



RESEARCH BRIEFING

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# Bridging the Local and Global

Education in the time of Covid-19

Dr Aliya Khalid and Lavinia Kamphausen

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This study is part of the broader project, *Bridging the Local and Global: Archiving Women's Collectives in Spaces of Action/Reflection*, which is a collaboration between the Durham University, Newcastle University and the University of Oxford and seeks to strengthen the link between the global imaginaries of local actors.

## Introduction

This study explores the experiences of Pakistani heritage mothers in England educating their primary school age children during COVID. The report makes an argument that women (as mothers) adapt their own philosophies of education to support their children through time. These changes are remarkable in times of rapid change like COVID. These mothers' perspectives inform the multiplicity of ways in which 'spaces' are created and recreated for their children drawing on their unique philosophies of education, thereby archiving their own experience.

This study engages in discussions about South Asian parenting in UK. The literature on Asian parenting practices in UK is indecisive. On the one hand it depicts them as asserting their aspirations on children and on the other as less involved and 'hard to reach'. This research deconstructs such deficit discourses and argues for knowledge to be created by the community through their own analysis of their practices of parenting.

This research provides insight into the communities in England that are often understood as 'hard to reach'.

## Our Approach

We draw on the interconnections between temporality and physical space to argue for a hybrid space that allows for new forms of knowledge to emerge.

We take the COVID-19 pandemic as the narrative turn that allows us to conduct an analysis across time and space.

We draw on interview data that was collected through 8 semi-structured interviews and two focused group discussions with mothers of Pakistani heritage in England.



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## Key Findings and Recommendations

- The mothers within culturally diverse communities in England hold the expertise to enable environments that could support children with their learning needs. It is therefore essential that efforts are made to bring mothers into the discussions around child development and education.
- School curricula should make provisions for creative pursuits that may be carried forth to home environments. Mothers identified the importance of leisurely physical activities for the socio-emotional wellbeing of children during COVID. There should be an integrated wellbeing agenda that brings the home and school together to aim for a wholesome learning experience.
- During lockdown mothers took the initiative of redesigning curriculum to suit the needs of their children. This skill and knowledge remain with the mothers who are now better equipped to support learning. Education would benefit from efforts to enhance home (mothers) and school knowledge exchanges.
- This study highlights the importance of culture and socio-cultural exchange as an accessory to learning. Educational institutions and policies that envision culture not only as a contextual factor but draws on it to inform educational provision are likely to progress equitable learning.
- Mothers may be seen as partners as well as facilitators of education. Formal efforts to include mothers' perspective to informal pedagogy could provide insights into a rich learning experience for children.

### Dr Aliya Khalid and Lavinia Kamphausen



**Dr Aliya Khalid** has a PhD in gender, education, and development from the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge. She is a Lecturer in Comparative and International Education in the Department of Education at the University of Oxford. Her work focuses on how mothers in the Global South navigate their agency in highly constrained circumstances. Her research interests lie in issues of epistemic justice and the promotion of knowledges (plural) and Southern epistemologies.



**Lavinia Kamphausen** is a DPhil student at the Department of Education, University of Oxford. Her doctoral research explores transnational student activism in the fields of demilitarisation, decolonisation and climate justice, involving a multi-sited ethnography. Her research interests include critical higher education research, the decolonisation of higher education and queer temporalities.

✉ [aliya.khalid@education.ox.ac.uk](mailto:aliya.khalid@education.ox.ac.uk)

🖱 <https://www.durham.ac.uk/research/institutes-and-centres/gender-law/research/current-projects/bridging-the-local-and-global-archiving-womens-collectives-in-spaces-of-actionreflection/>

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