for six long weeks, there is the matter of feeding them.” The Guardian (04.12.2019)

Journalists created images that allude to the emotional and practical pressure and burden placed on mothers, who were portrayed as responsible for providing for their children in a context of deprivation, degradation, and scarcity.

> “Her mother carried most of the load, but they all bore their share.” The Guardian (02.12.2019)

Articles represented how this deprivation and inability to meet children’s needs, threatened their role as provider.

> “When she [teacher] called the child's parents, she says his mother broke down in tears saying, "I can't afford to feed my children." The Guardian (04.12.2019)

Mothers’ inability to meet their caring expectations was represented by journalists as triggering vulnerability as they began to view themselves as a failure in their role as mother.

> “…It caused a great deal of anxiety and I felt like I had completely failed as a mother" she added The Independent (13.10.2019)

Alongside this, mothers were portrayed as believing they had let down their children, speaking to an internalisation of responsibility, blame and guilt. This self-blame speaks to the idea that mothers have the view that being poor means that they must have done something wrong or are in some way bad, linking to a wider thread of morality.

> “I've always worked hard to provide for my children, but it makes me feel like I’ve let them down” The Independent (03.06.2020)

In contrast, one article portrayed mothers as displaying anger towards politicians, for their decision regarding free school lunches, suggesting location of responsibility, blame and failure with the government.

> “But Julia, who struggled financially after being widowed at 37 with two young children, says the decision [school lunches] made her blood boil…” The Guardian (26.11.2020)

Many articles represented mothers' experiences of having no choice but to attend a food bank.

> "You might not have thought about what it feels like to have no choice but to swallow your pride and go to a food bank" The Guardian (26.02.2020)

And the painful emotions this injustice triggered in them.

> "The feeling when you walk into a food bank is very painful. I work so hard, yet I can't afford the basics" The Independent (03.06.2020)

Most articles portray mothers as selfless and caring. This again links to the thread of morality, as there is a sense that mothers' values are centred around being selfless and caring. What is right and thus to be viewed as good, they must give to others, even if this is at great personal sacrifice.

> "She turned down some of the more expensive foods…There are others more in need than me, save it for them" The Guardian (23.12.2019)

Other journalists portrayed mothers as responding to the vulnerability, and associated emotions evoked in them by escaping from the situation, physically and/or emotionally.

> "She says the experience [attending fb] was so horrible that she left in tears" The Guardian (26.10.2020)

There was also a sense of hopelessness, that mothers could find no way out of this situation and wanted to disappear.

> "I go to bed at night wishing I never wake up in the morning," says food bank user" The Independent (05.11.2019)

COVID-19 was represented by journalists as placing additional pressures and threats to mothers' who experienced a sudden loss of employment and autonomy.

> "I am so afraid… Finding a job is my top priority and that's causing me a lot of anxiety" The Independent (02.05.2020)

Journalists highlighted that for others, the impact of COVID-19 was the first time they had been unable to feed their children, creating a sense of shock and threat to their sense of self and role as a mother.

> "I never thought I'd be worrying about having enough for the children to eat" The Independent (02.06.2020)

This sub-theme captures how articles portray the emotional impact of struggling to survive. Many articles represented mothers struggling to survive as carrying the sole responsibility of providing for their children, and the emotional implications of this. Articles portrayed COIVID-19 as exacerbating these pre-existing pressures, creating additional threats to mothers' ability to survive and provide, as they struggled to maintain employment and access food to feed their children.

4.3.5 Subtheme D: The ripple effect

Most articles under this sub-theme portrayed that struggling to survive and provide, in a context of scarcity, impacted mothers' emotional wellbeing and mental health. The emotional impact is captured in each of the previous subthemes and is built upon with a particular and explicit focus on mental health.

Mothers trying to provide in scarcity, were portrayed by journalists as grappling with chronic depression, anxiety, diagnosis of personality disorder, paranoia, cumulating in suicides and break downs.

> "As the programme wore on, it emerged that her mother suffered from a personality disorder and anxiety". The Daily Telegraph (03.12.2019)

Most articles outlined how the wider structural context, directly impacted the circumstances mothers had to struggle to survive within, having real life implications for their emotional wellbeing and mental health.

> "…subjecting her to benefit cap, which in turn resulted in her benefit income being docked 20% a month. This left her stressed, depressed and struggling to feed and buy clothes for her children". The Guardian (20.07.2020)

Mothers were frequently portrayed by articles as being pushed by contextual circumstances to extreme measures to try and provide for their children, which impacted upon their mental wellbeing.

> A parent who had skipped meals to feed children during COVID-19 lockdown reported "Three weeks in I had a break down" The Independent (03.06.2020)

Articles portrayed how wider structural contexts and pressures impacted on mothers' relationships with their children.

> "…the pressure on the relationship between parent and child is as a contributing factor to increased depression and anxiety amongst families, as well as isolation and paranoia parents" The Independent (26.10.2019)

Articles portrayed that mothers' struggling to survive in scarcity, frequently grappled with mental health problems. These were frequently portrayed as existing in and being driven by the challenges of surviving in a context of scarcity.

4.3.6 Overall summary of theme

Overall, this theme captures mothers' emotional experience of struggling to survive in scarcity. The articles highlight that what shapes mothers emotional experience of struggling to survive, is being positioned as not worthy of help and support, placing them in an insubordinate and vulnerable position. Journalists highlight that the implications of this is that mothers have limited trust in the services available and do not know where to turn to for help. These factors contribute to them becoming isolated and alone and caught in a situation where they are unable to meet their own or their children's needs, impacting on mothers' sense of self and mental health. Articles represented COVID-19 as exacerbating pre-existing pressures, creating additional threats to mothers' ability to survive and sense of self.

4.4 Theme Three: Struggling to provide

4.4.1 Overview

Theme three captures mothers attending food banks as struggling to provide for their children; that is the relational experience of mothers and their children who are trying to survive within wider systems and political context. This theme builds upon theme two, providing an overview of the impact on the mother and child interactions, and impact of scarcity on the child. Mother and child are portrayed by journalists as becoming caught in cycles of love and protection. Despite mothers' best efforts to protect their children from the context of scarcity, articles portray that scarcity trickles down impacting children and narrowing their opportunities.

4.4.2 Subtheme A: Cycles of love and protection

This subtheme highlights how journalists represent the relationship and interactions between mother and children. Mothers were portrayed as trying to provide for and protect their children from scarcity, hunger, and distress. Several articles highlighted that children often inadvertently witnessed their mothers' pain and distress and would try to support and protect their mothers, by masking their needs or hunger and trying to help.

A large proportion of articles portrayed mothers as sacrificing their own needs, such as skipping meals, to protect and provide for their children.

> "Laura had stopped eating in order to scratch together enough money to feed her children." The Guardian (23.12.2019)

Journalists portrayed the horror of this situation for mothers, who are "choosing" to sacrifice food so that their children can eat, showing selflessness at great personal cost.

> "…it shows. She is painfully thin and has lost several of her teeth, a sign of malnutrition." "I go without food," The Guardian (23.12.20219)

Articles represented that when mothers had limited food, they would try to shield their children from scarcity and provide a sense of normality and structure for their children.

> "But I always set the table for the children – I keep things as normal as possible for them" The independent (02.06.2020)

Alongside this, mothers would shield their children from their own hunger and maternal sacrifice.

> "Luckily Mum isn't hungry", the girl says; and you know the biggest thing Mum will have for breakfast is her own little white lie." The Guardian (30.10.2019)

Articles highlighted that mothers' best efforts had limitations, as children remained aware of their mothers' worries and struggles to provide.

> "…daughter who sees how her mother worries over every penny, while shielding her from the painful stuff" The Guardian (30.10.2019)

And several articles highlighted that children inadvertently witnessed their mothers 'distress.

> "When Marcus Rashford was a boy, he would sometimes hear his exhausted mother crying herself to sleep" The Guardian (22.10.2020)

Within several articles, there was a sense that children were trying to protect their mothers from their hunger, by masking their own needs.

> "As he once put it, "if there was food on the table, there was food on the table", and if not he didn't moan about feeling hungry." The Guardian (22.10.2020)

And by maintaining an upbeat positive presentation.

> "Through it all, Tina maintained a cheery positivity that broke your heart". The Daily Telegraph (03.12.2020)

Despite this, several articles noted that these circumstances placed additional pressures on the mother-child relationship.

> "It will not be easy for her to disengage from the bills and uncertainty and simply be present with her child" The Independent (26.10.2019)

This sub theme captures mothers' personal sacrifice to provide for and protect their children from the implications of scarcity. Despite this, children were frequently represented as being aware of the situation and doing their best to protect their mother from any additional pressure, by masking their own emotional or food needs.

4.4.3 Overview Subtheme B: Spilling over

This sub-theme highlights how journalists present the wider structural context (outlined in theme one) sets up several conflicts and dilemmas for mothers, which trickle down and inadvertently impact their children.

Journalists frequently stated that mothers and children relying on food banks faced several challenges such as mental health difficulties and housing instability.

> "Living in cramped temporary accommodation, relying on soup kitchens and food banks, she had to battle not only her mental health problems, but those of her parents too…" The Times (03.12.2019)

Articles frequently portrayed mothers who despite personal sacrifice were still unable to provide for their children, who would have to live with hunger.

> "They go to bed hungry and they wake up and go to school without breakfast" (The Mirror 07.03.2020)

Articles highlighted the impact this had on children's academic performance, and self-worth.

> "Her GCSE results are poor, objectively speaking. In context, they are a triumph. She can see only the former." The Guardian (02.12.2019)

The impact was portrayed as narrowing their opportunities, and sense of hope for the future.

> "…announced that she wanted to be a solicitor, you could only wince…" The Times (03.12.2019)

Articles also represented the wider implications these factors had for children, who were not only hungry, but excluded from activities and peer relationships.

> "The thing with child poverty is that it's not just about getting a decent meal – they don't go to the cinema, the theatre, to the fair" The Mirror (07.03.2020)

Several articles portrayed how these factors, led to children feeling isolated, alienated and alone.

> "Children feel isolated because they see wealth only a few minutes away" The Mirror (14.03.2020)

Several journalists highlighted the impact on children in terms of mental wellbeing, distress, self-harm, and suicidal thoughts.

> "Laura is perplexed as to why she finds herself crying all the time. "It just happens." She starts self-harming and having suicidal thoughts and goes to a charity for help" The Guardian (02.12.2019)

Articles represented that COVID-19 placed additional pressures on services and their ability to meet children's needs, increasing risk posed to children.

> "In the last week I have had reports of three children missing from home – because there is no school check-in" The Times (19.04.2020)

This sub-theme captures how the narrowing of children's opportunities, places them in a risky position in school and society, leading to distress and impacting their mental wellbeing.

4.4.4 Overall summary of theme

This theme highlights how journalists represent the relationship and interactions between mother and children. Mothers were portrayed as sacrificing and hiding their own needs to shield their children from hunger, and distress. However, articles highlighted that children were often aware of mothers 'pain and distress, and they may try to mask their own needs to alleviate pressure on their mothers. Despite mothers 'best efforts to shield their children, scarcity was portrayed by journalists as spilling over. This was represented as having implications for the children of mothers who needed to access food banks, narrowing their opportunities in life, in both the present and the future and placing them in a vulnerable position.

4.5 Conclusion

The main research question of this study was to understand the newspaper portrayal of mothers accessing food banks in the UK. The sub-research questions investigated how mothers' identity and experiences were portrayed, and the impact of this on them. The intention is to bridge the research gap, regarding mothers accessing food banks and implications for their mental wellbeing.

Three main themes were identified following the thematic analysis of forty-five newspaper articles. These themes captured how articles portrayed mothers accessing food banks, experiences, identity, and impact on them, in the context within which they lived. Please refer to Appendix G: Data Analysis for reflection on construction of themes.

The first theme indicated that mothers were portrayed as subject to structural issues, which narrowed their opportunities, placing them in a position where the odds were stacked against them. Throughout this theme there was a thread of morality, as mothers were portrayed as blaming themselves for being unable to feed their children, despite the limited opportunities made available to them. The second theme demonstrated how articles captured the internal and emotional experience of mothers accessing food banks, as they are trying to survive within this wider system and political context. The third theme captured the relational experience of mothers and children trying to survive in scarcity. The impact of scarcity was portrayed by articles as spilling over and impacting on children's experiences and wellbeing.

5 Chapter 5: Discussion

The discussion chapter begin by linking the results by theme to the literature, then consider the data sample, the implications of these and evaluation of research. Finally, recommendations for future research will be provided.

5.1 Theme One: Lives stolen by poverty

The first theme, lives stolen by poverty, explores how wider systems and policy narrow mothers' options cornering them into accessing a food bank.

5.1.1 Subtheme A: "Pushed" down the ladder by political choices

The first sub-theme, *pushed* down the ladder by political choices, speaks to mothers' disempowered position within a hierarchical system, being subjected to politicians 'choices. These portrayals fit with statistical trends showing that food bank use has increased under the governments' austerity programs (Jitendra et al., 2017), introduction of sanctions and problems with the benefit systems, especially Universal Credit payment delays (Sosenko, 2019). This parallels trends in the US where mothers who were sanctioned benefits were reduced or eliminated were more likely to report food insecurity for their children and themselves (Reichman et al., 2005), as disadvantaged groups are at higher risk of being sanctioned and sanctions being imposed unfairly (Reeves & Loopstra, 2017; Webster, 2016). This portrayal by the media of mothers at the bottom rung of the ladder and politicians' treatment towards them can be understood through the model 'envy up and scorn down' (Fiske, 2010). This captures a process of comparison by which groups can be looked down on and devalued by more powerful groups' conscious attitudes and mental beliefs, enabling the higher status group to make tough decisions and treat those considered below them with passive neglect (Williams, 1991; Lammers & Stapel, 2011; Fraser, 1995).

However, the current findings place an emphasis on the purposeful and punitive treatment of mothers, suggesting that in the UK context not meeting the needs of mothers is an intentional form of punishment. The use of language by the articles adds a sense of morality to the current treatment of mothers, portraying them as punished and thus, in some way, bad and deserving of punishment by politicians and society, paralleling the treatment of mothers during the Victorian times, labelling them as 'immoral' and thus justifying their detention in workhouses. This contrasts to the treatment of mothers during the time of

rationing in WW2 when they were given additional support via special exception, to access additional milk to meet the needs of themselves and their children (Knight, 2011). This treatment of women has recently been explored in the modern-day context of the UK in relation to food banks, by Powers (2021), who found that the lives of mothers attending food banks were subject to unpredictable, unreliable, and punitive systems, such as UC, and benefit sanctions that forced claimants into destitution and eroded choice. From a Marxist perspective, the portrayal in the media of mothers as immoral and needing to learn a lesson could function to create moral panics to maintain the status quo enabling the institutionally powerful to justify policy that keeps unequal capitalist systems in place (Cohen, 1973).

In tension to this, the media also represented mothers as victims to incompetent and inadequate "shamefully shabby" state systems, locating the moral problem with failing welfare systems and political systems, not mothers. This fits with May's (2019) exploration of the film *I Daniel Blake*, highlighting that inadequate systems do not meet the needs of people, meaning that they have no place left to turn but a food bank. These conflicting media portrayals and the changing location of morality and immorality, between systems or mothers, could function to construct two different portrayals and identities of mothers; those who are immoral and need to be punished, and mothers as victims to inadequate state systems. These media portrayals justify two different types of responses; to be disciplined via state surveillance including sanctions versus pastoral powers and support via food banks (Powers, 2020).

5.1.2 Subtheme B: Narrowing opportunities

The second sub-theme, *narrowing opportunities,* captures how the structural context sets up several conflicts and dilemmas, decreasing the options available to mothers and placing them in a risky position. Mothers were portrayed by the media as being the sole carer and provider for children, whilst trying to balance UC payments, education, and work roles. They were also represented in a narrow set of financially undervalued employment roles, such as teachers and health care workers. This mirrors findings that women, in particular mothers, are an at-risk group being highly represented in non-standard employment due to needing to balance work and family responsibilities (Aassve, Burgress, Propeper & Dickeson, 2006) and employed in feminised and low paid roles such as cleaning, catering or caring (Kamerade & Richardson, 2018). In addition to this, mothers in employment were portrayed by the media as having

decreased incomes and an inability to feed their children. This supports findings of Beatty et al., (2021) who found that mothers accessing food banks were usually employed and experiencing in-work poverty. The reason for this was that welfare conditionality, such as sanctions, drove mothers to accept cycles of low pay and precarious employment, whilst overlooking structural barriers such as the costs of childcare at short notice, travelling costs or time and decreasing local authority support, making it impossible for mothers to make ends meet.

Single mothers were portrayed in the media at increased risk of narrowing opportunities, due to structural factors, including discrimination and maltreatment from welfare and healthcare services and professionals. This portrayal of single mothers as subject to unjust structural factors and limited opportunities contrasts the findings from Tyler (2008), when the media vilified single working-class mothers, overlooking structural challenges, representing them as 'chav', 'dole-scroungers', 'petty criminals', 'vulgar', 'overweight', 'drunk' and 'bad'. Instead, in this research, one newspaper article even questioned the value or benefit of the Department for Work and Pensions initiative of returning single mothers to work, highlighting the lack of value placed on mothers' contributions to society in terms of childrearing roles and need to access formal employment. However, despite an apparent shift away from sensationalist portrayals of single mothers, from 2008 to present day 2021, media portrayals highlight that single mothers continue to experience increased discrimination, suggesting that there has not been a shift in the way they are treated by services in their daily lives. This could be because the previous sensationalised portrayals of single mothers' identity have been impressed upon society's memory by media discourse, contributing to single mothers' continued discrimination and distress (Smail, 2005: O'Mahoney & Marks, 2014). Alternatively, it could be that these historical (2008) constructions of single mothers' identity are now being maintained by the media, via more subtle and implicit frames of morality, rather than sensationalist explicit, framing of single mothers, as 'drunk' and 'vulgar' (Tyler, 2008).

5.1.3 Subtheme C: The odds stacked against them

The third sub-theme, the *odds stacked against them,* captures the limited choices available to mothers. Mothers accessing food banks were portrayed by the media as trapped, helpless, and unable to escape, in the face of policies, such as Universal Credit. Media's portrayal of mothers lacking agency, being trapped and unable to escape, fit with the literature from the

US and Canada, where mothers reported feeling between a “rock and a hard place” in the face of rising childcare costs, transport, welfare reforms and increased work requirements (Chilton & Booth, 2007; Papan & Clow, 2015). In the US, these external structures were found to contribute to both a physical and spiritual type of hunger in women and mothers, placing them at increased risk of trauma and interpersonal violence.

However, the media also portrayed mothers as being blamed by society for the limited opportunities made available to them, being judged and labelled “unable to manage their finances”. This highlights that despite the acknowledgement of the structural causes that precipitate accessing a food bank, mothers are still located as responsible and to blame. This can be understood through gendered stigma around food poverty bound up with ideals of motherhood, which place mothers as solely responsible for providing food for their children. When they fail to satisfy societal expectations of self-reliance and are unable to provide for their children due to the limited opportunities afforded to them, they are condemned to failure as a parent and blamed (Powers et al., 2021). These portrayals of mothers in the media, captures the moralisation of approved and virtuous behaviour, such as managing the household budget, cooking from raw ingredients, ‘othering’ those who are deemed to fail to perform these skills, as in some way deficient and bad and needing to attend a food bank (Powers et al., 2021). Several papers have highlighted this disjunct between holding mothers responsible for feeding their children and their limited agency, both within society and within the household, recommending that child tax credits should be paid directly to mothers to increase their independence and autonomy (Powers, 2018; Papan & Clow, 2015).

Mothers were portrayed as physically side-lined into the shadows, silenced, and obscured by other priorities. Alongside this, mothers’ problems were portrayed as being ignored and dismissed by politicians who were shown as greedy and rich, placing blame with politicians for being punitive to mothers who are helpless, falling victims to society’s cruelty and inaction. Despite this, mothers were portrayed by the media as self-critical, attributing other people’s success to them being good and hardworking, not due to the opportunities provided to them. These interactions between the wider systems and life world can be understood through Habermas’ philosophy, as economic and political systems, were portrayed as colonising and intruding on mothers’ private everyday lives, as they internalised public narratives and began to view themselves as undeserving and to blame (Powers et al., 2018).

Throughout theme one, newspapers appear to have used mothers as lens to critique the government. In this sense newspapers have almost weaponised mothers for their own purposes. It is hypothesised that newspapers have multiple motivations for doing so, for example, critiquing cuts and policy and exerting control and influence back on the government (Hagan & Smail, 2005). By doing this they have presented a narrowed perspective which (intentionally or unintentionally) further dehumanises mothers (Marks & Thompson, 2010).

5.2 Theme Two: Living on the edge – trying to survive

The second theme, *living on the edge – trying to survive*, captures the internal emotional experience of mothers who are trying to survive within wider systems and political contexts.

5.2.1 Subtheme A: Mothering under scarcity

The first sub-theme, *mothering under scarcity,* captures the media portrayals of mothers' experiences of being positioned as disposable, enabling them to be treated as so, having their requests and needs dismissed, and not being worthy of help. There is currently a gap in the literature regarding mothers' portrayals in the media and the psycho-social implications of these. However, research into the psycho-social implications of TV programs on males and females accessing food banks found that affluent people nearby the food bank reported popular political messages, such as "alcohol, drugs, poor cooking skills, and financial management" as reasons why people accessed the food bank (Garthwaite, 2016), increasing experiences of stigma and shame in food bank users. The findings from this thesis suggest that there are unique constructions for mothers accessing food banks within the media, portraying and stereotyping them as 'disposable' and 'dirt', thus insubordinate and not worthy of help (Hagan & Smail, 1997; Raviv et al., 2003). The use of this language can elicit disgust and harm in the reader, functioning to place mothers accessing food banks as outsiders and impacting upon their value in the symbolic exchange systems (Skeggs, 2008; Cuddy, Fiske & Glick, 2004).

Whilst no research has specifically investigated the impact of these media stereotypes on women accessing food banks, some mothers attending food banks have reported an awareness of stereotypes (Hicks-Stratton, 2004). Alongside this, a body of literature highlights that woman, in particular mothers can be a group of emergency concern avoiding accessing food banks and being called the hidden hungry (Powers, 2018). It could be that the portrayal

of mothers accessing food banks in the media is inhibiting their help-seeking behaviour, increasing mothers' perception of the cost of seeking help, fear of loss of control, that help will be declined or that their need for food will be perceived as a problem of the self (Nadler, 1990; Wills & DePaulo, 1999). In addition, social and personal identities are theorised to be in a dialectical relationship, therefore it could be that these media portrayals are impacting mothers' self-concept, viewing themselves as unworthy (Archer, Hutchings & Leathwood, 2001; Brown, 2000). These identity formations could be contributing to the observed inhibited help-seeking behaviour in mothers, contributing to them becoming a group of emergency concern in the UK and impacting on their physical and mental health (Powers, 2018).

5.2.2 Subtheme B: Not knowing where to turn

The second sub-theme, *not knowing where to turn,* captures the media portrayals of mothers' experiences of struggling to survive and being unsure of where to turn to for support. Mothers were faced with the dilemma of trying to find trusted places to access support, whilst encountering services which may or may not meet their needs. Mothers were portrayed as fearful of government referral processes and food banks, instead, preferring to access trusted community led grassroots food banks, which encouraged mutual cyclical support. This finding fits with previous literature highlighting how mothers accessing food banks preferred to access community support in times of hardship, in contrast to hierarchical food bank systems (Powers, 2021). The media highlighted that mothers found interactions during the referral process particularly problematic as they are pushed into an insubordinate position where they must prove to others that they deserved help. Previous literature from the US highlighted that women's awareness of stereotypes of food bank attendees, such as being deceitful, untrustworthy, or unmotivated could impact further on their self-esteem during these hierarchical interactions (Hicks-Stratton, 2004). More recently, research in the UK has found that volunteers can be ill-informed about food needs and speculate that this is an ill-informed choice, due to defective behavioural practices such as laziness, greed, fraud, and financial mismanagement (Powers et al., 2020). The media represented mothers as coping with these interactions by asking for help from already known and trusted professionals, such as asking a teacher to attend on their behalf or asking a work colleague to attend the food bank with them. This could be mothers' way of accessing emotional support, yet also inviting

a work colleague could be a means of protecting their identity and self-esteem, preventing them becoming stereotyped as the 'lazy other' (Powers, 2021).

The media portrayed mothers in the UK accessing food banks as living in isolation and fear of not getting their needs met, exhausting support networks and not reaching out for support due to fear of being a burden to others. In terms of the literature there appears to be a variation across space and time regarding the support available to mothers. In rural Canada, mothers identified benefiting from a strong culture of social support and trust, supporting each other by sharing meals, carpools and inviting each other's children over for meals (Buck-McFadyen, 2015). This context of mutual support was linked to the recent economic recession, high levels of unemployment and the shared experience of poverty at that time. Interestingly, in the UK, the literature suggests there may be a split in mothers' access to support depending on ethnicity. For example, the work of Powers (2018) in the UK has found that mothers from Pakistani heritage may have greater access to informal family and community support networks due to a culture of sharing food within the community, buffering against food insecurity and the need to access a food bank. Whereas White mothers were more likely to report shame, embarrassment, and a tendency to try and conceal food insecurity and the use of food banks from the community and even their family (Powers, 2018). Research in Canada found that some young mothers felt shy about asking family or extended family for support believing they should be able to handle things on their own and/or were fearful of relying on previous partners or their extended family as they could terminate support at any time (Baskin, et al., 2019). What was clear from the literature was that despite variations in mothers' access to support across time and context, they were always placed as solely responsible for providing for their children, being placed in a position where they bore the burden. The UK media portrayed that when mothers were isolated and unable to meet their needs, this could precipitate suicide.

5.2.3 Subtheme C: Impact on self-hood

The third sub-theme, the *impact on self-hood,* captures how the media portrays the experience of struggling to survive and the impact on mothers' personhood and sense of self. The media represented mothers as living in constant worry and stress, as they tried to meet their own and their children's needs.

Mothers were represented as experiencing extreme distress when unable to provide for their children and meet their caring expectations. This led to vulnerability as they began to view themselves as failing as a mother, and experience self-blame. They internalised responsibility and guilt for letting their children down and wanted to disappear. There is a gap in literature exploring the impact of accessing food banks on the mother-child relationship. However, several articles do explore how neo-liberal discourses impact the wellbeing of mothers who are unable to meet expectations of providing food for their children (Kruger & Lourens, 2015). Kruger & Lourens (2015) use interviews in South Africa to place a psychological and political lens to mothers' responses to their children's hunger. They found that powerful gender and neo-liberal discourses place mothers as uniquely responsible for providing for their children and making sure they do not go hungry. This meant that when mothers were unable to meet these neo-liberal responsibilities, they felt guilt and shame, which could then lead to anger, leading to passive withdrawal or acting out behaviours (Kruger & Lourens, 2015). In the media portrayals in the UK, just one article represented mothers as expressing anger towards politicians for their decision around free school meals, signalling the location of blame and responsibility with the government. It is unclear if the difference in context between South Africa versus UK contributed to UK mothers' increased risk of internalising responsibility, leading to shame and passive withdrawal, rather than anger and aggression. On the other hand, it is possible that, the use of interviews in South Africa versus the exploration of media portrayals in the UK, could contribute to this difference in space provided to mothers' anger and aggression. The portrayal in the media could bias accounts of mothers as blaming themselves, instead of focusing on their anger and sense of injustice at the situation. The implications of these were that it places what is bad or wrong with mothers, maintaining the status quo.

The UK media portrayed mothers' value as centred around being selfless and caring. What was right and thus morally good, was to give to others, even if this was at great personal sacrifice, impacting on their physical and mental health.

5.2.4 Subtheme D: The ripple effect

The fourth and final sub-theme, *the ripple effect*, captures how the context of scarcity impacts on mothers' emotional wellbeing, with specific focus on mental health. Mothers trying to provide in scarcity were portrayed by the media as grappling with chronic mental health

problems including depression, anxiety, paranoia, personality disorder, cumulating in suicide and breakdowns. There is a gap in the literature from the UK investigating the mental health of women or mothers accessing food banks. However, quantitative and qualitative research in the USA and Canada highlights that mothers and women accessing food banks reported high levels of depression and anxiety, showing a range of symptoms including sadness, feeling lonely, difficulties with concentration, and challenges with sleeping (Zekeri, 2007; Buck-McFadyen, 2015; Chilton & Booth, 2007). The worry and stress keeping mothers up at night, was specific to gender and food related concerns, including fears and obsessions about not being able to provide and being a failure as a mother, leading to self-injurious behaviour and even hospitalisation (Zekeri, 2007; Buck-McFadyen, 2015). In addition, research has highlighted how the physical experience of hunger can impact on the body, sleep, and mental wellbeing (Chilton & Booth, 2007).

However, the UK media portrayals add an additional understanding regarding the mental health needs of mothers attending food banks, highlighting how the context of deprivation can lead to paranoia, and being diagnosed with a personality disorder. Whereas some newspapers portray the context as contributing to the paranoia impacting on mothers' relationships with their children, one article from The Daily Telegraph used the lens of personality disorder, disconnecting the mothers' distress from contextual factors and attributing this to her personality. This is clearly an important distinction, as locating the problem with the mother and her personality instead of the context, will impact readers understanding of the problem and responses to mothers. This research highlighted that not only do mothers experience distress due to practical preoccupation with providing food for their children, but that stigma, shame and fear, may lead to paranoia, mistrust, and mothers losing touch with reality.

5.3 Theme Three: Struggling to provide

The third theme, *struggling to provide,* captures the relational experience of mothers and their children trying to survive within wider systems.

5.3.1 Subtheme A: Cycles of love and protection

The sub-theme, *cycles of love and protection,* represents the media portrayals of mothers trying to provide for and protect their children from scarcity, hunger and distress. The media portrayals of mothers going hungry to feed their children fits with the literature from the US

and Canada, where mothers were found to sacrifice their own food needs to provide food for their children, frequently eating less often (Buck-McFadyen, 2015; Papan & Clow, 2015: Hicks-Stratton, 2004). Several papers questioned if this was because mothers internalised a caregiving role and assumed blame for the poor health of other family members (Papan & Clow, 2015; Powers, 2021; Hicks-Stratton, 2004). The media portrayals add a sense of horror to this situation, depicting mothers literally wasting away through starvation to provide for their children. However, these depictions actually contrast with previous research into media portrayals of White British working-class mothers, who were depicted as shirking their parental responsibilities instead being portrayed as overweight, lazy, and drunk (Tylor, 2008). An alternative explanation is that mothers are aware of these discourses and how attending a food banks causes them to lose prestige in the eyes of others and trying to counter-act them via self-sacrifice through skipping meals (Goffman, 1978). For mothers, the implications of being unable to meet their responsibilities of feeding their children could be a degradation which includes taking away their roles as a mother and placing their children into care. This places mothers in a position where they must sacrifice their own needs at huge personal cost to meet gendered expectations of being able to provide for and protect their children from hunger to resist being labelled with a spoiled identity and potential loss of their children (Goffman, 1978).

5.3.2 Subtheme B: Spilling over

The second sub-theme, *spilling over*, captures how the structural context sets up several dilemmas for mothers, who despite huge personal sacrifice are unable to protect their children from the impact of hunger. The media portrayed children being impacted by physical hunger, decreased academic performance and self-worth, narrowing opportunities and a loss of hope for the future. In addition, they experienced exclusion from activities and peer relationships, were at increased risk of harm from others, and experienced a sense of isolation and alienation. These already vulnerable children were portrayed at increased risk of exploitation, harm and distress during COVID-19 due to the additional pressure on services and the closure of schools. Despite there being limited research on the impact or views of children accessing food banks in the UK, these media portrayals clearly highlight the implications for children. It is clear that structural factors were placing mothers and their children in a disempowered position where a range of their needs are not being met, such as

belonging, security, self-worth, achievement, validation, agency and hope (Yalom, 1995: Rafaeli, Bernstein, & Young, 2010). Both the short term and long-term psychological implications of this remain unknown due to a gap in research. However, current media portrayals found that children could be self-critical, displaying self-harm and suicidal thoughts. It could be that children are internalising their experiences in school and wider society, impacting on their sense of self and contributing to distress (Goffman, 1978: O'Mahoney & Marks, 2014).

5.4 COVID-19

During COVID-19, the media portrayed mothers as victims to forces beyond their control and placed under additional pressures, such as sudden loss of employment, preventing them from feeding their children. In addition, there was increased coverage by all newspaper outlets at this time as seen in Figure 4. Most articles portrayed the impact of COVID-19 as an additional pressure to mothers who already lived in deprivation, struggled to access food and needed to attend food banks, fitting with the literature that COVID-19 exposed pre-existing food inequalities (Powers, Doherty et al., 2020). However, there was tension in the media, as The Daily Telegraph made a clear distinction between people attending food banks pre-COVID-19 as risk takers, and during COVID-19 as victims to forces beyond their control. These media portrayals overlook the contextual factors suggesting personal responsibility for mothers accessing a food bank pre-COVID-19, attributing this to poor decision making, in contrast to during COVID-19 when mothers are represented as victims to forces outside of their control. These media portrayals suggest that mothers during COVID-19 are worthy and deserving of additional support, whereas those prior to COVID-19 are not worthy of help. These two different portrayals of the problem are important, as it will impact where and what the intervention is.

5.5 Implications of absence of range of newspapers articles from data sample

Most articles identified were from a limited number of newspapers, which were considered to be left-leaning (Figure 5). There was a notable absence in any articles being published on the topic in the other papers and from a diversity of political perspectives. This was notable given the literature that outlined negative portrayals of mothers on welfare, as 'dole-scrounger', 'chavette', 'drunk' (Tyler, 2008; Skeggs, 1997) and the recent increase in food

bank use and food deprivation (TT, 2020a). There may be various reasons for this, i.e. WW2 and the pandemic are seen as exceptional contexts where the dominant discourses about personal failure are less pronounced and or less acceptable to publish. It notable that these other newspapers have not offered any alternative narrative and instead there is absence. This suggests there is not a focus on the importance of mothers' food deprivation and any need to report on the context and experience of these individuals. Here power is not used to construe a negative portrayal of somebody but instead render them invisible suggesting a lack of value in society as mothers' needs are not given voice (Smail, 2005).

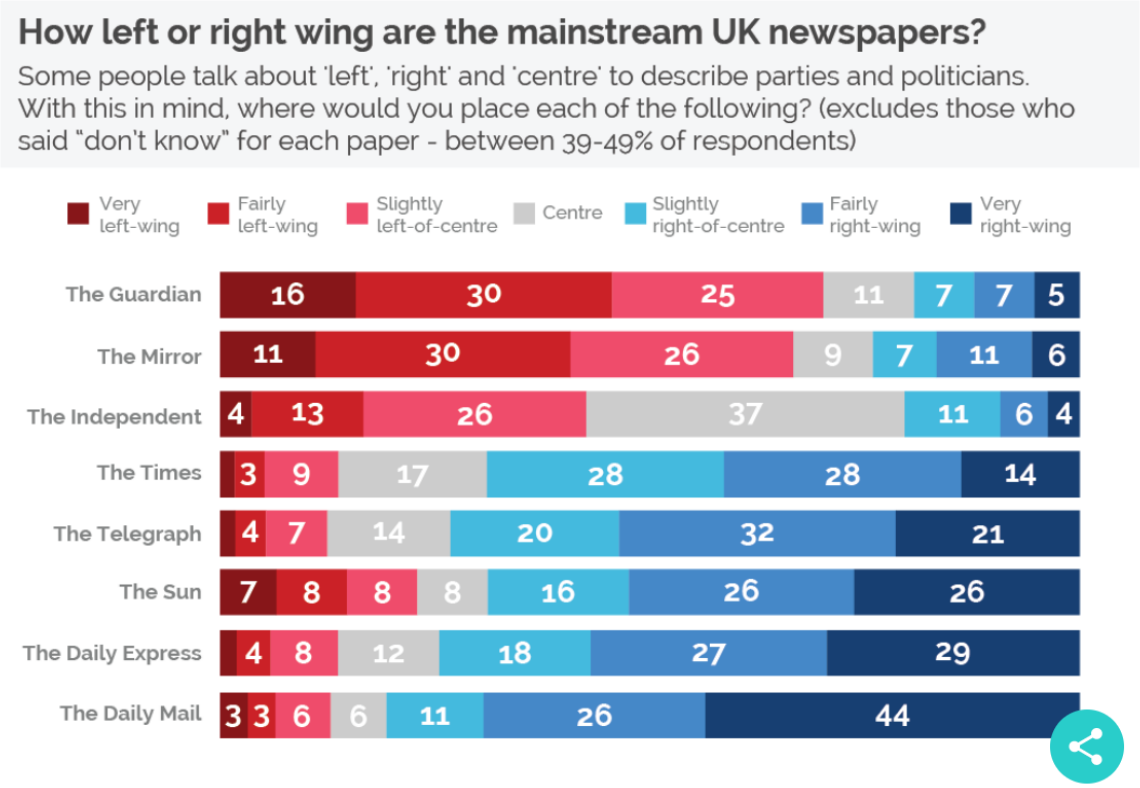

FIGURE 5: POLITICAL LEANING OF NEWSPAPERS (GOV UK, 2017)

5.6 Psychological Implications

5.6.1 Implications for mental health

These findings highlight the dominant and pervasive media portrayal of mothers attending food banks. This research goes beyond the existing literature, which predominantly focuses on the material and social conditions of people accessing food banks. In this study, the media representations of mothers accessing food banks were perceived as pivotal, placing a lens to the lived experiences of mothers attending food banks, whilst playing a role in constructing their identities, impacting their lived experiences and psychological wellbeing (Hill, 2015).

The group Psychologists for Social Change (PSC) believe that social, political and material context are central to individuals' experience of mental health and wellbeing (Zlotowitz & Williams, 2013). The next section will draw upon ecological systems theory to conceptualise how the exosystem can impact on an individual and their mental health (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Outlined below are some suggestions of implications of the findings for exosystem and microsystem interventions (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

5.6.1.1 For wider services

This research explored the impact of Bronfenbrenner (2005) exosystem, via online newspaper articles, on mothers accessing food banks. To do this the paper investigated how newspaper articles, portrayed mothers' identities, portrayed their experiences and how articles portrayed the impact of this. The media represented mothers attending food banks as victims to system neglect, discrimination, and purposeful maltreatment and punishment. Despite the constructions of deserving and undeserving, the media always represented mothers in a disempowered position, looked down upon by society and services and positioned as solely responsible for feeding their children. Whilst newspapers depicted mothers to suit their motivations adding to mother's dehumanisation. This suggests that the exosystem, via newspaper portrayals can act as a channel of power shaping mothers' identity and contributing to the treatment of them within society, services and by policies (Smail, 2005; Marks & Thompson, 2014). One means of overcoming this treatment of mothers by wider systems and services, would be to increase training in government welfare agencies, NHS services, Clinical Psychology courses and food banks to increase staff's understanding of how the wider exosystem, via media portrayals can bias perceptions of people and impact their interactions with services and inhibit help-seeking behaviour (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Hicks-Stratton, 2004; Powers, 2021; Garthwaite, 2016).

In addition, Bronfenbrenner's model (2005) suggests that the exosystem can interact with an individual's mesosystem and microsystem. In the case of this research, this means that newspaper portrayals can indirectly impact upon a person's environment and interactions within their community and home. This was supported by the current research which found that the media represented mothers accessing food banks as living in isolation being fearful of seeking help and support. These representations add to those of Power (2021) who found from interviews with mothers that interactions food banks can act as channels of

individualising societal discourses, and hierarchical interactions, that perpetuate shame, stigma and increase isolation. Drawing on community psychology approaches, clinical psychologists could work alongside partnership organisations, such as food banks, to provide local outreach programs supporting the development of connection between staff and service users. For example, a social action and/or group psychotherapy model could provide mothers attending food banks opportunities for social connection and solidarity with others experiencing hardships, providing space and opportunities to challenge systems of oppression (Holland, 1992; Yalom, 1995; Bryne et al., 2016).

These exosystem and mesosystem interventions could be facilitated via increased partnership working with food banks, mental health agencies and grass-roots organisations (Bronfennbrenner, 2005).

5.6.1.2 For clinicians

Bronfenbrenner's (2005) ecological systems theory suggests that multiple environmental systems and relationships interact with one another to exert an influence people's experiences and their daily lives. These interactions across time are thought to shape an individual's chronosystem, that is, how a person develops and interacts with the rest of the systems. The current research adds evidence to this model, as the newspaper portrayals highlighted the unique environmental and relational experiences of mothers attending food banks. Mothers accessing food banks were represented by the media as subject to structural challenges which led to experiences of diminished social value and personal worth due to being unable to provide for their children, experiences of hunger, worry, fear, isolation, shame, failure, and guilt, impacting on their mental wellbeing and behaviour. Previous literature from the USA and Canada recommended solutions such as personal therapy (Bronfennbrenner, 2005; Chilton & Booth, 2007; Zekeri, 2007). However, it is likely that in the UK adult mental health services, such as IAPT, focus on intrapsychic experiences, could obscure the role of social, political, and material factors of accessing food banks for mothers' wellbeing (McClelland, 2014). It is therefore considered important that mothers accessing food banks are offered alternative forms of intervention that provides opportunities to link personal distress with social oppression, such as, considering how the multiple systems in Bronfenbrenner's (2005) model interact and impact their daily lives and experiences, David Smail's (2005) power-mapping, Power Threat Meaning framework (Johnson et al., 2018) or

Narrative Therapy approaches. These approaches can enable mothers make sense of their distress and their responses to this within the wider context they live in, enabling them to resist narratives of individual blame and failure.

Bronfenbrenner's (2005) ecological systems theory was initially developed to conceptualise how multiple environments impact upon children's growth and development. It is important that Children and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS) professionals are aware of the direct and indirect psychological implications of accessing a food bank on the family unit, and the need for multi-agency working between CAMHS and Social Care (Salmon, 2004). Family therapy is already an established way of working in CAMHS and recommended in NICE guidelines. In this study, the media portrayals illustrated that accessing food banks had an impact on mother-child interactions, children's experiences in school and their mental wellbeing. Adopting the model of Bronfenbrenner (2005), it seems important that professionals within CAMHS have an awareness of how the exosystem, such as portrayals of their mothers or selves accessing food banks in newspaper articles, can indirectly impact a child's environment and relational interactions both at home and at school, contributing to lived experiences of distress. Within initial assessments, professionals could sensitively work with family systems to unpack the dominant narratives around accessing food banks and the impact of these on mothers and their children. This would provide opportunities for discussion, enabling mothers and their children to align or distance themselves from these discourses and express the impact they have upon them, their relationships, and their mental wellbeing.

Bronfenbrenner's (2005) model suggests that the exosystem can indirectly impact the mesosystem, including the family home. Despite the current research looking specifically into mothers, fathers were rarely represented in the media. This leads to important questions regarding the gender disparity in the UK, and what this means for a society and families where mothers are positioned as responsible, whilst fathers are not held to account?

5.7 Evaluation of the research

Tracey's (2010) Big Tent Criteria (referred to in the methods chapter) will be added to in further detail to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the current research.

5.7.1 Strengths

In terms of ***worthy topic*** criteria, this research is timely and relevant, being precipitated by data and research that highlights that mothers' attending food banks are at increased risk of material and social hardship and least likely to seek support (Powers, 2018; Douglas, et al., 2019; The Trussell Trust, 2020). This study brought a psychological lens to how newspaper article representations frame mothers and the socio-political landscape they live within, contributing to their distress (Tihelkova, 2015), illustrating that, in articles, mothers were portrayed as responsible for providing for their children, despite living in a context of sanctions, punishment and deprivation. The current research draws attention to the role of the newspaper in shaping the public perception of mothers' identities impacting how they are treated at different levels of society and by services (Marks & Thompson, 2010). The articles portrayed the dialectical nature of these representations becoming internalised by mothers, having implications for their sense of self, impacting help-seeking behaviour, and lived experiences of distress (Archer, Hutchings & Leathwood, 2001; Brown, 2000).

This research is ***rigorous*** because it used Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic analysis, using a range of newspaper articles from across the UK and a variety of outlets. Alongside this, a reflective diary was kept supporting self-reflexivity and frequent meetings with supervisors to provide analysis of thought and critical reflection. To check the credibility and add depth, inter-rater coding was completed on 10% of the articles, adding an alternative perspective and providing further opportunities for discussion and analysis for thought (Tracy, 2010). Finally, triangulation of the initial individual interview and newspaper articles codes were completed, to consider overlap of themes from articles and a food bank attendees lived experiences (Appendix H).

This research has made ***significant contributions,*** predominantly through heuristics. For instance, further understanding the impact of media representations of accessing a food bank on identity and mental wellbeing while considering cultural, social, and relational dimensions. Alongside considering the unique pressures and demands placed on mothers and how this may impact their needs and experiences of distress. It highlighted an unexpected absence of attention on the experiences of mothers and food banks given the increase in food bank use. In addition, an important finding is that most articles published were from a limited number

of national newspapers. It would be useful to see if remains representative outside of the pandemic.

5.7.2 Limitations

As discussed previously, whilst data sufficiency was met, only national newspapers were included. A limitation of taking a national over a local approach is that the UK has high levels of economic-political disparity across the country and variation in the use and organisation of food banks. This means there could be a large difference in representations of mothers accessing food banks in different local newspapers and different implications for mothers in these local contexts, which would not be captured in this research.

5.7.3 Suggestions for future research

This study brought a psychological lens to explore the media representation of mothers attending food banks in the UK. Whilst there is increasing consideration of the unique needs of women and mothers who attend food banks, it could be interesting to explore how gender identities are represented in the media (Powers 2018). There is a significant gap in the research, data collection and media portrayals regarding diversity of families instead depicting gender normative assumptions, it is unclear how this lack of representation of their experiences in the media, may inhibit help-seeking behaviour in parents from attending a food bank (North, 2016: Ross et al, 2016). Further, research could explore men's relationship with food banks, and the psychological impact this has on them.

Media portrayals highlighted how wider socio-economic and political systems, can impact on mothers' identities, experiences and wellbeing. Despite mothers' best attempts, they were represented as not being able to protect their children from the implications of hardship as children were portrayed as experiencing hunger, exclusion from peers and society, with low academic performance, hopelessness and high levels of distress. Further research is needed to explore how food insecurity and relying on a food bank impacts the experiences, identity and relationships of children and the implications this has for their wellbeing and sense of themselves.

The final recommendation of further research is to repeat this study when the pandemic is more manageable to see if there are any changes in diversity of newspaper publications and politicians' words, to investigate if they are still using the narrative discourses as described in this study.

5.8 Conclusion

This study used thematic analysis to look at the portrayal of mothers accessing food banks. Articles portrayed mothers as powerless victims to punitive policies that narrowed their opportunities, impacting upon their interactions and trust in services. Despite these circumstances, they were represented as internalising blame and failure for the limited opportunities made available to them, impacting upon their sense of self and wellbeing. Notably, most articles published came from two newspapers, suggesting a lack of importance or value placed by society on mothers' experiences. This study has several implications; firstly, it seems that articles play a role in constructing and perpetuating individualising societal discourses, which can impact upon the treatment and value placed on mothers by services and society, meaning their unique needs continue to go unmet. Secondly, mothers accessing food banks are at risk of internalising these individualising discourses of blame and failure, impacting their own sense of self, mental health, and ability to seek help. It is therefore considered important that mothers accessing food banks are offered alternative forms of interventions to provide opportunities to resist narratives of individual blame or failure (Smail, 2005), and that staff in services are provided training to develop awareness of these issues to meet the needs of 'hard to reach' populations. A strength of this study is that it provides new contributions to the literature regarding the role of the articles in constructing mothers accessing food banks and the implications for wellbeing. A limitation is that, due to time constraints, only national newspapers were included in the sample. It is unclear whether local articles would find similar or different constructions and what the implications of this is.

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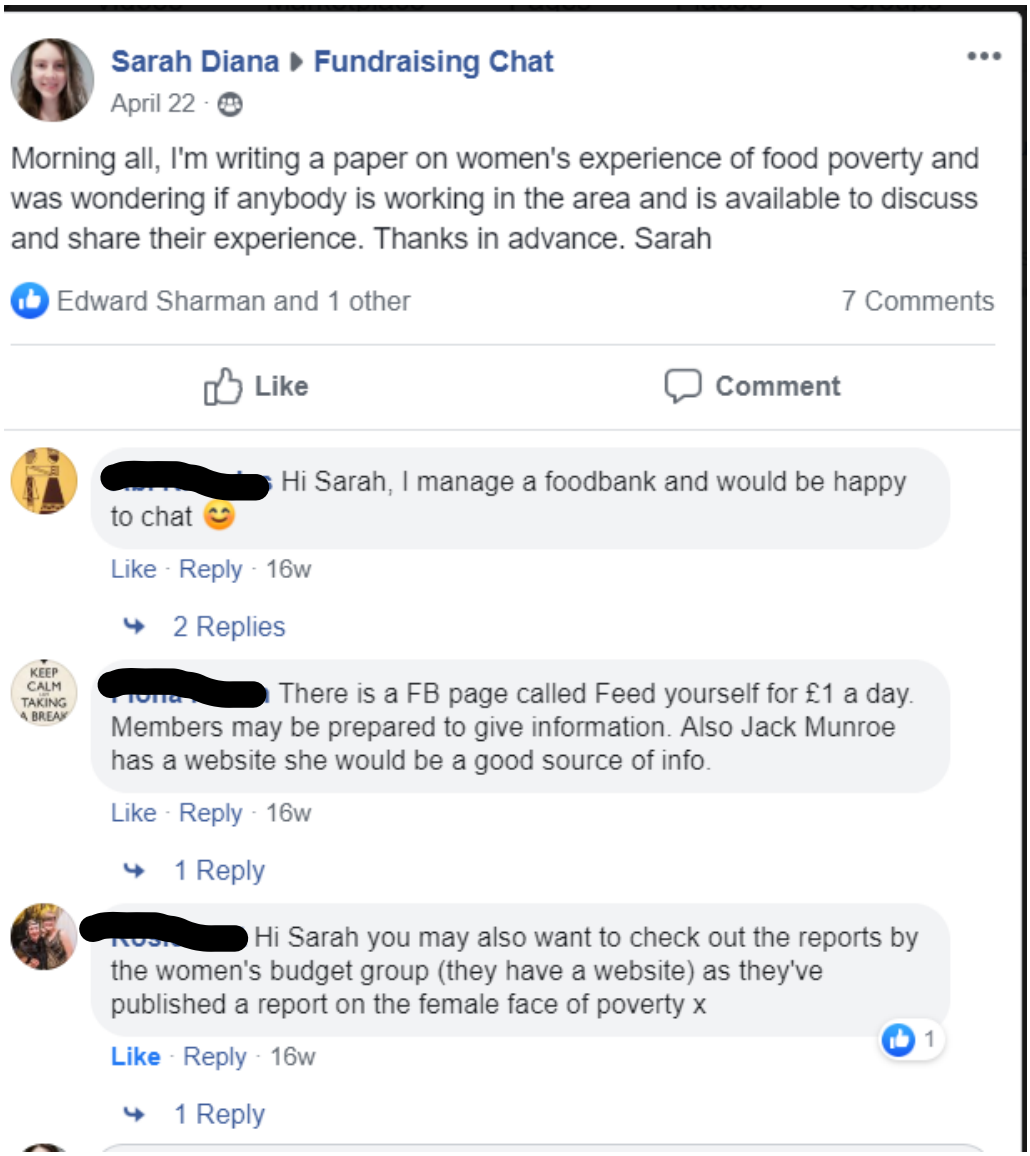
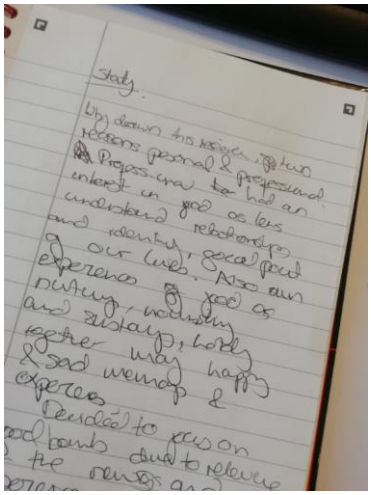
7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix A: Membership involvement

Advertisement via Facebook



7.2 Appendix B: Reflective Journal Excerpts



7.2.1 Extract 1: Why this topic?

Before starting this research, I am thinking about why I have been drawn to this topic, as these motivations could interact with my research decisions and process along the way. On reflection, there is not really one reason which contributes to my interest in this area, but a web of personal and professional reasons. Professionally I have an interest in food as a lens to understand relationships and identity as this is a focal point in our lives. My own experience of food is that it can be nurturing, nourishing, and sustaining, whilst holding together many memories.

I think it would be helpful to focus on food banks in particularly due to the relevance of this in the news and my experience in CAMHS. During my time at CAMHS it was clear that there are many pressures acting on families, and mothers which made it difficult for them to bring structure or stability to their children's lives. Part of me, wanted to work towards helping other children be able to have that experience of structure, consistency, safety, soothing and nurturing around food, and support mothers to be able to provide this for their children.

I reflected on my own relationship with food and how this has changed across my lifetime. From joining friends for family meals afterschool, to cooking and having food cooked for me, such as, birthday cakes, coming home after a long day to a meal cooked by a housemate, and bringing and sharing meals at work. Personally, the layers of life, particularly as a child appear to be formed around access or lack of access to food, meals, and interactions around these. Food was not only a physical need but giving and receiving food is a sign a communication,

that somebody is thinking of you, providing for you, nurturing you and cares – it can provide belonging or in its absence, alienation.

7.2.2 Visiting a food bank

On the 23.08.2019, I visited the food bank and invited attendees and volunteers to share their views on the research. One volunteer invited me to sit with her and discussed her personal approach to asking the TT questions to gain the information needed to provide attendees with a food package, reporting "most people are upset about coming here, we ask have you come here before? I say it's okay it's fine, don't worry, we all have times when we need support, we're all one pay check away from being here". I spoke with two mothers who were attending the food bank about the research aims, one mother reported the stress of needing to attend different places, such as the food bank and baby bank, whereas the other discussed the problems of informal work, experiences of domestic abuse and moving for safety and to save money. It was perceived that discussion of this research validated their experiences providing them opportunities to share and be heard. Both mothers were quick to relate the research topics outlined to their personal experiences, providing examples of how deprivation had impacted them emotionally.

7.2.3 Data analysis

Starting the data analysis process feels particularly overwhelming and anxiety provoking. There are so many different articles and lots of information. I am left thinking how I will ever synthesise, capture, and communicate the essence of this data to the reader, in a meaningful structure or narrative. I slowly start to follow the Braun and Clarke stepped process, reading – and re-reading the articles, highlighting and coding. As I become more and more familiar with the data and stick to the steps, instead of letting my mind skip to thinking I should be at stage 5, I start to feel more confident and able to trust in the process and in myself, that I would get to stage 5 and it would make sense and fall together like the pieces of a puzzle.

Conversations with my supervisor alongside following Braun and Clarke's five steps have been extremely important, in containing my anxieties and providing support. These discussions have helped me notice when I am slipping into my clinical role, as opposed to a researcher role, which can lead me to bias themes. For example, I frequently draw upon Narrative Therapy techniques in my clinical practices and am keeping an eye out for "Sparkling moments", however in the research context this was causing me to over inflate, strengths,

which risks biasing the results. At one point I had developed a subtheme of mothers' strengths, and resistance– however on critical reflection and returning to the literature it was clear there were limited instances of mothers being able to voice their concerns and change their situation. Just two articles showed working class mothers who had managed to change their position and circumstances becoming professionals who were able to speak out. The majority of portrayals were instead focused on more harrowing portrayals of mothers as trapped, victims and helpless.

In addition to this, supervisory discussions helped me reflect on my own position and context, of being from a separated family, – in the 1990's where the traditional nuclear family was positioned as the ideal. Supervisors helped me to take a step back and critique my own assumptions and consider how this portrayal is highlighted in the newspapers. This increased my awareness of who is missing in the articles, such as more diverse populations, including those who may be in same sex couples and how these representations may impact their ability to feel able to access a food bank or not.

7.2.4 Critical reflection on constructing themes

When contemplating the articles and data analysis, I found myself being drawn towards mothers 'strengths and "acts of resistance" which were portrayed in a minority of articles. I noticed feeling assured that some mothers were able to continue "fighting" despite the adverse circumstances they were living through and wanting to hold on to and present a more hopeful story. I wondered if this was linked to my personal experiences and that in some way, I was looking for comfort and reassurance, that there was some sort of happy ending. However, upon self-reflection and discussion with my supervisors, it was clear that the majority of papers did portray a more harrowing and single storied narrative of mothers accessing food banks. Upon consideration, it felt important to hold a mirror up to that reality and present the more single storied narrative, as this is the narrative single mothers accessing food banks are most likely to read and encounter about themselves when reading the national news.

7.3 Appendix C: Systematic review quality criteria used

Paper	Method used by paper	Quality check tool

Zekeri, A. (2007) Livelihood Strategies of Food Insecure Poor Female-Headed Families in Rural Alabama	Quantitative Cross-sectional design	CASP (2014)
Papan, A., & Clow, B. (2015) The Food Insecurity-Obesity Paradox as a Vicious Cycle for Women: Inequalities and Health	Mixed method	Pluye et al (2011)
Dressler, H., & Smith, C. (2013) Environment, Personal and Behavioural Factors Are Related to Body Mass Index in a Group of Multi-Ethnic, Low Income Women	Mixed method	Pluye et al (2011)
Bartfeld, J (2003) Single mothers, emergency food assistance, and food stamps in the welfare reform era	Quantitative	CASP (2014)
Hicks-Stratton, C. (2004). The Experience of Food Bank Usage Among Women: A Phenomenological Study. Master of Nursing Memorial.	Qualitative method	Tracey (2010)
Chilton, M., & Booth, S. (2007) Hunger of the Body and Hunger of The Mind: African American Women's Perceptions of Food Insecurity, Health and Violence.	Qualitative method	Tracey (2010)
Buck-McFadyen, E. V. (2015) Rural Food Insecurity: When Cooking Skills, Homegrown Food, and Perseverance Aren't Enough to Feed a Family.	Qualitative method	Tracey (2010)

Baskin, C., Guarisco, B., Koleszar-Green, R., Melanson, N., Osawamick, C., (2009) Struggles, strengths and solutions: exploring food security with young urban aboriginal moms	Qualitative method	Tracey (2010)
Power, M., Small, N., Doherty, B., & Pickett, K. (2018) Hidden Hungry? Experiences of food insecurity amongst Pakistani and white British women	Qualitative method	Tracey (2010)
Power, M., Small, N., Doherty, B., & Pickett, K. (2018) The incompatibility of System and Lifeworld Understandings of Food Insecurity and the Provision of Food Aid in an English City	Qualitative method	Tracey (2010)
Power, M & Small, N (2021) Disciplinary and pastoral power, food and poverty in late modernity	Qualitative method	Tracey (2010)

7.4 Appendix D: Ethics Approval

University of Hertfordshire UH

HEALTH, SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY ECDA

ETHICS APPROVAL NOTIFICATION

TO	Sarah Ommanney
CC	Jacqueline Gratton
FROM	Dr Simon Trainis, Health, Science, Engineering & Technology Chair
DATE	26/04/2021

Protocol number:	aLMS/PGT/UH/03904(3)
Title of study:	How are mothers accessing food banks in the UK portrayed by newspapers?

Your application to modify and extend the existing protocol as detailed below has been accepted and approved by the ECDA for your School and includes work undertaken for this study by the named additional workers below:

No additional workers named

Modification: detailed in EC2

General conditions of approval:

Ethics approval has been granted subject to the standard conditions below:

Original protocol: Any conditions relating to the original protocol approval remain and must be complied with.

Permissions: Any necessary permissions for the use of premises/location and accessing participants for your study must be obtained in writing prior to any data collection commencing. Failure to obtain adequate permissions may be considered a breach of this protocol.

External communications: Ensure you quote the UH protocol number and the name of the approving Committee on all paperwork, including recruitment advertisements/online requests, for this study.

Invasive procedures: If your research involves invasive procedures you are required to complete and submit an EC7 Protocol Monitoring Form, and copies of your completed consent paperwork to this ECDA once your study is complete.

Submission: Students must include this Approval Notification with their submission.

Validity:

This approval is valid:

From: 26/04/2021

To: 06/06/2021

Please note:

Failure to comply with the conditions of approval will be considered a breach of protocol and may result in disciplinary action which could include academic penalties.
Additional documentation requested as a condition of this approval protocol may be submitted via your supervisor to the Ethics Clerks as it becomes available. All documentation relating to this study, including the information/documents noted in the conditions above, must be available for your supervisor at the time of submitting your work so that they are able to confirm that you have complied with this protocol.

Should you amend any aspect of your research or wish to apply for an extension to your study you will need your supervisor's approval (if you are a student) and must complete and submit a further EC2 request.
Approval applies specifically to the research study/methodology and timings as detailed in your Form EC1A or as detailed in the EC2 request. In cases where the amendments to the original study are deemed to be substantial, a new Form EC1A may need to be completed prior to the study being undertaken.

Failure to report adverse circumstance/s may be considered misconduct.
Should adverse circumstances arise during this study such as physical reaction/harm, mental/emotional harm, intrusion of privacy or breach of confidentiality this must be reported to the approving Committee immediately.

7.5 Appendix E: Initial interview

7.5.1 Interview transcript

	Coding	Clustering
Female Age: 35 *Saying lots before interview started, came in, sat down and started speaking about previous partner, having a machete, threatening her….* X: I was **first, last here two weeks ago**, I'm not sure what the day was…. Interviewer: I can add that in X: It was the **first time I** can to to food banks…. Interviewer: Okay, thank you X: Urmm so the first question is what you've already touched on…what was leading up to how you came to be here? X: I mean, I wouldn't end up even in the food bank, **because I had a job, I had my own house which I saved for,** I have no money problems, I was always good with money, so it was **the chain of events** because of this which led to more problems and **that is how I ended up here…** M: Yeah of course… X: and it **didn't need to happen at** all…. M: hmmm	Fear, danger, hurt and at risk Clarifying new to attending fb Repetition attending food bank for **first time** – emotion? Shock & surprise at attending a food bank – out of character? Loss of independence/pride "saved" "It **didn't need to happen** at all…". Unnecessary/ preventable	At physical risk Identity Loss of control "chain of events" "…ended up here…." Preventable

X: That's what **upsets** me because when you work all your life and **you lose everything**, for what, **just because someone doesn't act**…and you know	"upset" "lose everything" "…because somebody doesn't act…"	Inaction/let down
M: Yea it sounds like such a difficult situation		
X: Yeah I can **still deal with** it…but that's only because I'm the kind of person who can, but there are other people who wouldn't.	View of self as someone who can "deal with it" – circumstances, treatment?	Strength/ persistence
M: hmmm		
X: They would be, I don't know **somebody might commit suicide, somebody** might be in psychiatry, as they may be in some **traumatic way** because, eugh it's hard to deal with the situation,	"somebody might commit suicide" "…might be in some traumatic way…"	Situation traumatic/ damaging to people in it
M: Yeah…?		Isolation/alienation
X: Yeah and if **you like have no relatives, nowhere to go,**	"Nowhere to go" – alienation…	
M: Mmmm		
X: you **lose everything** you ever had…and you have **to start again** and if you find you have to **start again and again and again** and **it's tiring you** know….	"lose everything…" "start again and again and again" hopeless/ Tiring	"lose everything…" Back to the beginning
M: Mm (supportive noises)		
X: And I **just hope**…I **settle here** in Hartlepool now…and **can start again**	Transition/hope/ settle/ start again	**Starting again**
M: Yes, so when was it you moved to Hartlepool?		

X: In Spring last year, so I've been here nearly a year…: I managed to stay to Manchester, but then he took me to court, I have to keep coming back and they gave him the file which actually stated where exactly I was going to Manchester, so, even the area…**so I was thinking like…why?? Why??** I moved away and now he knows everything again…	Danger, failed systems "Why? Why?" shocked/ betrayed	Lack of protection
M: mmm – so what happened then?		
X: Well he kept sending me to court, but… when he was **attacking me** he said "oh I am here because of the child" never mind it was 5 o'clock in the morning, like he's going to visit a child, logic would tell them it's not correct, that the text messages show it has nothing to do with the child, he was chasing me on the phone.	Being attacked	Target of violence Not safe
So I just kept **moving like this**…and in Manchester again he kept sending me to court and it was expensive because I had to go to Nottingham, and I told them, "**how can this happen?"** shouldn't he come to the court where the child lives or something, or maybe to meet somewhere, because he knows roughly where I am, you know because he knows now anyway, but no they say you have to travel, you have to go to court, it's court order, **otherwise you are in contempt of court.** I said "what will happen to me if I don't come?", I can't afford it, I like have to pay credit card or what, I have to travel with train all the time or having babysitter**, I like I can't afford nanny like….(**chuckle despair) they say "you have to come" I was like "so what you do **with me you put me in jail if I say no**, like what I didn't do anything, it was ridiculous…when I travelled there often what happened, I came there on time, I was waiting a couple of hours, the judge was late, even if it was first meeting in the morning without explanation she came, she just look	"moving like this…" being chased/ trying to escape Shock/surprise at treatment "otherwise you are in contempt of court" punished Shock/surprise Who is believed/credible? Additional pressure on resources – mother/carer	Escape Legal proceedings not meeting needs of mothers or protecting them

"oh erm oooh this paper didn't arrive, okay we need to postpone it till next time, you have to come again" and that's something I had to pay 1000 a day for it. Imagine, you travel they have cancelled and you still have to pay 1000 a day for the lawyer, and I'm like it, it was not just a day, I mean I knew for this particular hearing I would have to pay 1000 pounds if I wanted a barrister there, **and that was stressful** what can I do, but they cancelled, that's like they're like so you have to come again – and I'm like I have to pay 2,000 that's like come on, and then I receive a referral from the solicitor who arranged for the barrister and she sent me some bill for 700, I thought it's a refund or something, NO it was another bill, and I was like what is this (knocks table gently) for???	Ridiculous – different worlds lack of understanding Threatened/punished Court orders/demands – dehumanised by systems	
And they're like "oh it's for paperwork solicitor's fees" and I was like what was this, it was **suddenly few thousands like and rolling, she** gave me quote and entire process would cost me, 250 pounds and I said I cannot afford it, I remember telling her "well I can't afford it" but I really need lawyer because I didn't have before and it was just horrible, it happened to me and he had free lawyer on legal aid, I did not. Because someone had advised him this and the law was changing that time, and somebody had to tell him because he's not clever at all, he's like quite idiot [tss – sorts of chuckle] but he received advice from all sorts of people from police force man…. And basically he's the laws from now on you no longer have legal aid if it's something to do with children, you have to pay**,….but he had applied just a few days before the law, so** he's still, yup, and by the time I receive order they say "ahhh you are like two days late", "I'm like well	Lack of resources Injustice – who can access support and who cannot. How policy is created	Pushed to the margins Gender and help-seeking?

if it's the same case, shouldn't it be connected to when he applied so like it would be fair to both parties no?". What is this law? And a lot of people do the same, a lot of people are angry, how could they? Because a lot of mothers were in that situation, because somebody who knew that law, yeah that's clever…so they would apply and the mother couldn't have solicitor as they are already with child, and how can they afford them? They say we have 250 pounds, approximately, so I signed okay, I will pay by credit card and all, and it it was like 7,000 all together because they kept cancelling it like crazy and that's how I got **in debt completely unnecessarily**. And I'm good with money [raised voice], I can have one pound and **buy nice food for all the family,** I know how to cook it and **you save all the time** and then suddenly you receive 1,000 bill and 1,000 bill and why I say, **why I am tired**…(hahaha)	Caught in debt "save all the time" Trying to provide as mother	Tired
And then the interest from the bank, and once you have this eerrr credit card, and you've got to top it up, you can't ask for a loan because you have a bad credit score, and the fact that all my life I was having a house which should prove that I can pay everything, but **then suddenly I'm in a situation** where I can't even borrow, or they give you high interest on borrowing and then you can't get out of it anymore, just keep **working, working, but** if you have part time job, if you manage to get part time job, you can look after child, you can't pay all this things back, so just keep repaying the interest (voice cracks a bit), the same, like I just **keep paying, paying, paying, paying, and it's just**...	"suddenly I', in a situation…" Self – as hard working **"Working, working…"** "bad credit" labelled Trapped in debt/tired "**paying, paying**" hopeless cycle and circumstance	Shock

I cannot use, I keep just paying and err planning what I will do something, and now eeerr finally because I wanted to change the profession because err from manual **job or 0 contract job** you **can't survive**, even like any person any other person**, you come to work, they're like there's no work come tomorrow,** you've spent expenses like child care and then you don't get paid. And then you come next day and may you have work, like it's difficult for everyone**, but when you have child, you just keep working** without earning anything, you just earn to pay your bank or someone. So luckily I came to Hartlepool, I have to save, I'd never heard of Hartlepool, so I just needed..I was almost going homeless I couldn't afford anything, **so I was thrown out of our flat** urrrmm because the landlady wanted to come back, and **I had nowhere to go,** no housing, council wouldn't help, **so I just googled the cheapest dodgiest place in the UK** I just didn't care, I say it can't get worse, I mean like I needed some really cheap place, where everything's cheap, I don't care what it looks like, and I found Hartlepool and I found **really cheap rent, so it was a relief,** but with the huge debt even cheap rent you still have to pay all those money to the bank so whatever you save from rent you still have to pay back to the bank, so errm yeah, it's so much but luckily I wasn't able to know what to do with my life, I can never repay this…and I put a in to train, **and it was for free, for people with low income, and there was first sewing class**, I found it by chance through Facebook, **when I was begging, for** like this site where you can swap thing with people for free and collect somethings, and then someone put an advertisement for these free	0 – hour contacts Trying to survive/provide Balancing childcare "ehn you have a child you just keep working" "…so I was thrown out of our flat…" – disposable? "I had nowhere to go" "so I just googled the cheapest dodgiest place in the UK" "cheap rent and relief" Position of begging? "it was free…." Relief "when I was begging"	Treated as disposable by employee "thrown out of our flat…" Disposable? "I had nowhere to go" Exclusion/rejection Pushed to the margins – excluded, rejected? Begging

classes and I thought yeah I want it. Because I had tried to apply for jobs and no one wanted me, and I thinking but well what should I do anyway? It will probably be some horrible job again **and I work work work and I will drop dead someday,** and like (chuckled) I can never repay this anyway, so I went to sewing class, and thought yes I can do this, I could start my own business, I could learn how to sew, I had sewing machine, I thought I could sell it to get some money but then I thought well it's better if I sell it I can sell it anyway, but if I keep it learn that I could start business, so that I can actually start earning money, someone gave me leaflet saying we **errr looking for teaching assistances,** and we have this course and I was liked err at Uni I did a teaching qualification but I can't afford it I can't get funding, and now I am in the middle of my degrees, I can't do anything, I can't even teach and stuff. and they were like "you can study this" and I was like "I can't I don't have any money to pay". They were like "no you can try to apply its funded for people on low incomes" , so I did and I enrolled in a teaching class, so yeah but I don't get paid in my placement so I have to work for free (laughs), which is difficult, but I'm **optimistic** because once I get qualification I can then moved to paid job, **within school hours, with school holidays free, no babysitters**, so it kind of solves the problem, the payment is still quite low, but, I then can go onto teaching qualification, and I get three times more money then, and I thought yeah, **because I want to teach anyway**, it just feels sad that once I am there, I can build my qualifications if I manage to get funding, because its expensive and you then have to pay, for exams and those things, I think this is the thing that is missing from the government, how to get back to work. Even when you find class, you either have to pay for it or even	"work, work, work and I will drop dead someday" - stuck cycle of deprivation Finding pockets of support/resources…determination and persistence Enrolling for teaching job qualification Lack of funding – working for free Optimistic Babysitter – additional cost Limited resources…additional barriers Hartlepool services flexible, allowed mobile phone, trusted/respected role as mother	Determination Hope for change through training

if it's free and then it's not in the school hours, so how can you access it, you can't even pay babysitters. So **what I find here (Hartlepool) is that they match it for people, to get them to work, so they make it in between school hours** so that you can attend and if you need to you can have mobile phone, maybe you need someone from school, you can, so they can call you from school.	Hartlepool services consider needs of people and mothers	Interactions with services
I **never got any other advice from other places, even when I asked for it. It was not available; they didn't tell me about it or I don't know**… But, I'm sure this particular class, was from an organisation which is all over the UK, **but nobody ever gave me the advice to start with** and don't really advised it much because they said nobody ever phones about it….and all of us found it through Facebook (chuckled)….so I think people don't even get that information, even when I asked them.	Difficulty accessing support? "nobody ever gave me the advice to start with…"	Neglected/dismissed
I remember once, even when I asked, I told them I can't find the job, I have full time job **and they suddenly claim they suddenly claim they have no jobs**, I say what do you mean. So the thing is I then asked them about the solution, I don't want to end up like that, I would like to work and do something, but how in this situation, they couldn't advise anything at all, so I think there should be some plan from the beginning. So what I would do if I ran a charity organisation, for example, yeah, because I was thinking, about what I would do differently, **because sometimes I was so angry that they've all the funding and I think where all the money goes?** it doesn't go to actual help**, it goes to what getting the renting the building and putting leaflets about domestic abuse** or	"claim" questioning sincerity? "Angry…where all the money goes?" Priorities of charities and choices of interventions/money?	Who do services serve? Not meeting/responding to need to people they serve?

something, I mean that doesn't, now adays they put a lot of leaflets for example, it costs money, I mean does it really help the victim when they give you leaflet? Give it to your friends to read about how they should what, I mean come on I want to be safe; **I want to escape**. I mean stupid leaflets, none is going to read, they throw it in the dustbin, and it's just a waste of money really these leaflets and they are all these things drive me mad, if **there is urgent problem you need to deal with it** and not speak about it and have meetings and you know, a lot of people involved and you know a lot of people involved and **no-one is solving anything.**	"I want to escape" "…all these things drive mad…" incompetent charities/systems organisation? "…no-one is solving anything…"	Escape Inaction? Lack of urgency
Interviewer: What do you think could have helped? X: I think, a network, over the UK, it could involve private landlords, cancels, housing association, and they could have a network of empty properties, where nobody wants to live. Because that's so many empty houses here in Hartlepool and I'm like, so there are **people on the streets and you have empty houses**, and no one knows Hartlepool, so it's like you know. So **they could have this network** and let's says there's women here {knocks desk] and women here, and swap them no? No need to pay deposit or anything, you just swap them, so if they have cancel house you can swap this, so when their partners comes there is new person and she doesn't need to worry about him because she doesn't know him, so this could be helped. Ermm, because paying a deposit for example it's impossible if you already struggle you maybe pay monthly but you can't pay extra, so if they did it and if they had maybe ten here, ten here (taps table again showing	"people on the streets and you have empty houses…" waste, bad planning or resource use? Developing networks of support	Finding safety physically and mentally

where) they could help them to move and just to take a few things for them, cause you don't need to take furniture because you would have it there already**, if they swap you my place it would be there, it would be quick and easy**. And sometimes it's difficult for the women to leave because she doesn't know where she's going, like think maybe I go homeless, **I have nowhere safe to go, you know this is the kind of thoughts, but I managed finally but stress about it, but this would make the security so if she is scared, they can say don't worry we have a system in place, we can swap you here, we will introduce you to this excellent school, you will have a buddy maybe another women from the community she will show you around, you can relax and there is help if you need, not need furniture**, but this place to go, or a food bank or whatever,. Because a lot **of these women they are so distressed they can't even think clearly about anything, like, you know, so the kind of security, like yeah I have plan, I can survive, I can start new life, without worry, that's what I would do, because it will be practical** help. Because they were sending me to all different organisations and it was paperwork, paperwork, and I was like "for goodness sake, this man has machete", this is useless, I **was stressed from then even, because there was no help.** I don't know why they don't just simply help people, actually escape or something, you know? No practical help at all, it was just **useless, it felt like speaking to wall,** I was like, they have all these ticking the box's, like they give you paper, **tick the box,** like for example "do you live in the same household, no, well, once they **tick the box no,** you lose a point because it means he doesn't cause danger to you, you know what I mean, but I said "yes because he gets inside my house" and so it's even more dangerous, because if you live with someone and	Stuck and at risk Nowhere to go Need practical support to get to safety "…you can relax and there is help if you need…." "…they are so distressed they can't even think clearly…" "…different organisations…I was stressed by them even, because there was no help." "…it was just useless, it felt like speaking to a wall…" Tick box's – not a person? Fitting tick boxes – simply a number	"nowhere to go" Need safety and security Nowhere to turn Dehumanized

you are still alive, then maybe it's not that dangerous necessarily, maybe he just keeps you there, but kind of, but still you're okay, but if somebody comes, it's more urgent, you know he has the intention to really go and you know, but on the paper it looks like he doesn't cause danger, they tick these box's then they count points, and the score, and like are you either in a relationship, no, okay – he doesn't cause danger, but he does cause danger, I said no to him, I rejected him, but on paper it means he's not dangerous because he's not jealous or he's….but he was (my 1st thought dangerous or jealous?). He was constantly like if I have to go to work **….I was really upset about this paperwork,** it's **just ridiculous can't you use your brain** instead. You know like if women comes to me, she doesn't need to fill box's tick and I think how many points, is it dangerous or not, you mean you hear what happens and you see is he dangerous or not. He's criminal with criminal record, he threatens to kill her, well isn't it obvious? **So I was getting angry about this, no urgency no nothing, just paperwork**, and a few years, and I mean like it was crazy. Couldn't even go out, I once wanted to go to shop and I was with push chair and there was like narrow footpath because I was like, my last house was like hidden house, it was quite dangerous because it was like last house on the row, and that was just very narrow path to get to the road, it was like just 50 metres to get to the road. He was standing there and staring at my house, I couldn't get through, so I had to go back home. **Police said we can't do anything**, he's in public space, so he's not trespassing, I saw I can't get out, I mean should I literally push him	You lose a point because he doesn't mean danger to you – like a game Concerns not taken seriously "I was really upset about this paperwork…it's just ridiculous can't you use your brain" "So I was getting angry about this, no urgency, no nothing, just paperwork…" Risk of violence/abuse "Police said we can't do anything…" lack of protection	Dismissed Lack of empathy How policy/services works

with the push chair and kill him, was ridiculous. **They don't see whole picture, he also** bombarded me with messages on Facebook because also I run my own business of course I have to have it in my name, it's a legal thing, I can't not. They tell me "oh don't put your name there" but if the law says I have to put my name there to have a business and I work from home (eugh – sort of laugh), what can I do? So I have to put it there, how will customers contact me, and you don't help me, I have no money, I at least need to be able to do some work **from home to survive.** Don't put it there, I saw it's not you know, why do they not arrest him then? Instead of telling ME, that it was my fault. "You put your name there", well I have right to have my own website, anything to have my business, to put my phone number without him calling and texting me. It was horrible and the thing is I have thousands of …**this file I still have it had** home somewhere, not that they will ever investigate it, but I'm not going to throw the evidence out. He was **bombarding me** with messages, and the thing is he always put something in the middle, such as, "Oh I love you so much" and "How is your child?" and "Are you alright?" . They would see that message and they would say, oh, how I am the stupid one here, come on, he says he loves you and oh how are you, he thinks about your health and wellbeing, and they completely miss all the other messages, like the text messages saying "I'm going to kill you" and the fact that he bombarded me and I didn't want him, and they don't look at the string of it. If he sends you in one night 20 messages to your phone, with that.	"They don't see whole picture" lack of context or understanding Law placing her at increased vulnerability having to share information. Limited resources. Lack of consideration or protection Keeping the evidence "file" to gain justice one day Bombarded with messages, loving and violent threats	Vulnerability & lack of protection Narrowing options to stay safe Resistance?

And people just can't see, they make fun of it even, they say oh why are you so upset, he loves you upset, he loves you, so shouldn't you love him back or something? And they don't listen to you when you say, I'm not interested in him, he **chased** me from the day one, I said no the first day I met him, no I'm not interested.	Repetition of being chased, like animal, hunted or caught	Gendered assumptions – gratitude of any attention?
Even with friends, that's the problem, even people who know him and *know* that he causes problem, cause maybe he causes problem to them or someone else they know. But they still don't believe it or they don't take it seriously, really like. Oh or even I should be t**hankful**. You know like even you hear phrase**s like you should be thankful that someone is interested in you.** Like **I don't deserve better, like I should be even thankful that some psychopath if following me,** wherever I go, for me like, how should they say, I told them sometimes, "okay, if you like him so much if you think he's excellent come and date him or something" you will soon regret it!	"someone is interested you Like I don't deserve better" – trying to hold onto her worth/value in the face of these comments?	"deserving better.." Seen as not having own views or opinions?
None of them would risk it, none of them. One of my friends made a mistake with him, because behind my back she tried to help him, and he asked, her, basically he contacted all my colleagues, they weren't my friends, they were just working there, but he tries it, like oh, I believe you are a friend? She was like "no I don't' really know her" but then he started talking to her, and you know, he sometimes, he used my name, pretending to be me, because he kind of start chatting and tried to get information about me, because they might ask by like, how is your son, oh he is good and then ask "is he still going to the school so and so" and you know he tried to get information. But one of my colleagues	Role switching – try to be seen as human by others? "None of them would risk it, none of them" Knowing her own mind, own voice – not being heard by him or others?	Self-worth – how viewed that abusive relationship is okay? Inequality – who is this treatment okay for some?

found out it was him and was like, why are you pretending to be her? And he span "oh please, I miss my son and…" blablabla, he started story, oh we are in love blabla, you know all these kind of stories, "please "please help me to get to her because she doesn't want to see me, I want to apologise, can you arrange appointment with her and I will come with you, you will open door for me" and she fell for it, she tried to arrange an appointment with me, meaning it well, like reunite the family or something. I mean she would let him in, so why, I have all the locks on the door? When friends come and is like come in? He used his tricks. But luckily, but luckily, he started bombarding her too with stupid messages, about black magic and says "once I am there, we will do black magic on her, we will give her pill and she will fall in love with me" he started all this craziness, and she then contacted me finally because he was bombarding her and when she said no to him that's when he starting sending messages to her, and she was so scared she called the police (laughs) and she contacted me, we barely knew each other, I just knew she worked in the same place and she said "oh this man added me and he claimed you had lived with each other and something happened, he wanted to apologise and blablabla". I said NO, and she said "oh he wanted to come to your house and he sent me these messages, I'm going to delete it, I'm scared of him". I said "**don't delete it, send it to me" and I will use it as evidence.** She wanted to press charges also, because she was scared, but then she was so scared when I told her what happened to me when I to the police, she said, no I don't go to the police because he will get angry, and I was like "Okay, well at least give me the evidence" and I managed to get it from her, to show it's not just me, and that he does it too other people too, and then she just blocked him and luckily he	Partner: "oh I miss my son…want to reunite my family…" Exploiting? Her experience/subjective feelings not valid? "I mean she would let him in, so why, I have all the locks on my door?" Ignorance? Relief now believed/validated other experience	At risk Escape/safety

stopped. But that's because I also moved away, so eventually she was useless to him…like…to put it like that. Interviewer: Is there anything which helped you? X: Well because I had child to look after, and I think you just think, well whatever. **I lose house, I lose money, I lose job, I don't want to lose the child**. Like you feel like, I'll be hopeful and manage and eventually I will buy a new house, I will have a new job, **what if you lose child and you would just, what to live for like, you know. No one helped me like, no-one helped me at all, you know so that was difficult.** And also what helped, **was I do hope somehow that I will continue fighting,** cause I was afraid he would do it to other women. And I didn't want that to happen, so I just felt, well I have to continue doing something **and collecting evidence** and doing something, because I don't want anyone, **I just want to escape from it,** but I **will keep the evidence**, I will find a way. Because he will never stop, so maybe I might be safe, but as soon as he gives up on me, he'll realise, okay what can he do, but he'll find another **victim,** that very minutes and I'm sure there are some other victims now. And he just continues so I want to do something about that. Yeah I still keep it because I know how to catch him, **because he's so stupid,** he's kind of incredibly stupid in a way, because he boasts about what he does. He was walking	Repetition of loss – house, money… What helps is keeping child "what if you lose a child, what to live for…" "No-one helped me like, no-one helped me at all…" Alone, surviving "…hope somehow that I will continue **fighting**…" "…collecting evidence…" – act of resistance? "I just want to **escape** from it, but I will keep the evidence…" "..he'll find another **victim**…"	Live for child No-one helped Fighting Escape Safety/resistance Victim?

around showing photos, I found he, because he was working as a cleaner, he was allowed in women's changing rooms, he installed camera there, and he took photo of women in the toilet, in the changing rooms, **police know, but they just wouldn't listen to me, they said there's no evidence**. I said he has it on his phone, you just need to get it, but no they didn't. But the thing is, he boasts about it because he walks around, saying can you look at the phone and stuff like that, and he even said **police are so stupid they never** get me, look what I have and he's stupid. I was thinking if I had some kind of private investigator, who could pose as buddy like friend, kind of, he is so stupid he would tell you in front of camera how clever he is, like I'm so clever, police never get me, because you know why, I'll show you, and I was thinking, if I could afford, I could catch him and like he's that stupid, he's not very intelligent. But he's clever in the sense of how to get away with things, **he can manipulate people and be very sweet** and he can be very dangerous. If you spoke to him, he's so nice and clam and all that, kind of like you know, you would never think, until you find out, so. I still hope that one day, eventually he will be caught, because he will never stop doing crime, he's antisocial case, he's just, he doesn't have conscious at all, he will always do crime. He doesn't want to follow the rules, **he's laughing at the system,** and the more he gets away with it, he's like yeah I can do it again and again and they get away with it. So **he's going stronger and I'm worried that** one day he will do something terrible and like going crazy, starting watching some ISIS channel, or whatever he got crazy about it, I	"…because he's so stupid…" Not being listened too or believed by police "..he even said police are so stupid they never get me…" "…he can manipulate people and be very sweet and he can be very dangerous." Superficial? "…he's laughing at the system…" whilst she is being placed at risk	Police not believing/ incompetent/ tricked? Who is the system serving/protecting?

found it on Facebook, I sent to police of course, to see what he is. He immediately deleted it and he was even posing with some gangster, like posting I'm going to kill people, you know this kind of an, crazy, and police ask him about it, so I told police and he deleted it and put Christian cross and himself, like I'm such a nice person. And like it even makes me laugh now, but it's serious and like I'm thinking, maybe police check it and they think I'm idiot here, I tried to capture the link, but not sure I got screen shot, as didn't know how to use the computer. **But because nobody believes you, you look like you're the stupid one.** Just imagine you tell them, you look at his Facebook and then he changes, because they tell him in advance, that's the problem. **That's what police should never do, they always ask him about something, instead of checking something** instead of actually checking secret evidence, they could just look on Facebook, it's public you know. But no they would ask him "is it true that you put this up?" of course he would change it, I mean what do they think? So I'm really **worried** with all that is going on, it's not just what he does to women, but he is a crazy person like, with this maschette, and he was in jail before, and he attacked another neighbour, the **neighbour was punished**, it it, I don't get it like, hid neighbours has some mental health issues, and he looked through the letter box and he was irritated and tried to pierce something through his eye, luckily it just injured him. So obviously he got police and you know, so they arrested him initially, but then they release him, they	"So he's going stronger….and I'm worried" The system makes him stronger and her more vulnerable…? "But because nobody believes you, you look like the stupid one." Undermined "…what police should never do, they always ask him about something, instead of checking something…" Let down/ betrayed Not being taken seriously? Or real investigation? "worried" and at risk	No place belonging Isolation Safety

said, oh, the neighbour started it, he shouldn't have looked through his letter box. But he looked through the letter box apparently, because he was making noises, on purpose to irritate the neighbour, because he knew he had mental health issues and he laughed on Facebook, like yeeeah I'm going to irritate the neighbour, hahaah. So the neighbour just came "What are you doing?" basically, and they throw the neighbour out, he has council flat, so he thrown out of antisocial behaviour, it was in the court letters, because I complained at court and the judge looked at me like I'm an idiot, and said no, the neighbour is the criminal, and you just made now criminal from this idiot man, I was thinking like, how can this happen, there is evidence he is in hospital, there is injury, he could have killed them, he could have gone through his brain, I mean, seriously this is not normal behaviour. This was just ridiculous, he even eugh, received a letter from police, who called him hero for fighting crime because he got rid of the threat from this neighbour, **he show it at court, like letter from police and they know he's criminal, I mean he look like some sort of criminal or what?** So he was showing it like….I was like the bad guy there, I was like the bad one, who was complaining about this Christian man with cross, **but everybody even the judge knew he had a criminal record, it was all in front of her, but she wouldn't look at it, she saw just these few things from him,** she wouldn't even read through the rest, she ignore it completely like, I'm just making it up, even when the evidence is there, so….Why I have this file, this thick file with evidence, then he shows one stupid letter or something, so what makes it difficult is you need to stay calm, **otherwise if you start getting angry, emotional and angry, then you even get punished because they will say you in contempt of court or something because you are**	Services punishing those in need and vulnerable At risk of violence Antagonising vulnerable "…he show it at court, like a letter from the police and they know he's a criminals…" services being used as a tool? "…you need to stay calm, otherwise if you start getting angry, emotional and angry, then you even get punished…."	Service making judgements with limited information Services being manipulated to support perpetrators

shouting or something so it's very difficult to stay calm, and continue thinking, because you know he's sitting there smirking. **The smirk on his face, would drive me mad, he was constantly smiling and you know, even** when he admitted to something, the thing is he admitted to it with smile, so they suddenly don't take it seriously, like the way he acted looks so nice, even if he told you I just muscle people, he would get away with it, because he just smiled and talk about it like nothing happened, **because he knows how to talk how to speak, how to present himself. Then you have the stressful one shaking and everyone thinks you are all over the place, and they don't even put it together, that oh 'you're scared of him'.** I had no history of mental health problems, or accusation against me or anything, I had a job, I had money, I was like there was nothing, why all of a sudden would I for no reason pick one particular man, I didn't really know before, **why would I start making accusations, what for, why would I put myself through it?**	"The smirk on hid face, would drive me mad, he was constantly smiling you know…" Insincere & provoked "…because he knows how to speak, how to present himself…" People not considering the context of the situation – "…they don't even put it together that you are scared of him." decontextualized Who is believed and impact of this "why would I put myself through that?"	Punished for expressing emotions Gendered perspective – who is credible? Being driven mad
Interviewer: How was visiting a food bank?		
X: In a way I can't say I'm thankful for all that, I wish it never happened, **but in a way, I'm thankful for it for one reason, before I didn't really realise how difficult it is.** Like if I heard another women say, oh this man constantly brings flowers to my work place, I would probs be like other people and think – what's the problem? Like I wouldn't really see it, because I wouldn't have the experience of how irritating it is, when somebody constantly disturbs you and **pretends to be goods.** So in a way I can help some other people now, I mean I know if I met another women in the same situation, I wouldn't just	Trying to find silver lining. "Thankful" Increased empathy for others Awareness of own previous gender biases	Vulnerability/ identity?

say, oh go back home and everything is going to be fine, maybe you can speak to each other to solve the problem, no I wouldn't because I would think maybe that's something wrong here, I need to find her help. So it gives you the experience, as most people can't imagine how it feels, they just don't go **through it and make stupid mistakes, like try to reunite you with the man,** try to arrange secret appointments with him so he can apologise, and people do this and it's stupidity really, but they mean it well, they think oh, well she said she would call the police or something so we arrange meeting we will come there and he will escape, we will come to carpark, or wherever and he could come with knife and kill her something, people don't think about the danger of it. Or well people give my phone number to him or something, he can then find you everywhere, contact you, X: Yes, well the first thing is to be **somewhere safe,** before I could do nothing. In fact, it would then to find a job, or give me a job. But then I would not be with my child, what if he goes to the nursery and says, I'm collecting her today, then he may come even sooner, saying oh she got very ill she can't collect**, I'll collect child and they will just give the child**, that's how it is. You can't even sort or solve your situation, if I solve one problem, leads to another problems. **Just need to escape and start completely new life with new phone, new identity, like disappear.** Which is what I did because it is impossible to escape. I think a lot should change; a lot should change.	Tricked How learning would influence her response in future. "…make stupid mistakes, like to try to reunite with the man" "…the first thing is to be somewhere safe…" Concern of safety of child Other people can't comprehend/ understand "…new identity, like disappear…"	Strength Gender biases? Narrative of "ideal" "reunite" family place women at further risk? Safety The experience of wanting to disappear.

Interview: What led up to you attending a food bank? X: First I thought I'm fine, I'm **settled** and everything is going to be fine. But I didn't have money, but I kind of managed somehow, the only way I **survived** is, that I found supermarket which had **discounted items,** for 5p 10p, that was the only thing I was buying, otherwise we wouldn't have food, but like we had a lot of food, we were oright because it was so cheap, that even when I had one pound, I could buy like four and put it in the freezer and so we had everything.	To be settled Repetition of survived Practical strategies – discounted items. Freezer – storing/planning	Settled Survived Food strategies
But in the meantime, I still **couldn't find a job**. In the meantime I had to pay interest for all these banks, and I kept trying, all these months and I managed somehow, basically I didn't **buy anything and I didn't eat** and we were **struggling**. **Then winter came, the freezing the weather** and then I suddenly felt okay, I have exactly money to pay my bills and everything, but if I pay for gas now I'll be ten pounds shorter, as soon as I will do it I will be overdrawn 10 pounds and my bank will suddenly give me fines for everyday and then eugh (pauses struggles word)?	Unable to find job Interest Unable to buy items "Not eating" "struggling" "winter…freezing" additional pressures "suddenly…bank giving fines…" falling behind –penalised?	"Struggling" Falling behind Struggling

It can't stop and you **have deleted everything else**, and it started getting hard. So what I did during the daytime it was freezing at home, like I was like freezing, it was warmer outside, so **sometimes I just went for a walk, just to keep warm**, or to stay in shopping centre just to keep warm, we wasted my time which I wanted to spend home to actually earn money, but I was so cold I couldn't, I would freeze, **and I only turn the heating on when my son came back**, so I turn it on and then I turn it off again, but even then I ran out of money, I couldn't and then what happened this was like, I was **kind of surviving** but then I told the tax credits I work less hours because of the moving, and then because the cold, honestly, I couldn't do the same amount of work.	"deleted everything else" exasperation? Loss of hard work? "freezing" Strategies to stay warm "..went for a walk" "I only turn the heating on when my son came back" "…kind of surviving" Cold impacting on work	Hopeless/futile? Sacrifice for child
Then I started the **teaching assistant course in October**, I started, so obviously I needed to reduce my working hours, and the tax credits reduced my tax credit to very small amount, they say well tell us immediately and we could adjust it if you still struggle, because they counted my previous year's earnings, which was much higher because I had 3 jobs to afford living in Manchester, so I didn't have any money left over, I could just pay the bills from it.	"…teaching assistant course…" "…tax credit reduced my tax credit to very small amount…" systems not responding to needs, of mothers	Flawed systems / transitions – additional pressure on mothers limited recourses
So I contacted them again and said yes I have reduced hours, but that automatically mean I reduced my earnings, so I couldn't recalculate as would eventually need to pay		Narrowing finances

the difference, I calculated you owe me, but no, they reduce it further, **by ANOTHER 50 pounds** it's now like 250 pounds a month or something. I'm like I can't survive with that, I'm like I try to sell something and by chance I sold some things I was happy, but then one customer said Oh I didn't receive it and then I had to pay a refund, plus the cost of actual item and I was like **everything is goes wrong**, what's going on?	"…so I contacted them again…" frustration? Continuing trying to correct their errors "…they reduce it further…" "…everything's going wrong…"	
I was overdrawn and t**hen I missed for the first time in my life,** for all **these years I managed, all the problems I've managed to** always pay everything on time (Voice breaking) I don't **know how I did it, but I did it, laughs**. But this time I just didn't have money in my bank account, **everything was cancelled, my children's disability**, I asked again for it and I'm still waiting for the forms and stuff to arrive. They cancelled it too, like I had no benefits or nothing, **just this tax credit which was important even though it doesn't cover everything, but it was like a life saver,** and suddenly they cut it too and I was like….because they cut our income from last year.	"…then I missed for the first time in my life…" identity, somebody who meets obligations. Impact on her of not? "…for all these years I've managed, all the problems I've managed to always pay everything on time…" "…I don't know how I did it, but I did it…" grim resilience "…but this time everything was cancelled…" services letting her down "…this tax credit was important even though it doesn't cover	Shock at not meeting Obligations Self – worth? Identity? Despair/shock at falling behind. Life saver (tax credit) cut too

Yes, and they **cut the disability** saying the child doesn't need it, they (disability) informed them the tax credit and they automatically cut that too. But what happened to me before, it **was disaster** because obviously you pay everything **yeah and you know you have your budget**, **suddenly when they cut it** I like first appeal against it like I don't agree with the total, but in the meantime they kept paying me, then suddenly said no and wanted to take all these months back to repay it, and **instead of for a few months I had no money at all,** and then they just started a very little amount and then they came **back to normal eventually, but in the meantime I had more debts**.	everything but it was like a life saver, suddenly cut too…" "…cut that too…" "…was a disaster…" huge implications "…and you know you have your budget…" "…suddenly when they cut it…" "…in the meantime I had mot debts…"	Sense of being cut off from support Lack of control/ abrupt Transitions led to debts
I was **just working like crazy, I nearly dropped dead at work, working, working ,working, without any breaks, and was getting crazy** and I thought, one day I **was just collapsing at work, I thought I can't** do this anymore this is ridiculous, the more I work the more I owe, because I **also have to pay childcare** and **then they switch my job without even asking**, they suddenly make it like 0 contract, like before I knew I work yeah, even I could be quite flexible, I could check, I was working hotel, I could check, if there were not many rooms, I could call them myself, saying do you need time there are just 2 rooms to clean, empty house or maybe, I mean I can come, they say no you can take the day off, so I know in advance I can take the day off.	"working, working, working, working, without any breaks…" "I was just collapsing at work..." "..because I also have to pay childcare…" "…switch my **job without even asking**…suddenly make me 0-hour contract…" swap you in and out,	Counteracting impact of systems Personal cost/sacrifice Treatment in employment – replaceable, disposable? Needs not considered

But now they do exactly opposite and it cause me problems because I have arrange babysitter, and already had contacted her so I can't I have to pay her, I can't cancel it and I come to work and there is some new person I don't even know, saying "oh they paid me some cash in hand just to clean in here, I already did it" and **I'm like "what do you mean? I am at work here, I'm working here, I don't even know who you are, like?".** And I call them and they are like "you can go home" and I'm like "I don't get paid or what? I have to pay babysitter" and suddenly **it's like so much money you're in minus,** not only you lose your earning, you can lose 50 or 50 pounds or whatever, plus…and suddenly you are minus 100 in one day and you go like, 100 pounds damage and it's awful amount of money and if it happens twice, it's 200 and I was like, this can't be happening, what is this? **No-one even told me,** they never allowed me to have holiday, **they still owe me holiday** and I was like I want to be paid instead and they like never replied to me. **And I kept being thrown out, because they found some people who are cheaper then me,** who would do it for maybe 4 pound an hour, I don't know what, and there were some homeless people, or something for them it was still money, **because 8 pound they paid me was too expensive,** it's not even minimum wage now, if I was still working there it would break the law, but at that time it was just, about but, but I was not getting paid holiday or anything.	replaceable/disposable? Not consulted or seen as person Arriving at work for there to be no work available "You can go home" – rejected/dismissed "It's like so much money you're in minus, not only lose your earning….(babysitting)" "No-one even told me" – not treated as person, dignity/respect "they still owe me holiday…" used/exploited "thrown out, because they found some people who are cheaper then me," – as if a piece of rubbish? What say about worth? Use and dispose? – link to work until die –	Dismissed "keep being thrown out…" Replaceable How treated/ self- worth?

	exploited? Others take what they want?	
So eventually I had to leave, because they employed someone else, it was a horrible person, filthy man, he was attacking, he nearly **smashed my skull against the wall for no reason,** because he told me eugh, what he did to me, **he first tried to look friendly**, he said "I'm new manager" and I thought you're so filthy, obviously he had no experience he was another homeless person who they brought from somewhere, he pretended to be an experienced manager, but I found him through Facebook and I thought ha what is he playing? He didn't realise I could find him. He was saying he ran a chain of hotels and I'm a great manager. I thought why would someone like that ask for a job in this dodgy house full of crack addicts, and prostitutes, I mean I'm like did you work for Hilton or where' ever? obviously he never, he was only working in McDonalds or something- flipping the burgers and they throw him out from there because he couldn't do even that. No I **found it funny but at the time I didn't because I needed my job**, I was thinking what is he playing, once he offered me tea, he was like take break have a tea. But first he was so **filthy and I didn't want to drink it but I felt like, I don't know but then I felt sick after**, I thought I don't make this mistake again, this person if kind of creepy, next time he make me **drink again in friendly way I said no**, I don't want it, I want to continue working and he was getting an**gry, and he was screaming "I told you drink tea with me" and he even smashed me into the wall**. And even he was like 3 times bigger then me, and suddenly got so angry, and I just look at him and said "I said I'm not drinking the	"…he (manager) nearly smashed my skull against the wall for no reason…" – physical violence from colleagues "…tried to look friendly…" superficial "…at the time I didn't because I needed my job…" vulnerable position "I didn't' want to take the drink but I felt like" subjugate own needs wishes to appease manager? "…in a friendly way said no…" gender – how as a women say no?	Power Power imbalance Personal costs of speaking out

bloody tea**, we have customers coming in soon and I will clean it, now do you understand, now bog off".** And he was kind of like surprised he was like I am the manager here, I was scared of him, because I didn't want him to do something to **me, so I then left,** I thought I'm not going to deal with this person, he's crazy and I don't want more problems, and because they kept bringing more people, you know giving them cash in hand, they were like you can go, I paid to work there, I had less money by going there, it would be cheaper for me to stay at home and be looking at the wall, I would have more money than this.	Resistance "bog off…" "…so then I left…" safety through leaving	Limited control to respond
Then I couldn't find job, because they wouldn't' give me references**, because I complained about them,** of course I complained about them, because they wouldn't pay me, you know. So once you do that you never get references and apparently they never paid my national insurance number, because I contacted the inland revenue because I had to do the tax return, I had to pay, what do you think, I was so angry because I thought they would demand it from them, but no they made me the bill to pay it 140 pounds or something. I mean, I was angry, but what could I do.	"…wouldn't give me references, because I complained about them…" "I was angry, but what can you do?" Continued abuse bad treatment, yet limited ability to respond	On the margins of society Limited opportunities Vulnerable/risky Anger about circumstances/treatment help protect self Resistance/surviving
And then again how do you find job? **This is the only job I found, because no one else wanted to do it because it's a really awful place**. And most housekeepers they came	"…this is the only job I founds, because no one else wanted it…" How society views her and herself?	

they just left, before starting work, they just saw it, like naked people walking around on drugs and something here, I was like it's normal here don't worry, everyday working with crack addicts, prostitutes, you will get used to it, they're like oh and they escape, I was there one year, no1 was longer there then me, because I needed the job, I started getting used to it, I think I even **got stronger because I was so, I was angry about everything,** once there were some illegal people, they broke in the room and guests were coming so I needed to clean, it, it was broken damaged and I got so angry, and the owners didn't want police involved as usual because they did illegal things, like employing illegal people and didn't want problems. **But I was like there are these people, fine I'll go there and throw them out, I went to** the room, and said **leave this place otherwise I'll tell police and they were like hahaha**. So I came to one of these man and said "okay I'm going to throw you out" and he was like okay I'm going I'm going I'm going **and suddenly he was scared of me, I told him i know martial arts**, it's not exactly true, but I really life him like that, because I was angry, I was thinking I'm fed up with this**, I'm fed up with all these people, so it makes you stronger**, the more problems you go with, sometimes you just say I am fed up, in a way I felt quite safe working there, I felt more strong to deal with situations.	"I think I am even stronger because I was so angry about everything…" "…fine I'll go and throw them out…" taking a stand "…and suddenly he was scared of me, I told him I know martial arts…" "I'm fed up with all these people, so it makes you stronger"	Fighting back Dehumanised Compete/degraded
In fact we had another housekeeper, **who was supposed to replace me**, because she was even cheaper than me, she signed a contract for 250 a month, for 24/7 non-stop	"…supposed to replace me…because she was even	

work, they didn't allow her to leave the house ever, not even to do shopping, they said you will have to order it, **I said it's slavery, it's** illegal you can't do it, but she had nowhere else to go, she didn't want to go back to parents, she was to proud she was 18, I told her you could live with parents and have some work, she said no I want to be independent, I said well you will get trapped here, it's dangerous place, even I'm sometimes worried as sometimes people take knife at me, and sleeping over night, I wouldn't live here if they offered me free accommodation, cause it's too dangerous. She didn't listen and Monday what happened someone tried to kill her. I didn't see her cleaning and thinking what's happening I need to go home it's one o clock, she didn't start her room and people will start coming, I thought someone is coming in 5 minutes the room is not ready, what is happening. So, I stayed a bit longer, cleaned her rooms, then heard noise from her room. I found her, like, I tried to call the owners, they **said no don't call the police we will sort it, but they took ages**, to come, so eventually I had to call the police, but it took over an hour for the police to come, I wasn't going to wait, so I went to the room, and he managed to escape through the window, and she was there like, **she had strangulation mark** here, he was holding her like, that, there was bloody everywhere because he was smashing her over the furniture, like holding her by her head. Everything smashed, it was like and she had blood here err and I just grabbed her and said let's go, I took her in room downstairs, I was there with her. **I was so angry there, I wasn't scared of him, because I had this anger like I'm fed**	cheaper than me…" objects traded off one another "…I said it's slavery... Violence against women - vulnerability "I was so angry there, I wasn't scared of him, because I had this anger like I'm fed up like, I'm no longer scared of anyone, I'm fed up, these criminals and they were	

up like , I'm no longer scared of anyone, I'm fed up, these criminals and they were like scared of me, as if men twice as big as you, and you come to the room "I will beat you up you bastard,", I always said I take karate or something, it's not true but I just said it, and guess what they don't wait to find out if it's true, they just, he jumped through the window luckily, well unluckily he survived from the 2nd floor and he somehow managed to escape from there. But I told the managers, and they were angry that I called police, because police asked me who is this girl, is she guest here or who is she, I said no she lives here, they said okay where is her address, I said this is her address, they don't let her out she's literally living here and I explained everything because I was so angry, and I told them numerous time she is not going to survive here, we have all these criminal. **Police knew all the time, I'd contact the police, once they even came themselves, and said just to tell you there is a dangerous criminal hiding in this hotel – could you check it**? I was like wait a minute, what did he do? They were like we can't tell you but he's extremely dangerous, and I said, okay so you ask **me the housekeeper to go and check rooms because there is dangerous criminal.** Police is useless.	like scared of me, as if men twice as big as you, and you come to the room "I will beat you up you bastard," Police incompetent, "useless"? Not providing protection or help	Anger, taking over fear
Interview: What led to your decision to attend the food bank? So basically, I went to the church first, because I was never given any food voucher, even when I went to women's health, **they knew I struggle yet they never provided me**	"…I was never given any food voucher, even when I went to women's health, they knew I struggled yet never provided me	Treatment by police – neglected?

anyways so... But I was looking for something on Facebook (Chuckles), Facebook again, it always leads to Facebook**, I mean if Facebook didn't exist, I wouldn't even know.**	anyways so…" Impact hurt? Not provided care/support Role of Facebook	
Because I was **asking on one of these free sites if someone has any 2nd** hand clothes, something warm because I was really freezing, I didn't have**.. I was already overdrawn, so I thought I can't go into a charity shop to pay one pound for it I** just don't have the money at all, so I just ask for it, but someone notice it and they said if I also need food I can also go to this church on Thursday, and **first I felt embarrassed** as I can't imagine myself with maybe homeless people or something, I feel like I don't want to use it or something, like I don't know a food bank.	Asking for help – hand my downs "..I can't go into a charity shop to pay one pound for it…" Embarrassed – how be perceived "…don't want to use it…" Hesitancy about attending food bank	Needs not met Overlooked? Not provided support/care Inequality of provision of support
But **then I feel like it was holiday my son was at** home and we **were really freezing,** no gas no electricity it was freezing and we couldn't cook food because of the electricity, so I still have some food in the freezer, what to do, and I thought embarrassed about it, but I **thought what can we do, we can't just sit here and do nothing,** well they offer it so what, and it was **embarrassing feeling cause first time, I felt like beggar in a way, you know, what if someone calls social services or something, like you know, you don't know what's going to happen, they may think oh you struggle, maybe the child will be better without you, you know like, you have these thoughts all the time, maybe they**	Freezing Attending to provide for son Overcome embarrassment for son? No other options – "what can we do, we can just sit here and do nothing" "Embarrassing feeling first time cause first time I felt like a beggar…"	Scarcity

say you can't afford child, don't have it or something, any you know…and you think this is just temporary and in two months tome we okay, but you know the feeling of **it, it is scary**, so we came there and someone noticed we are new there, so then that's where I got advice to go to food bank, they said have you gone there and I said no I don't quality for it usually because I have tax credits, and as soon as you have tax credit, and in theory I have them I will still get them but in May or something, on average I should live comfortably, so I don't qualify for other types of benefits like heating and so on, and I went there and explained the situation**. I wasn't crying or anything but I was in despair, I felt bad that I even tell them, I thought like I don't know I got to this situation and I just at the end I don't know what to do anymore.**	"…you know what if someone calls social services or something, like you know, you don't know what's going to happen, they may think oh you struggle, maybe the child will be better off without you, you know like…maybe they say you can't afford child, don't have it or something…" "…it is scary…" "I **wasn't crying** or anything but I was in despair, I felt bad that I even tell them, I thought like I don't know I got to this situation and I just at the end I don't know what to do anymore." Needing somewhere to turn. Overwhelmed yet not able to express emotions through crying?	Overcoming emotions about attending food bank for child Embarrassing Fear social services And how will be viewed as a mother – if viewed as capable or not? Fear of being judged for having a child if unable to provide Burden? Hopeless? Overwhelmed

No **electricity, no gas, I felt pity for what I did before**, I was buying these 10p discounts and I **was running around Tesco getting** a huge amount of chicken breasts, like chicken breast which **is quite expensive was 10p, I couldn't leave** it, so I had smaller freezer but I fill it, half time so we would have meat regularly, and I was like I brought all these stupid chickens and **now they cut my electricity (Raising voice)** and all it melting **and I told them I have food at home, but I can't cook it and it will all thaw and I don't know what to do, I was thinking why all these cheap chickens and now all in vain,** and **now we will have no food just because of this a**nd they send me here and they say you can have food, **and it's a life saver, because it's just one moment, so I'm trying to save it as much as I can**, try not to use it at least in the meantime, all those cans, somehow to think now I'll be careful and if something happens and it's getting warmer and warmer, it's there's no electricity or something there's not that big problems that it's over winter, **in winter you can't be without electricity and gas, it's just awful you can't even make yourself a tea and can't** you know, so I started relaxing again, am like okay.	"Felt pity for what did before" all hard work lost so quickly "…running around Tesco…" "…now they cut my electricity…and all of it melting…now all in vain" "…now we will have no food because of this…" "…(FB) and it's a life saver" – image adrift fb throwing put ring "..going to try and save it as much as I can…" always trying to save/ make things last "…(winter) it's just awful can't even make yourself a cup of tea…"	Adapting to make ends meet – yet not enough? Watching loss of hard work, planning, resources – "all in vain" Pressures linked electricity, gas, food, additional pressure winter "…use whatever, still **try to make it nice**…"
Interviewer: Since attending the FB has your relationship to food changed? X: Basically, I **normally cook** from scratch, so if it was me, and I had money, I would really **buy nice organic and make everything nice**. But obviously if I get cans and there's one peas, one meatballs, one pasta, then I make it whatever, **but I still try to make it nice**,	"…I **normally** cook from scratch…" "…if I had money, I would really buy nice organic and make everything nice…"	Trying to provide balanced meals for self and child?

like so I'm not planning the food like before, as I have to eat what already have, **but try to plan it like,** so we have portion of meats, portion of vegetables and something. Interviewer: Is there anything you found helpful to cope with changes in way of eating? X: I found, the problem, with these, people receive all this packaging of food, sometimes I think **why people put this in the packet, it's useless, such as chewing gum for** example. I could really **do with milk and cereal so my child can have breakfast**, I can't do this with chewing gum for example and then I think how much people may **spend for this, if they maybe got advice,** like a list of things from most important. They might mean it well when they donate it, thinking **oh these people are poor they can't afford those extras**, like chocolate biscuits and things, so they give those extras and they don't really understand **we don't have the basics, if I had basic it's up to me,** to afford to buy the extras, **but the basics are important**. If it was up to me I would make sure all the basics were included, so people can have a healthy lifestyle. Cause, It's nice to have those biscuits, and my son got excited when he found chocolate and stuff, but when you think about it like do you have anything to eat and you give your child biscuit or chocolate it's not really good, is it? **even if your child is happy, you can't really survive like that**. What	"…then I make it whatever, but I still try to make it nice…" "…but I try to plan it like, so we have portion of meats, portion of vegetables and something…" "…why people put this in the packet, it's useless, such as chewing gum for example." "I could really do with milk and cereal so my child can have breakfast" "…if they maybe got advice…" solutions to educate donators "oh these poor people can't afford the extras…" "we don't have the basics…" "…but the basics are important…"	Needing the basics Donators meeting food bank attendees where they're at – lack of understanding/knowledge

I would find helpful, to make sure there is always th**e basics**, some sort of **basic food,** I would go for some pack of rice as you can make some food with that, or like pasta, you can make different foods with that, it's like the base of food you can fill your stomach with, and it takes some time to eat it.	"even if your child is happy you can't really survive like that" mother role	
Interviewer: How do you think not having access to these certain foods and food bank has impacted your life? X: If I didn't have access to it, I don't know really**, I would be without anything in that moment.** So, I imagine if it someone in a different situation, like for me its **temporary problems** and I'm working and **getting back to work qualifications** so I'm optimistic, and **finally be back to normal and I will go to normal shop and you know**.	"I would be without anything in that moment" "temporary problem" "I'm working and getting back to work qualifications…" "…finally be back to normal and I will go to normal shop and you know…"	Wanting to be "normal"?
I am scared now we all this covid 19, I was thinking what about the people if everything is shut down now, maybe even all the services and everything, how do people who rely on it, like they will be a few weeks at home without food or something, how are they going to deal with that?	"I am scared now we all have this COVID" "…what about the people if everything is shut down…"	Impact of COVID on access to services/support – fear/panic

So even I **start to panic, no not panic, we make smaller portions just to be on the safe** side, so I still eat, but I kind of like, just eat little bits, just to make sure I eat, and when I feel like eating something I say no, because we don't know what's going to happen, so….	"…so even I start to panic…" Adapting "we make smaller portions just to be on the safe side"	Planning for uncertainty of what will happen
Interviewer: How is it when eating a bit less? How feel in self? X: Well if it was just me I would be eating a lot, because I am a big eater**, I love eating I love food. So I have to restrict myself, so I am not really happy** about it, but at the same time I am the kinda person who **can manage with it**, **I am always thinking to myself it's just a temporary measur**e, it's serve the purpose in long term so now I need to be careful, but eventually I can afford to eat normally. At least I am **grateful** to have something to eat and just continue every day.	Having to restrict self – "love eating…love food" "I'm not really happy about it..." "…kinda person who can manage…" "…thinking to self-it's a temporary measure, it serve the purpose in the long term…" thinking of the long term as way of coping "grateful" – trying to see the positives	Strength – views self as somebody who can manage Reframing to support self-manage situation?
Interviewer: Are there any stories in the area/or news about using food banks and was your experience of coming here?	Viewed negatively by others	Articles categorise people who use food banks

X: So I had read some articles about coming to food banks and **some people were quite negative about** it, like there is more and more people go to food banks, but some people make negative comments about it, like about the people who use the food banks, and it makes you feel bad like you use the food bank, err because they made it like we are all lazy, not working, maybe we are bad with money, maybe we can't cook, you know and I was thinking like I can cook but eeer if you don't have money to buy the fresh food you can have cooking skills but what can you do, it's not like all these people are lazy and spend money and think ahhh we have nothing to eat let's go to food bank, it doesn't work like that you know, so **the negatively about it from people who have never been in that situation, that makes you feel bad about using it, because you don't want to be put in category, of lazy, useless people, you know, that's how it makes you feel.**	"Makes you feel bad about using it, because you don't want to be put in a category of lazy, useless people, you know, that's how it makes you feel" …"	Impact on how feel about attending food bank
Interviewer: Is there anything that gave you strength in terms of coming food bank on first day? X: I felt kind of **embarrassed to come** (chuckles), and I even tried to like err hide, **like I didn't want anyone to know that I was going to a food bank,** because it was, I was just desperate literally, I had to **kind of force myself to come just to survive** and it made me **feel bad in a way,** but then what is good was when I came home and my son found out, oh we have this, we have this and he was happy about it, **so then it was worth it, because then you think okay my son is happy,** here's something, yes, something maybe he never had before, he thought "oh what is this" and I'll look, and then I'll suddenly feel	"embarrassed" to attend food bank – self-conscious emotion "..like I didn't want anybody to know that I was coming to a food bank…" wanting to hide, not be seen? "…kind of force myself to come just to survive…"	Attending food bank to survive Worth the personal costs to see son happy

like, oh it's not that embarrassing, **because you think your child is okay** and you think okay chuckles. But it's funny, **like he dare not tell you go to there again and ask them for lollipops**, it and you explain it doesn't work like that, it's not like you order.	"…it made me feel bad in a way…" "…worth it because you think okay my son is happy…" "…it's not that embarrassing because you think my child os okay…" Child limited understanding – lack of choice	
Interviewer: What do you think is the thing which needs to change most? Be most helpful for you?		
X: I don't know**, I think there should be a whole new system in place, because it's not like well like it doesn't solve the problem**. Like the food it solves the problem and you are hungry, that minute you are hungry and you have food, okay yo**u survive one more week, but** then you come again like, it, **it's continuous problem. So I think like the whole system it needs to change, so that people do not end up in that situation where they need to beg for food basically,** so maybe, if there was like a network, where people could work together solving the issue, to make sure **the people can get back to work,** errrm maybe have some qualification, not needing to pay for it, maybe find with employees what they are missing because they can't find the correct people to do the	"I think there should be a whole new system in place, because it's not like well like it doesn't solve the problem…" "…okay you survive one more week…it's continuous problem…" "So I think like the whole system it needs to change, so that people do	System not fit for purpose? Trapped in continuous problem/system A system that makes you beg for food

job and if I don't know who they are looking for and if I don't know who they are looking for, I might not even think about that qualification, maybe if someone if looking for technical people, maybe I'm not interested in it, but maybe when I was incorrect, saying oh if you learn this and this skill they might employ you and then I can think well I can try and you may realise you know something you didn't know because you think oh it's quite easy because I can learn. Getting people back to work would be number one priority, because then you have your own earning, then depending on the person, you know some people are better with money, they take it and spend it on take-away and maybe they come here because they honestly don't have food and they did something silly, so then it could be like other skills like skills, like cooking skills, budgeting skills, like all these other skills, so once people have that money they know how to divide it and what to do first, and more advice like the person like who gives all the advice, so like **complex advice** to help people get out of this situation. Interviewer: Anything we haven't talked about which you think is important to discuss? X: Maybe some program on TV **or something which actually explains what leads to people getting into these situations,** because when people can actually see it, like real people in real situations, they **can start understanding what needs to change**, cause otherwise **there is prejudice** and like you know maybe more people could be helped, maybe some employees watching and think ahh, **oh I didn't think I see this is a problem, I see, maybe I can employ this person or maybe could have apprentice** or something	not end up in that situation where they need to beg for food basically," Importance of qualifications, employment, wider structural change Opportunity to develop skills Opportunity to access complex advice Highlighting the circumstances which contribute to people attending food bank Acknowledging there is a problem	Wider system solutions – causes not reactions Highlighting context people live in Educating people to increase equal access of opportunities

they could take these people, or at least some more people might donate food, because they think oh I never thought someone can end up like this, **maybe one day I can end up like this**, one day maybe I could donate a few cans, **so maybe the changing perception of someone and then people would be less embarrasse**d, **because when you feel embarrassed your confidence goes down, which impacts also your work, because you don't have 0 confidence, that even going to interviews makes you feel bad, cause you feel like a low life person kind of, like you know, you don't feel like a confident person anymore.** How did you find the interview?	"can start understanding what needs to change" Lack of knowledge – "Otherwise there is prejudice…" "…so maybe changing the perception of someone and then people would be less embarrassed…" "…when you feel embarrassed your confidence goes down, that even going to interviews makes you feel bad, cause you feel like a low life person kind of, like you know, you don't feel like a confidence person anymore."	Making visible the problem Impact on perception, prejudice, on embarrassment, sense of self and confidence Impact identity and how views herself in relation to others

X: I have been **smiling,** it was difficult and **stressful at times**, **I'm smiling but I was stressed, I was worried I would end up in the streets somewhere.** And the other problem is when you are a **single parent and self-employed no one gives you accommodation, because you don't have a guarantor, you are a single parent and people think you won't pay rent or something**, and it's more difficult so sometimes you have too take something more expensive, which is ridiculous when you are in this situation and you can't afford it, but othe**r people think oh we can get from cash from it, because we know the person is desperate,** so, you know, what am I supposed to do, I had to take the rent and she **kept increasing, increasing, because she knew no-one was going to give me flat, so luckily Hartlepool has so many empty houses**, apparently nobody wanted to rent that house, **so they were happy they had me there,** they didn't even need to check anything, they just moved me in, so surprised and it was okay (Chuckles) I had somewhere to go. Turning off recorder.	"I'm smiling but I was stressed, I was worried I would end up on the streets somewhere." "single parent…don't have guarantor…" lack of support makes people more vulnerable"…because we know the person is desperate…" – vulnerability exploited "…kept increasing, increasing (rent)…" alone and trapped "…she knew no-one was going to give me a flat…" on the edge of society Hartlepool "..nobody wanted to rent that house, so they were happy they had me there…" relief welcome/kindness Hartlepool	Excluded access to resources, due to limited resources Isolated – at risk harm/abuse Mothers vulnerable position places them at risk of further exploitation Margins of society Welcome/kindness refugee of Hartlepool

7.5.2 Interview coding

Concepts		
"surviving"	Escape	Constant risk of exploitation, violence and abuse
	"chain of events"	
	Punishment and blame	
	He was chasing me	
	Violence and abuse	
	"just paying, paying, paying"	
	Loss	
	Tired & trapped	
	Food strategies & planning	
	Struggling	
	Skipping meals and heating	
	Survive and sacrifice to provide for and keep child	
"thrown out"	Dehumanised	
	Rejected	
	Excluded	
	Disposable/replaceable	
	Exploited financially	
"Nowhere to go"	Isolated and alone	
	Not being believed, then dismissed and neglected	
	"cheapest dodgiest place"	
	Vulnerable	
Asking for help	Needs of mothers not met	
	Inconsistent provision of information or help	
	Incompetent professionals, systems, services	
	Lack of understanding & prejudice	

	Food bank as “lifeline”	
	Fear of how others will view her as mother	
	Fear of being categorised “lazy”	
Resistance	Pursuing education/training	
	Fighting back – anger consuming fear	
Impact	“Situation traumatic…”	
	Stress/worry	
	Fear/anger	
	Embarrassment – how others view attending food bank	
	Feeling “bad”	
	Prejudice & loss of confidence	
	“worth it because you think my child is okay”	

7.6 Appendix F: Data Collection

Newspaper articles included

Newspaper Title	**Article number**	**Date published**
The Guardian	1	30.10.2019
	2	05.11.2019
	3	21.11.2019
	4	28.11.2019
	5	02.12.2019
	6	04.12.2019
	7	10.12.2019
	8	23.12.2019
	9	12.01.2020
	10	07.02.2020
	11	26.02.2020

	12	10.03.2020
	13	13.04.2020
	14	23.04.2020
	15	20.07.2020
	16	21.05.2020
	17	22.10.2020
	18	26.10.2020
The Mirror	1	07.03.2020
	2	14.03.2020
	3	11.07.2020
The Independent	1	13.10.2019
	2	26.10.2019
	3	05.11.2019
	4	22.03.2020
	5	22.03.2020
	6	28.04.2020
	7	29.04.2020
	8	01.05.2020
	9	02.05.2020
	10	02.06.2020
	11	03.06.2020
	12	03.06.2020
	13	23.09.2020
The Times	1	03.12.2019
	2	19.04.2020
	3	10.05.2020
	4	17.06.2020
	5	17.06.2020

The Telegraph	1	03.12.2020
	2	18.04.2020
	3	25.04.2020
	4	24.10.2020
The Sun	1	22.02.2020
The Daily Mail	1	23.10.2019
Total articles	**45**	

7.7 Appendix G: Data Analysis

Coding development: Phase 2-5 of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

7.7.1 Phase 2: Generating initial codes (codes into clusters)

Newspaper: The Guardian	Coding	Clustering

Article 1 A children's book about food banks is a grim sign of our failure as a society; Britain's first picture book about families going hungry is an urgent reminder of the issues at the heart of this election The Guardian(London) October 30, 2019 Wednesday 2:20 PM GMT Copyright 2019 The Guardian, a division of Transcontinental Media Group Inc. All Rights Reserved Section: OPINION; Version:5 Length: 1200 words Byline: Aditya Chakrabortty	FB sign Failure of society Naming the problem of hunger as at “heart” of election – central	Failure

Body I have just read a beautiful book about something truly obscene. Full of lovely pictures and occasional bits of text, it's the kind you might read with your four-year-old. It shows a little girl and her mum as they visit a food bank.	Children now growing up with awareness of this issue Contrasting language to highlight "obscene" of FB meaning offensive or disgusting my standards of morality or decency	Morality
It's a No-Money Day is narrated by the daughter who sees how her mother worries over every penny, while shielding her from the painful stuff. "There's no more cereal, so I have the last piece of toast. Luckily Mum isn't hungry," the girl says; and you know the biggest thing Mum will have for breakfast is her own little white lie. When they reach the food bank, the child tucks into biscuits and squash while her mother sags like a balloon from which the air has escaped.	"It's a no money day" Maternal sacrifice food for child "mother worries over every penny, while shielding her from the painful stuff" Disappearing – sag balloon	Mother worry Shielding Pain Mother worry Disappearing
Only just published, it is believed to be the UK's first picture book about food banks. And, while the subject has been handled compassionately by the prize-winning author Kate Milner, I can't help but see that landmark as a disgrace - for all of us. It is the watershed moment when Britain's food banks go from newspaper headlines to a subject that teachers cover in classrooms; the moment at which mass destitution is no longer a badge of political failure but is instead accepted as part of British life.	Language all of us – responsibility? Food Bank Failure – political Mass destitution Acceptance as part of British life	

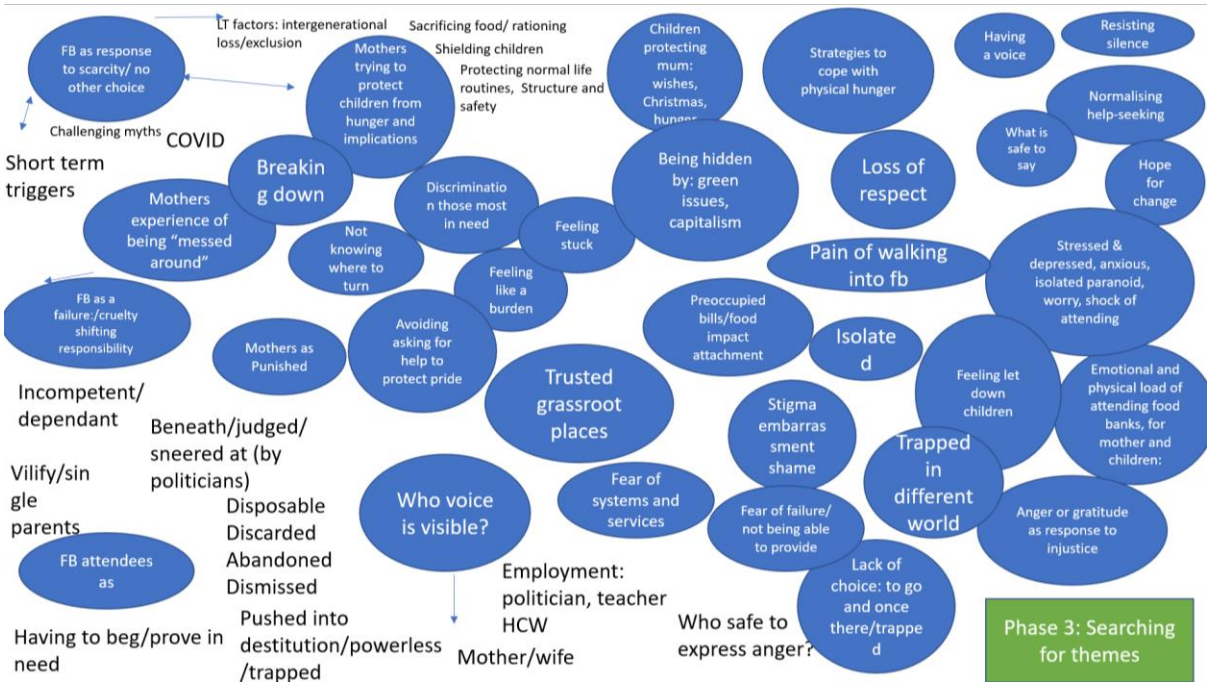
As recently as 10 years ago, child poverty was an evil that prime ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown both vowed to abolish ; now it is something you shamefacedly explain to your child as he or she nestles in your lap. Picture books used to be small worlds where kids could dream about farmyard animals and cuddly monsters; today they teach about the vast number of people that their parents' generation treat like dirt. In 2016 David Cameron casually dropped the legally binding targets to reduce child poverty - and those figures jumped. More than 4 million children live in poverty in the UK today - or nine kids in every classroom of 30. At the start of this decade, the TT ran just 57 food banks, giving 14,000 food parcels a year to children. It operated 428 food banks last year, handing nearly 580,000 parcels to children. This is a charity that sees itself as temporary. Our failure as a society is making it permanent. In one of the richest societies in human history, such figures should mortify us, yet the Westminster classes take them as unremarkable. They hardly ever trouble TV bulletins or newspaper columns, while Conservative cabinet ministers such as Michael Gove sneer at the impoverished for not being able to "manage their finances". As the UK staggers into a rage-filled general election, well-lunched gasbags will solemnly inform us that this is an election about "getting Brexit done" - while ignoring the cuts, the broken economy and the other causes that helped to drive the Brexit vote of 2016. Dealing with those causes would entail being winched out of the deep embrace of the TV studio sofas, tearing out the IV drip that feeds them the untreated bullshit of No 10 "sources", and seeing more of the country than could ever be conveyed in a fleeting vox pop.	Changing politicians and priorities Who is the monster/threat? "Treated like dirt" DC "casually dropped" Failure as society To be sneered at Judged/labelled as "not being able to manage finances" "well lunched gas bags" disparity? Ignoring the cuts, the broken economy and the other causes that helped drive Brexit vote. Denial? Ignore	Monsters/threats Failure Space Greed

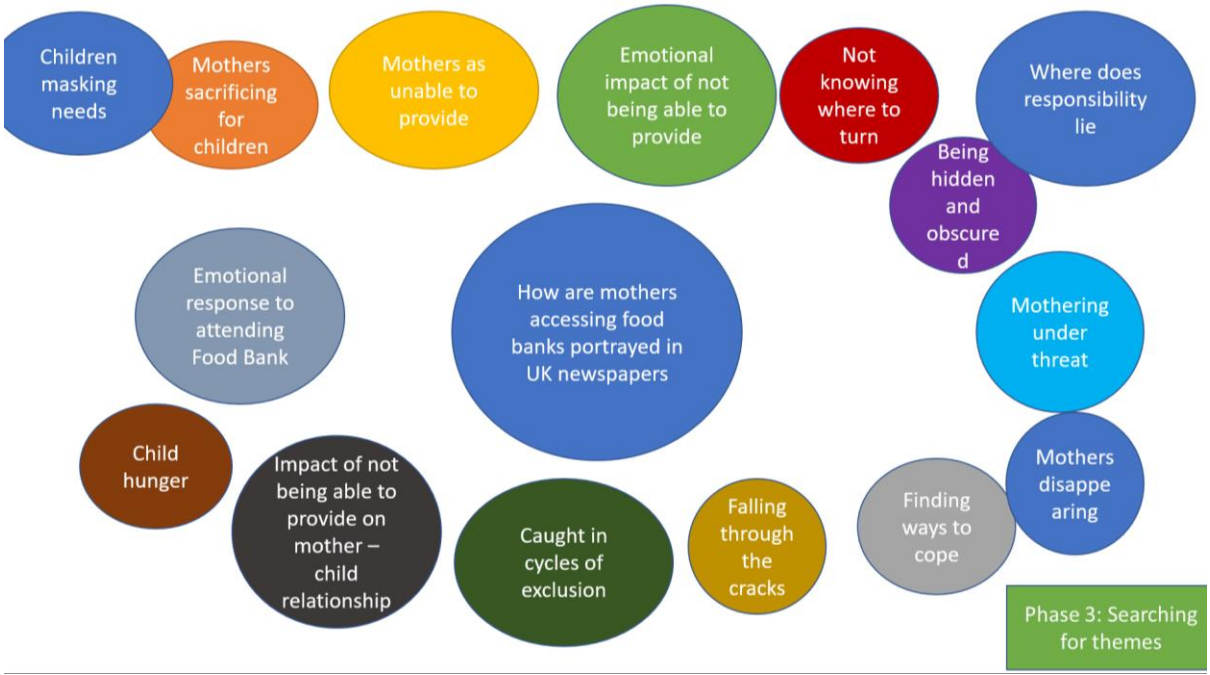
If the experts did that, they would confront a society where levels of deprivation once considered shameful are now treated as normal; where what was scratched together just a few months ago is now relied on as part of the new, ad hoc welfare state. This week I went to Colchester, in Essex, to see something both brilliant and saddening: a Munch Club. In a small scout hut on the postwar Monkwick housing estate, 45 children and their parents were getting a free lunch to ease the expense of half-term holidays. Tiny kids were burrowing into mountains of chicken nuggets and chips before collecting chocolate cake in custard. There'll be Munch Clubs across the town this week, run by volunteers and depending on donations. They're the idea of Maureen Powell, a local pensioner with a sharp blond bob and a smoker's laugh. She started here just a year ago, and by Christmas plans to run no fewer than six Munch Clubs. People keep asking her to lay on more, and she thinks she knows the number-one reason why. "UC!" she shouts, putting the blame squarely on the policy spawned by that MP down the road in Chingford, Iain Duncan Smith. "You have to wait five weeks for any money to turn up; and they mess you about. They [the government] give you a [starting] loan, which they take out of your benefits. It's just debt upon debt upon debt." To keep the clubs going, Powell often raids her state pension while her small home is crammed with four freezers and three fridges to store supplies. As indicated by the crutch with which she hobbles, she has her own issues - arthritis, asthma and secondary multiple sclerosis. Let me speak plainly: Powell is a hero, yet nothing about this system feels like an adequate replacement for a proper welfare state. Except that's not something the UK can say it really has any more - not when the state prefers literally to melt 50p pieces of hubris rather than keep citizens from starving.	Lack of trust: “mess you about.” Versus local pensioner trusted? It's just debt upon debt upon debt." Trapped cycle? Who has space Local hero Scarcity/deprivation	Caught Denial and comfort

At one table sit Gary and Rebecca, surrounded by their five kids. She raises the children, while he stacks shelves at a supermarket. When his wages hit their bank account, the money is all gone on bills by that same afternoon. Their UC top-up is just not enough. If they weren't at the Munch Club, "neither Gary nor me would eat anything till dinner, so as to leave more for the kids", says Rebecca. How do they cope with the hunger? "You get used to it," she shrugs. Their children get neither sweets nor treats, and their parents can't afford to take them to Colchester zoo or the fireworks. I think about the classroom tradition of talking about what you did in your holidays and wonder what these kids say. I wonder how tough things get at home, and how much they overhear. Not far away is Bevan Close, a reminder of the Labour minister who built this estate. Nye Bevan wanted communities founded on fairness, where "the doctor, the grocer, the butcher and the farm labourer all live in the same street". What has replaced his vision? When Cameron entered No 10, Colchester borough council received £11m a year from Whitehall. It's a sum that has dropped and dropped: this year it is £275,000; next year, precisely zero. Common lawns on the estate used to get cut every month; now it's only three times a year. Police officers used to patrol on foot; now, says councillor Dave Harris, "the only time a cop car turns up is when there's really bad news". The large NHS clinic, where parents took newborns to be weighed, is now shuttered up. We could talk about austerity or tough choices, but something far more profound has happened here - a poor area a couple of hours from Westminster has been systematically stripped of some of the rudiments of civilised life. This is the new	Nuclear family, roles mother “the UC not enough” sense of being squeezed Injustice Not eating/sacrifice Acceptance of situation/inequality as coping? Impact on child? What hear/witness? Repetition dropped and dropped – discarded & let down Taking away/ “stripped” of resources. Children relying on sick pensioners for food? Humiliation Surviving on the margins in isolation Questioning civilised life and morality of society	Disposable Trying to survive

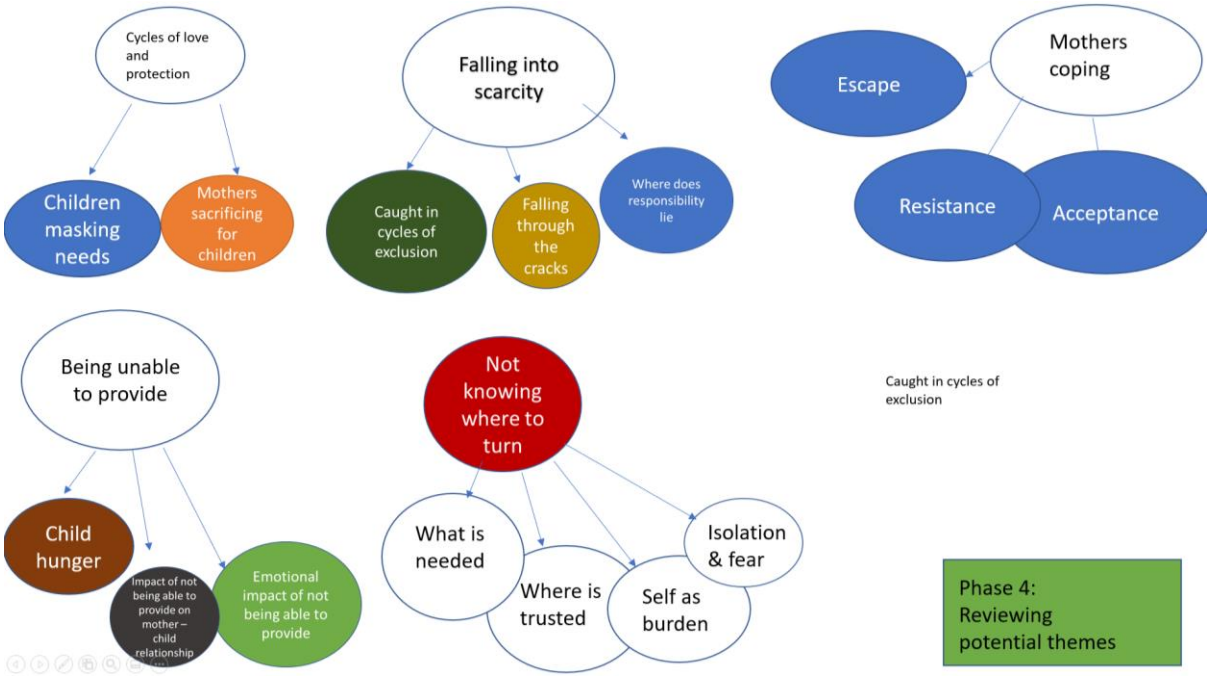
normal for swaths of Britain: where a man can be declared fit for work shortly before dying ; where headteachers have to beg parents for toilet roll ; where children must rely on a sick pensioner to keep them fed out of term time. That's what this election is really about: not Brexit, not Boris v Jezza, but how we define a civilised society. Aditya Chakrabortty is a Guardian columnist		Morality

7.7.2 Phase 3: Searching for themes

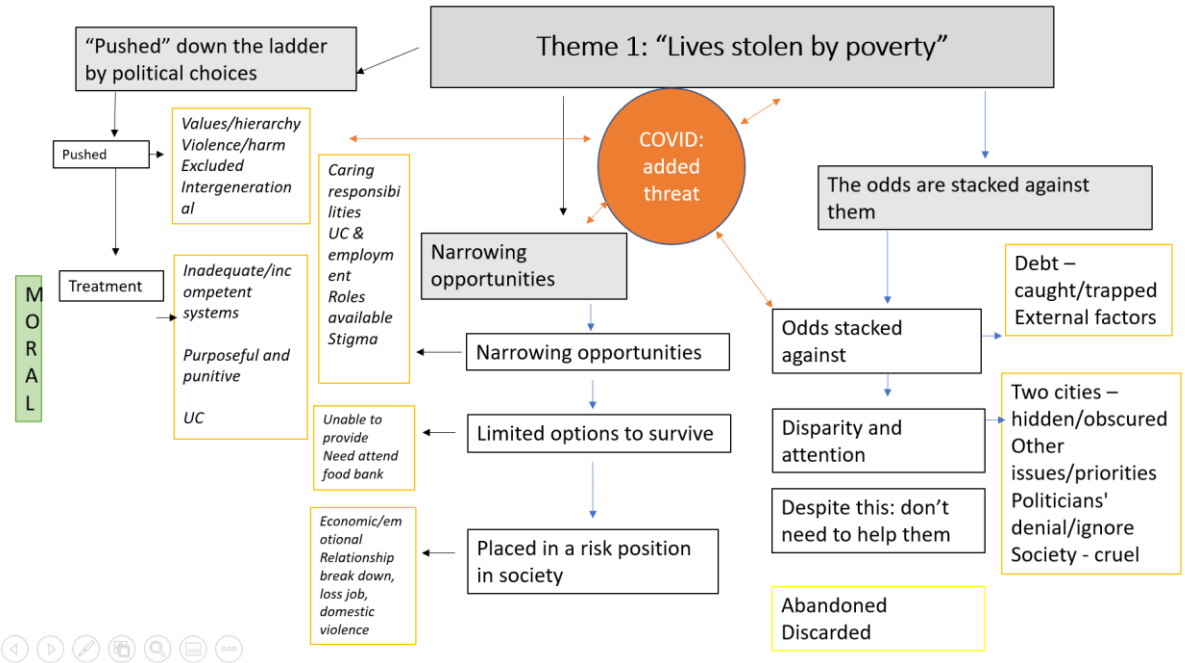


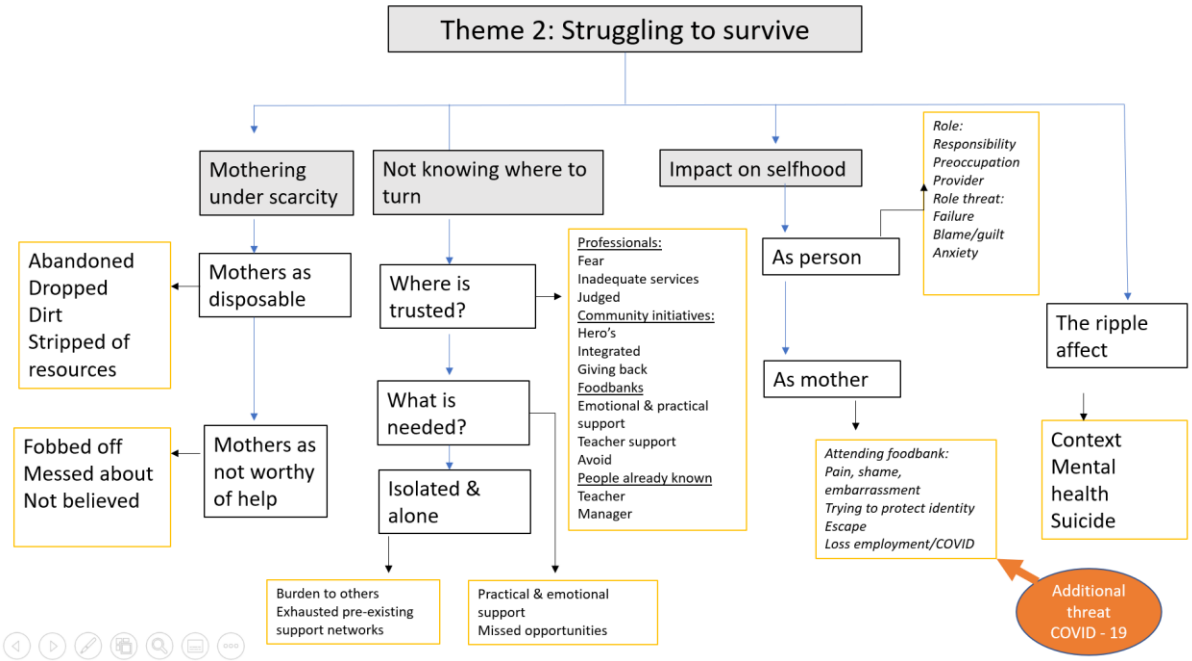


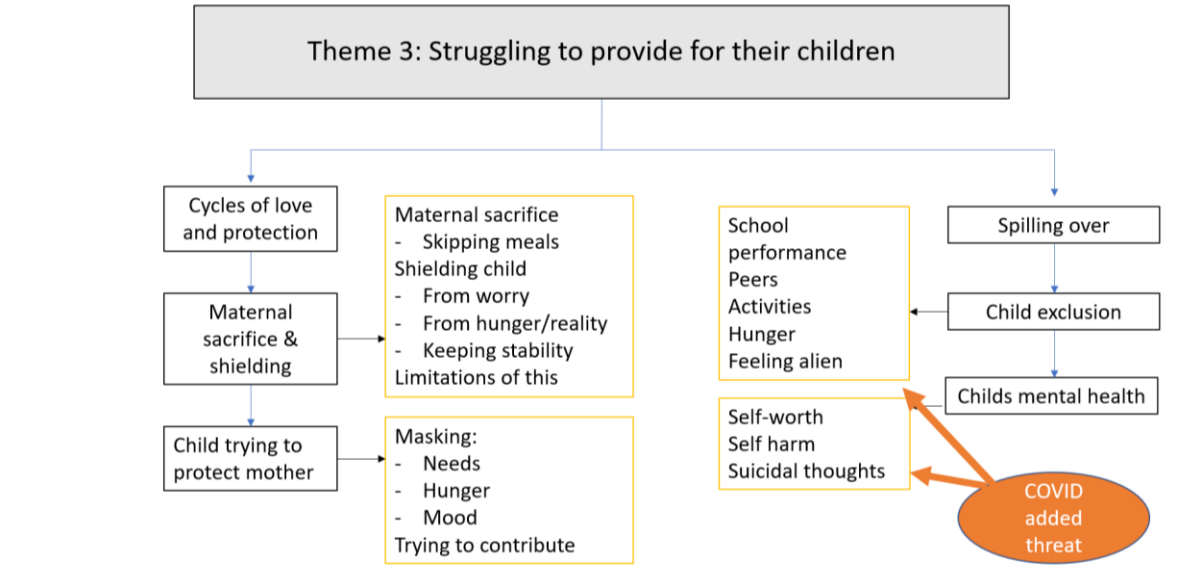
7.7.3 Phase 4: Reviewing potential themes



7.7.4 Phase 5: Defining and naming themes







7.8 Appendix H: Triangulation of individual interview and newspaper article themes

The tables below represent the similarities and differences between data from two newspaper sources the newspaper article and the initial individual interview. These visual representations were created as a tool to explore and triangulate the two qualitative data sources (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009).

Three tables were created to provide a visual comparison of each overall theme found in this research. The column on the left includes the themes, subthemes, and clusters from the newspaper articles. Whereas the column on the right, represents the concepts from the interview and how these compare with the results from this research.

7.8.1 Triangulation of theme one: lives stolen by poverty

Themes from newspaper articles	Additional ideas from interview
Pushed down the ladder by political choices	
How mothers are valued	
Violence/harm	Chased, physically and emotionally abused & harassed by ex-partner
Excluded intergeneratonal	No protection from police
Inadequate/incompetent systems	Not believed by police or legal systems
Purposeful and punitive	Physical violence & harassment by manager
UC	Impact of ending of tax credits
Narrowing opportunities	
Caring responsibilities	
UC & employment	
Roles available	Needing guarantor to rent
Stigma	Prejudice. Awareness of categories in the news e.g. "lazy"
Unable to provide need to attend food bank	
Placed in a risky position in society	Exploited financially by landlord
Odds are stacked against them	
Debt	
Caught/trapped by external factors	
Disparity of attention	Court and police systems not understanding mothers needs
Despite this don't need to help them	Hartlepool as safe haven
	Escape to new city (Hartlepool)

Green	Theme is in both data sources
Blue	Theme is in interview only
Orange	Theme is in newspaper articles only
Yellow	Adds more depth or new perspective

7.8.2 Triangulation of theme two: Struggling to survive

Themes from newspaper articles	Additional ideas from interview
Struggling to survive	
Mothering under scarcity	
Mothers as disposable	By police, landlords and employees
Mothers as not worthy of help	Should "appreciate" attention from (abusive) partner
Not knowing where to turn	
Where is trusted?	Fear of attending food bank will be judged unable to care for children
What is needed?	Fear of social services
Isolated and alone	
Impact on selfhood	
As a person (failure, blame, guilt and anxiety)	Self as survivor and fighting back
	Protecting self and other women
	Resisting abuse, exploitation and injustice
As a mother (pain, shame, embarrasment and escape)	Turning fear to anger and strength
	Self as hard working
	Searching for opportunities
The ripple effect	
Impact of context on mental health	
Anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicidal thoughts around accessing food and providing	Impact of attending food bank on confidence
Paranoias/mistrust	Feeling like a "bad" person
COVID-19 an added threat	

Green	Theme is in both data sources
Blue	Theme is in interview only
Orange	Theme is in newspaper articles only
Yellow	Adds more depth or new perspective

7.8.3 Triangulation of theme three: Struggling to provide

Themes from newspaper articles	Additional ideas from interview
Cycles of love and protection	
Maternal sacrifice and shielding	Sacrifice of fueld and heating in winter to protect child
Child trying to protect mother	
Spilling over	
Child exclusion	
Child's mental health	

Green	Theme is in both data sources
Blue	Theme is in interview only
Orange	Theme is in newspaper articles only
Yellow	Adds more depth or new perspective

7.8.4 Reflection on triangulation

Completing this process highlighted that there was significant overlap and differences in the two data sources; how mothers accessing food banks were represented by newspaper articles, and one mother's experience of attending a food bank. There was significant overlap as both data sources highlighted that mothers were subjected to external structures, dismissed by services, treated as disposable, viewed as not worthy of help and isolated and alone.

Newspaper articles represented politicians and policies as responsible for the treatment of mothers in society, positioning them as being purposefully punitive. Whereas, the mothers interview focused on close-up experiences, such as experiencing violence, abuse, and exploitation from her ex-partner, manager and landlord. In addition, she linked the experience of being treated as disposable to services mentioned in newspaper articles, however additional services were highlighted, including legal services, such as police, courts, and solicitors.

The newspaper articles portrayed the impact of mothers accessing a food bank on children and their daily lives. This was not focused on in the individual interview, likely due to questions not focusing on this. In addition, the mother was understandably distressed, and within the discussion centred the physical safety and provision of food for herself and her child, suggesting this was a main priority at that point in time.