AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ACCULTURATION, ETHNIC IDENTITY

AND PARENTING PRACTICES IN

ASIAN INDIAN FAMILIES


THESIS


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For my mother

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## CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The United States is experiencing an influx of immigration from countries around the globe. Many young immigrants are migrating to the U.S. to pursue educational and professional opportunities not available in their homelands. As such, many of these immigrants are opting to stay in the U.S. and therefore are getting married and starting their families. As well, these immigrants are forming informal ethnic communities within the cities to which they have migrated.

One ethnic group which has done this is Asian Indians. Over the last couple of years, Asian Indian families have developed a strong presence within the U.S. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there are currently 1,645,510 Asian Indian immigrants living in the U.S. (Reeves & Bennett, 2004). Furthermore, cities such as Austin, Texas, have experienced a significant increase in Asian Indian population. Many families have migrated to the area due to the industries which dominate the area, such as technology, research, and academia. As well, there are now restaurants, stores, and community organizations and centers that specifically cater towards Asian Indian families.

However, the immigration experience is not free from difficulties. Asian Indian families face the challenge of forming a new identity while retaining their sense of "Indianness." Moreover, these families are struggling with the challenge of raising their

young children in a culture where the values and parenting practices highly prized by Asian Indian culture are in constant conflict with the Western culture. According to Segal (1991), the "foundation of the Indian family system is threatened" by this immigration process (p. 235).

Family scientists and other professionals are becoming increasingly cognizant of the importance of studying Asian Indian families in order to gain a better understanding of the cultural background of these families, their parenting practices, and their needs. Furthermore, it is important for professionals to recognize that the practices used by parents in caring for children "instantiate cultural themes of importance to parents, and in this way they communicate cultural messages" to their children (Harkness & Super, 2002, p. 272).

Theoretical Framework

Two theoretical frameworks will be used to guide this inquiry. The first framework is Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1989). The ecological systems theory was developed based on the assumption that human development is influenced by interactions between the individual's ecological environment and his or her own personal development (Bronfenbrenner). Human development is thus shaped by these interactions.

The theory is composed of five multiple nesting systems. The system at the heart of the theory is called the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). This is the system or environment in which the most immediate and direct interactions occur. Examples of such interactions are those between a child and his or her family, and between the child and school. The next system is known as the mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner). The mesosystem refers to the interrelations amongst the various microsystems that the

individual can operate in. For example, the child/family microsystem can have an influence on the child/school microsystem in that the type of interactions the child has at home with his or her parents may dictate the type of interactions the child has at school with peers or teachers.

The third system is referred to as the exosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). In this system, economic and social factors have an indirect influence on the family. Examples of these factors include governmental policies such as immigration policies, economic well-being due to parental employment opportunities, and availability of religious institutions , ethnic communities, and community cultural sites within a given community. The fourth system in the ecological systems theory is the macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner). The macrosystem is primarily associated with the culture in which the individual lives. According to Bronfenbrenner, the culture in which the developing person resides exerts significant influence on the belief systems utilized by the individuals responsible for socializing the person, such as parents and schools. Examples of macrosystems would include culture such as American culture and Indian culture within the U.S., regionality, and social class.

The final system in this theory is known as the chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). The chronosystem represents the concept of time, and how time has an influence on the environments with which the individual interacts. Essentially, this system encompasses all the experiences an individual encounters throughout the life course.

In relation to immigrant Asian Indian families, it can be argued that each subsystem within the ecological systems theory will have a significant influence upon these families. These influences could affect how Asian Indian parents view themselves

in terms of their "Indianness," especially when these parents are raising their children in an environment that is different from the environment in which they themselves grew up. Moreover, these influences could affect the parenting practices used with their children.

In addition to Bronfenbrenner's theory, an acculturation framework will also be used to guide this study. Acculturation is defined as the cultural and psychological changes that a person within one cultural group undergoes after interactions with another cultural group or groups (Berry, 2003, 2006, 2007). There are different variations in how individuals and groups of people respond to these interactions. Furthermore, previous research has focused exclusively on both individual and cultural levels of acculturation, and there is a need for future research to examine the acculturative processes experienced by the family unit as a whole (Berry, 2007).

Berry (2006) has conceptualized acculturation as being a multidimensional process, which is reflected in his acculturation strategies framework. However, it is important to point out that Berry has developed his framework on the assumption that the ethnic minority, or nondominant group in question has the ability to decide on any acculturation strategy. In addition, this group is not forced to select a particular strategy due to influences from the dominant group (Berry, 2003, 2006, 2007).

Berry (2003, 2006, 2007) has identified four distinct acculturation strategies in which ethnic minority people experiencing acculturation can engage. These strategies are composed of two distinct yet related factors: attitudes and behaviors. Attitudes refer to what the individual prefers, and behaviors refer to what the individual actually does (Berry, 2003). Additionally, these strategies are organized around psychological and cultural factors (Berry, 2003, 2006, 2007). However, it is important to note that

acculturation strategies are not selected randomly by the ethnic group or individual. According to Berry (2003), the selected strategy is usually "an outcome of contextual factors rather than just a correlate" (p. 30). This means that both individual and cultural group influences such as physical appearance and the social ecology of a particular group can shape a person's selection of acculturation strategies.

The first acculturation strategy as identified by Berry (2003, 2006) is called assimilation. Assimilation is selected when the individual or group has chosen not to maintain the original culture, but opted to develop relationships and pursue interactions with those outside of the cultural group. The second acculturation strategy is known as separation. This occurs when people have opted not to develop outside relationships, but have a desire to maintain their cultural identity. Integration is the third strategy that can be utilized by an ethnic minority group or individual. With this strategy, individuals or groups have a desire to uphold their cultural identities as well as foster relationships with other groups. The final strategy is called marginalization. This strategy is characterized by individuals or group having no interest in maintaining their cultural identities and in developing relationships with those outside of the culture of origin (Berry, 2003, 2006).

The acculturation process is not always a smooth experience for everyone. When individuals and families experience issues or problems, this is referred to as acculturative stress (Berry, 2007). However, not all stress associated with acculturation is negative, or only experienced when families adopt the marginalized or separation strategies. Individuals and families can also experience acculturative stress while achieving the integration strategy (Berry, 2006; Krishnan & Berry, 1992).

Through the process of adopting an acculturation strategy, individuals and families will also develop long-term adaptations (Berry, 2006). These adaptations will either help these people to acculturate into their new society, or will make the process even more difficult than it already is. These adaptations are also comprised of psychological and sociocultural influences. Psychological influences include ones personality, life events, and social support (Ward, 1996, as cited in Berry, 2003). Sociocultural influences entail ones cultural knowledge, positive intergroup attitudes, and degree of contact with other individuals (Ward, 1996, as cited in Berry). Berry (2006) has suggested that ethnocultural individuals and groups who select integrative acculturation strategies will also develop better adaptation skills than those who select marginalized or separation strategies.

## Problem Statement

Currently there is minimal research that addresses the parenting practices of Asian Indian families living within the United States (Farver, Xu, Bhadha, Narang, & Lieber, 2007), and in particular, families with young children. The research that is available has either lumped Asian Indian families together with other Asian families (i.e. Chinese, Korean) into a homogenous group, or does not acknowledge Asian Indian families altogether. It is important to note that there are some distinct cultural differences between Asian Indians and other Asian families (Chao & Tseng, 2002). In addition, the process of migrating to another country where the dominant culture is significantly different from ones cultural background can be a daunting task and fraught with difficulties for the immigrant family. This process could have significant influence on the parenting practices used by the family to care for their children. Therefore, the purpose of this

exploratory study is to explore the relationship between immigrant Asian Indian parents' acculturation experiences, ethnic identities, and parenting behaviors in the areas of socialization and childrearing practices.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be addressed in this research study:

*Research Question 1:* How do Asian Indian parents uphold and maintain their ethnic identities after migrating to the United States?

*Research Question 2.* How do Asian Indian parents' ethnic identities influence parenting practices?

*Research Question 3:* How do Asian Indian parents' acculturation experiences influence parenting practices?

# CHAPTER II

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to examine how Asian Indian parents' acculturation experiences and ethnic identities influence their parenting behaviors in the areas of socialization and childrearing practices. This review of literature begins with a discussion of parenting qualities found in Asian families. This review also discusses the characteristics of Asian Indian families, and the previous research done with this population. A discussion of Asian Indian parenting, with an emphasis on socialization and childrearing practices, also follows. However, since there is a dearth of research on Asian Indian families, previous research from other ethnic groups, such as Chinese and Hispanics, that share similar characteristics with Asian Indians has been cited.

### Asian Families

When studying Asian families, it is important to take into account the cultural origins of each family. When one uses the term "Asians," he or she can be referring to a person from countries such as China, Pakistan, Cambodia, Thailand, and India (The World Factbook, 2007). As well, there are significant religious, ethnic, and linguistic differences within these countries themselves. Therefore, it is important for family science researchers to take these unique attributes into account within their research.

In their extensive review of previous research on Asian families, Chao and Tseng (2002) found three specific aspects of parenting behaviors that were similar across these

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Asian groups. The first aspect was a general focus on the family as being of primary importance. Specifically, Asian family members were expected to be interdependent upon each other across the lifespan (Chao & Tseng). This emphasis on the centrality of the family in Asian families was instilled in children as young as infants and according to Chao and Tseng, may be due to sociocultural influences guiding parents' behaviors such as Hinduism and filial piety.

Furthermore, all members of the Asian family, especially elders, were expected to play a significant role in raising children (Chao & Tseng). All elders were involved in child care by providing assistance in parental decision making and providing guidance and advice, even when the child became an adult (Chao & Tseng). In return, children and adults were expected to honor and respect their opinions (Chao & Tseng).

The second aspect of parenting that was shared across Asian families was the use of control and/or harsh parenting practices (Chao & Tseng). In general, Asian parents have been found to employ a more restrictive parenting style than European or Mexican parents (Chao & Tseng). These restrictive or controlling styles included practices referred to as *guan*, or training, in Chinese families and shaming in Taiwanese families (Chao & Tseng). However, Chao and Tseng pointed out that contrary to Western thought, not all controlling behaviors had negative impacts on Asian children's development. For example, the authors cited a study by Leung, Lau, and Lam (1998) in which Hong Kong Chinese parents utilized an authoritarian style of parenting and this resulted in positive influences on children's academic performance (Chao & Tseng, 2002).

The third aspect of parenting identified by Chao and Tseng was a focus on academic achievement. Asian families viewed the child's education as being their

primary responsibility and therefore held high expectations for their children to succeed

academically (Chao & Tseng). This emphasis on academics can be traced back to the

cultural attitudes and beliefs on child growth and development held by Asian families,

such as Confucianism and the "cultivation" beliefs held by Japanese families (Chao &

Tseng).

Although Chao & Tseng (2002) found three aspects of parenting commonly

shared amongst Asian groups, there remained differences between these groups as well.

An example of an empirical study highlighting these differences was conducted by Rao,

McHale, and Pearson (2003). Rao and colleagues examined similarities and differences

between the parenting practices and socialization goals of Chinese and Indian mothers

residing in Hong Kong and Bangalore. The researchers found that Chinese and Indian

mothers differed in their socio-emotional goals for their children. Specifically, Indian

mothers appeared to be more accommodating of individual differences and emotional

expressions from their children than Chinese mothers (Rao et al.). The researchers argued

that these differences must stem from cultural beliefs on child development and

socialization held by Indian mothers that are not held by Chinese mothers. More

specifically, Indian mothers were more accommodating of their children's emotional

expressions and individual differences than Chinese mothers (Rao et al.).

In another study comparing the maternal beliefs held by Japanese, Indian, and

English mothers, Joshi and MacLean (1997) found differences between middle-income

Japanese and Indian mothers' child development expectations in areas on education/self

care, peer interaction, communication, environmental independence, compliance, and

emotional control. More specifically, Indian mothers appeared to have more lenient

expectations for their children than Japanese and English mothers, meaning that Indian mothers expected children's competency in these domains at later ages. Furthermore, Japanese and Indian parents had significant differences between each other even though both cultures are characterized as being more collectivistic than individualistic. Joshi and MacLean suggested that these differences between Japanese and Indian mothers might be attributed to the differences in living arrangements and goals for each cultural group, such as family structure (i.e. nuclear versus joint) and socialization behaviors (independence versus interdependence) for children.

In sum, although there are similarities in parenting behaviors amongst different Asian groups as identified by Chao and Tseng (2002), there are also significant differences. The studies discussed above highlighted these differences. Additionally, these are two of the few studies available that have empirically studied Asian Indian families. Thus, the dearth of research prompts the need for family research that specifically looks at Indian families.

<div align="center">Asian Indian Families</div>

The term "Asian Indian families" refers to families whose cultural backgrounds originate from India. Still, there are various cultural and linguistic differences within these Asian Indian families due to their state of origin. India itself is divided into 28 states and 7 union territories, and there are up to 16 different official languages spoken, including English, Hindi, Telugu, Marathi, and Punjabi (The World Factbook, 2007). Despite these differences, there are similarities within these families. These similarities amongst Asian Indian families reflect four themes: religion, caste, gender roles, and family structure.

Religion

Religion is the expression of and adherence to an organized set of beliefs and rituals endorsed by a particular institution or doctrine (Hawkins, 2005; Hugen, 2001). According to Hugen (2001), religion has a significant role in the family life cycle. As families traverse through life, the religious practices and belief structures they hold shape their actions and relationships, including their family structure, how they parent, and the nature of their parent-child relationships (Dhruvarajan, 1988; Hugen, 2001; Mullatti, 1995). For example, religion influences the way parents socialize their children through the practices they use to introduce their children into the religious community (Hugen). Furthermore, religion also allows the family to uphold family traditions in regard to their religious beliefs, as well as uphold family cohesiveness by fostering family closeness (Hugen).

Religion and spirituality play a significant role in the Asian Indian family, and are in fact a common denominator between India's extremely diverse populations (Mullatti, 1995). Specifically, Hinduism is the religion most frequently practiced by families. In fact, over 80% of India's population is Hindu (The World Factbook, 2007). There are other religions practiced by Asian Indian families, such as Christianity or Islam, but no other religion exerts as powerful of an influence on Asian Indian family life as Hinduism. As such, a discussion of the basic tenets of Hinduism is warranted.

However, it is important to note that there is a paucity of research available on Hinduism and Asian Indian families from the family science field. Moreover, the majority of research available is either dated, or was written for other disciplines such as counseling, anthropology, psychology, and social work. Thus, I have only highlighted the

aspects of Hinduism frequently cited in this available literature. A full discussion of all the different variations of Hinduism is beyond the scope of this thesis.

## Hinduism

Hinduism is one of the oldest religions in the world, with its origins based in India. Although there is no definitive date of origin, it is theorized that the religion dates back to 3000 BCE (Narayanan, 2004). Central to Hinduism are the concepts of innate divinity and peace, which are reflected in all prayers and sacred texts (Singh, 2001). As well, Hinduism is viewed as being an integral part of the world, and is reflected in all areas of civilization: nature, people, culture, the sciences, and the arts (Flood, 1996; Fowler, 1997; Mullatti, 1995; Singh, 2001).

Hindus (followers of Hinduism) adhere to a worldview that focuses on five key components. These five components include: a spiritual power existing within the universe; all human beings possessing a divine life; all humans are a part of the same family; the promotion of the welfare of all humans through cooperative efforts will lead all to true happiness; and all religions existing in society are but partial approaches to actualizing one's ultimate reality (K. Singh, 1990, as cited in Singh, 2001). In addition, according to Mullatti (1995), Hindus have a belief that each person is brought into the world with an obligation to family members and the community.

In addition to these worldviews, Singh (2001) outlined four aims of life considered to be salient for Hindus. The first aim is *Dharma*, which means to live a life of righteousness (Singh). The second aim is called *Artha*, which refers to one's social and personal well-being (Singh). The third aim is *Kama*, which refers to one's gratification of worldly pleasures (Singh). The last aim is known as *Moksha*, which describes one's quest

to receive salvation from despair (Singh). It is the goal of the devout Hindu to achieve each aim (Singh).

Furthermore, Hodge (2004), Fowler (1997), and Singh (2001) have identified additional basic assumptions found to be prevalent to Hinduism. The first assumption is *Karma*, which is simply defined as the rule of cause and effect (Fowler, 1997; Hodge, 2004). The second assumption is *Samsara*, which refers to Hindus' beliefs in reincarnation (Fowler, 1997; Hodge, 2004). *Samsara* is conjoined with *Karma* in that a person's actions (positive or negative) will determine his or her's *Samsara* (Fowler, 1997; Hodge, 2004). The third assumption is called *Maya*. *Maya* is a difficult concept to define clearly. Singh (2001) defines *Maya* as "the outer appearance of the reality within" (p. 40). Fowler (1997) describes *Maya* as simply being transient, the material world. Hindus visualize the world as being immersed in *Maya* (Fowler, 1997; Singh, 2001). Reality is constantly changing due to *Maya*, and therefore it is imperative for Hindus to always remember the aims of Hinduism in order to achieve meaning in their lives, and eventually *Moksha* (Fowler, 1997; Singh, 2001).

Hinduism has also delineated four distinct stages of the life cycle (Mullatti, 1995; Singh, 2001). The first stage is called Brahamacharya, which means the student (Mullatti, 1995; Singh, 2001). This stage encompasses birth to age 25. The second stage is Grihastha, which means householder. This stage focuses on family life, as well as making contributions to the greater good of society by providing resources to the indigent (Singh, 2001). The third stage is Vanprastha, during which the individual retires from rituals and household duties (Mullatti, 1995). The final stage is called Sannyasa, which starts from age 75 and onwards (Singh, 2001). This stage is when the individual detaches him and

herself from family life (Mullatti, 1995). Each stage is celebrated by the Hindu family to ensure a "smooth transition" from one stage to the next, with families participating in rituals and ceremonies to commemorate these transitions (Singh, 2001). According to Kakar (1978), Ranganath and Ranganath (1998), and Singh (2001), the Hinduism life cycle can be viewed as being similar to Erik Erikson's lifespan development theory. The most significant difference between the two is that the Hinduism life cycle utilizes a circular perspective, meaning that characteristics of old age-hood can be seen during childhood, and vice versa (Singh, 2001). This means that the child-like behaviors that emerge due to aging are viewed as training for the next childhood (Singh, 2001).

Hindus practice their religion daily through prayers and ceremonies (called *puja*), and select a "God" to worship (Fowler, 1997; Mullatti, 1995). A Hindu household will have a section of the home devoted to their chosen God (Fowler, 1997; Mullatti, 1995). In addition, there are multiple gods/goddesses that Hindus honor throughout the year. For example, Hindus perform ceremonies to celebrate *Ganesha*, the lord of success, or *Lakshmi*, the goddess of prosperity (Fowler, 1997).

As previously mentioned, Hindu families also perform ceremonies to honor significant life experiences, called *samskaras* (Flood, 1996; Fowler, 1997). There are sixteen *samskaras* that Hindus perform, with the rites associated with a child's birth being one of the most important (Flood, 1996). One example of a *samskara* is the naming ritual for infants (Flood; Fowler; Mullatti, 1995; Sharma, 2000). Moreover, Hinduism also provides guidance on how parents should view their child's development. In their discussion of Hindu beliefs on child development, Rao and colleagues (2003) stated that Hindu families view development more from a nature perspective rather than a nurture

one. This means that children are born with predetermined dispositions and thus,

development should be left alone so that developmental processes can unfurl naturally

without interference from mothers or other family members (Rao et al.; Sharma). As

well, children are viewed by their families as being gifts from the gods (Hodge, 2004),

with Hindu families giving greater preference for boys over girls (Flood; Fowler; Kakar,

1978).

In addition to these celebrations of life experiences, Hindus also participate in a

variety of festivals, such as *Diwali*, which is simply described as a festival of lights, and

*Holi*, a colorful festival celebrated during the springtime (Flood, 1996). Moreover,

religious activities can also consist of daily activities such as bathing in the morning,

wearing certain clothing, and eating certain meals (Mullatti, 1995). Hindus also attend

temples to pay their respects to the gods (Fowler, 1997). Surprisingly, increased

urbanization and education have not altered Hinduism practices (Mullatti; Singh, 2001).

Urbanized and highly educated Asian Indians still practice Hinduism today.

## Caste System

One of the most well-known and complicated aspects of Hinduism is the caste

system. The caste system is a type of social order that delineates a Hindu's role in Indian

society (Flood, 1996; Fowler, 1997). There are four major broad classes, or *varnas*:

*Brahmins, Ksatriyas, Vaisyas*, and *Sudras*.

Each class has specific *gunas*, or qualities associated with it. People belonging to

the *Brahmin* class are characterized as being priestly, and possessing great intellect

(Narayanan, 2004). The *Ksatriyas* are people involved in administration, or ruling

activities, such as government or the military (Narayanan). The *Vaisyas* are composed of

farmers, or those who sell goods to people (Narayanan). The *Sudras* are the laborers who

mainly engage in activities to serve others, such as servants and farmhands (Narayanan).

Although the presence of the caste system is not so prevalent in major cities in India

today (Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, 2007), the system is still strongly

adhered to in the rural areas of the country (Fowler, 1997).

Family Structure

There are religious influences on the Asian Indian family structure. More

specifically, according to Mullatti (1995), Hinduism dictates strict guidelines for family

structure, with patriarchy being supreme. Men are responsible for making decisions for

the family, whereas women are primarily responsible for raising the children and

upholding religious traditions and practices. Moreover, the family's primary role is to

meet religious obligations (Hodge, 2004; Mullatti; Sonawat, 2001). These obligations

consist of having a male child, passing on Hindu traditions to the next generation, and

also honoring ancestors (Mullatti).

Moreover, as previously identified in Chao and Tseng's (2002) review of research

on Asian parenting, many Asian Indian families employ a family structure that

emphasizes familial interdependence. Family members are raised to be dependent upon

each other (Segal, 1991). Furthermore, the family structure is also patriarchal; females

are expected to depend on not only their husbands, but also on their fathers, brothers, or

sons (Dhruvarajan, 1988; Mullatti, 1995; Segal).

In addition to having an interdependent and patriarchal family structure, many

Asian Indian families also have an extended or joint family structure (D'Cruz & Bharat,

2001; Segal, 1991). These families have extended family members living with them, such

as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. There is also a hierarchical power structure, with men holding more power than women, and elders having more power than younger members (Deepak, 2005).

Contrary to some research on Asian Indian family structure, there is also research that indicates not all Asian Indian families use an extended family structure. Rather, many families employ a nuclear family structure (D'Cruz & Bharat, 2001). This family structure is seen both in families living in the U.S. and in India (D'Cruz & Bharat; Deepak, 2005; Mullatti, 1995; Segal, 1991; Suppal et al., 1996). Although a family may have a nuclear structure, the family may still adhere to patriarchal values and clear, definitive family roles (D'Cruz & Bharat; Deepak; Suppal et al.).

When Asian Indian families are separated from extended family members due to immigration, this does not lessen the influence that extended families may have on the family. For example, although some extended families may still reside in India, these families can still exert a significant amount of influence on the family living in the U.S. (Pettys & Balgopal, 1998). Specifically, the family in India assists the family in the U.S. to uphold traditions, religion, and language (Pettys & Balgopal).

Furthermore, family structure has an influence on parenting. For example, families utilizing a joint family structure have multiple adults to guide the child's socialization and caregiving (D'Cruz & Bharat, 2001; Deepak, 2005; Segal, 1991). Infants are highly indulged, and severe child training practices are used with older children due to the authoritarian nature of the family structure (D'Cruz & Bharat). Conformity is prized, and autonomy and separation are not encouraged (Segal). Mothers dominate the parenting, whereas fathers hardly participate. The overall importance of

joint families is on cooperation. In order to achieve this, authoritarian parenting styles are used (D'Cruz & Bharat).

On the other hand, nuclear families are not as structured as joint families since there is no hierarchical structure (D'Cruz & Bharat, 2001). The children have fewer adult models to access, infants are not indulged, and socialization practices are not as harsh (D'Cruz & Bharat). Practices are more accommodating towards the children, and autonomy and separation are encouraged. Both mother and father are involved in parenting and decision making; therefore a more democratic style of parenting is used (D'Cruz & Bharat; Deepak, 2005). However, Deepak found in her study on South Asian immigrant families living in New York that families transitioning from extended family structures to nuclear family structures found the experience challenging. These parents were not used to being solely in charge of parenting.

In relation to parent-child interactions, mothers are expected to be responsible for teaching the children about their culture and religion practices (Hodge, 2004; Kakar, 1978). Fathers, on the other hand, are the disciplinarians (Segal, 1991). Together, both parents are expected to guide the child in all areas of life, especially in the realms of education and marriage (Pettys & Balgopal, 1998). Children are expected to depend on their parents both socially and emotionally throughout their lifetimes (Segal), as well as demonstrate unconditional respect towards them (Pettys & Balgopal).

## Gender Roles

There are several different ideologies associated with Hinduism that are cited in family science research as having an influence on the family system. One such ideology is known as Pativratya (Dhruvarajan, 1988). This ideology has a significant impact on

family life because it delineates gender roles, in particular how women are to function within the family system and how they are viewed by other family members (Suppal, Roopnarine, Buesig, & Bennett, 1996). Specifically, Pativratya states that women are expected to live their lives honoring their husbands through unwavering devotion to their spouses (Amato, 1994; Dhruvarajan; Suppal et al.).

Pativratya also influences how children should be raised. In particular, children are expected to be raised in a manner that brings honor and prestige to the husband's extended family (Dhruvarajan, 1988). Parenting is also a reflection on the mother, so if a child misbehaves, the mother is the one to blame (Dhruvarajan). The father is in charge of the household, but the mother is in charge of caring for the children only (Dhruvarajan; Suppal et al., 1996). Children are treated differently due to their gender (Dhruvarajan). Moreover, girl children are taught to live a life with rigid rules as early as 10 years of age (Dhruvarajan).

In addition, mothers socialize their daughters to not consider themselves as unique or special because of their gender and status in the family (Dhruvarajan, 1988). Daughters are encouraged to put the needs of their brothers first in order to become self sacrificing (Dhruvarajan). As well, daughters are socialized to know that when they are married, their roles in their husband's life will be marginal until they have children, particularly sons (Dhruvarajan; Suppal et al., 1996).

Other researchers such as Kakar (1978) and Derné (2000) have challenged the view that daughters are socialized to not view themselves as special or unique. Some Hindu families, and especially extended family members, may dote on the girl child and treat her as a favorite especially when she is the only daughter in the family (Kakar,

1978; Derné, 2000). This focused attention on the girl child may cause her to develop feelings of uniqueness about herself.

The maternal relationship with the son is the opposite. The bond is the most emotionally charged one in the entire family system (Dhruvarajan, 1988). Pativratya does not give couples the ability to have an intimate relationship due to its emphasis on a patriarchal relationship between husbands and wives and therefore, according to Dhruvarajan, mothers must rely on their sons for emotional support.

There are signs of change regarding whether or not Hindu families subscribe to Pativratya while living in Western societies. In particular, Dhruvarajan (1988) studied 250 first-generation Asian Indian immigrants in Canada to see how influential this ideology was within a Western society. The author found that women who had earned their doctorates or worked in professional positions were more likely to shun this ideology (Dhruvarajan). Women who were less educated or did not work were more likely to follow the ideology (Dhruvarajan). Furthermore, families who had rejected Pativratya also indicated having a more equal relationship in terms of decision-making and division of labor at home. Dhruvarajan argued that this rejection of Pativratya may be due to the families being exposed to other ideologies such as egalitarianism and subsequently adopting them.

## Acculturation and Immigrant Families

The acculturative process can have a significant impact on the immigrant family. According to Santisteban and Mitrani (2003), the family system can actually make the acculturation process even more complicated due to the various acculturation responses

that can be exhibited by each family member. Because of this, familial bonds can be challenged.

Furthermore, acculturation can influence the socialization and parenting practices used by the immigrant family, such as child care arrangements, cultural practices, and discipline (Chun & Akutsu, 2003; García-Coll & Pachter, 2002). Parents must make decisions regarding the practices that will be used, modified, or given up in relation to the practices espoused by the dominant society (García-Coll & Pachter). Moreover, acculturation can also create individual parenting differences between parents, which can be another source of conflict within families (Chun & Akutsu).

Thus, it has been suggested that the most beneficial way for ethnocultural families to acculturate is for them to maintain both their culture of origin and their subsequent cultural identities (Berry, 2007). In addition to maintaining cultural identities, families should also actively partake in the activities of the larger society (Berry). This is reflective of the integration acculturation strategy. As well, familial functioning may play a critical role in helping families to successfully undergo the stressful experience of acculturation (Santisteban & Mitrani, 2003).

<center>Acculturation and Asian Indians</center>

There is limited research on the acculturation experiences of immigrant Asian Indians. One study on acculturation has examined the process in adults only. Krishnan and Berry (1992) conducted a study examining the relationship between acculturation and acculturative stress amongst immigrant Asian Indian adults living in the Midwest area of the U.S. Based upon data collected from 76 adults, the authors found that the acculturation strategy adopted by the majority of Asian Indians was the integration

strategy. In addition, those who adopted the integration strategy also experienced less overall stress due to acculturation. The authors posited that Asian Indians with higher integration attitudes most likely felt more comfortable maintaining ties with both cultures (Indian and American) and therefore experienced less stress than those who adopted marginalized or assimilated acculturation strategies.

In another study on acculturation in Asian Indian immigrants, Sodowsky and Carey (1988) found that most respondents strived to maintain ties with their culture as well as adopt some aspects of American culture. For example, Asian Indian immigrants maintained their connections with their native culture by upholding both religious practices and festivals, wearing Indian clothing and eating Indian food. The respondents also tried to incorporate some American cultural attitudes into their repertoires, such as having more egalitarian marriages, dressing in American-style clothing, eating American food, speaking English, and encouraging their children to become active in American sports. The Asian Indians in this study appeared to demonstrate both Asian Indian and American qualities both inside and outside the home.

The relationship between acculturation and parenting in Asian Indian families has been examined empirically. However, the majority of the studies currently available examine acculturation levels and its impact on parenting behaviors in families with adolescents. Moreover, there has been only one study, which was conducted by Jain and Belsky (1997) in which acculturation was specifically studied in families with young children.

Jain and Belsky (1997) studied the relationship between immigrant Asian Indian fathering behaviors and acculturation levels. In their study of 40 families with children

between the ages of 18 to 44 months living in Pennsylvania, the researchers found that the least acculturated fathers were the least involved in caring for their young children. The most acculturated fathers were found to be the most involved in parenting, as well as to be diversely engaged in the process, meaning that these fathers were involved in a variety of parenting activities, such as discipline, play, caretaking, and teaching. Another notable finding was that the fathers' length of time spent living in the U.S. was not significantly related to paternal involvement in parenting. The authors concluded that acculturation had an impact on fathers' parenting, especially parental involvement. The more acculturated the fathers were, the more involved they were in parenting their young children.

The rest of the empirical studies currently available on acculturation and parenting focus on Asian Indian families with adolescent children. For example, Patel, Power, and Bhavnagri's (1996) study focused on 100 immigrant Hindu Gujarati families living in the Houston area with children between the ages of 12-19. Through in-home interviews and three questionnaires, the authors found that fathers who were highly acculturated still had strong traditional beliefs and values for their adolescent daughters such as being well-mannered, being polite, and obeying authority. Conversely, length of time living in the U.S. predicted mothers' views on North American culture. The longer the Indian mothers resided in the U.S., the more they prized American characteristics within their children (Patel et al., 1996). Thus, it appeared that these parents were making choices on which American parenting practices to adopt.

In another study, Farver, Narang, and Bhadha (2002) examined the relationship between immigrant Asian Indian parents' acculturation experiences on adolescent

children's ethnic identity, acculturation, psychological functioning, and academic achievement. This study took place in the Los Angeles area and data were collected from 180 Asian Indian adolescents between the ages of 14-19 and their parents. The researchers found that Asian Indian adolescents indicated experiencing more conflict with their families when their parents either had a "separated" or "marginalized" acculturation style. Thus, Asian Indian parents' abilities to relate to the dominant culture had a significant impact on how the family functioned, especially for children. Furthermore, if the parents and the adolescent had dissimilar acculturation styles, then the family was more likely to experience conflict. In terms of ethnic identity, both parents and children who indicated having an integrated acculturation style also indicated higher ethnic identity. Interestingly, adolescent academic achievement was not significantly related to acculturation or ethnic identity. In sum, the Asian Indian family's ability to navigate between their culture and the U.S. culture had significant impact on their children's acculturation, psychological functioning, and ethnic identity.

In a subsequent study, Farver, Xu, Bhadha, Narang, and Lieber (2007) found that parental acculturation levels influenced their subsequent child-rearing beliefs. Specifically, Asian Indian parents with an assimilated or integrated style were more likely to utilize an authoritative parenting style than parents who were identified as having either a separated or marginalized acculturation level. The authors argued that the assimilated or integrated parents may have adapted their child-rearing beliefs to accommodate their abilities to function in both Indian and American cultures.

Ethnic Identity

In addition to examining acculturation experiences, it is also important to look at ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is defined as how individuals describe themselves in relation to their ethnic group (Phinney, 1990, 2003). Ethnic identity development occurs throughout the course of an individual's lifetime. Ethnic identity formation can be influenced by multiple factors, such as age, stage of development, and life experiences such as immigration.

Phinney (1990) has identified three specific components of ethnic identity. The first component is ethnic self-identification, which refers to the ethnic label that an individual uses to describe his or her ethnicity. The second component is an individual's sense of belonging to an ethnic group. The third component is the individual's level of ethnic identity development. This includes the level of positive or negative feelings that the individual has towards his or her ethnic group (Phinney, 1992).

Based upon her conceptualization of ethnic identity, Phinney (1990) has proposed a three stage model of ethnic identity development. This model delineates a progression in which the person moves from having an unexamined ethnic identity to an achieved identity. The first stage in the model is referred to as the unexamined stage, where the individual has yet to experience issues with his or her ethnic identity development. The second stage is the exploration or moratorium stage. This is where the individual actively explores his or her culture in order to find out who he or she is. Ethnic identity achievement is the third stage in Phinney's model. This stage is reached after the individual has explored his or her culture and has made a decision regarding how he or she identifies with a particular ethnic group.

According to Phinney and Ong (2007), the family is the basis for the development of one's ethnic identity. Specifically, families "[provide] the foundation for the development of knowledge and understanding of one's ethnic background" (Phinney & Ong, 2007, p. 55). Moreover, previous research has indicated that parents' ethnic identity levels have an impact on the family system, in particular the parenting behaviors and practices used to raise their children (Deepak, 2005; Hughes, Smith, Stevenson, Rodriguez, Johnson, & Spicer, 2006; Inman, Howard, Beaumont, & Walker, 2007).

### Ethnic Identity and Asian Indians

There are limited studies available that have specifically looked at ethnic identity in ethnic minority parents. Moreover, most of the studies have looked at children's ethnic identity levels. As well, there are few studies that have specifically looked at Indian families.

In her ethnographic study on South Asian families residing in New York, Deepak (2005) posited that these families organized their parenting around parents' ethnicity. In particular, the ways in which these parents viewed themselves as being a South Asian residing in the U.S. had a major influence on the decisions they made regarding their lives and their children's lives. For example, child care arrangements, expectations for children, and socialization goals were found to be areas influenced by parental ethnic identity levels.

As well, Inman and colleagues (2007) have examined Asian Indian ethnic identity development through contextual factors such as social support and cultural activities, and how these factors have impacted parenting practices. Through semi-structured interviews with sixteen first-generation Asian Indian parents, the researchers found that social

support, participating in cultural activities, maintaining familial connections with family in India, upholding traditional Indian values, and rejecting Western behaviors such as drinking helped these parents to maintain their ethnic identities (Inman et al.). Moreover, the respondents identified several barriers to ethnic identity maintenance, namely feeling a lack of guidance from their natal families in upholding cultural traditions and practices, feeling a lack of support from American society to maintain their "Indianness," and especially for Asian Indian mothers, feeling the need to sacrifice one culture (Indian) for the other in order to function in American society (Inman et al.).

Tummala-Narra's (2004) work with immigrant mothers also highlighted the struggles ethnic minorities faced while learning to navigate two cultural worlds. In particular, the author discussed how language was seen as the "basic defining element of cultural identity" (Tummala-Narra, 2004, p. 169). When immigrant mothers had to learn both a new language and means of expressing their emotions, they also "lost" their native language use, which was a significant experience for them. Therefore, it can be argued that this language loss could impact mothers' ethnic identities.

<div align="center">Parenting</div>

According to Harkness and Super (2002), "parenting is culturally constructed" (p. 253). Furthermore, parental ethnotheories, or cultural belief systems on parenting, can exert a significant influence on parenting behaviors and actions (Harkness & Super). Furthermore, these parenting actions are influenced by acculturation levels, family structures, and the goodness of fit between the family's cultural practices and the environment in which the family is residing (García-Coll & Pachter, 2002).

For immigrant families, parenting involves raising children in two cultures. As well, the process of migration influences parenting decisions. For example, Tummala-Narra (2004) found that when immigrant mothers had children in their new homelands, memories of their childhood and relationships with their parents were brought forward, including parenting traditions and values that were implemented at home (Tummala-Narra, 2004). In turn, these memories could influence these mothers' parenting practices.

The two aspects of parenting that will be examined in this thesis are socialization and childrearing behaviors. A general discussion of each follows. Previous research examining these behaviors within the context of the Asian Indian family is also discussed. However, since there is a paucity of research that specifically looks at Indian families, research from other ethnic groups has been used.

## Socialization

The term "socialization" describes the general process in which people acquire the skills and behaviors needed to participate in a particular social group (Grusec, 2002). For ethnic minority children, the socialization process is particularly salient. This process serves as a medium for them to learn about their ethnic culture, with parents exerting the most influence on this process. In addition, socialization helps foster children's developing ethnic identities. There are two types of socialization that will be discussed in this thesis, cultural socialization and ethnic socialization. A discussion of each follows below. However, it is important to note that the existing research on cultural and ethnic socialization does not clearly distinguish the two as being separate concepts, which has been noted in Hughes and colleagues' (2006) extensive review of literature on socialization. Therefore, there is some overlap in their definitions.

Cultural Socialization

According to Romero, Cuéllar, and Roberts (2000), cultural socialization refers to the various ways and means in which ethnic minority parents teach their children about their culture. Parents teach their children about the norms and values that are salient to their particular culture. This enculturation allows the parent to socialize his or her children into their cultural group.

Furthermore, Harrison, Wilson, Pine, Chan, and Buriel (1990) have identified three strategies that ethnic minority parents use to socialize their children to life in the U.S.: familial extendedness and role flexibility, ancestral worldviews, and biculturalism. Familial extendedness and role flexibility refers to the use of extended family members and other individuals to help care for the child. Ancestral worldviews are the religious and cultural beliefs that are salient to the family and that are passed from generation to generation. Biculturalism refers to an individual's ability to operate in both his of her culture of origin and the dominate culture. These strategies could be utilized by immigrant Indian families in their cultural socialization practices.

Cultural Socialization and Asian Indians

One of the most important cultural values instilled in Indian children during the childhood years is interdependence (Seymour, 1999; Sharma, 2000). Interdependence is fostered through the strategy of familial extendedness (Harrison et al., 1990). Children are socialized to be dependent upon parents (especially the mother) and other extended family members such as aunts, uncles, and grandparents (Seymour; Sharma). Seymour's ethnographic study of Indian families living in India reflects this cultural value. Indian children were socialized to be interdependent upon family members from birth. Likewise,

Sharma's field work in India found similar results. In addition, Jambunathan, Burts, and Pierce (2000) also found similar results in their study of Indian mothers residing in the U.S. In turn, the involvement of extended family members provides an opportunity for all family members to be involved in the child's development (Ranganath & Ranganath, 1997).

Furthermore, familial extendedness can provide a source of support for immigrant mothers. For example, Tummala-Narra (2004) found that immigrant mothers relied on social groups formed through their ethnic communities as a source of support to help them handle the challenge of raising their children with two cultures. In contrast, Maiter and George (2003) found that a lack of informal network support actually helped mothers by furthering their desire to teach their children about their cultural values and norms.

In regard to ancestral worldviews, Asian Indian mothers and extended family members are primarily responsible for teaching children about Hinduism (Kakar, 1978; Ranganath & Ranganath, 1997). This teaching takes place through storytelling and discussing parables. This notion held true for mothers residing outside of India, as was the case in Tummala-Nara's (2004) work with immigrant mothers. In particular, mothers were viewed as being responsible for teaching their children their cultural traditions while living in the U.S.

In relation to biculturalism, Maiter and George's (2003) exploratory qualitative study focused specifically on the contextual issues faced by immigrant South Asian mothers while raising their children in Canada. The authors posited that South Asian mothers acknowledged the influence that social context had on their parenting and children, and therefore used parenting styles that took this into account. There were two

goals that mothers focused on specifically in their parenting: identity formation and character formation.

In terms of character formation, mothers focused on personal qualities that were part of their cultural value system. These qualities included respect for elders, living a disciplined life, modesty, humility, perseverance, hard work, and persistence. The mothers also felt that these qualities would enable their children to be productive members of Canadian society as well. Additionally, mothers focused on instilling respect for group values instead of individualism in their children.

In regard to identity formation, the mothers believed that cultural values were a necessity for instilling their children's sense of belonging to a particular cultural group. In order to achieve their parenting goals of character and identity, the mothers used three different approaches: religious and cultural activities (practicing religion and cultural activities daily), cultural norms (children are the focus of the parents' lives; mother-child dyad is highly valued), and personal example (modeling good behavior).

Furthermore, Patel and colleagues (1996) found that Indian parents differed in their cultural socialization practices. The researchers found that mothers were more likely to value American ideals and characteristics than fathers. In addition, mothers were more likely to teach these values to their children. The researchers posited that length of residence in the U.S. influenced mothers' decisions to highly value American ideals. On the other hand, Indian fathers were more likely to instill cultural values of obedience for authority and politeness in their daughters.

Ethnic Socialization

Children learn about the behaviors, attitudes, languages, and values of a particular ethnic group through the process of ethnic socialization (Phinney & Rotheram, 1987). In addition to learning about these core values and behaviors, children also learn how to view themselves and other people within their ethnic group. Children are socialized about their ethnic identities through the context of their environments, with their families exerting the most influence on them. Additional contexts that are also influential are social networks or neighborhoods, and individual and group characteristics (e.g. parents' ethnic identity, immigration status, and child's age) (Hughes et al., 2006). However, Hughes and colleagues (2006) have noted that there are very few studies available that have taken into account parents' ethnic identities and how these identities influence ethnic socialization practices. Due to this dearth of knowledge, research with other ethnic minority families has been cited to lend empirical support.

There is little to no empirical work on the process of ethnic socialization in relation to Asian Indian families. One of the few studies that explicitly discussed how Indian parents taught their children about their ethnic identities was conducted by Inman and colleagues (2007). This study found that Asian Indian respondents identified several strategies used to instill ethnic identity in their children. Some of the strategies utilized by the parents included modeling culturally appropriate behaviors, and teaching Indian culture through the use of books and cultural activities. However, these parents also identified challenges to parenting, which included receiving limited guidance from both extended family members and the community in general on how to raise their children, not possessing adequate cultural knowledge, and having to struggle with strong Western

cultural influences such as a lack of Indian schools and organizations to help socialize children to their ethnic culture.

Another study that looked at Asian Indian ethnic socialization was conducted by Dasgupta (1998). The author found that Asian Indian parents strived to maintain continuity of their adolescent children's ethnic identities by passing along the cultural beliefs and customs most salient to them, in particular their views on gender roles and dating. The parents' views were found to be reflected in their children's conservative views on dating and gender roles.

Since there are limited studies available on ethnic socialization in Indian families, studies conducted with other ethnic groups will be utilized to provide support. For example, Brown, Tanner-Smith, Lesane-Brown, and Ezell (2007) found that non-White families were more likely to discuss ethnic heritage with their children than White families. In addition, Knight, Bernal, Garza, Cota, and Ocampo (1993) found that Mexican mothers who identified as being very comfortable with their culture were more likely to teach their children about the culture. The authors posited that parental ethnic background influenced what children learned about their culture.

Moreover, in a study on Puerto Rican and Mexican mothers' familial ethnic socialization practices, Umaña-Taylor and Yazedjian (2006) identified nine themes regarding how mothers engaged in ethnic socialization. These themes were: visiting the country of origin; instilling a sense of ethnic identity in their children; use of extended family members to teach children about their culture; eating cultural foods; books, videos, and the internet; practicing native traditions; teaching children to speak Spanish; using children's questions to teach about culture; and the curriculum used at school.

However, the authors also identified three themes that were particularly salient for mothers who were foreign-born. These three themes were teaching children to respect people, eating religious foods to celebrate holidays, and teaching children to be proud of being Latino. Thus, it can be hypothesized that these three themes could be salient for immigrant Indian parents as well.

<center>Childrearing Practices</center>

As previously mentioned, the practices used by parents in caring for their children communicate the saliency of culture in parenting (Harkness & Super, 2002). However, it is important to recognize that there are very limited studies on the childrearing practices used by Asian Indian families, and specifically in families living in the U.S. The recent interest in Asian Indian childrearing practices is reflective of the emerging research interest in cultural influences on early childhood development (Sharma, 2000).

In addition, there is a need for research to be conducted that looks specifically at Indian families since previous research has found differences amongst Asian families (Rao et al., 2003; Joshi & MacLean, 1997). Indian families in the U.S. face new challenges as they learn to raise their children without the constant physical help from extended family members, which is different from their experiences in India. As well, the childrearing practices used by the parents are influenced by Hinduism (Kakar, 1978; Hodge, 2004). These experiences should be explored by family scientists in order to gain a better understanding of Indian families in the U.S.

<center>Expectations and Discipline</center>

Parents' expectations for their children are derived from cultural and societal beliefs that are found to be most salient. In regard to Asian Indians, the expectations that

parents have for their children can also be influenced by Hinduism beliefs. As previously discussed, Hinduism delineates specific views on child development. Children are seen as gifts from gods, and therefore childrearing should be child-centered (Hodge, 2004; Rao et al., 2003). Children's development is expected to unfurl on its own and without any additional prodding from parents (Rao et al., 2003; Sharma, 2000).

As previously discussed, one way in which parental expectations for their children are exhibited is in their teaching of their children to be interdependent upon the family. Through this, children learn to view themselves as being part of a group and not as independent. Furthermore, all family members are involved in raising the child and ensuring that the child's needs are constantly met (Seymour, 1999; Ranganath & Ranganath, 1997). This expectation is also further enforced in the child's interactions within the home. For example, children are expected to share their toys and books with siblings and other children at all times (Sharma).

Another way in which Hinduism is manifested in childrearing practices is in parental beliefs on when children should be able to accomplish particular developmental tasks. As previously discussed, Joshi and MacLean (1997) found that Indian mothers expected their children to develop their self care, communication, independence, emotional, and peer interaction skills at later ages than Japanese mothers. Likewise, in their study on parenting practices and socialization goals of Chinese and Indian mothers, Rao and colleagues (2003) found Indian mothers to be more accepting of their children's individual differences and expressions of emotion than Chinese mothers. The authors posited that these differences were due to the different cultural beliefs that the mothers held on how children develop.

However, in her study on immigrant Indian mothers, Jambunathan (2006) found that these mothers held inappropriate developmental expectations for their preschool children. This meant that the mothers expected their children to achieve developmental milestones at an earlier age than what was developmentally expected. The author argued that this may be due to the mothers' desire to push their children to develop quickly in order to be successful in school, which is reflective of the high value placed on education by both Indian and other Asian families.

Chao and Tseng (2002) identified the use of controlling discipline techniques with children as a parenting behavior found in most Asian families. One example of a discipline technique that is used with Chinese children is training, which is instructing children "early through guidance and continuous monitoring of their behaviors, while also providing parental involvement, concern, and support" (Chao, 2000, p. 234). This style is similar to Baumrind's authoritarian parenting style since there is a focus on adhering to set standards of conduct and obedience. In her study on Chinese mothers, Chao (2000) found that training was the parenting style frequently used by the mothers with their elementary school children. This meant that mothers structured all of their children's activities, both academically and socially.

However, previous studies have shown that the discipline practices utilized by Indian families are varied and some do not appear to be as strict as training (Jambunathan & Counselman, 2002; Rao et al., 2003; Seymore, 1999). These variations appeared to be dependent upon the child's age and where the child was growing up (India or the U.S.). For example, D'Cruz and Bharat (2001) and Ranganath and Ranganath (1998) have stated that Indian children during the early childhood years, in particular infants and

toddlers, were indulged. The children were not forced to follow adult commands, and were not expected to learn self-help skills until they were around age four (Ranganath & Ranganath).

However, Seymour (1999) has argued that this was not the case with Indian children living in India. Rather, she stated that Indian infants were not indulged. Seymour described incidents in which infants did not appear to be indulged by their caregivers, such as bathing. Although the infant might have been crying due to the bath, the mother did not provide comfort to the child. Seymour posited that this action was to show the child that he or she was not in charge of the situation and to teach the child to obey the parent or caregiver at all times.

According to Almeida (1996) and Hodge (2004), Asian Indian parents do not employ physical discipline practices such as time outs with their children, as this technique was viewed by Indians as being too controlling. Instead, Indian parents employed methods such as inducing guilt, shaming the child, and using nonverbal communication such as giving the child a disapproving look (Ranganath & Ranganath, 1997). However, Jambunathan and Counselman's (2002) study contradicted this assertion.

More specifically, Jambunathan and Counselman found that Indian mothers residing in India were more likely to use corporal punishment to discipline their children than Indian mothers residing in the U.S. In addition, Indian mothers in the U.S. were found to use more authoritative parenting styles than mothers in India. The authors posited that these differences may stem from Indian mothers' acculturation experiences in the U.S.

Child Care Arrangements

Another important aspect of parenting is child care. Today many American families place their young children in formalized child care arrangements. Previous research has found that high quality child care programs promote children's cognitive development (NICHD ECCRN, 2000). It can be assumed that this aspect of child care would be particularly important for Indian families who place their children in outside care, since according to Chao and Tseng (2002), there is a high cultural regard for children's academic success.

However, the child care arrangements of immigrant families have largely been unexplored in family science. There is salient information that can be gathered from this kind of research. For example, Obeng (2007) found that the preferred child care arrangement for immigrant African parents was leaving the child with family members in their own homes. The reason for this choice was that the parents felt that family members would help teach the children the cultural beliefs and practices of their culture. As well, family members would help instruct children on appropriate moral behaviors. In all, this was believed to help the children to become more successful in life.

Likewise, Brandon (2004) found similar results based upon the data from the Survey of Income and Population Program Participation of 1996. The researcher found that immigrant families preferred to care for their children at home. Furthermore, immigration status, and demographic characteristics of the family (e.g., whether one or two parent(s) work) also influenced immigrants' families use of center care.

In another study on immigrant children's preschool attendance rates, Magnuson, Lahaie, and Waldfogel (2006) found that immigrant children were more likely to be cared

for at home by a parent than non-immigrant children. In addition, immigrant children were less likely to attend preschool than other children. Child care experience and immigrant status also had an effect on immigrant children's English skills. Specifically, immigrant children who stayed at home instead of attending preschool had lower proficiency in the language than immigrant children who attended preschool and non-immigrant children. Interestingly, the authors found that maternal education was not found to have an effect on preschool experiences.

On the other hand, Obeng's (2007) study found that the majority of immigrant African families did end up placing their children in child care centers. The families cited that the reason for doing so was for socialization opportunities. Another reason was for the children to learn English. A third reason was that the parents believed that their children would get a "good start" on academics and become successful in school if they attended American child care centers.

Obeng (2007) also discussed how the African immigrants liked child care centers where there were several people in charge of caring for the children. According to the author, this was reflective of traditional African cultural beliefs of a collective approach to raising children. As well, some parents indicated their preference for entrusting their children's care to adults with child development training, as they believed that center-based teachers would have formal training than family members or other immigrant families. Other salient findings were that some parents did not care about the child care teacher's race, and some did not want their child's teacher to use a play-based teaching style. Rather, these parents wanted their children to be formally taught by the teachers in order to instill obedience, listening skills, and responsibility. Obeng (2007) posited that

culture influenced a parent's decision to use child care, and also the type of child care arrangement used.

A compelling argument that Brandon (2004) made about the importance of center-based child care was that a center was a way for an immigrant child to obtain social capital to help with the transition process to American schools. Furthermore, Magnuson and colleagues (2006) also found that preschool attendance benefited children whose mothers spoke a language other than English at home. These preschool experiences provided a foundation for immigrant children to gain the necessary school readiness skills to successfully transition into the U.S. kindergarten system.

There have been no formalized studies conducted on the child care preferences of Asian Indian families. However, Deepak's (2005) study briefly discussed several types of child care arrangements used by South Asian families living in New York. The author mentioned how some families did not enroll their children in child care programs in the United States due to a fear of child abuse for their children. Thus, some parents chose to have other Asian Indian families care for their children. In addition, other parents chose to sponsor their parents to come live in the U.S. and help care for the children at home.

Opportunities for Professional Development

Despite the fact that there is limited research on Asian Indian families, the information that can be gathered on this study could have implications for professional development for family practitioners, especially for professionals working with immigrant populations. For example, the kind of information that can be gathered regarding the preferred child care arrangements for these families can inform early childhood professionals and elementary school educators on the reasons for immigrant

families selecting particular forms of child care for their children. In turn, this information can help these professionals to better understand these families and to provide more effective services for these families.

Likewise, information regarding the childrearing practices used by these parents can help family practitioners guide their services, especially if families are engaged in practices that may be detrimental for their children. Furthermore, information regarding the cultural and ethnic socialization practices used by Indian families for their children can also help practitioners to better understand the familial experiences of these families. This knowledge can enable practitioners to develop culturally sensitive services or interventions with these families.

## Summary

In sum, there is limited research that has specifically looked at the parental experiences of Asian Indian immigrant families living in the United States. Furthermore, the research that is available is either dated, or has focused on the parenting experiences of Indian families with adolescents. The current research available has identified some similarities, but it has also identified some inconsistencies. Thus, the goal of this study is to examine how acculturation and ethnic identity experiences impact the socialization and childrearing behaviors of immigrant Asian Indian families.

# CHAPTER III

## METHODS

The purpose of this research study was to analyze information collected from Asian Indian families to see if acculturation and ethnic identity experiences influenced their parenting behaviors. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to discuss the research methods that were be used for this study. It is important to emphasize that this study, guided by grounded theory, was largely exploratory in nature due to the limited empirical studies on Indian families in the U.S.

Another significant factor that needs to be explicitly addressed is my relationship with this thesis project. This process is known as reflexivity (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Esterberg, 2002). The benefit of the researcher outlining his or her values, beliefs, and biases that might influence the research work is that the validity of the qualitative analysis is enhanced. Likewise, according to Patton (1999), the credibility of the researcher is also enhanced when the researcher discusses his or her personal qualities that may have an influence on the qualitative data.

As such, I consider myself to be an outsider in relation to the Indian population. I am an outsider since I am neither Indian nor an immigrant. However, my mother immigrated to the United States from Mexico and experienced issues with acculturation and ethnic identity. Moreover, these experiences shaped her subsequent parenting behaviors and actions, which had a direct influence on me. In addition, I have experience

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working with Indian families through professional work as a child development specialist and therefore have developed a heightened awareness of and greater understanding of Indian culture. And lastly, I am currently in a relationship in which my partner is an Asian Indian. I believe that these experiences may influence my interactions with the data collected for this study.

<div align="center">Participants</div>

Snowball sampling technique was used to recruit respondents for this project. Specifically, contact with Indian families was established through a key informant, my significant other. My significant other immigrated to the United States from India, and currently works in an industry where he has frequent interactions with other Asian Indians. Furthermore, he has been involved in Indian organizations in the Austin community, and therefore has developed connections with the Indian community.

Fifteen families were recruited for this study, for a total of 30 participants. Both mothers and fathers were recruited for this project, and the interviews ranged in length from one hour to three hours. The average age range for these parents was 30-39 years, with one parent reporting 40-49 years. The range for length of time in the U.S. was 7-18 years. In addition, parents came from various parts of India, with nine parents from Maharashtra, five from Andhra Pradesh, three from Gujarat, two from Tamil Nadu, two from Kerala, three from Karnataka, three from Delhi, and one each from Haryana, West Bengal, and Rajasthan states. All parents reported their ethnicity as "Indian", with one parent reporting "Indian/U.S. citizen." As well, all parents identified their religion as being "Hindu".

All parents possessed some level of higher education, with three parents with some college education, seven parents possessing a bachelor's degree, 19 parents holding a graduate degree, and one parent who reported "other". The most frequently reported income range of these parents was 100,000 and above.

Additionally, 11 families had one child between the ages of two and seven, and four couples had two children within the same age range. The mean age of the children was 46 months. None of the participants declined to participate in the study.

<div align="center">Procedure</div>

The research procedure included the following actions. After initial contact through the key informant, the parents were given a copy of the consent form (Appendix A) to review. If the parents decided to participate, they were asked to schedule interview times that were most convenient for them. In addition, the parents were provided with a demographic questionnaire to complete. The consent form explained the purpose of the study, identified the forms each parent was required to fill out, and explained the interview process. The consent form also contained information regarding confidentiality and assurance that the parents were able to stop their participation in this study at any time.

Prior to conducting the interviews, rapport was established with each participant. I followed some of the approaches recommended by Taylor and Bogdan (1998). On the day of the interviews, I spent some time becoming acquainted with the family before commencing the interviews. I also asked the parents if they would like share with me any artifacts significant to them, or if they would like to ask questions regarding this project outside of the context of the interview session. Another strategy used was

communicating commonalities between me and the participants. Moreover, using a key

informant helped contribute to the rapport process. By establishing rapport with the

participants prior to the interviews, I was able to obtain more detailed information from

the participants.

Qualitative and demographic data were collected, which will be described in the

next section. Each parent was assigned a code number to preserve confidentiality. I

transcribed all interviews verbatim, and the data were stored in a secure location

throughout the duration of the project.

<div align="center">Instruments</div>

A modified version of the life story interview approach (Atkinson, 1998) was

used to gather information from Indian parents (Appendix B). This modified approach

involved using semi-structured interviews to ask parents questions about their

experiences prior to migrating to the U. S., as well as their experiences after coming to

the U.S. These questions specifically covered experiences surrounding their ethnic

identity development, as well as parenting experiences. Due to the methodological nature

of the proposed interview approach, each parent was interviewed individually. These

interviews were tape-recorded and assigned a code number to maintain confidentiality.

These interviews ranged from one to three hours in length.

The life story interview approach is appropriate for research studies that are

interested in examining peoples' personal experiences throughout the life course and

reflecting these experiences through their own words and not the researcher's (Atkinson,

1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Moreover, the process of leaving ones country of origin

for another is a significant, life changing aspect of an individual's life. These experiences warrant focused attention and discussion in the family science discipline.

## Data Analysis

Grounded theory methods were utilized to analyze the data. Grounded theory allowed the researcher to develop a theory based upon the data collected from a project through the process of constant comparison (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Moreover, the use of grounded theory methods in family research was appropriate due to the researcher's ability to generate new ideas and theories on family development, which are highly valued in the field (LaRossa, 2005). The methods outlined by Strauss and Corbin will be used for this project.

The first stage in grounded theory analysis was open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This allowed for categories to be developed. In addition, these categories were developed in an "in vivo" fashion, meaning that the words used to identify the categories came from the participants themselves (Strauss & Corbin). A team of 3 independent coders read the interview transcripts in their entirety before conducting line by line analysis of the transcripts to establish categories. The team met periodically to discuss discrepancies until consensus was reached by the whole team. The independent coders also identified properties and dimensions associated with each category. Properties referred to a category's characteristics (Strauss & Corbin). Dimensions were the variations that were exhibited by a particular property (Strauss & Corbin).

Axial coding was the second stage in the grounded theory data analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The researcher actively related the categories previously identified

during open coding with other categories and subcategories. Through this, the researcher outlined the conditions in which a particular phenomenon occurred.

The third stage in analysis was selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In this stage, a central category was selected in which all other remaining categories would be related to in order to communicate the "final story" (Strauss & Corbin). Theoretical saturation was achieved by this stage of the analysis. Once coding was completed, a conditional and consequential matrix was developed based upon the data derived from the study (Strauss & Corbin). The purpose of this matrix was to denote the relationships amongst the different analytical components of the data and organize them in a logical manner.

Objectivity was emphasized to reduce bias. One way in which this was accomplished was by soliciting multiple perspectives regarding a particular phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). For this study, both mothers and fathers were interviewed. By obtaining multiple perspectives regarding a particular phenomenon, the researcher was able to incorporate these into the theory and thus increase the credibility of the results (Strauss & Corbin).

A demographic questionnaire was administered to the parents in order to collect background information. The survey included questions such as length of time spent in the United States, religion, whether or not the parent identified with a caste/social group, and income level. Age of child or children, and type of child care arrangement used were also included in the survey (Appendix C).

# CHAPTER IV

## RESULTS

This study was designed to examine the following research questions: How do Asian Indian parents uphold and maintain their ethnic identities after migrating to the United States? How do Asian Indian parents' ethnic identities influence parenting practices? How do Asian Indian parents' acculturation experiences influence parenting practices? After analyzing the data, several significant themes emerged. These themes are organized into two major categories: ethnic identity and parenting. Furthermore, acculturation experiences were often reflected in these discussions. A full discussion of these themes follows.

### Ethnic Identity

Throughout these interviews, two major interrelated themes emerged pertaining to ethnic identity. First, the majority of these Asian Indian parents discussed how they maintained ties with Indian culture. As well, most of these parents discussed how positively they felt about their "Indianness," and they also included these positive feelings in their identity. However, a few parents did not feel very strongly about their "Indianness." Second, parents' discussed a variety of self identification labels that reflected a continuum from Indian only to American only. There were some parents who stated self identification labels that did not include the words Indian or American. Based on the numbers alone, these themes appeared to be a dominant point. Thus, their

discussions indicated that Indian culture was still a highly salient component of Indian parents' lives in the U.S.

*Maintaining Ties with Indian Culture*

Asian Indians' ties with Indian culture were reflected in a variety of activities. For example, one frequently cited example was ensuring that the families celebrated Indian festivals within their homes. One father, Saurav, said: "We do celebrate *Diwali*, the major or the biggest festival, together with friends here, eating sweets and all those good foods." Likewise, Chanda, a mother, said: "I always, like any important festivals we would make sure that we celebrate at home. It starts with a prayer, we do that at home. Then we celebrate every festival from *Holi* to *Diwali*." As well, Meena, a mother, said: "Yeah, *Onam* and *Vishu* are the major functions that we have. There's nothing else for that. So since we only have a couple of them, you need to hang on to them [laughs]!"

Another example in which Asian Indian parents maintained ties with their culture was through periodic contact with their families. For instance, Vivek, a father, said: "Every two years, or maybe every two and a half years, we used to go to India with [our son]. So that's how we maintain our Indian culture." Similarly, Madhavi, a mother, said:

Those Yahoo messengers and everything, and the price of the phone line, I can talk to my mom every day... I'm able to talk and use the webcam and everything, so it's pretty good. We are able to maintain that contact.

In addition, many Indian parents also described how they maintained ties with Hinduism. The majority of the parents mentioned attending temples and saying prayers or practicing *pujas* [Hindu rituals]. For example, Pallav, a father, said: "At our home we have kind of small temple, so every day we pray." Similarly, Sunita, a mother, said: "We

pray every evening. We have a shrine in the house and we pray every evening. Every morning when I get up, we say this little tiny prayer to praise the sun and we'll thank god for this day."

Establishing a community of Indian families in order to celebrate special occasions and religious holidays was another frequently cited example. Sunita said:

Fortunately we have a bunch of Indian friends living around here. So during festivals it's like we'll have, say the *Ganesh* festival or *Diwali*, I just have a potluck at my house and we'll get, individually they will all be Hindus. We'll have food, we'll talk, and we'll wish each other.

Furthermore, attending community events was another method in which Asian Indians maintained ties with their culture and/or religion. For example, Rohan, a father, said:

So there is a group in Austin, Austin Malayalee Association that's [for] people from Kerala, so they have cultural programs and *Onam* program for example. During *Onam* time they will have various competitions and dance and cultural programs and *Onam* feast, of course. So that's a good place where we can get to meet people and take part.

For Rohan, participating in the association enabled his family to participate in cultural programming as well as helped celebrate one of the most important festivals for him, *Onam*.

However, many parents appeared to downplay their connections with their culture and religion. Despite the fact that these parents were socializing with primarily Indian friends, attending temples, celebrating festivals and performing *pujas* at home, or attending cultural programming within the community, they felt that they were not

deliberately maintaining ties with Hinduism and Indian culture. For example, Gauri, a mother, said: "We don't actively try to be a Hindu here. We maybe just live the life that we learned to live. I mean, we just live it." Likewise, Padma, a mother, said "We're not like, it's not like a ritual that every Sunday we go [to temple] or something. We don't do a *puja-puja* at home, but [my husband] will always keep something in front of god every day." Paresh, a father said: "So being an Indian would probably mean that you practice your Hinduism and you remember your festivals and all of those things. I don't do anything special that tells me every day that I am an Indian."

As well, there were a few Asian Indian parents who stated that they had very limited to no explicit connections with Indian culture or Hinduism. When asked how he maintained connections with Indian culture and Hinduism, Ritesh, a father, said "Oh it's easy, I don't. No, yeah, it's very little, if any. [I am] not that religious…So mostly it's cultural than religious." According to Ritesh, he maintained very limited connections with Indian culture, and these connections were more culturally based rather than religious based. Likewise, Nivi, a mother, said: "I think I just feel [Hinduism] in my heart, and that's it."

When these parents were asked how they felt about being Indian, numerous parents indicated that they felt "proud" or "good" to be Indian. Bina, a mother, said: "Oh, I feel proud, yes!" Chanda stated "I like being Indian because the culture still exists, and people still give importance to relatives, family, friends, [and] kids. Those things are there. Grandparents are there. Great thing, you know." Fathers also stated similar feelings regarding their Indianness. For example, Sachin said "I feel very proud of it. Yeah, I'm

very proud to be an Indian." Sandeep, a father, said: "You know what? I feel good [about being Indian]."

In contrast, there were a few parents who did not feel very strongly about being Indian. For instance, Nivi said:

I feel myself! I don't enjoy being different because I think everybody is different, so for me to say 'I am like this because I'm Indian', I think I would be lying to myself if I said that. I think I'm just me.

Thus, Nivi did not feel that her sense of "Indianness" was an important part of her sense of self. Furthermore, Nivi felt that identifying herself with her Indian ethnicity meant that she was different from everyone else, which she did not want to be.

*Self Identification*

Elements of acculturation emerged in the parents' responses to the interview question "How would you identify yourself as, Indian, American, or Indo-American?" For example, seven parents said that they would identify themselves as Indian-American. When asked to explain her response, Asha, a mother, said the following:

"I would say Indo-American because see I am a citizen of both of the countries, and I want to be a proud citizen of the U.S. as well as a proud citizen of India, too. So you know for both the countries, I belong to both of the countries, I feel."

Similarly, Chanda stated:

Even though I'm an Indian, but I'm living here and I don't know if we ever intend to go back because we've been here so long...So I believe wherever you are you have to respect that place because, you know, follow the trend. Not necessarily— again, you have to filter out what trend you want to follow. Yeah, Indo-American

would be the right word for us, I guess. I mean, for me [laughs]. And I'm sure [my son], he says the same thing.

Chanda felt that by incorporating what she wanted to follow from American culture, she was showing respect towards the country and therefore she was able to call herself an Indo-American. Based upon the previous statements, it can be argued that these parents are in the process of acculturating into the American society.

In addition, one father, Sandeep, said the following regarding being Indian-American: "India has given me a lot. So has America. Don't ask me to choose between the two because that is as hard as choosing between your parents when they're going through a divorce." Thus, it appears that this father had experienced acculturation into the American culture, and he viewed his experiences living in America as being just as critical as his experiences from India.

Additionally, acculturative influences were also evident in the responses given by three parents who stated they were American with Indian origins. When asked to explain their responses, these parents mentioned that they could not discount their Indian upbringing. For example, one father, Ashwin, said:

So basically by citizenship I'm U.S., right? I'm a U.S. citizen. Let me just put it the way my friend put it, so he said 'I'm an Indian by heart, and living by American,' something like that [laughs]. So yeah, I'm proud of being here, but I'm proud of being born in India.

According to Ashwin, although he was legally a U.S. citizen now, he still felt that he was an Indian. Further, Ashwin felt proud for both countries, and incorporated this pride into

his identification label, thus reflecting a degree of acculturation in his self identification. Likewise, Arpana, a mother said:

> I'm proud to be a, like Indian originated American citizen. Let's put it the correct way because I don't know if it's correct of me to just say I'm Indian now. I'm not American citizen by birth, so it's through naturalization, but my origin is still India, and I mean I can never forget it. Even though I took citizenship, I don't think I could ever forget the Indian tradition. I feel great to have like both cultures. That's always good to learn new things.

Arpana felt great to have both Indian and American cultures incorporated in her identity. She was also the parent who answered "Indian/U.S. citizen" for the "Ethnicity" question on the demographic survey. Therefore, it can be argued that Arpana's self identification also reflected a degree of acculturation.

> Another mother, Sunita, said:

> I have a green card, I am not an American, but if I ever become an American citizen, I'll be an American with Indian origins…I'm not discounting either. I'm saying both are equally important in making me what I am. I'm not what I was when I lived in India, and I wouldn't be what I am if I hadn't been brought up in India. So it is one of the foundations of me, but I have both. I have both.

Although Sunita was not yet an American citizen, nevertheless she still felt that living in the U.S. had influenced her identity. Thus, it can be assumed that this mother's response reflected acculturation influences on her self identification.

> Surprisingly, only one parent, Reena, a mother, identified solely as American: "Okay, so until last month I was an Indian, so I just became an American citizen."

Additionally, another parent, Saurav, currently identified himself as Indian, but planned to change that once he became an American citizen:

> Currently I am saying I am Indian as far as passport holder goes, but once I become an American citizen, I will say American. It's just holding one passport from one country versus the other. Personally doesn't even change me at all.

For Saurav, his identification label was based upon which country he was a legal citizen of. Yet, he did not feel that choosing to call himself American meant that he had changed personally and become an American. He still felt that he was the same person regardless of the self identification label he used. Thus, it is possible that this father was not as acculturated as other parents.

Interestingly, there were 12 parents who still identified themselves solely as Indian. These parents appeared not to be as acculturated as other parents in relation to their self identification. For example, Sneha, a mother, said: "Indian. No other question, no other answer. Indian." Several fathers also held strong views regarding their Indian identity. For example, Sachin said:

> Like I am still Indian citizen, okay? And I've been brought up in India. I don't want to lose my identity, and everybody in America are immigrants. Nobody's American here. All are immigrants, so why should I lose my identity?

Hence, it is possible that these parents were not interested in incorporating the U.S. culture in their ethnic labels. Moreover, especially for Sachin, he felt that doing so meant that he would lose his Indian identity.

Likewise, another mother, Shobha said: "I mean I like this place, I'm part of this culture, but I identify myself with Indian. I'm definitely Indian." This was particularly

salient considering that this mother indicated in her interview that she enjoyed both Indian and American cultures and was exposing her child to both cultures. Yet, she still saw her identification label as being Indian only.

Similarly, one couple, Madhavi and Vijay, and another father, Mukesh, identified themselves as "Indians living in America." When asked to explain his answer, Vijay stated:

> For example, I don't have any non-Indian friends here. I don't mingle with them. I do have a house in a good neighborhood and I am following the American way of doing things, but that is more so because that is how things are done there. Let's see...I mean, whenever I go out to eat in a restaurant, my first preference is always Indian. Even though we eat Indian food twice a day, 14 meals every week, but still [laughs].

Although this father viewed himself as being an Indian due to his behaviors, he still felt the need to relate it in context of the country he was currently living in, America.

On the other hand, there were two parents who did not view their Indianness as being a salient part of their identities. When these parents were asked how they would identify themselves as, one mother, Nivi, said "I would say I'm a person. I'm a human being. I don't think I would distinguish myself as anybody because...I think it would be an injustice to think of me a certain way when I'm not." Likewise, Ritesh said "Why do I need to call myself anything? You know, I don't know. I don't like to be put in boxes."

As well, there was only one parent who did not know what he would identify himself as. During the interview, Arun said the following regarding his identity:

I'm confused as to what I am again. But I can see I'm more comfortable here in

this country with the people, talking to people here. But I can see I'm also not as

involved with my neighbors. More with Indian friends. I don't know, I'm

probably neither here nor there [laughs].

In sum, the majority of these participants were still interested in maintaining ties

with Indian culture as well as Hinduism. In fact, the majority of parents still self

identified with their Indian ethnicity. Yet, despite that continued identification, a small

group of parents were choosing to identify with American culture.

<div align="center">Parenting</div>

The other major finding that also related to ethnic identity was parenting. This

emerged in six interrelated themes: guidance and discipline, childcare, similarities and

differences to family of origin parenting practices, acculturation and parenting practices,

ethnic and cultural socialization, and child's ethnic identity. When it came to parenting

schemes, there were very few differences between these Asian Indian parents even

though most of the parents still identified strongly with their Indian ethnicity. Many

parents described parenting practices that focused on instilling decision-making skills and

disciplining without harsh physical practices. Additionally, several parents described how

they were interested in fostering their children's development by enrolling their children

in child care programs such as Montessori, which is a specific approach to early

education that fosters independent learning by having teachers employ a hands off

approach to children's play and providing toys that promote self directed play (North

American Montessori Teachers' Association, 2007). Parents also discussed whether or

not the U.S. was influencing their parenting practices, thus highlighting the potential

influence of acculturation on parenting. And finally, parents explained how they were socializing their children to both Indian and American cultures.

*Guidance and Discipline*

In regard to guidance and discipline, parents indicated that they mostly used a positive guidance approach. For example, the majority of these parents said that they used praise with their children. Mukesh said:

> I think the other day [my daughter] had those, those A to Z puzzles, and she did
>
> that in like I think less than a minute or so, and I was really happy. So I gave her a
>
> high five and, you know said that I'm really proud of you and you did a great job.
>
> That is nice, really good. I appreciate her as much as I could.

Similarly, Padmini, a mother, said: "I do encourage [my son] more by saying 'you did a pretty good job' and everything. Sometimes I do give him his favorite chocolate, which is M&M, so that he knows that he did a very good job there and that's why he got the prize for it."

In addition, modeling was frequently cited as a method of guiding children's behavior. When parents were asked how they handled situations within the home such as wanting their children to clean up their toys, many parents stated that they would model cleaning up behaviors for their children. For example, Madhavi said:

> If he's not doing it, I just go with him and start showing him how to do it so
>
> instead of asking to do the whole thing. I start asking him to get—okay, if the
>
> tiger is out, let's get the tiger and put it in the bin, and he thinks it's more of a
>
> playful thing mommy's doing now rather than just saying it's cleaning time.

As well, distracting and ignoring were other commonly cited tactics used by parents to guide their children's behavior. For example, Madhavi said: "I just distract [my son]. [I say] bird cage, let's find the bird, and just kind of distract him and get him to do something else." Sonia, a mother, said: "The thing that works the best for me is I ignore her and I tell her to come to me once she is done with her crying or shouting or whatever." Likewise, another tactic used by parents was reasoning. For example, Parag, a father, said:

> Basically we still say that you've got to do that stuff and you're old enough to do stuff like pick up your toys and pick up your plate when you're done, and most of the time he'll do it. But when he doesn't want to do it, we ask him the reason. Like I actually ask him for the reason.

Along with distraction and reasoning, threats were also frequently used by parents to get their children to perform household tasks such as cleaning up toys. Parents said that they threatened their children with taking away toys or withholding a cherished activity, such as reading books. For example, Ritesh described the tactics he used to calm his children down whenever they had temper tantrums: "If they still don't listen, [I] start by threatening with some things like calm down, this toy is gone, that meaningful weekend is gone. [We] come home right now. And then generally it works."

As well, a majority of these Indian parents stated that they were using non-punitive physical discipline strategies such as time outs. For example, Saurav, a father, said this about time outs: "Time out is [a] charm. I mean, it just works." His wife, Bina, also mentioned that she preferred to use time out with their twins: "The time out thing

works for me the best because you don't even have to hit the child, you don't have to

scream at [them], nothing."

Conversely, there were a few parents who mentioned that they did resort to

spanking as a discipline strategy. In particular, Sneha said:

> But if [my son] is doing something that is unsafe that he can really get hurt, then I
>
> really spank him then. I will definitely spank him. Like he got one this morning
>
> [laughs]. So yeah, if he's putting himself in unsafe situations, he definitely gets
>
> spanked from me.

Chanda also described using similar strategies with her son whenever he exhibited a

temper tantrum:

> I don't beat him up, but yeah, you know just one spank, or one or two even. That
>
> too I try to minimize because he's getting older and I'm sure he doesn't like me
>
> doing that, and nobody does, actually.

Thus, Chanda recognized that her son did not like her spanking him, and consequently

she was trying to minimize her use of spanking as a discipline strategy.

In addition to discipline, these Asian Indian parents also communicated

expectations they had for their children. These expectations were oftentimes discussed in

regard to their children's behavior. For example, Sneha said this about her son in relation

to discipline: "He's a kid and he does things, but we try to work it out with him."

According to Sneha, she tried to match her discipline strategies in relation to what her son

did in a given situation, while also keeping in mind that her son was still a young child.

Likewise, Sachin stated:

I don't want to traumatize them, you know? Sometimes they remember things. I

don't want [my son] to remember bad memories, you know. I mean, they're [a]

child! Like if they don't make mistakes, then who'll make mistakes, right? So you

have to understand their age and tackle that accordingly.

Thus, Sachin was more concerned about focusing on the fact that his son was still a

young child and he was expected to make mistakes rather than using controlling

discipline practices with him.

Another area of discipline in which parental expectations emerged was regarding

the need for parental intervention in children's conflict situations. For instance, several

parents mentioned the importance of letting their children try to solve their conflicts with

peers rather than having the parents intervene. Rahul talked about his approach to conflict

situations between his son and another child:

We don't try to...interfere all the time 'cause they kind of have to figure some

things out themselves. You know, as long as things don't go out of hand, and one

of them is not trying to hit the other child, we don't step in.

Equally, Madhavi said:

I kind of just [observe] them carefully and just [make] sure that nobody is really

hurting anybody and just let them deal with the situation. But I personally feel

that we should just let them kind of alone and let them deal with their own issues,

as long as they're not really hitting or kind of getting hurt or anything.

*Childcare*

During these interviews, all parents mentioned that their children were enrolled in

formal child care programs such as preschools and Montessori programs. An interesting

trend that emerged in the data was that many of the children started attending outside

child care programs between the ages of 2 and 4. For example, Sneha said this about her

decision to wait until her son was at least 2 years old to attend a child care program:

> 'Cause I thought that like first two years he needs more attention from the parent
>
> and…even for myself, it's my first child, so I wanted to see how the child is
>
> growing up, so that's why I wanted to stay with him. But after two years, as how
>
> here it is…he does not have an outlet for him, for his energy, and to get
>
> interacting with other kids and all, so I think it's really good for him to go [to
>
> preschool] from maybe like 2, 2 and a half [years old].

Furthermore, when parents were asked why they chose to have their child attend a

child care program, the majority of the parents stated that it was for socialization reasons.

For example, Mukesh said:

> Well the reason why was when we got back from India this year, we realized that
>
> she was talking in our language, which is our mother tongue that we have. But as
>
> far as interacting with other kids, that was becoming a problem for her. So we
>
> thought that it would be easier for her to communicate with them if she is talking
>
> in a language that is common out here, and because she is going to be living here,
>
> it is better for her to understand how the other kids talk, how they behave, and
>
> there's no other way, no better way for her to know that then to go to a school
>
> here, or a daycare. So that was the reason why we put her in there.

Thus, not only was Mukesh's daughter going to learn how to interact with other children

her age by attending a daycare program, but she was also going to learn how to speak

English.

However, there were a number of parents who stated that they specifically chose a particular program such as a Montessori program over a traditional daycare or child development center. These parents viewed their children's Montessori programs as being better programs for their children. For example, Reena said: "I do believe that Montessori's kind of give you better tools than normal preschools do." Likewise, Rohan said:

> Montessori, at least they try to teach [my daughter] some stuff like alphabets and animals and colors and all that stuff, shapes. And they had some physical activity like building things with blocks and all that, so that seemed a good idea at least to get her exposed to things other than playing, just playing.

Hence, both parents felt that Montessori programs benefited their children more so than other formal child care programs. Another parent, Rahul, said:

> We tried this one place...it was pretty pathetic. Okay, they have this whole concept of self play which doesn't work for children. Children need organization in their lives. You know, you cannot expect a child—free play doesn't work for a 2 year old.

Rahul felt that his child needed a school that provided organized activities for children and did not focus solely on free play.

Conversely, only three couples preferred to have their child cared for by themselves or by their own parents in order to foster attachment. Although two couples did end up sending their child to a daycare, it was only for a short period of time and for socialization purposes only. Padmini said:

Well I didn't want to put him in the daycare full time because my mom was still here, so I still would like him to stay with a family member more. I mean, I feel like if you don't let kids stay with the family members right now, they won't have that much attachment to the family, so that's why I didn't want him to stay [a] whole day [at the daycare].

*Relation to Family of Origin Parenting Practices*

When it came to overall parenting schemes, eight parents stated that they were implementing the same parenting schemes that their own parents used with them while growing up in India. For example, Pallav explained how he used the same techniques his parents used with him as a child with his daughter:

So one of the things that I always get kind of…not to like pressure too much, okay. Let her play her own in what she wants to do. And so like not to be too much protective all the time. Yeah, so those are the things also like in our childhood.

According to Pallav, he felt that he used similar parenting techniques like his own parents in that he let his daughter control her own play activities, and he also did not try to be overly protective over her.

In contrast, seven parents said that they were not using similar parenting schemes as their families of origin. For example, Sonia said "Absolutely not." When asked to provide an example of how these parents are different from their families of origin, the majority of the parents listed discipline strategies. For instance, Sonia said:

As I said, I have many more resources available to me, and plus I've studied a little bit of psychology, and I think that's the main reason, because I know a little

bit more than they did during their time, and I know what might work and what's

not going to work, so definitely I think that I'm totally different than what they

were.

Likewise, Sunita said: "No, I think I'm quite different compared to my mom. I don't

spank [my daughter]."

Also, fathers expressed similar statements in relation to their parenting practices.

For example, Saurav said:

So in India pretty much it goes for…it's like adults are first, and then the elder, or

the grandparents and then kids. This is how the hierarchy is, but here you put the

kids first and then everybody else. So that changes your every action basically.

Hence, Saurav felt that he was not following the parenting practices used by his family of

origin in that he put his children first before adults and elders, which was a significant

change from the way children and elders were viewed in India. It is quite possible that

acculturation could have influenced these parents' decisions to not follow in their

parents' footsteps when it came to parenting.

Interestingly, 12 parents said that they were using similar parenting practices as

their families of origin, but they were also not following exactly in their parents'

footsteps. The most frequently cited parenting practice in which these parents were not

similar to their families of origin was discipline. For example, Padma said "[Our parents]

did what they knew was best, but from where we stand, if we know something different,

we should make an attempt to change it." On the other hand, only three parents said that

they were not sure whether or not they were following the same parenting practices as

their families of origin.

*Acculturation and Parenting Practices*

Acculturation influences were also reflected in parents' narratives when they were asked the question of whether or not the U.S. has influenced their parenting practices. Twenty three parents stated in their interviews that moving to the U.S. had affected their parenting. For example, Arpana said "Yes, it's like yes, when you're like this, it's like more important for okay, have you spent enough time with your kids and all. In India I don't remember any parent thinking it in that way." For Arpana, the U.S. had influenced her parenting practices in that she was more cognizant of the amount of time she spent with her children. Another parent, Sonia, said:

> I'm sure I would have still been the kind of parent who likes to read a lot and try
>
> to do the things that are recommended, but I'm sure I would have been affected
>
> by the [Indian] culture and, you know, other people telling me what to do. Yeah,
>
> definitely.

Based upon Sonia's statements, Sonia felt that her parenting would have been influenced by both Indian culture and also other people instructing her on what to do as a parent if she had been living in India. Living in the U.S. has permitted her to avoid those influences and allowed her to develop her own parenting schemes.

Likewise, Rahul said the following regarding how living in the U.S. had influenced his parenting practices:

> Because we are here, I think we are forced more often than not to kind of analyze
>
> what we do, and to kind of look for—rather than to fall towards, to apply
>
> something which was common in the way we were brought up, we have to kind of
>
> see if it applies to this context. So that has definitely changed our parenting.

According to Rahul, immigrating to the U.S. affected his parenting in that he had became more cognizant of how his experiences with his family of origin had the potential to shape his current parenting practices.

Another way in which the U.S. has influenced these Indian parents was through guidance and discipline strategies. For example, Chanda said:

> We didn't know what a time out was when we were in India [laughs]. We would just get smacks or scoldings, you know. We didn't know any better, like there was a better way to handle things without touching the child. And those are good things actually that I've learned, instead of just scolding and not reasoning out and just, you know, letting our frustration out because the child did something wrong. That's not right. We do that. I'm not ideal. I do that sometimes, but we do follow other things, too.

Thus, although Chanda admitted that she still resorted from time to time with her son to similar discipline practices that were used with her as a child, she also recognized that there were other methods of disciplining her child without using physical methods such as smacks.

Another way in which the U.S. influenced Asian Indian parenting practices was through the use of parenting resources. Parents identified using parenting books, listening to CDs on parenting, reading parenting magazines, and also using internet sources to help them in their parenting practices. Numerous parents also mentioned the ease in accessing these parenting resources here in the U.S. For example, Sneha said:

> Another good thing is that I could get so many resources here that eventually exploring all those I could figure out that it's okay to do this, and I think this is a

good parenting skill. So I kind of actually *learned* how to parent. I'm not saying

that I do a great job, but whatever I know now of parenting is something that I

have really learnt, and some of the things are of course from what I saw my

parents do...I still even now keep learning and learning and learning to do it, so

it's more like a subject for me [laughs].

For Sneha, the many parenting resources she was able to access here in the U.S. helped

her to learn various parenting skills. Likewise, Saurav said:

The books, the magazines I read here, they help me to understand the psychology

at hand towards certain things, and that helps me to deal with [my twins].

Otherwise it would be I am an adult, you are a child. You are supposed to be a

certain way. If you're not, you'll be yelled at or spanked or timed out, whatever

they do in India. That is totally wrong because what it does is that it suppresses

your expression, your assertiveness, and I don't want to do that to my kids. I want

my kids to be really assertive, really expressive, and imaginative, and I just try to

look at it from that way.

Thus, Saurav felt that the resources he accessed here in the U.S. had helped him to handle

discipline situations with his children. Furthermore, Saurav was now more intent on using

practices that did not negatively affect his children's socio-emotional development.

On the other hand, some of these parents recognized that the parenting practices

they were using with their children in the U.S. contrasted with the parenting practices

used by parents in India. Asha gave an example of how her desire to cultivate her

children's cognition skills through creative activities at home was not valued by her

father:

Like in India if there is cardboard, they trash it. And I feel like if my kids want to

build something out of it, I don't mind them doing it. Even if the house gets

messy, I think if the kids want to do something, then it's okay. I won't take away

their creativity in that. So yeah because my father, he definitely would get mad at

me for this. He would say you are giving them some junk and they are making the

house messy. No, let them be creative. They enjoy the hard work [laughs].

Moreover, Shobha described a conversation she had with her mother regarding her

guidance and discipline strategies:

[My mom] says that we tell [my son] everything. We explain everything to him

like he's an adult and she says you guys were like alright, always being dragged

along and being told what to do, never had those choices or explanations or

anything like that. You were never treated as adults when you were kids. When

you were kids, you were kids. Kids were treated like kids. So that's something I

haven't gotten from my parents.

Therefore, both Asha and Shobha recognized that the parenting practices they were using

with their children were different from what their parents used with them, and their

parents noticed these differences.

On the contrary, four parents felt that immigrating to the U.S. did not influence

their parenting practices. They felt that they were using the same practices that their

parents used with them as children. Also, they felt that they would have been the same

kind of parent living in India. For example, Rohan, a father, said

I was never a parent back in India, so I don't know that. But I wouldn't say so,

though. Even if I was living in India at this stage…I think things would be quite

similar. I don't think I would have told [my daughters] like the whole

*Mahabharata* [Sankrit epic] anyway [laughs]. I mean, essentially I would want

the kinds of values I have, and what I think is important and not so important

wouldn't be any different. It would still be the same.

However, one important distinction about these respondents was that three of these

parents still identified strongly with an only Indian identity versus a bicultural identity.

Moreover, the fourth parent in this cohort, Nivi, did not identify herself with either an

Indian or American identity. Nivi viewed herself solely as a "person".

In addition, although Vivek acknowledged that living in the U.S. had not

influenced his parenting practices, he still felt that he needed to give more attention to his

son, as evidenced in his quote:

Maybe I need to give a little more attention to him, but if we were in India, then

even I need to spend less time with him whatever I am spending right now

because there are so many other people around him to take care of him, right?  So

maybe a little more attention, so that's about it.

Even though Vivek felt that the U.S. has not affected his parenting, he recognized that

there was a difference between the amount of time parents spend with their children in

the U.S. and in India, thus indicating his self awareness about his parenting practices.

*Socialization Regarding Indian and American Culture*

As previously discussed, socialization refers to the active process of parents

teaching children the practices that enable them to be a part of a particular social group

(Grusec, 2002). All parents, including the parents who solely identified themselves as

being Indian, were open to teaching their children about both Indian and American

cultures. These parents wanted to expose their children to Indian culture as well as Hinduism. Additionally, even though many of the parents mentioned that they did not know what American culture actually entailed, they felt that they should allow their children to be exposed to it by celebrating festivals such as Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Halloween.

Many of these parents mentioned in their interviews that their children were exposed to Indian culture and Hinduism through a variety of means. These included attending temples, celebrating festivals such as *Diwali* and *Holi*, wearing Indian clothing, taking trips to India to visit family, showing respect towards elders, and also practicing *pujas* at home. Another frequently cited example was using literature such as the *Amar Chitra Katha* comic books and the Sanskrit epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* to teach the children about Indian and Hindu cultures. To illustrate, Sachin said the following regarding how he taught his son about Indian culture:

> There's books, and then we do *puja* in the morning, you know. And then like we
> have cartoon books [that] he reads, and we go to temple every Sunday. So that's
> how. He does classes over there. He attends, so that's how he learns.

Based on Sachin's narrative, he was inculcating Indian culture into his son through several different activities.

Oftentimes, these practices occurred during the context of children's everyday activities, such as parent-child interactions and mealtimes. For example, Arpana said:

> We sing a lot of Indian songs, and I teach [my children] *shlokas* [Sanskrit
> prayers]. Now they're like at an age that they can really get through to them, so I

started teaching them some *shlokas* and then whenever they pray to god they even

recite those, so that's good.

As well, Saurav talked about how he told his twins stories about the gods:

> We try to modify them to whatever their current status is, so if we are having
>
> dinner, then we start telling stories of some god that his bones are so strong
>
> because he ate spinach and broccoli and chapatti [Indian bread], and you should
>
> eat it, too.

Based upon these narratives, it appeared that these parents incorporated elements of

Indian culture and Hinduism into their children's everyday activities.

Another method of inculcating Indian culture into the children was through

teaching the parents' native language. Numerous parents stated that it was imperative for

their children to know their parents' mother tongue. For example, Padmini said:

> We do encourage [our son] to speak in our native language, which is Gujarati for
>
> us. The reason is because his grandparents, my mom and dad, are staying with us
>
> so he can communicate with them. Plus when we go back to India, he can
>
> communicate with other kids, family members, everything. Otherwise he won't
>
> like it there or it's like why did I came?

For Padmini, it was important for her son to speak Gujarati so that he could have ties with

his grandparents, who were living with the family in the U.S., as well as with other

family members back in India.

Furthermore, Rohan said this about teaching his native language to his children:

"Language is one big part of [culture], so if [parents] don't teach an Indian language to

the kid, I think you completely shut out one aspect of the culture. I think that is very important." For Rohan, language was a significant marker of culture.

Additionally, parents discussed the importance of teaching their children about Indian culture. For example, Ashish said: "I guess it's important so that [my son] does not have any kind of void in his identity. Just so that he knows what constitutes him. So in that respect, I think it's important." According to Ashish, it was important for his son to know about Indian culture so that he would know his heritage.

On the other hand, some parents did not feel it was important for their child to know every detail about Indian culture, especially Hinduism. For example, Sachin said: "Hinduism, not important. Indian culture means like what is *Diwali*, all the festivals, whatever they mean. If he's interested, I'll teach him…he should know the basics, you know, which is good." For Sachin, he felt that it was more important for his son to know the basics of Indian culture rather than all the specific details of Hinduism. Furthermore, Sachin also felt that his son's interest in knowing this information was also an important factor in what he taught him.

Interestingly, some parents appeared to downplay their efforts for instilling Indian culture and Hinduism into their children regardless of parents' views on ethnicity. For example, Sandeep said:

> I definitely want them to read the *Amar Chitra Katha's* because I got a lot of my knowledge of Hinduism from like the stories and stuff like that from there, and I definitely want grandparents to tell them stories. And whenever I can remember any of the stories, I do tell them the stories and I continue to do that. But other than that, no, we're not very active.

Similarly, Nivi said "We don't have any need to teach him. We're going to let him just pick up whatever he wants to. He can have his own religion." Another mother, Reena, said that she used an "ad hoc" approach to teaching her children about their culture, meaning that she focused on teaching her children about their culture whenever the need arose.

This feeling of downplaying their approaches to teaching Indian culture to children was also shared with parents who identified solely with their Indian ethnicity. For example, Vijay said:

> Any music that [my son] dances to at home with us is Indian. We eat Indian food. We talk in Hindi. We have Indian friends, so pretty much that is his exposure of, that's what he's seeing. That's what he's growing up in, so I guess that's what he'll learn. Other than that, there's no formal training that we are giving him on being an Indian.

According to Vijay, although his son was exposed to Indian culture through language, food, music, and socializing with primarily Indian families, he felt that he was not engaged in any "formal" cultural training with his son.

Furthermore, though many of these parents said that they would expose their children to Indian culture and also Hinduism, they did not want to enforce their children to adopt these practices. This response was stated by both parents who identified as Indian American and parents with a strong Indian identity. For example, Gauri said:

> I am not expecting her to follow it. I'm going to give her the freedom of choice, whatever life she wants to live is fine with my expectations. The thing is the more expectations you set upon her, the more confused she becomes. She doesn't know

how to react. We are talking about different cultures and different parts of the

world when you are living in another part of the world, right? So we encourage

her everything that she gets done. If she doesn't, then it's okay.

Likewise, Bina said:

I would really like to explain everything and try to [have my children] understand

that, but it will be their choice to continue doing that or not as they grow up. So I

don't know what's going to happen, but I'll surely make an effort to tell them

everything I know about the religion, the culture, the traditions, everything.

Thus, Bina hoped to teach them about Indian culture and Hinduism while growing up, but

ultimately it was the children's decision to decide whether or not to permanently adopt

these practices while living in America.

Fathers also shared similar feelings regarding whether or not to enforce their

children to adopt cultural or religious practices. For example, Ashish said:

I won't be hung on teaching each and every minor detail about it because of

course [my son's] identity is more of identifying himself with his surroundings

here [U.S.], so that will be his main identity. But of course he has to know what

his identity is with respect to family, so that's where Hinduism and Indian culture

will fit.

Ashish planned to expose his son to Hinduism and Indian culture up to a point where he

felt his son would be able to identify with the culture and religion in relation to his

family, but he was not planning to teach his son every minute detail regarding each

because they were living in the U.S. Moreover, he believed that his son would identify

more with the U.S. culture than Indian culture.

When these parents were asked the question "Do you find it difficult to teach your child about Indian culture and Hinduism?", the majority of the parents responded they did not. When asked to further explain her answer, Madhavi said: "I don't think it will be difficult just because of all the friends, and we take him to the temple so often." Contrastingly, eight parents stated that it would be difficult for them to teach their children, as illustrated by Ashwin's quote: "I mean, being a minority is hard to teach. It's hard to keep up what you want to teach them."

Furthermore, parents described the importance of exposing their children to American practices as well as Indian practices. For example, Madhavi said: "I will definitely make my son get the good values of the U.S. culture and the good values of Indian culture, and just grow up to be a good kid." Additionally, Arun said:

> We try to teach her about Christmas. We try to teach her—tell her a few things about Diwali. Not much, just a little bit at home, and this is to sort of keep her updated as to why things are going on. Why people are celebrating, just to make her curious as to what's happening and why. And we do that both for Indian as well as American culture.

Likewise, Shobha said:

> The thing is that we are living in a place that is predominately Christian. These are the main holidays, so he is celebrating with the people we are around with. That's who we live with. So it's a nice thing to celebrate with them. It's your way of respecting people around you. It's what you do.

Thus, Shobha felt that celebrating Christian holidays with her son in the U.S. was a sign of respect towards the society in which they were living.

Even though many Indian parents also mentioned that they did not know what American culture was, they felt it was still important for their children to learn something about it. To illustrate, Padma said: "Yeah, maybe when she grows up, she's curious, and we'll both sit down and learn American culture together [laughs]." Likewise, Bina said: "I'm going to be here for life in America, so I also want to know about the whole thing, so it can be fun for us, I guess."

Moreover, although many parents did not feel it was necessary for them to teach their children anything specific regarding American culture, they felt that their children would learn all that they needed to know about the culture through interactions with the larger society, such as their child attending outside child care. Arun said : "So a lot of what she gets, say from the cartoons, from food, from going on Halloween and attending things at school, and Easter egg hunt[s], so she gets a lot of it from society and from what we practice at home because we live in America." Likewise, Sandeep said: "See, they're growing here. I don't think I really need to *try* and expose the kids to American culture because like I was exposed to Indian culture without actually having to try."

*Child's Ethnic Identity*

When it came to parents' expectations for their child's ethnic identity, parents varied in their responses, which ranged from an American only identity to giving the child a choice in deciding on an ethnic identity. Despite the fact that three parents viewed themselves as having a bicultural identity, they expected their children to identify solely with being American. For example, Rahul said "I would say I am Indo-American, but [my son] would be an American just because we grew up in different places. Mmhmm,

he would be an American. If he thinks he's Indian, he's fooling himself." According to

this father, place of birth played a factor in one's identity.

In addition, three parents who identified themselves as Indian only expected their

child to identify himself or herself as being American only. For example, Paresh said:

"[My daughter] should say that she's an American with parents who are from India."

Equally, Mukesh said:

> I would want [my daughter] to answer as an American…because she's born here.
>
> She's going to be brought up here, so the only thing that she has in common as far
>
> as Indian culture is concerned is that her parents are Indians.

According to these parents, place of birth dictated their child's identity and because these

children were born in the U.S., they should identify themselves as Americans. Moreover,

especially for Mukesh, these children's link to Indian culture was through their parents.

Eight parents who identified solely with being Indian felt that their children would

have a bicultural identity. For example, Sneha stated: "This is what I think…He has touch

of Indian, but he's born and brought up in America, so it would be more like Indo-

American." This mother's response was similar to Mukesh's in that place of birth was an

important factor in deciding on her child's ethnic identity.

Furthermore, six parents who identified themselves as having a bicultural identity

also expected their children to have a bicultural identity. One couple, Asha and Ashwin,

even went as far as to make their children citizens of both the U.S. and India, even though

their children were born in the U.S. During her interview, Asha said "They both are

citizens of India also, so we got them the citizenships for India. We all are citizens of

both of the countries. Yeah, so we have allegiance to both of the countries."

An additional response that surfaced from the data was giving the child a choice in his or her ethnic identity, meaning that the child would be able to decide whatever identity he or she wanted to undertake. This was regardless of the parent's own ethnic identity. Seven parents stated this expectation for their child. For example, Pallav said:

I mean, personally, it's up to [my daughter], really, how she feels about it. Yeah, but definitely she will know where she comes from, okay. She'll have the right values, and she will definitely be very aware of where she comes from, so in her mind there won't be any confusion, anything like that. She'll be basically very strong from what her roots [are] and all those things, and so when it is strong—I mean, it is completely understood, then no matter who she associates with, that will not affect her. So whatever she wants because she was born here, right?

Thus, geography appeared to play a germane role in this parent's expectation for his daughter's ethnic identity in that because his daughter was born in the U.S., she would be able to choose her own identity. Likewise, Gauri stated "Whatever [my daughter] wants. Yeah, and whatever combination of it she wants. It's her choice."

Interestingly, numerous parents stated that they did not plan to teach their children to be proud of being Indian. This response was frequently given by parents who saw their children as either American or Indian American. A frequently stated response to the question "Do you teach your child to be proud of being Indian?" was that their child was not an Indian. For example, Arpana said: "No. They're not Indians, so I can't. It's wrong of me, actually...to tell that you are called Indian. They are *born* to Indian parents, but they are Americans. They are born *here*." Therefore, according to Arpana, she was not going to teach her children to be proud of being Indian because they were born in the

U.S. and thus were Americans rather than Indians. Another commonly stated response to this question was that the child was too young to learn this information. For instance, Vijay said: "It's too early to say that, right? He's only 2."

On the other hand, some parents said that they wanted their child to be proud of being Indian. For example, Chanda said "Why not? That's where his roots come from." In addition, Rohan said "I would want them to know where they came from and we have the traditions and culture of the land where their parents came from." According to these parents, having their children feel proud of being Indian meant that they would know and appreciate their heritage.

<p align="center">Summary of Findings</p>

In summary, the results from this study focused on three main research questions that were addressed in the beginning of this chapter. The data supported major findings in that most Asian Indian parents were maintaining connections with their "Indianness" after migrating to the U.S. Also, these parents were sustaining connections with their religion, Hinduism. However, acculturation played a role in these connections in that several parents were self-identifying with American culture along with their "Indianness." Additionally, these connections with "Indianness" were also influencing the parenting practices used by these parents with their children, namely in the childrearing strategies and ethnic and cultural socialization practices they used with their children. Nonetheless, acculturative influences were evident in the parenting practices used by Indian parents, specifically in parents' use of positive guidance discipline strategies as well as their interest in exposing their children to American culture.

# CHAPTER V

## DISCUSSION

This chapter focuses on summarizing and interpreting the major findings of this study, ethnic identity and parenting, in relation to the proposed research questions stated in previous chapters. These results will be analyzed in regard to the existing literature currently available on this subject, as well as the two theoretical frameworks that were used to guide this study, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Berry's acculturation model. A surprising finding emerged from the data, which was that the data did not match with Berry's model and it appeared that selective acculturation had occurred. Furthermore, limitations to the study will also be discussed, as well as implications for future inquiry.

### "Indianness"

Overall, the data culminated into an overall storyline with one overarching theme, which was the importance of Asian Indian parents' feelings towards their sense of "Indianness." These feelings of "Indianness" appeared to guide their personal ethnic and religious maintenance strategies. Specifically, most parents were interested in enforcing ties with their culture and religion after immigrating to the U.S. Parents also felt strongly about their "Indianness" and most parents still self identified as being Indian.

Moreover, "Indianness" also appears to influence parenting practices. For example, parents wanted to teach their children the customs associated with Indian culture and Hinduism. Parents were also keen on teaching their children their native languages. As well, some parents were interested in teaching their children to be proud of being an Indian.

However, it also appears that acculturation is another factor influencing these parents' feelings towards their ethnicity and their parenting strategies. Due to the fact that these parents migrated to and have resided in the U.S. for a considerable amount of time, they have been exposed to U.S. styles of parenting and therefore appear to adopt some of these techniques into their parenting repertoires. For example, these parents used parenting practices such as praise and discipline with their children. In regard to socialization practices, most parents felt that it was important for their children to learn about American culture as well as Indian culture, and thus expected their children to adopt bicultural identities. Despite this expectation for their children, these parents still maintained ties with Indian culture and Hinduism and some self identified as being Indians only.

Due to these experiences of acculturation, these parents also seemed to make choices in what they were doing, whether it was maintaining ties with Indian culture or with parenting practices. Furthermore, it also appeared that the majority of these parents were extending this choice-making ability to their children through their socialization practices, especially in regard to their children's ethnic identities. Moreover, many parents mentioned that they were not following in their parents' footsteps in terms of disciplining their children. This is particularly salient for several reasons. First of all,

these parents have transitioned into an environment which is wholly different from their country of origin. Moreover, as several parents have expressed in their interviews, these adults were accustomed to having input from their parents or community elders prior to making decisions. The fact that they were now making parenting choices on their own without consulting with their families or elders is a significant change. It is likely that parents were able to do this due to the fact that most of them were not in close proximity to their families of origin.

<div align="center">Maintaining Ethnic Identity</div>

The data from this study lends support for the first research question posed for this study, which was: How do Asian Indian parents uphold and maintain their ethnic identities after migrating to the United States? The results indicate that the majority of these immigrant Asian Indian parents were maintaining ties with Indian culture after moving to the U.S. In turn, these connections could be aiding these parents' sense of ethnic identity.

These narratives indicate a variety of ways in which Indian culture was supported and maintained in parents' lives. For example, parents cited celebrating festivals as a means of preserving ties with their culture. Sodowsky and Carey (1998) and Inman and colleagues (2007) also reported similar examples in their study on Asian Indian immigrants. Another frequently cited example of how Indian culture was preserved was by establishing a community of Indian friends and attending community events, a finding which is consistent with previous research (Inman et al.).

Additionally, many parents still followed elements of Hinduism after migrating to the U.S. Practicing *pujas* and attending temples were some of the methods in which

connections with Hinduism were sustained. Despite the fact that these parents were now living in a society where the dominant religion is Christianity, they were still maintaining their religious beliefs and practices. Inman and colleagues (2007), Mullatti (1995), and Singh (2001) also reported similar trends in their work on Asian Indian families.

However, a surprising finding emerged from the data regarding parents' narratives on their ties with Hinduism. It appeared that parents' narratives regarding how they maintained connections Hinduism do not seem to be nearly as extensive as what has been previously reported by scholars on the germaneness of Hinduism in Indian family life (Inman et al., 2007; Mullatti, 1995; Singh, 2007). According to Almeida (1996), Hinduism is oftentimes viewed more as a way of life rather than an organized religion such as Christianity and therefore it is likely that parents were not fully aware of all of the Hinduism influences their lives. It is also possible that they would have followed a similar form of Hinduism had they been living in India instead. Another possibility is that parents were not comfortable with discussing their Hinduism beliefs with the researcher due to her outsider status. On the other hand, it is also possible that influences such as acculturation, and lack of proximity from families back in India could have played a role in parents' decisions on whether or not to maintain strict ties with Hinduism. Perhaps parents felt that they had more freedom to follow Hinduism in a format that was more conducive for their lives due to Christianity's dominance in America, and the lack of societal pressure to follow the religion in a strict format.

As well, it was apparent from these interviews that the majority of these participants still held positive views regarding their "Indianness." In turn, this sense of "Indianness" most likely motivated these parents to sustain connections with Indian

culture and Hinduism. Furthermore, these parents' positive feelings regarding their

ethnicity also influenced their subsequent socialization practices with their children, a

finding which is also consistent with previous research (Bacon, 1996; Deepak, 2005;

Hughes et al., 2006; Inman et al., 2007).

Furthermore, these findings are also reflective of exosystem and macrosystem

interactions on the familial microsystem, as evidenced from Bronfenbrenner's (1986)

ecological theory. The exosystem encompasses factors such as Hindu temples and the

established Asian Indian community in Austin, whereas the macrosystem involves larger

contexts such as American ideologies and culture. The familial microsystem includes

Indian parents, their cultural practices, and their feelings regarding their ethnicity. Thus,

despite the fact that these parents were embedded in American culture due to living in the

U.S., parents' feelings and beliefs regarding their Indian culture and Hinduism and ready

access to an established ethnic community and temples most likely influenced their

decision to adhere to their cultural and religious practices and to share these practices

with their children.

Interestingly, several Indian parents appeared to downplay their efforts to

maintain ties with Indian culture and Hinduism. It is possible that these parents did not

view their practices as being significant or unique, and were simply following the

practices that they learned as children. On the other hand, acculturation experiences could

possibly be contributing to these parents' feelings regarding their ethnic and religious

practices. For example, it is possible that some parents may have felt uncomfortable

revealing to the researcher that they still regularly followed Indian cultural practices and

Hinduism despite having lived in the U.S. for a considerable amount of time due to past experiences with revealing similar information to outsiders.

In regard to how these parents self identified, it appeared that the majority of parents in this study were in the achievement stage of Phinney's (1990) model of ethnic identity development. This meant that parents had selected an identity that they felt encompassed their feelings regarding their ethnicity and current life circumstances. For example, several parents stated that they viewed themselves as having a bicultural identity, meaning that they identified with both Indian and American cultures. It can be argued that these parents have acculturated, or are in the process of acculturating into the American society. Moreover, these findings on ethnic identity can also be viewed through Bronfenbrenner's (1986) ecological framework. For example, Indian and American cultural influences are reflective of interactions between the micro and macrosystem, and these influences are reflected in the parents' bicultural self identification labels.

However, a surprising finding was that the majority of the parents in this study still identified themselves as being solely Indian. These parents were also considered to be in the identity achievement stage of Phinney's (1990) model. Even though these parents had resided in the U.S. for a considerable amount of time, they still viewed their identities as being Indian only. Perhaps the parents who still identified strongly with their Indian culture were giving privilege to their culture over American culture. For example, they may have felt that because the U.S. does not have a distinct culture such as Indian culture, choosing to incorporate American culture into their identities meant that they were losing their ethnicity. Moreover, macrosystem influences such as parents' social standing within the U.S. society and general perceptions of Indians by Americans, and

microsystem influences such as their feelings for Indian culture, could also impact their feelings and subsequent practices regarding their ethnicity.

In contrast, it is plausible that the few parents who did not self identify with a specific ethnicity had an unexamined ethnic identity according to Phinney's (1990) model. These parents may not have explored their identity in relation to their ethnicity. It is also possible that these parents simply viewed their ethnic identity as being an unimportant aspect of their lives.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that ethnic identity development is not a static process; ones feelings towards ones ethnicity can change throughout the life course (Phinney, 2003). Hence, it is possible that these Indian parents may or may not feel the same way regarding their ethnicity as they age, and also as their children transition into adolescence and young adulthood. Therefore, these results highlight the importance of context in relation to ethnic identity. More specifically, parents' views on their self identification is dependent on their particular attitudes or behaviors, such as how salient "Indianness" is in their lives, or how they incorporate American culture into their identities during a particular period of their life course.

Overall, these results contrast with those results found in Krishnan and Berry's (1992) study on immigrant Asian Indian adults living in the Midwest, which found that the integration strategy was the acculturation strategy adopted by most of these adults. This meant that these Indians incorporated both Indian and American cultures into their lives. Yet, it is possible that regional differences might account for these differences between Krishnan and Berry's work and the current study. Given that their study only examined the experiences of Indians residing in the Midwestern area of the U.S., it is

possible that these Indians adopted American culture into their lives due to living in areas that may not have had established ethnic communities such as those in Austin.

<center>Ethnic Identity and Parenting Practices</center>

The second research question presented in this inquiry was: How do Asian Indian parents' ethnic identities influence parenting practices? Based upon the results garnered for this study, it appeared that the majority of these parents were developing parenting schemes based around their personal ethnic and religious experiences. Thus, these parents' sense of "Indianness" was guiding their parenting. Similar results were reported in Bacon's (1996) study of Asian Indian families residing in the Chicago area.

Overall, the results from this study indicate that parents were engaged in socialization practices about Indian and American culture with their children. For example, parents were inculcating Indian heritage in their children and also teaching their children about Hinduism and Hindu culture. Parents were also permitting their children to celebrate American holidays within their homes. Furthermore, these socialization practices can be viewed through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's (1986) ecological model in that these practices are representative of the interactions between three different subsystems: exosystem (Hindu temples and festivals, Asian Indian community in Austin), macrosystem (Indian culture in the U.S. and American culture), and microsystem (parents and child). More specifically, parents' feelings regarding ethnicity, culture, and religion appeared to influence their decisions on whether or not to socialize their children to Indian culture, Hinduism, and American culture.

However, it is not clear is how transnational influences, such as parents taking their children to India and Indian culture in general, factor into Bronfenbrenner's

ecological theory. Similar arguments were presented in Umaña-Taylor and Bámaca's

(2004) work on immigrant Columbian, Guatemalan, Mexican, and Puerto Rican mothers

living in the U.S. They found that these mothers were using resources from their

countries of origin, such as videos and books, to help socialize their children to their

culture. Due to the fact that Bronfenbrenner's framework focused solely on the culture in

which the family currently resides, it is difficult to ascertain where globalization

influences would fit in the theory. This uncertainty is particularly important to consider

due to the fact that Bronfenbrenner's theory is frequently cited as a theoretical framework

guiding research on immigrant families in the U.S.

Many of the socialization strategies used by the parents to inculcate Indian culture

and Hinduism into the children, such as telling Indian and Hindu stories, celebrating

festivals, attending temples, taking trips to India, and performing *pujas*, were similar to

the strategies previously reported by Inman and colleagues (2007). Likewise, Harrison

and colleagues (1990) have identified the transmission of ancestral worldviews or beliefs

regarding culture and religion from parents to children as a strategy that ethnic minority

families use to teach children about their culture of origin and the host culture.

In addition, the importance of children learning their native tongue was also found

to be germane in this study. Fathers were just as concerned as mothers in fostering and

sustaining these languages with their children. Although Tummala-Narra's (2004) work

focused solely on immigrant mothers, it was interesting to see that fathers were actively

engaged in teaching their children their heritage language.

It is likely that fathers' personal beliefs on the importance of children knowing

their native tongue influenced their decision to teach the language to their children. This

is reflective of the importance of Bronfenbrenner's (1986) microsystem (fathers' teachings on Indian culture) on child socialization practices. This action is also representative of possible transnational influences on parenting in that many parents felt that teaching children their heritage language enabled them to establish relationships with their extended family back in India. Bronfenbrenner's model does not take these transnational influences into consideration and therefore it is difficult to situate these practices within one of the ecological systems.

Moreover, these results also contrast with what has been previously reported on parental responsibility for cultural socialization of children in that mothers were not solely responsible for inculcating Indian culture into their children (Kakar, 1978; Patel et al., 1996; Ranganath & Ranganath, 1997; Tummala-Nara). However, it is also possible that Indian families' social class could have contributed to these different findings. The majority of the parents in this study were of upper middle class standing, and previous research has highlighted the saliency of social class in parenting (Hoff, Laursen, & Tardif, 2002).

A particularly interesting finding from this study was how some parents also downplayed their approaches to teaching their children about their culture, which was similarly reported by some parents in relation to their own personal ethnic and religious connections. Again, it is possible that these parents did not view their socialization practices as being significant or unique, and were simply following the practices that they learned themselves as children. However, it is also possible these parents do not want to draw focused attention to their children's "differences" from other children due to their minority status in the U.S., which could be reflective of acculturative influences on

parents' feelings towards their ethnicity. For example, parents may want their children to focus solely on their similarities with other children regardless of race or ethnicity to promote children's successful inclusion into the dominant society and thus take on what Hughes and colleagues (2006) define as an "egalitarian" approach to socialization. An egalitarian approach to socialization means that parents focus on teaching their children to "value individual qualities over racial group membership" (Spencer, 1983, as cited in Hughes et al., p. 757). It is possible that they may feel unsure of how to handle the task of teaching their children about their ethnicity and downplayed what they did, or they may feel uncomfortable with the topic or are uninterested in having discussions about ethnicity with their children.

On the other hand, the majority of Asian Indian parents felt that it was not difficult to teach their children about Indian culture and Hinduism. This finding is interesting as the existing research on this topic points to the challenges associated with parents' socialization of their children (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). It is possible that the community ties which these parents have forged with other Indian families could be contributing to these parents' feelings about teaching Indian culture to their children. Previous research has also identified the saliency of social supports, or community ethnic socialization, for immigrant Indian families (Inman et al., 2007; Tummala-Narra, 2004). Furthermore, similar to what Knight and colleagues (1993) found in their study of Mexican mothers, these parents may have also felt comfortable enough with their culture that they felt they taught their children with little difficulty.

Alternatively, the majority of these parents were also interested in establishing connections with American culture for the sake of their children's socialization

experiences. This interest in creating connections with American culture is reflective of macrosystem influences on parental socialization practices (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Even though these parents felt that they did not need to actively socialize their children into American culture, they still felt it was important to incorporate some elements of the culture such as celebrating holidays into their children's lives, which is consistent with previous research on immigrant Pakistani and Indian families in Canada (Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil, 1981). Furthermore, many of these parents felt this practice demonstrated respect towards the country in which they were currently living, as well as opportunities to learn something new along with their children.

Moreover, it appeared through these actions that these parents were interested in fostering an Indian American, or bicultural identity within their children. This finding is particularly salient considering that the majority of the parents in this study still identified themselves solely as Indians. Therefore, it seemed these Indian parents were taking their children's social contexts (living in America) into consideration when it came to socialization. This is yet another example of macrosystem influences on the parent-child microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Furthermore, using a bicultural socialization strategy is one that has been previously identified by Harrison and colleagues (1990) as one that ethnic minority parents use to socialize their children to American culture as well as their culture of origin.

However, an interesting finding was that these parents were split on the issue of whether or not to teach their child to be proud of being Indian. Although some parents felt that it was important to teach their child to be proud of being Indian so that their child could understand and appreciate his or her heritage, numerous parents felt that it was not

relevant to their children's lives due to their child's age or the fact that their child was born in America. Thus, these views could be reflective of parents' feelings regarding ethnicity in that parents who identified more strongly with their Indian heritage were more likely to teach their children to be proud of being Indian. These findings do not reflect previous research on parents' reports on the importance of teaching children about their heritage and to be proud of their heritage (Brown et al., 2007; Umaña-Taylor & Yazedjian, 2006). However, these previous studies did not account for parents' feelings regarding their ethnicity, which this study did. This could explain the differences in these findings. Furthermore, these findings also highlight the importance of geography in the cultural and ethnic socialization of Asian Indian children in that a child's place of birth appears to influence parents' socialization practices.

<div align="center">Acculturation and Parenting Practices</div>

Finally, the last research question guiding this study was: How do Asian Indian parents' acculturation experiences influence parenting practices? According to the results from this study, it appeared that acculturation has had an influence on parenting practices used by these parents. The acculturation influence emerged in both parenting practices as well as parental ethnic socialization strategies, which previous research has identified as areas in which acculturation impacts the family system (Chun & Akutsu, 2003; Farver et al., 2007; García-Coll & Pachter, 2002). However, this influence varied in certain dimensions of parenting, such as whether or not these parents were using similar parenting styles as their families of origin and how they were socializing their children.

For example, one area in which acculturative influences were evident in parenting practices was in guidance and discipline. The majority of the parents in this study stated

that they adopted more American styles of child guidance such as using praise, time outs, and limited their use of spanking due to U.S. societal influences. In essence, these parents adopted more democratic modes of parenting. Similar findings have been previously reported in studies on immigrant South Asian mothers in Canada (Maiter & George, 2003), as well as on studies of mothers living in the U.S. (Farver et al., 2007; Jambunathan & Counselman, 2002; Rao et al., 2003).

Furthermore, it may be that these parents had become aware of what is considered acceptable practices in the U.S. society regarding discipline, and they understood that their children would be exposed to these practices through their neighborhoods as well as their schools. This is also an example of how factors from the exosystem and chronosystem can influence parenting, as conceptualized in Bronfenbrenner's (1986) theory. For instance, exosystem factors would include parents' use of guidance and discipline strategies such as praise, reasoning, modeling, distraction, and time outs, which are strategies that are most likely used in the child care programs their children are enrolled in and by families in their neighborhoods. Another example of exosystem influences would be parents' use of parenting resources such as books and magazines. These resources most likely contributed to the change in their parenting practices. Further, according to some parents, these resources would have been more difficult to access had they been in India. The gradual adoption of these parenting practices, or acculturation in parenting practices, would be reflective of Bronfenbrenner's chronosystem due to acculturation being a byproduct of time. Thus, the results from this study indicate that social context played an influential role in parenting, a finding which

is consistent with previous research (Maiter & George, 2003) and further highlights the influence of acculturation on the parenting schemes used by parents.

Another area in which acculturation influenced parenting was through childrearing. For example, both mothers and fathers were involved in guiding and disciplining their children, and socializing them to both Indian and American cultures. These findings are surprising because they contradict previous work on Indian families (Hodge, 2004; Kakar, 1978).

Based upon these interviews, it was apparent that coparenting was occurring within these families. Therefore, these findings both support and refute previous research findings by Jain and Belsky (1997). Although these researchers found that only fathers who identified as being bicultural were heavily involved in childrearing, the results from this study indicate that both fathers who identify with both Indian and American cultures and fathers who strongly identified with their "Indianness" were heavily involved in childrearing. It is probable that parents' level of education was more influential than self identification on their parenting practices.

It is probable that acculturation could have influenced some fathers' decisions not to adhere to the definitive gender-based family roles and patriarchal values that have been identified by previous research as being a salient aspect of Asian Indian family life and to become more involved in parenting (D'Cruz & Bharat, 2001; Deepak, 2005; Dhruvarajan, 1988; Hodge, 2004; Kakar, 1978; Mullatti, 1995; Seymour, 1999; Sharma, 2000; Suppal et al., 1996). It appeared that parents were rejecting the strict Hindu gender roles posed by Pativratya, and employed a more egalitarian approach to parenting.

Dhruvarajan (1988) also reported these as being strategies adopted by highly educated

immigrant Indian families residing in Canada.

Likewise, acculturation could have contributed to Asian Indian parents' decisions

to use outside child care for their children. Although immigrant parents generally

preferred to care for their children at home (Brandon, 2004; Magnuson et al., 2006;

Obeng, 2007), the majority of parents in this study had enrolled their children in some

form of outside child care by the time the child was between the ages of 2 and 4. The

main reasons vocalized by parents was that they wanted their children to develop

socialization and English skills, which were the same reasons that immigrant African

families had for placing their children into outside care (Obeng). As well, these reasons

highlight the importance and value of education in Indian families, a factor which has

been identified by Chao and Tseng (2002) as being an important aspect of parenting for

all Asian groups. Further, these parents viewed this "social capital" as being important

for their children's future success, which Brandon argued was an important function of

U.S. child care programs for immigrant families and their children. Therefore, it is

probable that these parents opted to enroll their children in outside care programs so that

their children could learn how to operate in an American context.

When it came to acculturative influences in parental socialization strategies, one

area in which these influences were evident was regarding parental expectations for their

children's ethnicity. The majority of parents expected their children to adopt a bicultural

identity. These parents were exposing their children to Indian culture and Hinduism, but

not enforcing the adoption of these practices. Additionally, these parents strived to

inculcate American heritage into their children by participating in activities of the larger

society such as celebrating holidays at home, which is the strategy Berry (2007) posited

to be the most beneficial way for immigrant families to experience acculturation.

Moreover, these findings can also be interpreted through Bronfenbrenner's (1986) theory.

Parents' expectations for their children to have a bicultural identity represent

macrosystem influences (American culture) on their socialization practices

(microsystem). Likewise, parents' openness to having their children identify as Indian

Americans could also be reflective of chronosystem influences. As parents' length of stay

in the U.S. increased, it is quite likely that parents gradually became comfortable with the

notion of having their children develop bicultural identities.

However, an area in which acculturation influences were not as clear was in

relation to parents' expectations for their children's behaviors. Consistent with research

findings on parental expectations (Joshi & MacLean, 1997; Rao et al., 2003), most Asian

Indian families appeared to adopt more child-centered philosophies towards childrearing

tasks such as permitting the child to learn how to resolve peer conflicts by himself or

herself and taking the child's age and development into account when disciplining him or

her. Therefore, parents appeared to be more accommodating of their children's socio-

emotional expressions. It is possible that these parents were simply adhering to Hinduism

principles on child development, which advocate a child-centered approach, rather than

following another specific philosophy of child development (Rao et al., Sharma, 2000).

Alternatively, these results do not reflect previous findings (Chao, 2000; Chao & Tseng,

2002) that harsh discipline practices are frequently used by Asian families as a means of

controlling their children's behaviors. The results from this study serve to highlight the

diversity that exists in discipline practices used by Asian Indian parents.

Acculturation influences were also apparent in parents' self assessments regarding how their parenting practices were similar or different from their families of origin. For example, the majority of parents discussed how they differed in the kind of discipline practices used with their children and their beliefs on children. Most parents opted for democratic styles of discipline such as reasoning and used non-punitive practices such as time outs. Likewise, parents also focused more attention on their children, which is also another area of difference between these parents and their families of origin.

These parents' decisions to change their parenting practices regardless of how their families of origin felt about it appears to go against previous findings regarding the importance of elders in childrearing (Chao & Tseng, 2002; Pettys & Balgopal, 1998; Segal, 1991). The results of this study indicate that most parents were not including all of their elders' opinions and beliefs regarding parenting in their parenting schemes, which reflects a degree of acculturation. Thus, it is likely that macrosystem factors such as American childrearing philosophies influenced these parents' decisions to use different methods of discipline strategies (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Additionally, the lack of proximity between parents and extended family members could have also contributed to these parents' independent decision making on parenting and use of diverse discipline practices.

Yet, it is important to emphasize the apparent contradiction between the results from this study and existing research on the importance of interdependence in Asian family life (Chao & Tseng, 2002). It is possible that there could be other outside factors contributing to these families being less interdependent, including macrosystem influences such as current U.S. immigration policies that make it difficult for Indian

families to have extended family with them in the U.S. for a long period of time, and the influence of American cultural values such as independence (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to fully explore these contradictions.

Another surprising finding was the lack of discussion in the parents' narratives regarding stress or conflict between them and their families of origin regarding their parenting practices. Although some parents mentioned how their families of origin noticed differences in the parenting practices they used with their children, little to no parents discussed actual incidents of conflict. Possible explanations for this include that parents may not have wanted to discuss these conflicts with the researcher, and the questions used in the interviews did not directly ask parents about conflict situations with their families of origin regarding parenting. Also, parents could have been deeply committed to parenting in a different style from their families of origin that these incidents were not enough to cause stress.

In contrast, several parents identified how their parenting practices were similar to their families of origin. For instance, these parents discussed how they were still adhering to similar parenting beliefs and practices that their parents used with them as children, such as being less protective over their children's activities. Therefore, it is quite likely that these parents were not as acculturated as other parents were in regard to parenting practices.

In addition, the majority of these parents mentioned that living in the U.S. has had an impact on their parenting behaviors, which is also reflective of acculturative influences on parenting. For example, several parents said that they had become more aware of the kinds of parenting practices they were using with their children.

Additionally, parents frequently accessed parenting resources and modified their discipline strategies to be more in line with practices commonly used in the U.S. Surprisingly, this was regardless of how the parents self identified (Indian only, bicultural, American only, or no label). In contrast, only four parents explicitly stated that living in the U.S. had no effect on their parenting practices. These parents differed from the other parents in that the majority of them still identified with an Indian only identity. Thus, it can be deduced that length of stay in the U.S. had not influenced these parents and that they were not as acculturated as other parents were in regard to parenting practices.

These findings on parenting behaviors were surprising because it appeared that a different process of acculturation had occurred with these participants. Therefore, based upon the results from this inquiry, it was apparent that Berry's (2003, 2006, 2007) model of acculturation may not have been the best fit. According to Berry's model, individuals undergoing the acculturation process will decide to engage in either one of four distinct, specific acculturation strategies, which are integration, separation, marginalization, and assimilation. However, based on the results from this study, it appeared that these parents did not align perfectly into any one of Berry's four acculturation categories, For example, although some parents did not feel strongly about their ethnicity and did not self identify with it, they still felt the need to expose their child to their culture and religion. Furthermore, parents who identified with a strong Indian ethnic identity expected their children to adopt a bicultural identity. Berry's acculturation model does not take these variations in acculturation into consideration.

Selective Acculturation

Therefore, it is possible that Asian Indian parents were practicing a specific type of acculturation called selective acculturation. According to Portes and Rumbaut (2006), selective acculturation refers to the process in which an individual adopts elements of American cultural practices in addition to maintaining important aspects of his or her culture, especially language. Selective acculturation differs from Berry's model of acculturation in that acculturation outcomes do not result in clear cut acculturation profiles. Additionally, Bowskill, Lyons, and Coyle (2007) argued that these typologies assume similar outcomes for all acculturating individuals regardless of context. In contrast, there are no predetermined profiles associated with selective acculturation. Selective acculturation permits variation in immigrant families' acculturation strategies, meaning that families can decide on which aspects of their culture and American culture they want to adopt into their lives (Portes & Rumbaut).

Although selective acculturation seems similar to Berry's (2003, 2006, 2007) integration strategy, there are distinct differences between the two concepts. Berry's integration strategy assumes that immigrants will be integrated in all aspects of their lives, including childrearing practices, due to both positive interactions with the dominant society and a desire to maintain ties with their culture. On the other hand, selective acculturation posits that individuals can selectively choose which aspects of their lives in which they want to acculturate in. For example, most parents in this study chose to acculturate in their parenting practices and not in their ethnic identity.

Thus, selective acculturation could explain the variability in how parents viewed their ethnic identities and how this influenced their parenting practices. More specifically,

most parents discussed the importance of having their children speak their native tongue, which is supportive of selective acculturation as defined by Portes and Rumbaut (2006). However, parents were also not interested in forcing their children to adopt all aspects of Indian culture. Parents were also interested in incorporating specific elements of American culture such as holidays into their homes. These examples highlight the ways in which Indian parents practiced selective acculturation in their socialization practices.

Another area in which selective acculturation plays a significant role is in the parents' decision to adhere to Hinduism and to expose their children to it. According to Portes and Rumbaut (2006), "when second generation children continue observing the faith of their parents, certain benefits associated with selective acculturation become apparent: there is a common universe of meanings shared across generations, more open channels of communication between the two generations, and a system of beliefs and norms antithetical to downward assimilation" (p. 316). Therefore, it is plausible to say that parents were inculcating Hinduism into their children to establish a shared sense of togetherness through the context of shared religious beliefs and practices. However, parents also indicated that they were not interested in forcing their children to adopt Hinduism. Again, this is an example of how parents engaged in selective acculturation.

Moreover, selective acculturation could also explain how these parents' childrearing practices compared or contrasted with the ones used by their families of origin. For example, the majority of parents stated that they differed from their families of origin in that they opted to adopt more democratic styles of parenting with a focus on using non-punitive discipline practices. On the other hand, several parents stated that they were only following similar parenting practices as their families of origin. Based upon

these narratives, it was evident that parents chose whether or not to modify their parenting practices. Parents' freedom to make this decision on parenting practices may have been due to the fact that their families of origin were still in India or due to acculturation influences resulting from living in the U.S. for a considerable period of time.

Previous studies on Asian Indian families also lend support for selective acculturation. For example, Patel and colleagues (1996) found that highly acculturated Indian fathers still maintained traditional Indian values with their children within the home. Moreover, Wakil and colleagues (1981) found similar support in their study of Pakistani and Indian immigrant families in Canada. Therefore, selective acculturation may be a more appropriate model of acculturation for Asian Indian families than Berry's acculturation framework due to parents' decisions to incorporate select elements of American culture, namely child guidance and discipline practices and American festivals, into their lives.

However, another factor that should be taken into consideration with these participants is social class. All of these parents in this study are educated and part of the upper middle class. Harkness and Super (2002), as well as Hughes and colleagues (2006) have identified the saliency of social class in parenting and socialization practices. Parents who belong to higher socioeconomic statuses are less likely to use harsh discipline practices with their children (Hoff et al., 2002). Hence, it is possible that these parents' social class could also be contributing to their parenting decisions and subsequent practices.

Limitations and Strengths

With all research studies, it is imperative to identify limitations. First and foremost, this study lacks generalizability due to the nature of the research design and its exploratory nature. Qualitative research in general does not lend itself to generalizations regarding social phenomenon, so it is important to take this factor into consideration when interpreting the results of this study.

Secondly, social desirability bias was another issue to consider. Although I am not an insider with this population, it is possible that participants may have revealed information that they would not reveal to an insider. For example, some participants may have felt comfortable revealing information to an outsider than they would have to another person of Indian origin, such as their feelings regarding their ethnicity. On the other hand, participants may not have revealed information to me due my outsider status. For example, some parents may have not felt comfortable fully disclosing information regarding their childrearing practices to an outsider. Additionally, it is natural for parents to want to present themselves as being "good parents" to others, so it is possible that parents were trying to present themselves as such to the researcher. This is another factor to take into consideration when interpreting the study's results.

Thirdly, sampling bias was a factor to consider. The participants who volunteered to participate in this study might differ from other individuals who did not elect to participate in such a study. These participants may have had a genuine interest in this study, or found this study to be particularly relevant for their lives. Also, considering the high regard Asian Indians have for education, it is possible that this value could have influenced these parents' decision to participate in this study. Additionally, sampling bias

may have influenced recruitment efforts. Some of the participants in the study knew each other and it is possible that this may have influenced their decision to participate in the study.

Fourth, it was beyond the scope of this study to discuss the full impact of acculturation on Asian Indian parents. Due to the fact that acculturation was teased out of the data and not explicitly studied, it is impossible to understand all of the effects of acculturation on ethnicity and parenting. Therefore, caution should be used when applying the results of this study to other immigrant populations.

Lastly, this population of immigrant Asian Indian families was homogenous in their demographic characteristics. All of the participants in this study were educated, upper middle class families. It has been well established that immigrant Asian Indian families tend to be some of the more successful Asian immigrants in the U.S. (Reeves & Bennett, 2004), so it is not surprising that these participants were part of this demographic. Additionally, the data from this study could be reflective of the community in which these parents reside. Austin is a growing metropolitan area with diverse populations of people. Moreover, the kinds of industries dominant in this area (technology, academia) could also influence the migration patterns for Asian Indians.

Despite limitations associated with this study, the information obtained from conducting such a study still makes a significant contribution to the family science field due to the dearth of studies on Asian Indian families. There are multiple strengths associated with this study. First and foremost, this study was one of the few qualitative studies done with Asian Indian families. The benefit of qualitative studies is that these studies enable social scientists to study social phenomenon such as ethnic identity,

acculturation, and parenting through the lenses of the participants themselves. Moreover, qualitative studies have the ability to capture the process of acculturation, which is difficult to ascertain from quantitative studies. Additionally, since there are limited studies available on Asian Indian parenting, the use of qualitative methods was warranted.

Moreover, this study is also one of the first studies to use grounded theory methodology with this population. Grounded theory methods enabled the researcher to establish relationships between themes and to identify the central category of given social experiences such as immigration and parenting. The use of grounded theory methods further enhanced this study.

This study was also one of the few studies conducted on Asian Indian families from a family science perspective. As previously discussed, the majority of the research available on Asian Indian families comes from various disciplines such as social work, anthropology, and psychology. Therefore, it is critical that family scientists continue to study this population with a family perspective so that the discipline can further extend the research on this topic and generate results that are applicable to family researchers and practitioners.

Furthermore, this is one of the few studies to explore the relationship between Asian Indian families and Hinduism. Due to the fact that Asian Indians continue to migrate to the U.S. in large numbers, it is important for both researchers and practitioners to gain an understanding of Hinduism and its relationship to the Asian Indian family system. One way in which this can be accomplished is by continuing to conduct studies with Asian Indians.

Implications

There are numerous implications for future research. One implication is to

continue conducting empirical studies on Asian Indian families. Since the majority of the

extant research on Asian families has been with Japanese and Chinese families, it is

imperative for social scientists to study other Asian groups, especially Asian Indians

(Chao & Tseng, 2002).

Furthermore, more qualitative studies are needed on Asian Indian families,

particularly on the acculturation and parenting experiences of immigrant families with

young children. Since the majority of the available literature on Asian Indian families has

been derived from quantitative measures and has focused mostly on immigrant parent-

adolescent relationships, there is a need for more research on the experiences of

immigrant parents raising young children in America. The information that can be

garnered from such studies can shed light on how parents' acculturation experiences and

ethnic identities influence child growth and development. Thus, as recommended by

Hughes and colleagues (2006), one way in which this could be accomplished is by

conducting a longitudinal study where immigrant parents with young children are

followed throughout their children's childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood. It

would be interesting to track the parenting and socialization behaviors used by these

parents and to see how these influence child outcomes.

In regard to the type of acculturation identified in this study, more studies are

needed that fully explore selective acculturation as a viable acculturation strategy adopted

by immigrant families. Studies that examine selective acculturation would lend support to

Ward's (2008) argument that acculturation research should look beyond the "Berry

boxes" in order to further extend the field of research. It would be interesting to see which other immigrant groups besides Asian Indians adopt practices that are reflective of selective acculturation. Future research should also take into consideration the issue of transnational or globalization influences on family and child development. Considering that Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory does not account for these factors, it is imperative that family scholars and other social scientists take these influences into consideration when designing research studies focused on the experiences of immigrant families.

In addition, future research should also look at Asian Indian populations located in other metropolitan areas of the U.S. where there could be more diverse socio-economic conditions, such as the New York or Chicago areas. Since the participants in this study were primarily homogenous in their socioeconomic statuses, it would be interesting to see studies conducted on families from lower socioeconomic statuses to assess the experiences of these families, and to see if these experiences differ from the experiences of families from more affluent backgrounds. Additionally, family scientists should further explore the importance of ethnic communities in facilitating connections between ones ethnicity and religion. Since previous research has identified the importance of social supports for immigrant families such as Asian Indians (Inman et al., 2006; Tummala-Narra, 2004), it is imperative that future studies take this into consideration in their research designs.

The child care choices made by parents in this study is another potential area for future research. Considering that there is limited scholarship on the child care choices made by immigrant families, future research should explore this area of family life.

Further, as more and more immigrant families continue to establish their roots in the U.S. and turn to child care programs as a means of helping their children to gain social capital, it is critical that family scholars develop research agendas that take this into consideration.

In addition to these empirical implications, there are practical applications for family professionals. In line with Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework, family professionals such as child care providers should guide their work with Asian Indian families and other immigrant families through an ecological lens in order to provide culturally appropriate services to these families. Moreover, acculturation should also be considered and viewed through an ecological context. According to Johnson (2007), viewing acculturation through the context of an ecological framework demonstrates how multiple systems impact immigrant families and child development. For example, the availability of ethnic community supports, societal views regarding immigrant populations and parents' socioeconomic status all have an influence on family functioning. Additionally, not all immigrant families experience similar acculturation experiences, so it is vital that family professionals evaluate the influence of acculturation through an ecological perspective.

Likewise, professionals should also refrain from underestimating the knowledge base of immigrant parents. For example, considering that the Indian parents in this study demonstrated a strong interest in learning and incorporating different modes of child guidance and discipline into their parenting repertoires, practitioners should continue to support their efforts by sharing their wealth of resources. In return, practitioners should

also invite immigrant families to share their knowledge of parenting with them, which according to Lynch (2004) will help practitioners develop cross cultural competence.

Furthermore, this study also highlighted the importance of religion in family life. Practitioners should take the opportunity to educate themselves on religious traditions beyond Christianity to further enhance their interactions with populations who practice religions unfamiliar to them. In her article on spiritually sensitive services with families, Hawkins (2005) argued that practitioners should take the time to identify their personal views on spirituality and how these views could impact their services to clients. Furthermore, according to Hugen (2001), being self aware of ones religious beliefs will enable professionals to provide services that are culturally appropriate.

In addition, practitioners should take into consideration the influence of religious beliefs as well as cultural beliefs in parenting practices. For example, Hinduism is a religion that has specific views regarding child growth and development. As well, previous research and this study have identified the importance of Indian culture in childrearing practices. Therefore, it is essential that practitioners are sensitive to these parental belief systems and are able to accommodate them in their services with these families.

<div align="center">Summary of Discussion</div>

This study was only a small step for opening the lines of inquiry regarding the parenting and acculturation experiences of immigrant Asian Indian families, and the importance of ethnic identity in these exchanges. A surprising finding emerged from the data, which was Indian parents' use of selective acculturation. This finding was significant because it challenges existing acculturation models that are frequently used in

family studies such as Berry's (2003, 2006, 2007) acculturation framework. Additionally, Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory further enhanced this discussion and emphasized the influence of social ecologies on Indian family life. Hopefully this study will encourage other family scientists to further advance this discussion by developing more advanced research studies on these topics based upon the limitations, strengths, and implications identified by this study. The future research opportunities are endless.

APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM                                                    ʲ

A Study of Asian Indian Parents living in Austin, Texas

My name is Alice Navarro. I am a graduate student at Texas State University in the
Department of Family and Consumer Sciences working on a new research study to fulfill
requirements for a Master of Science degree. My contact information is: 512-947-8573,
or alicen@txstate.edu. I would like to invite you to participate in a study of immigrant
Asian Indian parents living in Austin, Texas. The purpose of this study is to explore the
relationship between Asian Indian parents' experiences in India and the United States,
ethnic identities, and parenting behaviors.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are an Asian Indian
parent. You were referred to me from someone you know. You will be one of 30-40
people chosen to participate in this study. I will ask you questions about your
immigration experiences, for example, why you decided to come to the United States, as
well as ask you questions on how this experience has influenced your ethnic identity, and
your parenting practices. My goal with this study is to write a thesis report to fulfill
degree requirements, with the possibility of using this information for future conference
papers and articles that will be published in academic journals.

If you decide to participate, you will take part in a one-on-one in-depth interview with
me. The interview will be audio-tape recorded and should take no more than one hour of
your time. In addition, you will be given a demographic information sheet to fill out. This
sheet will have questions for you to answer, such as the length of time spent in the United
States, age of child or children, and the type of child care arrangements used. The
possible risk to your participation is psychological discomfort from describing/reliving
past events and interactions that may have been negative or damaging. Agencies that
might be helpful for you include (1) Saheli for Asian Families (www.saheli-
austin.org/index.html; 512-703-8745), (2) Life Works (www.lifeworksweb.org; 512-735-
2100), and (3) Family Connections (www.familyconnectionsonline.org; 512-478-5725).
A possible benefit is discussing immigration and parenting experiences that you might
not have described prior to participating in the study.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified
with you will remain **strictly confidential.** An exception to confidentiality involves
information revealed concerning child abuse, which must be reported as required by law.
Tapes will be assigned a code number so your name will never be attached to the tape.

Only I, the interviewer, will hear the tapes, and they will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences until the study is finished. At that time, I will destroy the tapes. When I describe the information obtained, an alias or false name will be used in place of your true name or identity.

If you decide to take part in the interview, you are free to stop the interview at any time. You can withdraw from the study without prejudice or jeopardy to your standing with Texas State University-San Marcos. You do not have to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable. If you have any questions, please ask me. I can send you a summary of the study or any resulting papers if you request. The Texas State Institutional Board (Approval #2008-95576) has approved this study.

You will be offered a copy of this form to keep. If you have questions in the future, please contact me. With questions or concerns about your rights or this research, you may also contact my advisor, Dr. Ani Yazedjian (512-245-2412; ay12@txstate.edu). If you have any additional questions about the research or your rights as a participant, you can contact one or both of the IRB co-chairs, Dr. Eric Schmidt (512-245-3979 – es17@txstate.edu) and/or Dr. Lisa Lloyd (512-245-8358 – LL12@txstate.edu), or to the OSP Administrator, Ms. Becky Northcut, at 512-245-2102.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate in this study. Your signature means that you have read the information provided above and have decided to participate. You may withdraw at any time after signing this form should you choose to do so.


_____            _____
Signature of Participant                                  Date


_____            _____
Signature of Investigator                                 Date

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Participant: _____

<u>Introduction</u>: Today I am going to ask you a variety of questions. I will first ask you some background questions, and then I will ask you questions about your childhood in India. Then, I will ask you some questions about what your life has been like in the U.S., and then I will ask you questions about your parenting experiences.

## Background

- How long have you lived in the United States?

- What was your reason for moving to the United States?

- What do you like best about living in the United States?

- What do you like least about living in the United States?

## Life in India

*Ethnic identity experiences in childhood*

- How did you first learn about Indian culture?  Hinduism?

- How did you celebrate special occasions or religious holidays in your house?

- What role did your family have in teaching you about Indian culture?

- What role did your extended family have in teaching you about Indian culture?

*Childhood experiences*

- Could you describe to me what a typical day was like for you as a child?

- What kinds of activities did your parents do with you during your childhood?

- Who took care of you the most?

- What kinds of practices did your parents use with you whenever you did something that they did not like? Who was responsible for doing this?

- Did you attend a child care program while growing up? If so, what kind was it? Why do you think your parents enrolled you in this particular program?

Life in the U.S.

*Ethnic identity*

- Could you give some examples of how you maintain your connections with Indian culture while living in the United States? With Hinduism?

- Some people find community resources (i.e. going to temple, cultural programs, schools) helpful in maintaining cultural connections. How about you?

- How do you feel about American culture?

- How has moving to the U.S. influenced the way you view yourself today?

- How do you feel about being Indian?

- How would you identify yourself, as an Indian, American, or Indo-American? Why?

*Parenting*

- What is a typical day like in your home with your child?

- Think of mealtimes with your child and tell me what that is like. For example, what is breakfast like?

- What is nighttime like for you and your child? Are there any special activities or routines that your child does?

- What kinds of activities do you do with your child at home? (Give examples—play, read books, draw pictures)

- How often do you read to your child?

- Some parents like to praise their children for learning new skills. What do you do whenever your child learns a new skill?

- Think of a scenario where your child does something to another child such as hitting, how do you respond to that?

- So if your child does not do something that you want him/her to do, such as put away his/her toys, how do you respond to that?

- Some parents like to take their children to places such as the zoo, or the park. What places do you like to take your child to?

- Who takes care of your child the most?

- When your child has a temper tantrum, how do you typically respond to that?

- Does your child attend a child care/daycare program? If so, what kind of program is it? Why did you decide to enroll your child in this particular program?

- As you reflect on the parenting practices that you use with your children, do you find yourself using some of the same parenting practices that your parents used with you during your childhood? Why or why not?

- How has living in the U.S. influenced your parenting practices?

- Has starting a family in the United States affected the way you view yourself as an Indian? How so?

*Socialization*

- How do you teach your child about Indian culture? About Hinduism?

- How important is it for you to teach your child about Indian culture? About Hinduism?

- Who is responsible for teaching your child about their culture? About Hinduism?

- Do you still use some of the same cultural practices that you used in India? Why or why not?

- Do you teach your child to be proud of being Indian?

- Are there any community resources (i.e. going to temple, putting children in music classes) that you use to help teach your child about their culture and religion? What are they?

- Do you find it difficult to teach your child about Indian culture and Hinduism?

- How do you teach your child about American culture?

- Who is responsible for teaching your child about American culture?

- Do you find it difficult to teach your child about American culture?

- How do you want your child to identify themselves as?  American, Indian, or both?  Why?

Concluding question

- What advice would you give to other Indians about coming to the U.S. and starting families here?

DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET

**Participant:** _____

**Sex (circle one):**     Male        Female

**Ethnicity (circle one):**     Indian        Other

**Age (circle one):**

< 20       20- 29       30- 39       40-49       50-59       > 59

**Education (circle one):**

< High School       High School       Bachelors       Graduate       Other

**Length of stay in U.S. (circle one):**

< 5 yrs       5-10 yrs       10-15 yrs       >15 yrs

**Occupation:** _____

**Religion (circle one):**     Hindu     Christian     Other

**Social Group (circle one):**

Brahmin       Kshatriya       Vaishya    .   Shudra       Other       Does not apply

**The state you are from in India (i.e. Maharashtra):** _____

**Age(s) of child/children:**

First child: _____    Second child: _____    Third child: _____

**Sex of child/children:**

First child: _____    Second child: _____    Third child: _____

**Child care arrangement (circle one):**

First child:

      Stays at home with parent

      Stays at home with another caregiver (i.e. grandparent)

      Attends daycare

      Attends a Montessori program

Second child:

      Stays at home with parent

      Stays at home with another caregiver (i.e. grandparent)

      Attends daycare

      Attends a Montessori program

Third child:

      Stays at home with parent

      Stays at home with another caregiver (i.e. grandparent)

      Attends daycare

      Attends a Montessori program

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## VITA

Alice Navarro was born in New Braunfels, Texas on January 14, 1980, the daughter of Jesse Navarro and Olivia Gomez. After graduating from New Braunfels Senior High School in 1998, she entered The University of Texas at Austin. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Learning and Development-Youth and Community Studies from the College of Education in December 2002. She worked in several nonprofit child care programs in the Austin area, including The University of Texas Child Development Center. In August 2006 she entered the Graduate College of Texas State University-San Marcos. In 2007, she received a student travel award from the American Evaluation Association to attend their annual conference, which was held in Baltimore, MD. She has also served twice as a federal grant reviewer for the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and has presented research coauthored with Drs. Ani Yazedjian and Michelle L. Toews at both the 2007 and 2008 National Council on Family Relations conference.

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