South Asian Immigrants' Perceptions of Abuse in Marital Conflicts: When are Male Abusive Tactics an Acceptable Method of Managing Conflicts?

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BOSTON COLLEGE
Graduate School of Social Work

SOUTH ASIAN IMMIGRANTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ABUSE IN MARITAL CONFLICTS: WHEN ARE MALE ABUSIVE TACTICS AN ACCEPTABLE METHOD OF MANAGING CONFLICTS?

A dissertation
by

SATYA R. MONTGOMERY

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of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

As there is an increasing awareness of the occurrence of domestic violence among South Asian immigrants, a need for cultural-sensitive interventions and community education are necessary to break the silence of victims. In order for us to begin the process of breaking the silence, there is need for a paradigm shift that can more accurately capture the experience of South Asian immigrant victims. This paradigm shift requires us to move away from blaming culture for the violence but to look at socialization, acculturation processes and mutuality in relationships as factors that may lead to increased acceptance of abusive tactics in marital conflicts. Using a sample of predominately first generation South Asian immigrants (N= 50), in the United States, the present study investigates the perception of acceptance of a husband's use of abusive conflict tactics to manage marital conflicts. Approximately half of the sample completed online surveys measuring South Asian immigrants' perception of acceptance of marital conflicts and the rest completed a paper survey. Through various statistical analyses such as regression, one-sample t-tests and chi-square, South Asian immigrants demonstrated higher levels of acceptance when it was perceived that the wife violated a social norm and when they perceived the wife as less educated. In addition, South Asian male immigrants who perceived that their own wives were not meeting their needs were more likely to rate the abusive tactics of the husband in the Abusive Conflict Tactics Perception Scale (ACPTS) as acceptable. The findings have implications for

domestic violence advocates who are seeking to educate the community on domestic violence by challenging the misperceptions that abuse in marital relations is a direct result of cultural norms rather than socialization that can transcend culture.

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Chapter I
Introduction

Purpose and Specific Aim

This study investigates South Asian male and female attitudes toward various manifestations associated with marital conflict. I am examining the following questions in my study: (1) What are the limitations to using violent methods to resolve marital conflict? (2) What are the factors that moderate the South Asian community's perception of the use of violence by South Asian males to manage marital conflict? (3) if violence is seen in the community as an unacceptable method of handling marital conflict, is there variation in the perception of acceptance? My purpose is to further the research and practice community understanding of domestic violence as unhealthy dimension of marital conflict in the South Asian immigrant community in the United States and to demystify the concept of culture and the role of acculturation in shaping attitudes toward the use of violence in relationships. Creating a greater understanding of factors that shape our attitudes can help practitioners begin the process of developing interventions that will change the South Asian community's response to domestic violence, from denial to support and advocacy.

In the next section, I will examine the current research in the area of domestic violence in the South Asian communities in the United States. Gaps in research will be highlighted to illustrate how my research expands our perception and understanding of culture, acculturation and satisfaction in personal relationships as key factors that influence our worldview of violence in marital relationships.

Introduction to the Literature Review

Framing the Problem and the Gap in the Research

Research on domestic violence in the South Asian immigrant communities in the United States focuses on the victims of the abuse. Leading researchers in this area suggest that cultural ideologies can either serve as protective factors against the violence or place women at greater risk for violence (Abraham, 2000; Raj & Silverman, 2002; Das Dasgupta, 2000). It is this paradox that can complicate the research in this area. The researcher needs to have a comprehensive understanding of how South Asian culture can increase or decrease immigrant women's vulnerability to violence. Deviation from South Asian gender roles can legitimize the use of violence by men and a higher threshold of tolerance for violent acts by women. Furthermore, we need to connect domestic violence as another dimension of marital conflict rather than a separate problem. Thus the gap in current domestic violence research is an understanding of which marital conflict situations immigrants perceive the husband's use of abusive behaviors as acceptable to resolve the conflicts. Studies have predominantly focused on expanding our understanding of the impact of violence on South Asian immigrant women within a society and ethnic community that denies domestic violence and blames the women for the violence. The blame can come from the ethnic community, because families and friends feel the women are not upholding their duties. Blame can also come from the mainstream society in the United States where cultural misconceptions about the ethnic community influence perception and therefore influence policies and practice (Das Dasgupta, 2006) Thus silence becomes the preferred choice for South Asian immigrant women rather than speaking out or seeking help from the abuse. To shift the perception of the South Asian immigrant community as well as the mainstream communities, as practitioners and researchers we need to shift our paradigm first.

Rather than keeping marital conflict research and domestic violence research as two separate problems in society, we need to incorporate domestic violence into marital conflict research as a continuum of marital conflict that is unhealthy and lethal. Violence between couples, according to Johnson (1996) is not always lethal or based on a differential power and control dynamic where all the power and control is in the hands of one partner. The paradigm shift in our view of marital conflicts will help us better understand that domestic violence is an unhealthy and lethal dimension of marital conflict. When we view domestic violence as another dimension of marital conflict, the interventions we create will be more effective in stopping the victimization of South Asian immigrants in the hands of the abuser, their ethnic community, and the larger society. In the literature review, I will elaborate on a new theoretical framework that I have created that connects the two social problems, marital conflict and domestic violence as a continuum rather than separate issues.

Literature Review

In general, South Asian culture dictates that women are expected to follow the rules set by their husbands and in-laws. South Asian immigrant women are expected to preserve the family honor and culture in a foreign country. Men who batter use this expectation placed on women as an excuse to blame the women for their anger, therefore justifying the abuse. South Asian victims' report their spouses become violent when they perceive their authority is being challenged (Abraham, 2002; das Dasgupta, 1996). Any challenge to the male authority is perceived as a threat to their power and control. This threat cuts across all cultures -- western to eastern --and men who batter convince themselves that abusive behavior, from emotional to physical, is acceptable behavior (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002).

There is no clear explanation as to why some South Asian males batter women and others do not. If the structure of society and cultural beliefs are the primary indicators of violence, then we need the secondary indicators of violence in men to understand why some men batter while others do not. Mahalik, Locke, Theodore, Cournoyer and Llyod (2001) suggest that contextual factors can affect male masculinity development. The distribution of wealth, characteristics of economy, political environment and recent history affect society's construction of what-are appropriate male attitudes, behaviors and roles. Nghe, Mahalik and Lowe (2003) assert that gender socialization with an emphasis on appropriate family roles, emotional expressiveness, and assertive behaviors clearly shape Asian male behaviors. Asian men are taught that being emotionally restricted is a sign of masculinity directly affecting their self-esteem. Asian men are also socialized to believe that men are the dominant members of the household and are given unquestioned authority. Women, particularly mothers, are viewed as the primary caregivers to meet the emotional needs of the family. These gender scripts keep men away from the emotional life of the family and their identity is directly tied to being a good financial provider to the family.

External factors, such as racism limit male opportunities to economic success, which ultimately leads to decreased self-esteem (Nighe, Mahalik, Lowe, 2003). Men who engage in traditional family roles experience greater gender conflict in their intimate relationships in times of financial stress. These men are at higher risk to batter women than men who engage in participant and role-sharing in the family (Mahalik, Locke, Theodore, Cournoyer, and Llyod, 2001).

Research on immigrant communities focuses on intimate partner violence and/or family violence where the woman is not only victimized by her spouse or partner but by his family. In

violence against South Asian immigrant women, the partner uses tactics to isolate their partners, further limiting her access to resources and support. The community and the extended family minimize the existence of domestic violence, further isolating women and legitimizing the male's control over his partner. Das Dasgupta (2006) interviewed twelve Indian women focusing on the following topics: childhood socialization; gender discrimination faced at home; importance given to women's education by her family, and parental restrictions around male-female relations. Das Dasgupta found traditional patriarchal power imbalances are gaining momentum and strength in immigrant communities in the United States as a way to preserve traditional cultural beliefs and values in a foreign country. Research in this area has raised the community and mainstream society's awareness of domestic violence in the Asian communities. But it is not clear whether such increased awareness has translated to increased knowledge among South Asians of the magnitude of abuse, and that it is not an acceptable practice between a husband and wife.

Research in the area of domestic violence within the South Asian immigrant communities in the United States has not explored the general attitudes of the community on marital conflict. By focusing on understanding attitudes toward marital conflict, we can better understand the range of a husband's behaviors from what is considered normal to what is abusive. Having a more in-depth understanding of these factors can help domestic violence advocates build community awareness. Margaret Abraham has done extensive research in this area, creating a greater understanding of how culture can be both protective and make immigrant South Asian women more vulnerable to violence. Abraham's (2002) study focused on the victims' stories, describing the methods of control the husbands used to keep women in fear as well as the ways women preserved their identity by resisting the daily abuse. Sharma Das Dasgupta focused her

research on expanding our understanding of the macro system and how the courts, legal systems and policies become barriers for immigrant women seeking help.

Anita Raj and Jay Silverman conducted the first well-known quantitative study on the prevalence of domestic violence in the South Asian communities in the United States. In a study they conducted in 2002, they found that 40 percent of the women in their study reported domestic violence in their current relationship. Another study conducted by Raj and Silverman (2003) documented that immigrant South Asian women are at greater risk for injury from intimate partner violence than non-immigrant women. Even though this study furthered our understanding of the prevalence and magnitude of the issue, there were limitations. First, the sample size was 160 and could not be generalized to the larger population. Second they used two new scales developed that were not validated with a sample of South Asians. One is an acculturation scale made up 10 items and the second is a general 12-item social scale. Raj and Silverman is outcome attempted to measure the following: (1) to assess the knowledge of DV and (2) prevalence of physical, sexual and injury-related violence. They found awareness of domestic violence low among the participants in the study. Furthermore, they found immigrant-related factors to be possible predictors of more severe intimate partner violence. Also, those reporting no family in the United States were three times more likely than those with family to be physically injured. The findings from this study add to our understanding of domestic violence and provide quantitative data to support the concept many practitioners and advocates have witnessed: women who are isolated are at greater risk of injury. The increased risk of injury to isolated women is universal to all battered women, not just immigrants.

Fikree, Razzak and Durocher (2005) conducted a study exploring Pakistani men's attitude toward spousal abuse and the risk factors for physical abuse by men. The sample size is

176 men married for at least one year or more. Before being accepted to participate in this study the men also needed to be dating their wives at least a year before being married. The results of the study are interesting: 55 percent of the men reported being victims of physical abuse. Forty-three percent of the men thought husbands had a right to beat their wives. The researchers interpret the findings to support the concept that Pakistani men, in general, view violence against their wives as acceptable behaviors. This conclusion is incorrect given a key limitation in the study. Of the men who participated in the study, the majority acknowledged abusing their wives. So the sample is over representative of batterers compared to non-batterers and therefore is not a random sample. If Pakistani men who reported they do not abuse their wives, participated in the study, would they view battering women as acceptable behavior?

In a Fikree, Razzak & Durocher (2005) study the men stated domestic violence is a problem tolerated by society. The men who are abusive themselves justify their actions by blaming society. The researchers, not understanding the pathology of batterers, use that statement to conclude the same about the culture of Pakistan. Such a dangerous conclusion that culture causes violence has been used by courts and the legal system to lessen sentencing of immigrant men who batter in the United States, concluding they do not know better, therefore cannot be punished for upholding their cultural beliefs (Das Dasgupta, 2006). In order to understand the attitudes of Pakistani men toward domestic violence a diverse sample is necessary, otherwise we will falsely conclude, as these researchers have, that culture condones violence against women. A study on attitudes needs to look at multiple factors that can influence attitude and conclusions need to be drawn that do not further the oppression of immigrant women.

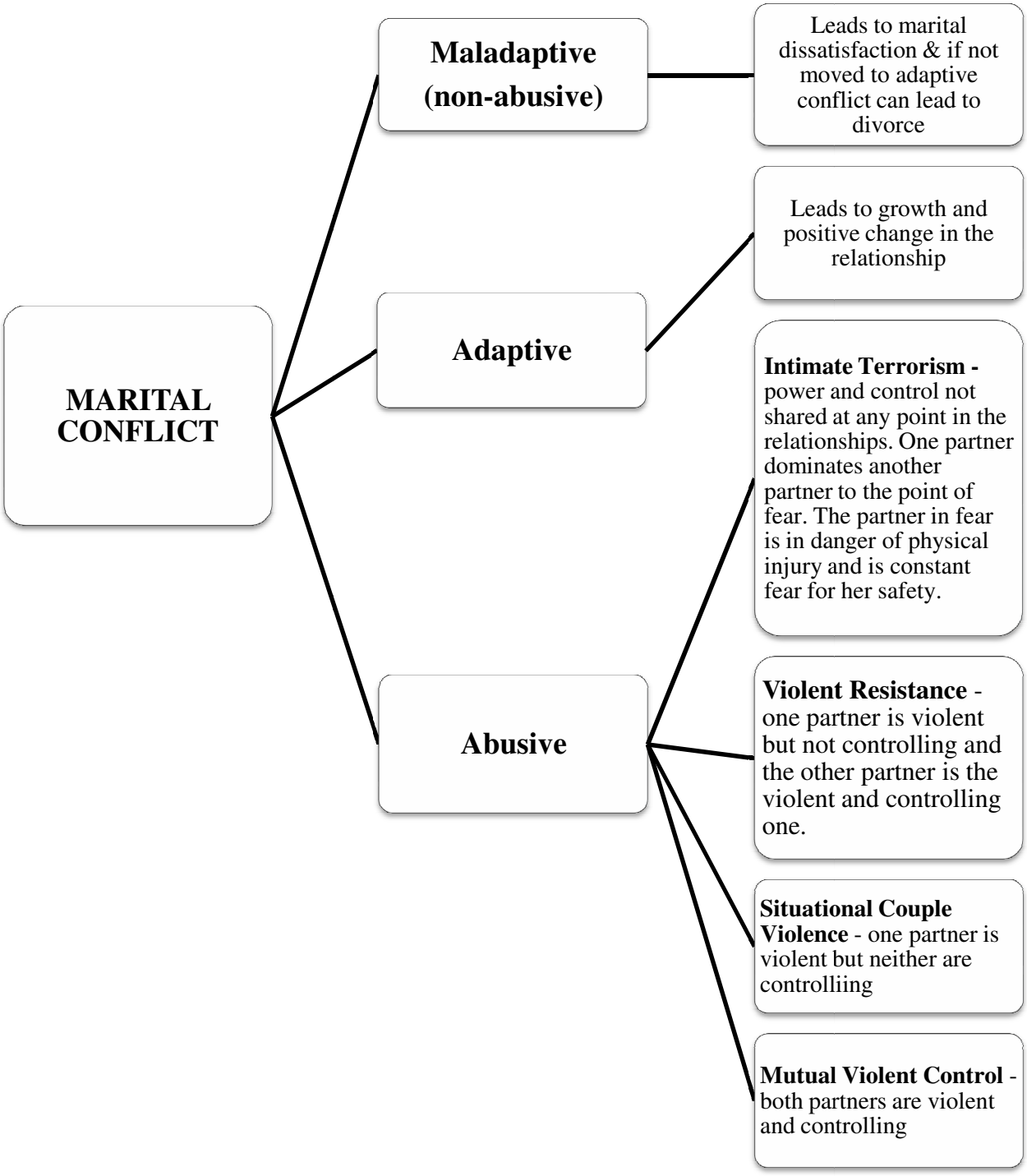
In the following section I will discuss the theoretical framework for the study, and the assumptions about human behavior. These assumptions about male and female interactions in the South Asian community govern the creation of the vignette scale, the focus on acculturation, and the importance of personal satisfaction in a relationship to influence attitudes about abusive behavior.

Theoretical Frameworks

A New Framework where Domestic Violence is another Dimension of Marital Conflict

Domestic violence in the South Asian immigrant communities in the United States is a prevalent problem. Raj and Silverman (2002) conducted a study of 160 South Asian women in the United States, of which 40.8 percent state they have been physically and/or sexually abused by their current male partner. This study is one of the first to quantify the prevalence of domestic violence in the South Asian communities. There have been other researchers such as Abraham (2000), Das Dasgupta (2000), and Mehrotra (1999), who conduct qualitative studies to capture the voices of the victims, to hear the ways the abusers control them and how they resist the abuse. These narratives provide the missing pieces a quantitative study cannot capture. Despite the importance of these studies to expand our understanding of domestic violence and the cultural dimensions, we are still not clear at what point do South Asian immigrants perceive it is acceptable for South Asian males to use abusive behavior to control their wives during marital conflicts. When the abusive behaviors are used to manage marital conflict, the line has been crossed and the relationship is re-categorized as abusive and not an example of poor communication or poor conflict resolution skills. In abusive relationships power and control are no longer shared but in the hands of one partner who chooses to use that power and control to

dominate another to the point of fear. Below is a diagram that illustrates the conceptualization of marital conflict.



In my study I am investigating the perception of South Asian immigrants on marital conflict that is abusive, adaptive or maladaptive. Research in the area of marital conflict focuses on the factors causing conflict leading to marital dissatisfaction (Kitson, 2006). When trying to understand dissatisfaction in marital relationships, perception of satisfaction is a key factor. Some researchers in the field of marital conflict view violence as unhealthy communication between partners, implying a lack of mutuality in the relationship (Kitson, 2006). When practitioners view the violence from an assumption of mutuality, then couples therapy is an acceptable intervention to eliminate the violence by re-establishing healthy marital conflict. Theories on domestic violence are based on the assumption that violence between couples is not mutual (Walker, 1999; Price, 2005). Both assumptions are current if we re-categorize violence between partners into four categories and one category is where mutuality between the couple does not exist and couples therapy can be dangerous for the victim. Johnson (2006) through his research on domestic violence has created four categories to describe the violence between couples. First, there is intimate terrorism in which one partner is controlling and violent and the other partner is not. This type of interpersonal violence is typically found in samples taken from shelters and agencies. To further support this categorization of domestic violence as intimate terrorism Katz's (2006) states in his book, *Macho Paradox,* violence against women needs to be redefined as men's violence against women. Studies on South Asian women residing in the United States and Europe found that most documented violence against women (approximately 90 percent) is perpetuated by men and/or their families as intimate terrorism (Johnson, 2006). Second, in violent resistance, the individual is violent but not controlling and the partner is the violent and controlling one. This situation has been documented to occur in South Asian immigrant couples as the woman's response to resisting the controlling behaviors exhibited by

her husband (Abraham, 2002). It is her method of preserving her sense of identity and in some instances to stop the violent behavior from the spouse. This type of violence is rooted in patriarchal and gender-based views of women embedded in the structure of the society. Third, situational couple violence, the individual is violent but neither partner is controlling. This situation occurs when the partners cope with external and internal stressors on the family unit through violence. It is generally situational and does not fall into the current definition of domestic violence which is rooted in the etiology of power and control. The last grouping is mutual violent control, in which both partners are violent and controlling. This type of violence does not fall into the category of domestic violence because the power and control dynamics are mutual. In situational violence and mutual violent control, mutuality can be re-established by changing the communication pattern between the couples. Intimate terrorism refers to domestic violence and is about power and control and therefore re-establishing mutuality is not feasible nor the best option for the victim. In violent resistance, the victim is responding to intimate terrorism as a way to survive and preserve a sense of self. Re-establishing mutuality is not feasible in this category either.

Bancroft and Silverman (2002) say it is not uncommon for therapists, courts, judges, and domestic violence advocates to make the mistake of associating battering behaviors with culture and class. Bancroft & Silverman (2002) further state in their book, *The Battering Parent: Addressing the Impact of Domestic Violence on Family Dynamics*, "these assumptions often come to our attention through professional's statements that the family in a particular case 'comes from a culture where domestic violence is considered acceptable'" (p. 24).

In order to understand the role of culture in relation to domestic violence, we need to deconstruct our biases that culture causes domestic violence and to view culture from a different

lens. For victims of abuse in different immigrant groups in the United States, women's perception of available options are based on cultural beliefs and values as well as the responses of the ethnic communities and the institutions of authority. By assuming an ethnic culture causes some women to be more vulnerable to domestic violence than other women is dangerous, further isolating and oppressing immigrant women in a foreign country.

Some domestic violence advocates and researchers use feminist frameworks to explain how domestic violence continues to exist in our society. It focuses on one concept in the feminist framework that female oppression is embedded in a patriarchal society that maintains the power of men over women (Bishop, 1994; Burstow, 1992; Walker, 1979). This narrow interpretation of feminist theory focuses on the negative impact of culture, minimizing the positive impact of culture in experiences of immigrant women (Sharma, 2001).

The risk is to further oppress women from another country who choose to stay in an abusive relationship by stating their culture and society are responsible for their abuse. South Asian immigrants who face oppression and racism in the United States can feel more isolated by such strong feminist views, further retreating into a marriage where they are no longer happy. To leave would confirm the negative view westerns have about their culture and values, therefore increasing the oppression felt by their ethnic community (Das DasGupta, 2005). Social constructionism in feminist theory focuses on how people construct their reality and world view (Price, 2005). An individual's world view is influenced by their daily life experiences and cultural beliefs and values.

To best illustrate the dangers of evaluating culture through a feminist framework that fails to incorporate a social constructionist framework it is helpful to look at Goel's interpretation of the story of Ramayana. Ramayana is the mythological story of Ram and Sita, two Hindu

gods, whose love is legendary yet that love and devotion was challenged by society's perceptions of duty and expectations placed on them by that society. In Goel's (2008) reciting of the story of Ram and Sita, she attempts to illustrate how Indian women are taught to believe in forbearance and self-sacrifice over individuality and autonomy through the choices Sita made. In the story of Ram and Sita, Ram, the son of King Dasrath, was the eldest son and was in line to be crowned King. On the eve of Ram's coronation, one of King Dasrath's four wives asked King Dasrath to grant her two promises, one of which is that her son, Bharat be crowned king instead of Ram. So King Dasrath honors his promise and banishes Ram to the forest for 14 years. Sita, Ram's wife, insists on going with him, arguing that her rightful place is by her husband's side. Goel's interprets Sita's choice to go with her husband and her behavior in the forest as subservient and devoted solely to her husband's needs. This devotion to her husband is viewed as negative and a clear example of how the cultural value of a devoted wife is a barrier women face in leaving abusive relationships. If we re-interpret Sita's choice from a feminist theory that incorporates a social constructionist perspective, we would note Sita's choice to go with her husband did not indicate a feeling of oppression or blind obedience. Sita's decision provides her a sense of honor and self-respect.

Similarily, King Dharasta's fourth wife exercised a choice: to promote her son to King instead of Ram. One could judge the fourth's wife's choice as wrong and judge Sita's choice as wrong. Yet each woman constructed a worldview of her duty, one to her husband and one to her son. Adhering to the values of the family in which you were raised and the culture can provide a sense of purpose and direction. Abraham (2006) states in her study that cultural beliefs are an initial barrier because the emphasis on the importance of marriage and cultural cohesiveness influences many immigrant women to stay in an abusive relationship. Yet women also resist the

abuse through the culture and structure of society, preserving their self-identity as women. It is important to note that a woman's self-identity is based on honoring the values and beliefs South Asian women are raised with, such as preserving family honor, self-sacrifice, etc.

The story of Ram continues with Sita kidnapped after being tricked by a demon to cross a protective boundary. After a year, Ram finds her, defeats the demon that captured her and then in front of his army tells Sita he will not accept her back because she was with another man for a year. Ram's decision not to accept Sita back was based on pressure from his generals. In the folklore, Ram wants to accept Sita back, believing in her fidelity to him but the views of his generals lead him to prove to all her fidelity and honor. Sita, in an act of defiance, and an awareness if what her husband wants to prove to his subjects, has a funeral pyre built and states to all present: if I have been faithful and loyal to my husband then I will be able to walk through the fire unharmed. Sita walks through the fire without a scratch or burn and Ram takes her back. Back at the palace they are crowned King and Queen.

In the palace, Ram's advisors are suspicious of her and Ram must prove his faith in his wife for all to witness. Sita who is tired of all the suspicions and disrespect shown toward her by the people of the Kingdom, swears openly in court, " 'If I have been true to my lord in work and in deed, in my heart and in my actions, may great Mother Earth receive and protect me' " (Goel, 2005). The earth opens up and Mother Earth takes her back into her shelter. Throughout Goel's interpretation, Sita's loyalty, forbearance and devotion are highlighted as negative characteristics because women today view Sita's devotion to duty and her marriage as a model to aspire to. Ram, throughout society's distrust of his wife, remains devoted to her. He challenges the suspicions toward his wife's honor and fidelity by asking her jump into the fire, knowing she will survive. In the same manner that Sita is cherished for being a devoted wife, Ram is seen as

the first God to set the standard for marriage between a wife and husband that must be founded on love, devotion, faith and fidelity. Goel (1995), in her interpretation of Sita's last act of defiance, states the following.

> "Sita gains nothing beyond her dignity. She loses her position as a queen, wife, and as a mother. Even as she wins, she sacrifices. She is not rewarded with a happy earthly existence, despite having proven herself the perfect wife. Rather, her reward, like her devotion, is intended to transcend death" (p. 648)

Using a narrow interpretation of culture, Goel is viewing Sita's choice as wrong because she died. Instead Sita's choices exemplify the values of forbearance, acceptance, and preservation of family, ideals that continue to be taught to women today (Goel, 2005). These values directly contradict the western values of individualism and autonomy, which are viewed as the foundation for gender equality. As stated earlier, Abraham (2002), talks about how Indian women resist the abuse they endure and preserve their self-identity. It is through these ideal values that Indian women victims of domestic abuse use to cope and show defiance. One woman in Abraham's study (2002) stated that she made sure she has her husband's tea set everyday for him, but she makes sure it is ready each day fifteen minutes later. He is unaware of this subtle act of defiance yet such an act gives this woman a sense of dignity and strength. She is still adhering to the values she was raised in yet she also being safely defiant.

In the next section, two theories will be detailed. The first, the acculturation theory describe how immigration patterns, sociocultural development of the native country, oppression and racism within the United States (host country) affect the development of a woman's identity and her ability to seek help (Chun, Organista, and Marin, 2003). The second, feminist theory, will be outlined to help us better understand the barriers South Asian immigrant women face in

the decision to leave abusive relationships. Some of the barriers are cultural, societal racism, oppression and legislation.

Acculturation Theory, the Impact on the Family and Individual

A theoretical perspective that further explains the cultural responses of battered immigrant women is acculturation theory. As the number of immigrants entering the United States increased after the 1960s, the pressure to assimilate and incorporate mainstream values increased (Haines & Mortland, 2001). The following passage documents the experiences of some ethnic groups and supports the assumption in a unidimensional model of acculturation that discrimination in the host culture plays a significant role in determining whether an ethnic group retains or rejects its cultural heritage.

> The receiving community often defines the immigrants arriving in their hometown as different from their own ancestors – despite the fact that many members of the receiving communities are immigrants or children of immigrants...Americans in receiving communities make assumptions about immigrants that may or may not be true, but nevertheless operate in their relationships with them as if they were true. For example, Americans generally assume that cultural adaptation follows economic integration. If immigrants become gainfully employed but retain their cultural values, the hosts are surprised, uneasy, and often annoyed (Haines & Mortland, 2001, p. 4).

In the 1990s the volume of immigrants continued to grow. "The 1990 U.S. census counted 19.8 million immigrants, an all-time high" (Rumbaut, 1994, p. 750). The 2000 U.S. census counted 10,242,998 Asians in the United States compared to 6,908,638, a 67 percent increase from 1990. (Barnes & Bennett, 2002). The first wave of immigrants during and prior to the 1990's were highly educated, holding professional jobs in the United States, such as engineering and

medicine. The second wave of immigrants between the 1990's and 2000, were less educated than the first wave and often held jobs as store owners and taxi drivers and many did not speak English. These immigrants ranged from being well educated to uneducated. These variations in educational levels resulted in diverse family structures, work ethics and values in contrast to the "white ethnics" that immigrated to America in the early 1900s, who generally came from the same social class. As a result, many Americans became worried that the new wave of immigrants would undermine fundamental American values such as self-reliance, individualism, hard-work, and personal responsibility. "The proportion of white immigrants declined from 88 percent of those arriving before 1960, to 64 percent in the 1960s, 41 percent in the 1970s and 38 percent in the 1980s" (Rumbaut, 1994, p. 750).

This fear led political, social, and economic institutions to attempt to control the development of values and perceptions among immigrant children, termed as "americanization of immigrants" in the 1990s (Rumbaut, 1994; Kraver, 1999). Many immigrants of color were viewed as inferior because they could not be easily assimilated into the mainstream culture. The prejudice evolved into discriminatory practices and policies in some states where the percentage of new immigrants continued to grow. For example, in California, Proposition 187 was passed in 1994. This preposition denied public education and health care to illegal immigrant children and families (Rumbaut, 1994). It was not until the later half of the decade that the judicial courts pronounced the legislation unconstititutional.

Due to the new mix of immigrants coming to the United States, a unidimensional model of acculturation could no longer adequately explain why some immigrant groups would chose not to assimilate into the larger society as past Europeans immigrants had. Padilla (1980) stated

researchers in the 1950s and 1960s, Redfield, Linton, Herskovits and Social Science Research Council (SSRC) developed four classic formulations of acculturation: assimilation, integration, rejection, and deculturation. As the model was expanded through empirical research the four class formulations were re-defined to include the following: assimilation, separation (segregation), biculturalism (integration), marginalization (deculturation) (Kuraski, Okazaki & Sue, 2002).

South Asian immigrant women coming into a new country are faced with unique challenges that other non-immigrant victims of abuse do not face, such as isolation due to societal racism and language barriers. Sharma (2001) states that battered immigrant women are dealing with the loss of a social network from their country of origin, linguistic isolation, and mainstream religious and cultural practices that are different from their country of origin. Therefore, they face a more acute isolation and powerlessness due to entering a new country (Boss, 1999; Sharma, 2001). An immigrant woman's main source of information is her spouse, who is more likely to be more acculturated to the mainstream culture and able to maneuver through the legal, economic and social systems. When the spouse is abusive, he will more than likely distort the truth of resources available to his wife and lead her to fear deportation and in some cases the loss of her U.S. born children (Sharma, 2001; Raj & Silverman, 2002; Abraham, 2000). On a macro level, immigrant women are isolated by racism and oppression toward their ethnic community by the host society (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002; Nesdale & Mak, 2000).

Raj and Silverman (2002) state in their analysis of current domestic violence research that immigrant women change their worldview of gender-specific roles due to varying acculturation processes. When an immigrant arrives in a new country, she is exposed to cultural values that are different from her country of origin. This migration results in a restructuring of

her values and beliefs to bring them more in line with those of her new adopted society. This restructuring becomes threatening to many abusers who feel a loss of control when their spouse begins to challenge traditional gender roles (Das Dasgupta, 1998). These men may re-establish control by increasing verbal and physical abuse toward their spouse (Abraham, 2000; Raj 2002; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). Culture and gender play a key role in maintaining the cycle of violence and also building resiliency traits among immigrant women. Dasgupta & Warrier (1996) conducted a study of 12 South Asian battered women whose childhood socialization of traditional gender roles became barriers to help-seeking behavior in the United States. The following passage from the Hindu sacred texts provides a clearer understanding of the cultural beliefs that dominate the socialization of girls in India (Dasgupta & Warrier, 1996):

> Arundati was the wise and learned wife of sage Vahistha and the daughter-in-law of lord Brahma himself. Through mediation and self renunciation, Arundhati gained special spiritual powers that made her equal to the male sages of her time. Despite her erudition and achievements, Arundhati is better remembered for her devotion to her husband. So unparalleled was Arundhati's steadfast dedication, that she was rewarded with a place in the assembly of seven seers in the great *Saptarshi* constellation (the Big Dipper). According to Hindu traditions, a woman who follows the path of servitude set by Arundhati, will be worshipped in heaven itself. Therefore, to inspire a new bride in her wifely duties, one of the rituals in the Hindu wedding ceremony entails the viewing of the star Arundhati (The *Anushasan* [instruction] chapter if the epic *Mahabharata*) (p. 245).

Dasgupta and Warrier (1996) indicated that the women interviewed internalized a belief that they were secondary to their husbands regardless of educational achievement, level of independence, religious beliefs or length of stay in the United States.

Bui (2003) states that scholars have recognized the importance of acculturation and migration on the type of responses battered immigrants can have toward abuse. Both factors determine their access to resources and degree of adjustment to a new culture (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). However, current research indicates being more or less acculturated to dominant country values [United States] does not *prevent* domestic abuse (Raj & Silverman, 2002; Abraham, 2000; Yoshihama, 2001).

Historically, policy makers have categorized all Asians as one homogeneous group, failing to understand that Southeast Asian and Asian Indian patterns of migration are distinctively different (Yoshioka, 2001). These differences alter the attitude of the immigrant toward the host country and her place in society (Nesdale & Mak, 2000; Berry, 2001). For example, many Southeast Asians are from Vietnam, Cambodian, Laos and Korea. These are countries where citizens' rights are generally violated by government policies and practices. Without understanding the culture of origin, a practitioner or researcher can make the error of assuming all Asians share the same cultural factors that make them vulnerable to spousal abuse. Raj and Silverman (2002) highlight cultural factors that increase an immigrant woman's vulnerability to spousal abuse are gender roles, societal justification of abuse, acceptability of violence, and the role of isolation from the ethnic community as a means of control. If a South Asian woman reports her husband's abusive behaviors, she is at risk of isolation from her community or blame for not being a "better" wife, which can lead to isolation as well.

Prior to 1965, the number of Asian immigrants coming to the United States remained significantly low due to anti-immigration policies that denied many Asians access to the United States. One such act was the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. This act was passed in response to the anti-Asian sentiments coming from the white labor force (Abraham, 2000). This law stayed in effect until 1943. Until 1952, the government passed various quotas that placed limitations on the number of "aliens" that could become citizens. These quotas placed limits on citizenship access based first on race then on nationality (Abraham, 2000; Orloff & Kaguyutan, 2002). It was not until the 1965 Hart-Cellar Act Congress eliminated the remaining discriminatory immigration practices. "This act abolished the previous quota system that discriminated on the criteria of race and substituted a limit of 290,000 immigrants per year, with each country in the Eastern hemisphere limited to 20,000 immigrants. Children, spouses, and parents of citizens were excluded from these restrictions" (Abraham, 2000, p. 54).

Most South Asians migrated to the United States after 1965 to seek better economic opportunities (Das Dasgupta, 2000). After resettling, the majority of males returned to their native country to bring back a new wife. The wives originally entered the United States as ~~a~~ legal permanent residents (LPR) until immigration laws shifted the legal status of wives from legal, to illegal to temporary legal status, depending on when the wife arrived in the United States (Wood, 2004). The change in immigrant status for women determined their access to resources and their ability to stay in the United States.

Feminist Theory, Redefining the Role of Women in the Family

According to feminist theorists, domestic violence is about power and control and cuts across all cultural and socioeconomic groups (Mehrotra, 1999; Raj 2002; Yick 2001). Whether these women are able to access services is dependent on the policies of the country, the response

of the community and the response of law enforcement. If any fraction of society, from law enforcement to the legal system, oppresses immigrant women then the women are less likely to seek help (Abraham, 2000; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002).

Feminists argue the patriarchal society that exists in the United States sanctioning marital violence deems it socially acceptable to batter immigrant women (Sharma, 2001). Men also control the development of policies and social norms that keep the control in their hands (Denzin & Lincoln, eds.,2003). The feminist theoretical framework emphasizes empowering women to define their own lives, honor their own feelings and make their own decisions (Sharma, 2001). The purest interpretation of feminist theory is often compromised by practitioners, in the field of domestic violence, due to unrecognized racist beliefs and biases toward immigrant women who choose to stay in an abusive marriage. Sharma (2001) reports "many feminist therapists have identified several of the heterosexist and masculinist biases within these frameworks, they have not questioned their more subtle racist and classist assumptions" (p.1412). This is problematic for immigrant women seeking services from domestic violence agencies whose interventions are based on a feminist model of treatment that places the emphasis on leaving an abusive situation rather than staying.

Due to cultural norms and practices, many immigrant women are not ready or willing to leave an abusive marriage, thus the service model for these women will need to focus on reducing violence in the relationship and honoring the forms of resistance immigrant women utilize to survive the abuse (Almedia & Dolan-Delvecchio, 1999). Mehrotra (1999) reported in her qualitative study that South Asian immigrant women were not passive individuals refusing to fight back against the abuse as believed by the larger society. Mehrotra (1999) documents how

one woman took power back from her abuser to regain a sense of control in a relationship where she lacked control for 18 years:

> When we first got married, I used to get up in the morning and... fix his lunch every day. One day...I brought him his lunch box...He got mad [about something] ...He took that lunch box and he threw it at the wall. The food fell all over. I didn't say anything to him about it, but I didn't pick it up. I just left it there and when he came back from work, it was still there and he had to pick it up and clean it because I wouldn't touch it. From that day till now, I never fixed his food in the morning. He had to pack his own lunch or he had to buy it, or whatever. I just never did it.

In the United States, the option of leaving an abusive relationship is often viewed by many women as loss of honor and loss of family support (Abraham, 2000; Raj, 2002; Ayyub, 2000; Bui, 2000). The same cultural values that are an obstacle to seeking help for the abuse can also be a means to resist the abuse as documented in the example above. Within the South Asian community, the immigrant woman is given the task of preserving her culture from the intrusion of western values and ideals (Abraham, 2000). Thus, many women believe leaving their husband will hurt their parents, siblings, and their children. The price of leaving an abusive relationship within a host society that is perceived as oppressive and racist, is more daunting than enduring an abusive husband (Shirwadkar, 2004; Silka & Tip, 1994). Many immigrant women also believe their children will experience greater psychological harm if they leave their spouse than if they stay (Foss, 1996; Purkayastha, 2000). Empirical evidence is lacking that may prove or disprove immigrant women's perception that the harm to a child living with a single mother is greater than the harm of witnessing domestic abuse in the family.

Denial by the Ethnic Community and the Larger Society due to the Model Minority Myth

Mainstream society lumps all Asians with different histories, nationalities, and cultures into one group known as Asian Americans (Abraham, 2000; Yoshioka, 2001). The belief in society is that these ethnic groups have achieved success by adhering to "ideals" of American society such as equality of opportunity, independence, initiative, and self-reliance (Abraham, 2000; Gannon, 2001). Such conformity is documented in South Asians' focus on the family and the importance of hard work to achieve success. "This success has occurred at a time when mainstream Anglo-Americans increasingly perceiving African Americans as violating these so-called cherished values and making illegitimate demands for changes in status quo." (Abraham, 2000, p.9). This label is a method of control by the dominant society toward these ethnic groups. It creates a division between minority groups and also silences the voices of those who do not fit the "image" of the model minority. "This model minority status frequently means denying or making invisible any issue that is perceived as eroding that image, such as poverty, AIDS, homosexuality, substance abuse, and domestic violence..." (Abraham, 2000, p.11). It was not until the 1990s that South Asian women began challenging the concept of the model minority, pointing to how it suppresses the needs of immigrant women in the United States (Das Dasgupta, 1998; Thomas, 2000; Abraham, 2000; Mehrotra, 1999).

I have briefly outlined how feminist theorists explain the continuation of domestic violence within immigrant communities and the concept of model minority as a dividing factor within communities of color in the United States. This division further isolates battered immigrant women from accessing social supports within their community and the mainstream society.

Other forms of isolation that are just as devastating for immigrant women are the immigration policies in the United States that protect the rights of immigrant men but not women. The Violence Against Women Act of 2000 looked to reform these discriminatory practices of current immigration policies as well as rectify limitations in the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

Immigration Policies, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), Impact Women's Choices

Early immigration laws gave husbands the right to petition for legal status for their non-citizen spouses; yet citizen wives could not petition for their non-citizen husbands. This gendered policy continued until the 1940s (Wood, 2004). After WWII, changes in immigration policies were virtually nonexistent. The underlying perception within the legal system was that one spouse should remain dominant over the other (Wood, 2004; Goldman, 1999). This perception did not change despite the efforts of policy makers to make the language within the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) gender neutral.

In the mid-'60s, when restrictions placed on the immigration of Asians were lifted, the first wave of immigrants were men. These men achieved legal permanent residency status or their green card. They would return to their native country to get an arranged marriage and would then sponsor their wife to come to the Unites States. This placed many men at an advantage over the women in their knowledge of U.S. system, politics and economics. This advantage was maintained through the immigration policies such as the INA. Under this policy, the sponsoring spouse would have to file on behalf of the sponsored spouse, most often the wife. If the sponsoring spouse chose not to file the petition or chose to withdraw the petition, the wife was placed in a precarious position. She had two choices: remain in the country illegally or go back home. Thus, in a situation of violence, the wife was at the mercy of the abuser with limited

resources as an illegal citizen and a genuine fear of deportation (Abraham, 2000; Wood, 2004; Goldman 1999; Shirwadkar, 2004).

In 1986, the INA was amended with the passing of the Immigration Marriage Fraud Amendment (IMFA). This act was passed based on a "perception," rather than sound empirical research, that many men and women were marrying U.S. citizens for the purpose of entering the United States. Wood (2004) states the following, about what Congress found to support the passing of the IMFA:

> [h]istorically, U.S. immigration policy has recognized the importance of protecting nuclear families from separation by permitting immediate family members of U.S. citizens to immigrate to the United States without numerical limitation[,]...aliens who either cannot otherwise qualify for immigration to the United States or who, though qualified, are not willing to wait until an immigrant visa becomes available, frequently find it expedient to engage in a fraudulent marriage in order to side-step the immigration law. Surveys conducted by the Immigration and Naturalization Service have revealed that approximately 30% of all petitions for immigrant visas involve suspect marital relationships.

It is not clear how the surveys were administered or how the data was collected. This is important to understanding the validity of the results and the conclusions drawn about the percentage of fraudulent marriages. The significance of this policy for immigrant women is profound due to the "good faith" provision (Abraham, 2000; Goldman, 1999; Wood, 2004). According to the IMFA, a LPR is put on a "conditional" two-year permanent resident status. Goldman (1999) states that in order to lift the "conditional status" the following needs to occur:

(1) the legal citizen needs to file a new petition within 90 days of the 2nd anniversary of the initial petition

(2) participation of both spouses in the INS interview (if one spouse is missing then the "conditional LPR status" cannot become permanent)

This puts the power of the legal status of the battered spouse in the hands of her abuser. Thus, the abuser can refuse to come to the interview or chose not to file the second petition to change the LPR conditional status of his spouse (Wood, 2004; Shirwadkar, 2004; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002; Abraham, 2000). The only way a spouse could prevent her deportation was to file for an "extreme hardship waiver" under the Violence Against Women Act of 1994. This "extreme hardship waiver," if granted, would cancel deportation and lead to the granting of a permanent legal status. However, it was at the discretion of two adjudicators as to whether the waiver would be granted. In addition, in order to be considered for a waiver, Goldman (1999) states the following conditions need to be proven:

(1) if in the U.S. for 10+ years

(2) demonstrated "good moral character"

(3) no convictions

(4) could cause hardship to the legal citizen spouse and/or the children who are U.S. citizens, not the spouse being deported

Because the decision to cancel deportation is subjective, two independent adjudicators could hear the same facts and issue two different decisions (Goldman, 1999). The values and beliefs held by the INS officials often influence the decisions made. Menjivar & Salcido (2002) state "history reveals that racism and sexism are entrenched in immigration laws of the receiving

countries...U.S. immigration laws and policies have focused on keeping out the 'illegals' instead of focusing on potential future citizens" (p.913).

Another change that affected immigrants was the 1996 immigration reforms. Wood (2004) states that Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) cut off a majority of public benefits to undocumented immigrants. A negative consequence to immigrants was the passing of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRAIRA) with the purpose of lowering the number of illegal immigrants entering the country.

Under the act, employers could be penalized for hiring illegal immigrants. The act also placed limitations on the availability of relief to illegal citizens, and changed the standard of hardship from *extreme* to *exceptional and extremely unusual* (Wood, 2004; Goelman, 2003). The burden of proof was placed on the victims of domestic abuse who often needed a professional to document the impact of the abuse on their psychological and physical well-being. With limited number of human services agencies servicing illegal immigrants, this can be a significant challenge to the victim (Orloff & Kaguyutan, 2003; Goelman, 2003; Wood, 2004; Abraham, 2000).

Due to the unforeseen consequences to the PRWORA and IIRAIRA on victims of abuse, Congress amended the original 1994 in 2000. There are several provisions in the VAWA 2000 Reform that need to be highlighted to illustrate its complexities and limitations. In the original VAWA legislation, widowed or divorced immigrant women could not petition for legal status. The 2000 reform allows these women to self-petition for legal permanent residency within two years of a divorce or death. The second change is a lowering of the burden of proof for extreme hardship so the Attorney General could consider any evidence of proof of hardship. Wood

(2004) states that the Senate conference report on VAWA 2000 elaborates on this change as follows:

> [a]llows abused women spouses and children who have already demonstrated to the INS that they have been victims of battery or extreme cruelty by their spouse or parent to file their own petition for a lawful permanent resident visa without also having to show they will suffer "extreme hardship" if forced to leave the U.S., a showing that is not required if their citizen or lawful permanent resident spouse or parent files the visa petition on their behalf (p.149).

The third change is the modification of the concept of "good moral character". In the old version of the VAWA, any criminal conviction placed on the victim by the abusive spouse was a barrier to seeking assistance under VAWA. Now the VAWA 2000 supports the Attorney General to declare that a battered immigrant has shown "good moral character" as long as she is not the primary perpetuator of any violent act against her spouse and provided it was an act of self-defense.

By understanding the history of immigration policies toward immigrants in the United States, we have a clearer understanding of factors that influence a battered immigrant women's acculturation process. Battered immigrant women who experience discrimination due to unjust, discriminatory immigration legislation are less likely to trust law enforcement to protect them from the abuse of a spouse (Orloff & Kaguyutan, 2003). In summary, discriminatory immigration policies sanction an abusive husband's power, enabling him to control the citizenship status of his wife and therefore control her access to financial benefits and legal resources that could enable her to leave an abusive relationship (Orloff & Kaguyutan, 2003; Abraham, 2000; Raj & Silverman, 2002). In sum, there are three theoretical frameworks: (1)

domestic violence as a dimension of marital conflict, (2) feminist theory, and (3) acculturation theory that provide a framework to better understand the barriers South Asian immigrant women in the United States face in trying to leave abusive relationships. Domestic violence is a complex phenomenon that cannot be explained solely by culture. Instead it is crucial we look at the intersection of racism, migration history, racism and discrimination experienced by immigrants in the United States and how culture can be both a protective factor and a risk factor for immigrant women. By viewing the social problem of domestic violence through a social constructionist framework we can better understand, assess and evaluate the causes of violence in immigrant communities.

Research Questions & Hypotheses

This exploratory study investigates the South Asian immigrant perceptions of when it is acceptable for husbands to use abusive behaviors to manage marital conflict. Cultural values related to masculine identity will be measured as potential concepts that may legitimize male use of violence to manage marital conflict. Threats to masculine identity addressed in the survey include a wife questioning her husband's authority in public and in private, any perceived threat to family harmony and childrearing by the wife, and perceived threats to the husband's social standing in the community. This study will investigate whether South Asian males compared to South Asian females perceive it as more acceptable for males to use control tactics to manage relationship conflict when there is a perceived threat to masculinity and cultural values. Demographics that could influence perception of acceptance are length of residence in the United States, educational level of participants, education levels of spouse, family income and religious preference.

This research seeks to answer the following broad research questions, (1) What are the limitations to using violent methods to resolve marital conflict? (2) What are the factors that moderate the South Asian community's perception of the use of violence by South Asian males to manage marital conflict; (3) if violence is seen in the community as an unacceptable method of handling marital conflict, is there variation in the perception of acceptance? These broad questions have been detailed into more specific research questions.

1) What factors are associated with perception of acceptance toward abusive conflict tactics in marital disagreements?
2) Does the acculturation process affect South Asian immigrant perception of acceptance toward abusive tactics in managing marital conflict?
3) Is there a difference between male and female perception toward male controlling tactics in marital conflicts?
4) Are some abusive behaviors more culturally acceptable then other behaviors due to gendered roles in South Asian countries?
5) Does degree of mutuality in a relationship affect perception of acceptance toward abusive tactics in managing marital conflict?
6) When controlling several demographics, does gender affect perception of acceptance toward abusive tactics in managing marital conflict?

The goal of my study is to investigate the relationship between levels of the acculturation processes and mutuality on the South Asian community's acceptance of the use of abusive tactics to manage marital conflict. The foundation of the hypotheses is that perceptions and attitude are socially constructed and any changes in perception of the acceptability of abusive behaviors in managing marital conflicts are influenced by our experiences. Factors that

shape our experiences are how we adapt to a new country (acculturation), our current satisfaction with our relationship (mutuality), the length of time in the United States, length of current marriage, age, gender and educational level. The strength of these factors influencing perception can vary based on context.

Hypothesis I:

South Asian immigrants who acculturate to Western values will more likely perceive abusive behaviors in managing marital conflicts as unacceptable compared to South Asians who acculturate to Asia values.

Hypothesis 2:

a) South Asians who report higher mutuality in their relationships will more likely rate higher on acceptance of husbands' abusive behaviors as less acceptable.

b) Lower mutuality may indicate perception of higher acceptance of the use of abusive behaviors in managing marital conflict among males.

c) Women will perceive the abusive behaviors unacceptable regardless of level of mutuality in the relationship.

Hypothesis 3:

a) South Asian immigrants' spousal education levels are a predicator of perception of acceptance.

b) The more educated the respondents or their spouses are, the more likely they will perceive acceptance of abusive behaviors by the husband toward a less educated wife as an acceptable method of managing marital conflicts.

The length of residence in the United States and the length of the marriage are important variables. Even if a participant identifies as Asian, the influence of western culture cannot be

ignored. So traditional roles in a relationship are often re-examined in a society, such as the United States, where it is expected that men and women have equal rights in a relationship. In South Asian countries, gender roles are clearly defined based on a hierarchal society. Men are respected by women, elders are respected by men and women, and children respect their elders. This leads to the development of a fourth hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4:

The longer South Asian immigrant males reside in the United States or the longer they are married, the more likely they will perceive the abusive behaviors of the husband toward the wife as a more acceptable method of managing conflict.

Hypothesis 5:

The longer South Asian immigrant women reside in the United States, the more likely there is an association between length of stay and mutuality in the relationship.

Hypothesis 6:

When controlling demographics such as age, length of residence in the United States, participant's level of education, spouse's level of education and length of time married, female are more likely to perceive the abusive behaviors of the husband toward the wife as less acceptable than males who will find the behaviors more acceptable.

These research questions and hypotheses were addressed through a survey with three scales. The first scale is developed by this researcher to measure the dependent variable, acceptance. The second scale is the Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale. Finally, the Mutual Psychological Development Questionnaire (MPDQ) measures the communication between partners to assess the degree of mutuality perceived in the relationship. In the next section, the sampling strategy, data collection and analysis will be explained more fully.

Chapter II
Methodology

Sampling Strategy

The sample consists of South Asian immigrants who are from or their parents are from Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan or Sri Lanka. The participants reside in the following states: Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Arizona, New Jersey, Texas, Alabama, New York, and Arkansas. I implemented multiple approaches to recruiting participants, (1) through South Asian immigrant organizations in Massachusetts, such as Saheli and Matahari; (2) through the media, advertising in a Indian newspaper whose subscribers are from the New England area; (3) my own network of family and friends in the United States. For over two years, I volunteered with a grassroots domestic violence agency called Saheli that works with South Asian immigrants. I brought to the organization not only my research experience but also my social work practical experience in the field. Saheli was able to provide me with access to some cultural events commonly attended by South Asians for the purposes of recruitment. Despite access to the target sample through Saheli sponsored cultural events, it was still difficult to recruit participants. The South Asian immigrant community is a closed ethnic community in general suspicious of researchers and /or mental health professionals. This situation made recruitment a challenge due to this researcher's limited resources, namely, the survey was in English only, and I did not have funding for additional research assistants or translation of the survey into various South Asian dialects.

Through Saheli's assistance, I was able to attend two cultural events - one in New Hampshire and the other in Massachusetts. The New Hampshire event was dance performances

by students. Over 100 people attend and there were only two people willing to participate in the study. The second event celebrated, India's Republic Day, was attended by 100- 200 people in attendance. Nineteen agreed to participate in the study. The survey used in this recruitment and the one in New Hampshire had an old version of the demographic questionnaire that was later expanded to capture more variables such as income level. Thus, these participants were not asked about their income level. All who completed the survey spoke English and were given a $10 gift card to Starbucks that only eight people took; the rest refused. The next 29 participants were recruited through family and friends and through the media. First, an advertisement was placed in an English-language newspaper that reaches over 10,000 South Asians in the New England area. Second, an advertisement was placed in Lokavani, an on-line Indian newsletter. For these two recruitment strategies, potential participants were given a link to an anonymous survey through Survey Monkey. Third, MataHari, another South Asian organization, which works with victims of domestic violence, sent my e-mail requesting participants, with the link to the survey to their listserv. There was no reimbursement for filling out the on-line survey for this group of participants. Fifty-two people started the on-line survey but only thirty (57.7%) completed the survey and one survey could not be used because the participant was from Trinidad.

The surveys are anonymous and confidentiality is protected for all participants. No names were solicited, and the 21 people who completed the paper survey at the cultural events read and agreed to the detailed consent form (Attachment 6). The completed paper surveys were coded by number and connected to the corresponding consent form. By completing an on-line survey, there is an implied consent to participate in the study by respondents. When friends and family were utilized for recruitment purposes, a detailed description of the study along with the

survey link was sent to family and friends who forwarded the message by e-mail to their extended network. The text used for the newspaper advertisement is the same text used for the e-mail solicitation, approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Boston College. In Table 1, I have highlighted the sample demographics.

Table 1

Mean, Standard Deviation and Percentage Information on the Sample Demographics (N= 50)

Variable	M	SD	PERCENT
Age	45.08	11.68	
Gender			
Males			30% (15)
Females			70% (35)
Highest Level of Education	--	--	
High School	--	--	2% (1)
College Degree	--	--	45% (22)
Graduate Degree	--	--	43% (21)
PhD Degree	--	--	10% (5)
Spouse's Level of Education*	--	--	
High School	--	--	4% (1)
College Degree	--	--	31% (8)
Graduate Degree	--	--	54% (14)
PhD Degree	--	--	12% (3)
Family Income**	$160,000.00	$103,551.52	
Length of Time Married	20.08yrs	13.25yrs	
Length of Residence in US	22.75yrs	11.39yrs	
Family Living in the US			
Yes	--	--	62% (31)
No	--	--	38% (19)
State Living In			
MA	--	--	56% (28)
NH	--	--	10% (5)
AZ	--	--	14% (7)
TX	--	--	10% (5)
NJ	--	--	4% (2)
AL	--	--	2% (1)
NY	--	--	2% (1)
AK	--	--	2% (1)
Religious Practice			

Hindu	--	--	85% (41)
Muslim	--	--	2% (1)
Sikh	--	--	4% (2)
Jain	--	--	2% (1)
None	--	--	6% (3)
Are you employed?			
Yes	--	--	84% (42)
No	--	--	16% (8)
Is this your 1st marriage?			
Yes	--	--	98% (47)
No	--	--	2% (1)
Number of children			
Zero	--	--	16% (8)
One	--	--	14% (7)
Two	--	--	49% (24)
Three	--	--	18% (9)
Four	--	--	2% (1)

*Only 26 participants reported spouse's level of education
**Only 25 participants reported family income

Of the fifty South Asian immigrants who participated in this research study, 30 percent were male (15) and 70 percent were female (35). The age of the participants ranged from 27 years to 71 years, 94 percent were married at the time of participation and 6 percent were divorced. Forty-three percent of the participants had a graduate degree and 31 percent had a college degree. Thirty-one percent of participants reported their spouse's educational level at a college level and 54 percent at a graduate level. The average income was $160,000 (s.d. = $103,551.52) with the range being between $40,000 to $500,000. However, 25 respondents did not report their income.

Eight-eight percent state they were first generation immigrants defined in the survey as being born in Asia or a country outside the United States. Twelve percent stated they were second generation immigrants defined as being born in the United States and either parent born outside the United States. None of the participants identify as 3rd, 4th or 5th generation immigrants. In sum, the sample was middle-aged, well-educated, and middle to upper class. In the next section, the measurement tools will be outlined in greater detail.

Measurement and Data Collection Process

This study is the first to examine the factors influencing perception of acceptance toward abusive conflict tactics based on an assumption that individuals' world views are socially constructed. In order to capture multiple variables that can influence attitude, three scales were administrated in the survey. The first, Abusive Conflict Tactics Perception Scale (ACTPS) is comprised of six self-developed vignettes (subscales) with five – to eight questions asking participants to rate the degree of acceptance of a husband or a wife's behavior in managing marital conflict. Each subscale is topic driven as follows: (1) husband's work stress on martial conflict; (2) change in wife's work status; (3) wife challenging husband's opinions in public; (4) wife's expected duty to maintain the household chores; (5) husband not allowing wife to develop female friendships; (6) children witnessing their parents marital conflict. Each subscale was carefully written to capture cultural acceptable roles between a husband and wife in the South Asian immigrant communities in the United States. In each subscale, the wife challenges the cultural-specific gendered role of a wife in the family. The result is the husband using violence to bring the violence back within the parameters of what is socially-acceptable behavior of wife. Throughout the history of the women's movement in various societies, women have challenged gender-specified roles leading to increased marital conflicts. Traditional men who want the status quo and are willing to use violence to maintain that power and control will use the challenging of gendered-roles by women as an excuse to use violence and abuse to resolve the marital conflicts. Some South Asian immigrant men and women raised in more traditional families perceive the husband's abusive behaviors as acceptable in some marital conflicts but not necessarily all. We are not clear what factors contribute to this perception of abuse being

justified method to re-establish harmony in the home. Due to cultural upbringing and societal messages about gender from their own ethnic culture and the patriarchal culture within the United States, South Asian immigrant men believe maintaining traditional roles in the family is the only way to keep harmony (Price, 2005). All of my subscales are focusing on domestic violence (aka intimate terrorism), the unhealthy dimension of marital conflicts.

The second scale is Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale and the third scale is the Mutual Psychological Development Questionnaire (MPQD) measuring mutuality in the relationships. Below I have provided more details on the measures used.

Abusive Conflict Tactics Perception Scale (ACTPS). Currently the scales measuring violence in relationships such as the Conflict Tactics Scale have been used almost exclusively with white middle class women. Hence, it does not capture the cultural dimensions that may influence a community's response to violence. To more accurately capture the cultural dimensions amongst the South Asian community I created the scale called Abusive Conflict Tactics Perception Scale (ACTPS).

The development of the ACTPS was based on an extensive literature review conducted on the subject of domestic violence in South Asian immigrant communities. Upon reading the literature on this topic, it was decided that there are key cultural values that are sacred in a collectivistic society and when these are perceived to be violated by a wife, the husband may feel justified (or that it is legitimate to use) in using physical violence against her. Those values of loving and serving one's family, upholding family honor, and respecting hierarchical and societal role expectations are based on gender. Women are expected to be the primary caretakers of children and expected to uphold cultural values under which they were raised. Women who deviate from their role within the family are judged as selfish or disobedient and therefore in

defiance of their familial values. The vignettes were created to demonstrate the contrasting displays of individual values seen in Western cultures where a woman stands up for herself by emphasizing her right to independence and equal rights. In trying to secure some level of freedom and/or equality the women in these vignettes would openly disagree with their husbands, resulting in conflict. The vignettes also captured the collectivistic values seen in South Asian cultures where family comes first and the individual second. After each vignette the participant was asked whether they agreed with the statements normatively evaluating either the husband's or wife's behaviors. The statements identifying specific behaviors reflect cultural values and beliefs regarding male and female roles in the family from western perspectives and non-Western perspectives. The Likert scale ranged from 1= Disagree; 2 = Mildly Disagree; 3= Mildly Agree; to 4=Agree. In order to increase reliability, 7 out of 34 questions were asked in the opposite way and needed to be recoded as follows: 1=4; 2=3; 3=2; 4=1. So a higher score on the scale indicated higher acceptance.

When I tested the psychometrics of the scale, the following question, *"To what extent do you agree with the following statement: 'Sandeep had the right to slap his wife because she is not following direction"* needed to be removed from the final analysis due to zero variance. All participants disagreed with this item. In the final analysis, I had a scale with six vignette categories, creating a 34-item multiple-choice scale (Cronbach alpha = .91). The ACTPS score range was developed by multiplying one times 34 and two times 34 which created the first score of 34 and the second of 68. My rationale for scoring the scale in the following manner was based on the Likert Scale items, 1=disagree, and 2=mildly disagree. A person who responds disagree to all 34 items has a score of 34, indicating a perception that all of the husband's behaviors are abusive, and therefore unacceptable method to managing conflict. As the

participants score moves away from 34 and closer to 68, they still perceive that the husband's behaviors are abusive but there is more variation in perception of which behaviors in the subscale are viewed as unacceptable and acceptable. The ACTPS score range for perception of acceptance toward the abusive behaviors was calculated the same way, three times 34 equals 102 and four times 34 equals 136. Those who score between 102 -136 perceive the behaviors by the husband an acceptable method of managing marital conflict. One hundred and thirty-six indicates that the participant perceives all the abusive behaviors of the husband as an acceptable method of managing the marital conflict. As the participants scores move away from 136 and closer to 102, this indicates higher variation in perception of acceptance. A score of 69 – 101, indicates the participants perceive some abusive behaviors as acceptable and some as not acceptable but do not have an overall score that indicates a perception of acceptance or non-acceptance of abusive behaviors.

Each subscale in the ACTPS has four to eight items, measuring a cultural dimension that research has shown to be a justification by the community for continued spousal abuse. Subscale one which includes *husband's work stress on marital conflict* as a potential justification for abuse has four items. Subscale two includes *change in wife's work status* has eight items. Subscale three evaluates *wife challenging husband's opinion in public* has six items. Subscale four evaluates *wife's expected duty to maintain the household chores"* has five items. Subscale five evaluates *husband not allowing wife to develop female friendships* has five items. The final subscale evaluating *children witnessing parent's marital conflict* has five items. As mentioned earlier, the ACTPS subscales are based on qualitative research conducted on South Asian victims of domestic violence, and each cultural scenario is based on personal stories documented by the victims of what led to their abuse and the type of abuse they endured. I changed the names and a

few aspects of the stories to provide a comprehensive picture of how domestic abuse manifests itself in this ethnic community. Table 2 contains the subscales with each justification for spousal abuse, along with the Alpha coefficient and other descriptive statistics.

Table 2

ACTPS Subscales, the Alpha Coefficient, Mean, Range and Standard Deviation

Subscale	N*	Alpha	Mean	Range	SD
Husband's work stress on marital conflict	5	.82	10.98	4.88	3.67
Wife's work status	9	.68	25.5	9.92	5.04
Wife challenging husband's behaviors in public	7	.82	17.69	7.80	5.95
Wife's expected duty to maintain household chores	5	.29	19.34	7.70	11.19
Husband not allowing wife to develop female friendships	5	.45	14.2	5.80	2.08
Children witnessing parent's marital conflict	5	.39	17.08	4.98	2.34

*Number of questions in the subscale

Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA). The SL-ASIA is modeled after the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans (Cuellar, Harris, & Jasso, 1980). The scale has 21 items which cover the following categories: language (4 questions), identity (4 questions), friendship choice (3 questions), behaviors (5 questions), generation/geographic history (3 questions), and attitudes (1 question). Five additional questions are added to the original scale by Suinn-Lew with the objective of helping researchers further classify the data.

Questions 22 and 23 are interpreted together (category 1) and questions 24 and 25 are interpreted together (category 2). Question 26 is independent from the other questions. The person can be classified as either Asian-identified, Western-identified or bicultural depending on how they respond to the two categories of questions.

The acculturation process provides a framework for understanding how immigrants adapt to the dominant culture in the United States. The initial framework was based on data collected on the experiences of "white ethnics" who immigrated to the United States in the early 1900s. After the ban on immigration was lifted in the 1960s, the new immigrants facilitated the diversification of society. However, the new group of immigrants still faced challenges in adapting to the host culture and the type of adaptation was dependent on the type of interaction experienced with the host culture (i.e., discrimination toward the ethnic group) and the reason for immigration.

According to researchers (Padilla 1980; Berry 2001), acculturation theory puts forth a framework to explain how immigrants adapt to a host culture with values and beliefs that are uniquely different from their own. The four categories developed are as follows:

- Assimilation – refers to relinquishing your cultural identity and embracing all the values and customs of the dominant (host) culture.
- Biculturalism (Integration) – to retain cultural identity and also take on the values and beliefs of the dominant culture
- Separation (Rejection) – the group segregates from the larger society. The group institutes a self-imposed isolation (i.e. the orthodox Jewish communities in the United States) or the dominant culture separates the ethnic group from larger society (i.e.

internment camps for Jews in Germany during Hitler's time; the Japanese internment camps in the United States during WWII)

- Marginalization (Deculturalization) – the individual and/or family reject both the culture of origin and the dominant culture.

It is important to remember according to Padilla, Berry, Olmedo, Keefe, Torres-Matrullo and Szapocznik & Kurtines (1980) that the individual's or the family's decision to pick one of these four variations implies a freedom of choice. "In part, the right to chose options relates to degree of tolerance for cultural diversity which is present in a society, both at the individual (attitudinal) or group (community, institutional, governmental) levels" (Berry et al., 1980, p. 15).

Suinn-Lew (1987) views identity as a self-perception or subjective statement of person's cultural character. Therefore, it is possible for an individual to fit into Western society, interact well with Westerners but self-identify with the Asian community rather than identifying as bi-cultural. In the SL-ASIA scale, participants are identified as having either low acculturation or high acculturation (assimilation) or as Western-identified, Asian-identified or bicultural-identified. In order to obtain a total score on the 21-item scale, the responses of the 21 questions are added together and divided by 21. A score of 1 or 2 means low acculturation and a score of 4 or 5 means high acculturation, with 3 being neutral. Another method of categorizing the scores is to look at a score of 1 or 2 as Asian-identified, 3 as bicultural-identified and 4 or 5 as Western-identified. The Cronbach alpha equals .86 for the 21-items.

Mutual Psychological Development Questionnaire (MPDQ). The MPDQ was developed by Genero, Miller, & Surrey. The MPDQ is a 22-item Likert-type questionnaire consisting of two 11-item subsets. One subset refers to a respondent's ability to respond empathically to his or her partner\ and the second subset describes perceptions of how the partner communicates in an

empathic way to the respondent. Both subscale response options are a 6-point scale ranging from *never* to *all the time.* Genero et al. report that the alpha coefficients for a sample of spouses ranged from .89 to .92 and .95. The analysis of my sample resulted in a Cronbach alpha of .95. In summary, the demographic items, the SL-ASIA and the MPQD were the measures that I used for the independent variables and the AACTS was used to measure the dependent variable. In the next section, I will outline the strategies used to analyze the relationships in each hypothesis.

Statistical Analysis

In order to analyze the relationships between my independent variables and my dependent variable (perception), I conducted several statistical analyses. The first analysis I conducted for all of the hypotheses was one-sample t-tests. The second analysis is a correlation matrix to determine multicolinearity among the demographic variables. The third analysis is a regression analysis, where I entered the variables into a linear model, using either a stepwise or forward approach. I did not use multivariate regression due to the high correlation among the different predicator variables. Instead I chose to look at the Beta and F change between one predictor against the dependent variable. In other words, I was able to determine the change in the explained variance based on entering each variable in a stepwise or forward manner. I also conducted a chi-square analysis for hypothesis one only in order to determine statistical significance among the three acculturation subscale variables I entered into a regression.

Chapter III
Findings

The findings are presented in four sections; the first two sections examine the hypotheses and the relationships between the predictor variables and the criterion variables. The next section presents the relationships of other independent variables, demographics, and their relationship to the independent variable. In other words, I am looking at whether various demographics explain the variance in perception of acceptance. The final section presents other significant relationships among the variables that are not directly related to the hypotheses but will expand our understanding of how the variables are related. Before reporting the results of the regression analysis, the results of a one-sample t-test are presented in order to examine whether there are significant associations between the independent variables and perception. A one-sample t-test can provide a more accurate test for associations between variables where the sample is less than 100. While a regression also provides valuable information, it is a more sensitive statistical analysis and may not show predictability when the sample size is less than 100, when in actuality there is a relationship between the variables. Table 3 displays the results of the one-sample t-test.

Table 3

2-Tailed One-Sample T-Tests for Variables Associated with Perception

Variable	Mean	t-Test	df
Perception	46.3	30.8	47
Acculturation	2.4	31.7	49
Mutuality	104.1	35.0	31
Spouse's Education	3.7	26.3	25

Length of Residence	22.8	14.1	49
Length of Marriage	20.1	10.6	48
Gender	1.7	26.0	49
Participant's Education	3.6	36.0	48
Age	45.0	27.0	48

Before conducting linear regression analyses to test the hypotheses, I needed to check for multicolinearity among the independent variables. Below is a correlation matrix of all the of the independent variables to be entered into a multivariate regression analysis. Based on the correlation matrix, there are several variables that should not be entered into the same regression equation. These are the length of marriage length of residence in the U.S. age, and number of children. The next step in the data analysis was looking at what variables were associated with acceptance through a regression analysis.

Table 4

Correlation Matrix of Independent Variables (N= 50)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Length of Residence.	---	.342*	-.056	-.048	.696**	.069	.696**	-.434*	.289*	.187
2. # of Children	.342	---	.074	.228	.603**	.238	.651**	.024	.013	.119
3. Level of education	-.056	.074	---	.254	.097	.424*	.026	-.003	.195	- .164
4. Spouse's Education	-.048	.228	.254	---	.046	.094	.092	.053	-.006	-.469*

5. Age	.696**	.603**	.097	.046	---	-.042	.940**	-.272	.120	.170
6. Family Income	.069	.238	.424*	.094	-.042	---	-.024	-.130	.094	-.138
7. Length of Marriage	.696**	.651**	.026	.092	.940**	-.024	---	-.272	.116	.141
8. Mutuality	-.434*	.024	-.003	.053	-.272	-.130	-.272	---	.244	-.212
9. Asian Self-Identity	.143	-.323*	.020	-.092	-.270	-.059	-.320	-.088	---	-.150
10. Acceptance Score	.187	.119	-.164	-.469*	.170	-.138	.141	-.212	-.150	---

*p < 0.05 (2-tailed)
**p < 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Acculturation and Acceptance of Abusive Tactics

In the first hypothesis, I examined the relationship between acculturation and perception of acceptance. Before conducting the regression analysis I scored the ACTPS and found that all of the respondents' scores were in the range of 34 -80 (M=46.33; SD =10.41). The overall scores indicate that in general, the respondents did not condone the use of abusive behaviors by husbands in the majority of circumstances of marital conflict. However, the variation in responses within the ACTPS point to a range in perception of acceptability toward abusive behaviors in the management of specific marital conflicts. As a result, I made a decision to look at variation by scale items. By analyzing the data in this manner, I will be looking at whether there is a relationship between each scale item and perception of acceptance. If a scale item is a statistical significant predicator, it does not necessarily mean that acculturation is a predictor of perception. In order to show a relationship between acculturation and perception of acceptance, the total score on the 21-item acculturation scale would need to be associated with the outcome

variable. When I entered the total acculturation score, there was no statistical significant between acculturation and perception of acceptance, standardized β = - .116; SE = 9.9; F=.528; p=.472. This is primarily due to the lack of variation in levels of acculturation. Sixty-four percent of the participants reported low acculturation, indicating they identify themselves as Asian-only or mostly as Asian-only, while 34 percent reported themselves as bicultural, indicating they identify themselves as both Western and Asian. Greater variation in acculturation processes is needed to accurately predict whether there is an association between acculturation and perception of acceptance.

There are three scale items that indicated variation in responses, prefer to associate, ethnic origin of friends when participant 0-6 yrs, and movie preference. Given the within-scale item response variation, the results of the regression analysis showed a relationship between each scale item and perception of acceptance. Despite the associations, this finding cannot be used to support hypothesis 1, given the data is based on 3 scale items within a 21-item scale. Given this limitation, I decided to run a cross-tab to see whether there were any significant chi-squares. What I found is that each of the three scale items indicated a statistically significant relationship with perception of acceptance. The Spearman coefficient for the scale item, ethnic origin, is .027, and for scale item, prefer to associate is .002 and for scale item, movie preference is .002. Table 5 presents the chi-square information for the three subscale variables, including the Spearman coefficient.

Table 5

Chi-square for the Ethnic Origin, Prefer to Associate, Movie Preference and Acceptance Score

Variable	1	2	3	4
Ethnic Origin	--	-.072	.184	.330
-Sig. (2-tailed)*	--	.630	.221	.027

Prefer to Associate	-.072	--	.283	-.441
-Sig. (2-tailed)*	.630	--	.051	.002
Movie Preference	.184	.283	--	-.436
-Sig. (2-tailed)*	.221	.051	--	.002
Acceptance Score	.330	-.441	-.436	--
-Sig. (2-tailed)*	.027	.002	.002	--

*Spearman Coefficient, p< 0.05 level or p< 0.01 level

When analyzing the data, the regression analysis showed that the acculturation subscales (Y) have some predictive value to acceptance (X). Before entering the three acculturation subscale items into a regression equation, I needed to ensure the independent variables were not highly correlated. Table 6 presents the correlation matrix among the three subscale variables. When the three subscale items were used as predicators and entered through a stepwise method into the regression analysis, an association was found between "prefer to associate" and acceptance. As each variable was entered into the regression, the un-standardized Beta increased, and the R squared value increased (see Table 7).

Table 6

Correlation Matrix for the Three Acculturation Scale Subscale Items/Variables

Variable	1	2	3
Prefer to associate	----	-.062	.320*
Ethnic origin	-.062	----	.172
Movie preference	.320*	.172	----

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 7

Change in Acceptance of Abusive Behaviors with Three Acculturation Subscale Items: Prefer to associate, ethnic origin preference at a young age and movies preferred

	β	B	SE	R^2	F change
Step 1					
Prefer to Associate	-.504	-6.29	1.66	.25*	14.316
Constant		62.57	4.58		
Step 2					
Prefer to associate	-.522	-6.51	1.50	.41**	
Ethnic origin	.399	4.47	1.34		11.107
Constant		56.33	4.52		
Step 3					
Prefer to associate	-.404	-5.04	1.42	.54***	
Ethnic origin	.448	5.02	1.22		
Movie preference	-.372	-5.26	1.62		10.494
Constant		67.42	5.32		

β= standardized coefficients; B= unstandardized coefficients
*F = 14.316; **F =14.434; ***F = 15.349

In this regression analysis, I entered the following acculturation variables from the scale: prefer to associate, ethnic origin and movie preference. When a regression analysis was conducted individually entering each acculturation scale item, each was found to be associated with perception of acceptance (see Table 7). In order to measure the strength of the association between the respondents' preference for association and acceptance, I needed to control for the influence of the other two acculturation scale items that were also associated with acceptance. When all three scale items are entered into the regression, 54 percent of the variability in perception is explained by the regression. Furthermore, the un-standardized beta for each regression analysis increased as the variables were entered into the equation from the origin of

stepwise regression analysis of 62.57 to 67.42. Controlling for the influence of who they recall selecting for friends at a young (the ethnic origin) and their movie preferences, the beta for preference to associate increased by one standard deviation as the ACTPS score decreased by .404. The respondents who prefer to associate with Asians only will rate a higher acceptance of abusive behaviors by the husband in managing marital conflicts, while those who associate with predominately Westerners or equally with Asians and Westerners will score lower on ACTPS scale, indicating lower acceptance.

Level of Mutuality and Acceptance of Abusive Tactics

In my second hypothesis I examine the relationship between mutuality in the relationship and acceptance. In the MPDQ, the range of scores were 77 (lowest score) to 128 (highest score). Higher mutuality was indicated in a high score while lower mutuality was indicated in a low score. In this study, the mean score was 105, the standard deviation was 16.80 and the range was 57. The following table documents MPDQ scores by percentage.

Table 8

Percentage and Frequency of MPDQ Scores

Score Range	Percent	Frequency
71- 89	26%	8
90 – 105	26%	8
107 -119	26%	8
120 -128	23%	7

Note: MPDQ scores represent 32 out of 50 respondents, 19 scores missing

The regression analysis shows that there was no relationship between mutuality and acceptance, unless with whom South Asians prefer to associate with in their communities is entered in the equation. When MPDQ scores were entered into the analysis and the influence of the

acculturation variable "prefer to associate" is controlled, than mutuality could predict acceptance, β= -.342; SE = .1.30. As the MPDQ scores went down, indicating lower mutuality, then ACTPS scores increased, indicating higher acceptance. Respondents who reported lower mutuality in their relationships were more likely to find the husband's behaviors an acceptable method of managing marital conflict, when the influence of who they would like to associate with in the community is removed from influencing their attitude.

When looking at the male respondents, there was an association between acceptance and feelings around how their spouses related to their needs, based on the responses to the second part of the MPDQ scale. In the second part of the scale, the respondents were asked "when we talk about things that matter to me, my spouse is likely…". The respondent was asked to rate 11 statements related to how the respondent perceives their spouses relating to their needs. In looking at the second part of the MPDQ scale, males who perceived their spouses are unresponsive to their needs were more likely to rate the abusive behaviors of the husband as acceptable. I entered the MPDQ score for second part of the scale (11 items) into the regression analysis, stepwise method. The findings showed that when South Asian males perceived the responsiveness of their spouses are not meeting their needs (lower score on part two of the MPDQ scale) it predicated a higher acceptance of abuse. For South Asian women, there was no relationship between perception of the spouse's responsiveness to their needs and acceptance. I took this analysis further, controlling for the influence of other variables, length of time married, educational level and age. Since length of time married and age are highly correlated, I entered each into two separate regression models. The results of the analysis are noted in Table 9.

Table 9

Change in South Asian Males Perception Based on Spouse's Responsiveness to Their Needs, Controlling Influence of Years Married, Educational Level and Age

Variables Controlled	β	B	SE	R^2	F
Perception (MPDQ)	-.592	1.006	.441	.57	5.99*
Number of Years Married	.249	.198	.206		
Constant		94.661	23.81		
Perception (MPDQ)	-.753	-1.279	.395	.54	5.29**
Level of Education	-.118	-1.894	3.739		
Constant		118.763	26.639		
Perception (MPDQ)	-.671	-1.141	.452	.54	5.18**
Age	.106	.089	.223		
Constant		100.523	29.008		

β= standardized coefficients; B= unstandardized coefficients
*p = .02; **p = .03

Demographics of Participants and Spouses and Acceptance of Abusive Tactics

When I conducted a regression analysis for hypothesis three in which I entered participants' educational levels, there was no statistically significant relationship found between educational level and acceptance. Surprisingly, there was a relationship between spouse's education and acceptance, B = - 6.16, SE = 2.48; t = -2.49; p =.02. This analysis shows that the South Asian immigrants are more likely to accept a husband's abusive behaviors in managing marital conflict when the spouses are less educated. This is an important predicator in relation to societal views on gender. The acceptability of abusive behaviors may be related to class. In India, from which most of the participants originate, there is a distinct economic class system, the poor and the rich. Among the wealthy South Asian immigrants in the United States, the findings indicate a class bias grounded on the assumption that the use of violence with less educated spouses is more accepted than with educated spouses.

When I entered length of stay into a regression analysis for hypothesis four, I did not find a significant relationship between length of residence and perception of acceptance. However, when conducting the analysis with only men there was a relationship between length and perception, β=.556, SE = .290, p = .031. The longer a person resides in the United States the more likely the male respondent will perceive the abusive behaviors as appropriate. The same is true that men who have been married for a longer time will perceive greater acceptance of husbands' abusive behaviors in marital conflicts, β=.572, SE=.184, p=.026. These results support the theoretical concepts associated with the acculturation process and how greater length of time in the United States can change values and beliefs about gendered roles.

In conducting a regression analysis for hypothesis five, where mutuality is the dependent variable and length of residence in the U.S. is the independent variable, there is an association, β= -.479; SE=.262; p =.024. The longer a woman resides in the United States the data showed that her perception of mutuality in the relationship decreases. This shift may be due to increased exposure to Western values and a direct challenge to cultural views on gendered roles, in which gender equality is not as important.

In testing hypothesis six, where I am looking at the association between gender and acceptance of abusive tactics, I conducted an one-sample t-test rather than a regression. In the one-sample t-test, there is an association between gender and perception for males and for females. For males, the t-test value is 10.7, df = 49, while for females, the t-test values is -4.58, df = 49. In order to reject the null hypothesis for males, that there is no association between the two variables, the t-test value must be either greater or equal to 2.68. For females, the t-test value must be less than or equal to -2.68 for us to reject the null hypothesis. Based on the

analysis, females perceive the abusive behaviors of the husband as less acceptable method of managing conflict while males perceive the abusive behaviors are more acceptable.

Post-hoc Analysis: Exploring the Influence of Socialization on Gender Roles in Shaping Perception

In the post-hoc analysis of the data the range of responses to the ACTPS varies, which may indicate variation in responses based on a perception that the wife violated a social norm. There are a number of factors that can increase acceptance that were not measured but are based on clinical experience. One factor is socialization. In chapter 1, I discussed in detail the cultural barriers women face in leaving an abusive relationship. In tables A – F, I highlight the responses showing interesting variation that may relate to a perception that the wife is threatening harmony in the home by her actions, therefore increasing the perception of acceptability toward violence as a tactic to manage the marital conflicts.

Table A

Frequency and Percent of Responses to Question Two in *Change in Wife's Work Status* in ACTPS (N=50)

Q 2: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Muhammad is correct that Rani's job is interfering with her duties to her family?

Rating	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Disagree	34	68
Mildly Disagree	7	14
Mildly Agree	7	14
Agree	2	4

Table B

Frequency and Percent of Responses to Question Five in *Change in Wife's Work Status* in ACTPS (N = 49)

Q5: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Rani made the right decision to quit her job in order to decrease the physical violence in the home?

Rating	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Disagree	30	61
Mildly Disagree	11	22
Mildly Agree	6	12
Agree	2	4

Table C

Frequency and Percent of Responses to Question One in *Wife Challenging Husband's Opinions in Public* in ACTPS (N= 50)

Q 1: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Naveen is correct in his view that Rekha should not challenge his decisions or opinions in public?

Rating	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Disagree	24	48
Mildly Disagree	11	22
Mildly Agree	10	20
Agree	5	10

Table D

Frequency and Percent of Responses to Question Four in *Husband Not Allowing Wife to Develop Friendships* in ACTPS (N = 50)

Q 4: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Swapna should disobey her husband and continue to interact with neighbors?

Rating	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Disagree	8	16
Mildly Disagree	12	24
Mildly Agree	14	28
Agree	16	32

In table E and F, these two statements were included to test the knowledge of the participant of domestic violence. In the literature review, batterers often tell their partners they are sincerely sorry for the abuse (whether physical or emotional). However the apology is part of the cycle of violence (Walker, 1999). If the participants agree that husband is sincerely sorry, it may indicate a lack of understanding of domestic violence and the psychology of abuse, therefore indicating the need for education on what constitutes intimate partner violence.

Table E

Frequency and Percent of Responses to Question Four in *Wife Challenging Husband's Opinions in Public* in ACTPS (N = 49)

Q 4: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Naveen is sincerely sorry for hitting Rekha, when he apologizes to her?

Scale	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Disagree	26	53
Mildly Disagree	8	16
Mildly Agree	8	16
Agree	7	14

Table F

Frequency and Percent of Responses in Question Two in *Wife's Expected to Maintain the Household Chores* in ACTPS (N = 50)

Q 2: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Gopal's response of laughing and telling Lakshmi not to take the children seriously when they call her stupid and lazy is emotional/mental abuse?

Scale	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Disagree	21	42
Mildly Disagree	2	4
Mildly Agree	3	6
Agree	24	48

We understand the intersection of various life experiences that can influence our attitude and the perception of acceptance toward abusive behaviors by a husband, whether culturally-based or based on a fear of Western influence. With this context in mind, we can better understand the findings from this study.

Chapter IV
Discussion

Research on domestic violence in the South Asian immigrant communities has focused mainly on the victims' responses and modes of resistance. The purpose of this study is to examine cultural-based responses to the violence among a community sample's acceptance of husbands' abusive tactics in managing marital conflicts. The review of the literature in Chapter 1 suggests that cultural practices are a barrier for women in seeking help or a means of resisting the abuse endured. Yet looking at the empirical studies of interpersonal violence among South Asian women, very few, if any, examined the influence of cultural attitudes on this topic. A meta-analysis of the research conducted on domestic violence in the past sixteen years (Yick & Oomen-Early, 2008) found only thirteen (21.7%) research studies guided by a clearly defined theoretical perspective. Half of the articles described a phenomenon and a one third of the articles looked at causal relationships. None of the articles reviewed by Yick & Oomen-Early (2008) evaluated the attitudes of the South Asian community on the acceptance of abusive conflict tactics by a husband to manage marital conflict.

This exploratory study is based on two theoretical perspectives, feminist theory and acculturation theory. Both are derived from the idea that reality is socially constructed based on our experiences and interactions with the larger culture in which we are born and in which we interact. Given the influence of society on our perceptions and values, we cannot ignore the influence Western society has on many immigrant communities in the United States. Values such as individualism, the Western emphasis on mutuality in a marital relationship and the focus of many feminist groups on the empowerment of women are difficult to ignore. The viewpoints are broadcast in the media, magazines and through the school systems that many mothers

associate on behalf of their children. These viewpoints are internalized into the conscious or unconscious mind. This study shows that the values of individualism and mutuality in the context of intimate relationships are influencing South Asian men's and women's attitudes. For example, South Asian men rate higher acceptance of abusive behaviors of the husband toward the wife, the longer they reside in the United States. Why does this happen? Is it because men perceive their wives as moving away from traditional roles? Does this fear increase in a culture that has values that are in direct opposition to one's native culture? Based on my clinical interpretation of the data founded on the tenets that feminist and acculturation theories my answer is yes to the questions above.

In acculturation theory, the assumption is that the longer an immigrant resides in the United States (the host country) the more acculturated they are to the host country. As South Asian immigrants become more acculturated to Western values in the United States, there is a higher probability they will find the abusive behaviors of the husband as less acceptable. The findings show the reverse in which the participants who reside in the United States for a shorter period compared to those who reside for longer periods show lower acceptance. Other factors that may influence acceptance are experiences with racism and oppression. These factors can increase marital stress, leading to a decrease in marital satisfaction and an increase in anger toward the dominant group (white males) (Nesdale & Mak, 2000). The longer South Asian immigrants reside in the country where they experience this oppression, the higher the probability they turn to their ethnic community for support and move away from the host communities (Das Gupta, 2006). As a result, South Asian males want to preserve the "model minority image", fearful that bringing attention to social problems in the community will increase the acts of racism & oppression. This fear leads to less tolerance of women moving

away traditional Indian values toward Western values, which is perceived as a direct threat to harmony in the home. If we believe the assumption behind acculturation theory that greater length of time in another country shifts views, we are making another assumption that men who have western values are less sexist or less chauvinistic or less traditional. Since the South Asian immigrant males in this study did not shift away from gendered roles, we can conclude that western society has gendered views of men and women as the Asian society and that Asian men are not exposed to a different value system when it comes to male and female roles but similar values. This may explain why there was no shift in male perception of acceptance.

In the ACTPS, I provided clear "red flags" in the marital relationship where the husband fit the definition of a batterer. Bancroft & Silverman (2002) define the term batterer as follows:

> A batterer is a person who exercises a pattern of coercive control in a partner relationship, punctuated by one or more acts of intimidation physical violence, sexual assault, or credible threat of physical violence. This pattern of control and intimidation may be predominately psychological, economic, or sexual in nature or may rely primarily on the use of physical violence (p. 3)

When the data were analyzed to investigate the relationship between demographic variables, acculturation processes and mutuality on the perceptions of acceptance toward abusive behaviors, the findings partially supported the hypotheses outlined. In reviewing the first hypothesis looking at acculturation processes as a factor influencing perception, the data show that identifying oneself as Asian, bicultural or Western does not affect how South Asian immigrants in this study perception of acceptance toward abusive behaviors. The highest percentage of participants identified themselves as Asians. As a result, I decided to look at variation within the acculturation scale as a possible predicator of perception of acceptance.

There are three variables associated with the perception of acceptance. In sum, the three acculturation scale variables that are predictors are "prefer to associate", "ethnic origin of friends from 0-6 years", and your "movie preference". The most interesting finding is association of peer groups in youth with perception. The results were shocking because it went against the assumption upon which acculturation theory is based on, prolonged association with Western values will increase acculturation toward those values. Instead, association with Westerners at a young age was associated with perception of acceptance, and peer associations between ages 7 - 18 years had no influence on perception.

There are several plausible explanations for this discrepancy, one is the small sample size, n=50. Such a small sample size decreases variability in responses and decreases the probability that the results are statistically significant but in reality there is no association. When reviewing the data, 68 percent of the participants report associating with Asians at a young age, while 32 percent report associating with both Asian and non-Asians and/or only with non-Asians. The second factor may be due to poor memory recall. It is difficult to remember who you associate with at a young age and who you associate with as a teenager. We would have greater confidence in ethnic origin association at a young age being a true predicator of acceptance if peer group association as a teen was also a predicator of acceptance. Despite the limitation, the findings should not be dismissed but investigated in future research with larger samples.

The next finding of interest is with whom South Asians prefer to associate with as a predicator of perception. The findings show that that a preference to associate with Asians is a predicator of higher ACTPS scores. According to social constructionist theorist, a person's worldview is influenced by his environment and daily experiences. In the United States, many

ethnic communities associate exclusively within their ethnic community. Such a practice is not uncommon, but the implication is profound. Domestic violence advocates who are looking for evidence-based interventions supporting the idea that increased exposure to Western values may directly decrease acceptance of violence in the marital relationship cannot find evidence in these data. The next step for many practitioners is the creation of community educational programs focusing on women's equality in marital relationships. Future studies examining how marital disaffection occurs and how women can build a new identity in a new culture could expand our understanding. It is important for practitioners to keep in mind that deconstructing a person's worldview requires sensitivity and deeper understanding of the culture from which the person originates. Culture is a complex phenomenon where protective and risk factors need to be identified and acknowledged in order for interventions to help victims. Based on the complexity of culture, it is not surprising that females' rating of their husbands' responses, when it comes to talking about things that matter to them, did not predict acceptance of abusive behaviors in managing marital conflict. However, in more traditional households, males expect women to meet their needs first, indicating a sexist attitude toward women (Katz, 2006). Women's perception of whether their needs are being met by their husbands did not influence rate of acceptance.

The most interesting finding involves South Asian male responses to the MPDQ items focusing on their feelings around their spouses' responsiveness to their needs. The findings show that males find the use of abuse to manage marital conflicts as more acceptable when they feel their wives are less responsive to their needs. We live in a culture, be it Western or Asian, where machismo has become a platform for legitimizing violence against women (Katz, 2006). We see posters, commercials, and videos where women are displayed as sex objects rather than

intelligent, strong, resourceful human beings. Men are displayed as strong heroes saving women from harm or intimidating villains hurting women. These images influence our worldviews of male and female roles in all societies. South Asian males in this study expect their spouses to meet their emotional needs and if they fail to do so than violence is legitimate justified response. This finding is significant in supporting the qualitative research conducted in the field of domestic violence.

Many victims of marital abuse talk about how failure to get food on the table on time can lead to violence, as can publicly complaining of abuse (Abraham, 2002). A lack of education on IPV in the South Asian community makes it more difficult for victims to turn to their community for support and assistance. It is common for the community to assume that when a batterer apologizes for his violent behavior that he is sincere. This belief is common across all ethnic groups and is one dynamic in assessing knowledge of domestic violence. The second indicator of knowledge is providing an example of abuse where the wife is laughed at in front of the children, therefore undermining the mother-child relationship. A batterer in order to maintain control over the partner will turn the kids against the partner, further eroding her self-confidence. The findings show that laughing and ridiculing a wife in front of her children is not necessarily seen as abuse by South Asian immigrants in this study. Thus, one can conclude that such behavior is seen as an acceptable and may be a common interaction between husband and wife. To begin the process of creating social change, we need to shift community attitudes against the idea of women being forced to make undue sacrifices for family at the expense of individuality. This shift can only come from within a society where women choose to challenge gender roles while preserving the positive dimensions of family and culture. This study is a step toward providing the context for changing attitudes in the community about male and female marital

relations and the importance of breaking down cultural barriers that perpetuate a cycle of violence.

Practice Implications

Research in the area of marital conflict across other ethnic communities is scarce and more research is needed to help us better understand the perception of acceptability toward abuse in such conflicts given the complex nature of culture in influencing behaviors. Through this study, we find that the use of violence is more acceptable by men when the wife is not upholding the gendered roles in the home. The areas with the greatest response variations in the ACTPS are views on a woman's job interfering with her duty to her family and the belief that quitting her job will stop physical violence; the latter insinuates that the woman is to blame for the violence in the first place. The findings show that South Asian women are often blamed for violence by their husbands, that somehow their behaviors caused the husband to become violent. In domestic violence literature, it is common for women to blame themselves for the abuse, feeling they should have spoken out and should have left sooner (Price, 2005). Women from all ethnic backgrounds feel responsible for such violence and shame for staying with their abusers (Walker, 1999). This personal shame can be mitigated if the community is supportive and blame is not directed at the woman.

Furthermore gender is associated with perception of acceptance. South Asian immigrant women are more likely to perceive the abusive behaviors of the husband toward the wife as unacceptable while South Asian immigrant males find such behaviors as more acceptable in some marital conflicts. Given the roles of men and women in South Asian society, this finding is clinically relevant. We are able to substantiate that male and female perception of how to resolve marital conflicts vary when abuse is the tactic used. In turn perception influenced by our

socially constructed reality based on our life experiences. Literature reviews have shown that men and women are socialized differently in many cultures, not just the South Asian culture (Goodman & Epstein, 2008; Katz, 2006).

There is a common worldview held by families that influence the parenting practices and adherence to rigid gender roles in many South Asian countries. Henderson (2002), states that children are expected to respect their family members based on age and gender. For instance girls are taught to obey and respect in the following order: elders, fathers, brothers, uncles, grandmother, mother, and aunts. In many South Asian countries, the family structure is not nuclear, but extended and blended. As a result a young child will feel an attachment to many female adults (i.e. grandmother, aunts and its mother). The mother encourages this form of attachment thus preventing a close, intense and all encompassing bond that is valued in western families (Henderson, 2002; Goldberg, Muir & Kerr, 1995). This South Asian parenting style teaches a child to disregard individual selfish desires and learn to identify with larger group needs.

Children learn about what their rights are at a young age as well as the importance of family obligations. In this stage of development girls and boys are educated on the gender-based roles in society. Girls are told to be responsible for their families and to be respectful to their elders and male figures in the household (Abraham 2000; Almeida & Dolan-Delvecchio, 1999). Given this socialization, the female's participant's perception of what is acceptable behaviors by a husband toward their wife shifted from what beliefs they were raised in. The clinical implications are significant, South Asian immigrant women's perceptions seem to shift given their contact with western society. The values of equality between men and women in western society seem to influence immigrant women's socially constructed reality of gender roles.

Keeping in mind that men and women are not equal in western society but the value of equality is universally accepted even though there are challenges to making it a reality within the work, home and other social institutions. As women connect with other women within and outside their ethnic group, an exchange of ideas occurs. Women are relational people across all cultural and ethnic backgrounds and build a sense of self through their relationships with other women (Almeida & Dolan-Delvecchio, 1999). Therefore it is important for practitioners to create interventions where women are connected to other women within and outside their ethnic community. To help shift South Asian immigrant male perceptions, they need help de-constructing traditional and chauvinistic views on gender roles. Almeida & Dolan-Delvecchio (1999) have put forth the need for males to role model to other males a new way of relating to women and to challenge their perceptions of women. Katz (2006) states the importance of men speaking out against violence against women as well. When men stay silent they are condoning the violence. Thus the importance of a community response to marital conflicts where abuse is the tactic to manage the conflict needs to be challenged by the family and friends in the immigrant women's ethnic community.

Limitations of Study

This exploratory study is the first to investigate the perceptions of South Asian immigrants in the United States toward a husband's use of abusive tactics to manage marital conflicts. The findings from this study can provide implications for practice and future research. Second, the study is based on a framework where I have categorized domestic violence as an abusive marital conflict where power and control is in the hands of one partner. The other partner lives in fear and moving the relationship toward mutual healthy conflict that can promote growth in the relationship can put the victim in physical danger if attempted. Yet by looking at South Asian

immigrant's perceptions of abusive tactics within marital conflicts can create a paradigm shift in how practitioners can intervene to help victims. Unfortunately due to limitations in the design and the sample size, I was not able to fully test this new theoretical perspective. Third, we cannot generalize the findings to the larger population for a number of reasons: (a) the sample was not random, (b) the participants recruited came from a higher socio-economic strata, M = $160,000, (c) ninety-eight percent have a college degree or higher, (d) all speak and read English. Fourth, the Abusive Conflict Tactics Perception Scale has a Cronbach alpha of .91, yet the subscales evaluating *wife's expected duty to maintain household chores, husband not allowing wife to develop female friendships, and children witnessing parent's marital conflict* have low Cronbach alphas of .29, .45 and .29. Therefore I recommend researchers and practitioners interpret the findings from these subscale with caution.

These limitations may account for the lack of variation in acculturation levels and mutuality ratings. This may be why both acculturation and mutuality were not statistical significantly associated with acceptance. If the sample consisted of non-English speaking South Asian immigrants, we may have been able to capture a more diverse socio-economic strata and more variation in educational levels. With a more diverse sample, we would be clear as to whether acculturation or mutuality can predict acceptance. Despite several limitations the findings still provide us a new paradigm that we can use to rethink how we intervene on behalf of victims, how we educate the community about domestic violence, and a new scale that has been validated through this study, the Abusive Conflict Tactics Perception Scale (ACTPS).

Future Research

In this study, the findings from the post-hoc analysis bring to our attention the strong possibility that the South Asian community will have difficulty understanding the impact of

violence on women's psychological state, therefore making it difficult for women to turn to their community for support. In the Abraham (2000) study, women reported not being able to turn to their community for support, feeling more isolated and scared in the face of marital abuse. The findings from the post-hoc analysis support studies focused on the voices of victims who feel a lack of support and are blamed for the abuse. The variation in perceptions in which the husband's behavior is not viewed as abusive universally in marital conflict situations is an important practice implication. There is a need for more education in the South Asian community on healthy versus unhealthy marital relations. More studies are needed on the dissolution of marriage in societies that focuses on the collective instead of the individual. In those communities, when does marital disaffection occur? Does it start when the woman feels she is not fulfilling her duties to the family? The findings support this idea as a plausible explanation for marital disaffection among men, thereby increasing acceptability of the use of abuse to manage marital conflicts. We need to explore this concept further in future research to better understand the role of duty to the family as another source of marital disaffection rather than strictly looking at individual needs not being met.

In addition, the ACTPS is the first scale developed to evaluate the perception of acceptability toward the use of abuse in managing marital conflicts in South Asian communities in the United States. The ACTPS has been validated through this study with a Cronbach Alpha Reliability rating of .91, with the elimination of one question in the scale, in vignette one, question three. The omitted question reads, *"To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Sandeep has the right to slap his wife because she is not following directions."* This question was taken out of the data analysis. Despite the high Cronbach alpha for the entire ACTPS, the alpha coefficient for subscales four, five and six were low, indicating low reliability.

Thus it is recommended that future researchers using this scale to interpret the findings for the last three vignettes with caution.

The second recommendation for future research is the development and validation measurements of relational factors and the acculturation process with South Asians. The MPDQ needs further testing with non-Western ethnic groups; the original scale was validated using Caucasian couples and with Latinos. Within this sample, the Cronbach's Alpha reliability is .95. Unfortunately, the Suinn-Lew Acculturation Scale was not the best tool to capture the acculturation process that South Asians experience in the United States. I would recommend for future research studies to create a shorter scale (10 questions) and to create a qualitative component to the assessment process to assess the effects of racism and oppression on acculturation. Such a tool has been developed by Raj & Silverman (2002) but has not been validated so it is unclear how reliable the scale is.

The third contribution is the development of a new theoretical model in evaluating the problem of domestic abuse as another dimension of martial conflict that is unhealthy and lethal. Interventions developed in many social programs are guided by a theoretical model (Royse, Thyer, Padgett & Logan, 2006). Through this study, I have developed a new theoretical lens to assess and evaluate the problem of domestic violence in marital relations. Domestic violence advocates focus on machismo and the degrading images of women as sex objects as the primary cause of male violence toward women. By looking at the intersection of perceived mutuality in the relationships, acculturation processes, demographic variables that shape attitude such as length of residence in the United States, length of marriage, who they prefer to associate with in their community, and education levels in addition to racism and oppression experienced, we have a new model of how domestic violence one dimension of marital conflict. By understanding

why men batter and why women have difficulty leaving, from a culturally-based model, we can intervene to help women and men in more effective ways. Through this new perspective, we can create interventions that provide novel methods to stop the cycle of domestic violence in immigrant communities. In some situations, the only solution is for the woman to leave but in other situations, certain tactics can be implemented as a first response. Whether an inability to meet their needs is due to women moving away from traditional roles or a perception that the wives are not fulfilling their familial duties will require further analysis to substantiate. The responses of the men are based on perceptions guided by their worldviews that directly link to their emotional responses. If perceptions can be altered, then the emotional responses, in theory, can be altered as well, leading to higher marital satisfaction. Second, there needs to be a shift from prioritizing harmony in the home as the basis of a good marriage to establishing mutuality in the relationship. To shift the belief that harmony in the home can be maintained by traditional gender roles will require both men and women to embrace alternative definitions of harmony defined by mutuality in marital relations rather than traditional gender roles. This does not mean that traditional roles in a family are wrong are do not lead to a perception of equality. Mutuality occurs between couples when they communicate and negotiate gender roles, being open to challenging preconceived notions of what constitutes a successful marriage. Thus, the importance of family does not need to be compromised by South Asian couples but must simply be re-defined to meet the needs of both partners without requiring either party to sacrifice his or her individuality repeatedly.

The fourth implication is the importance of breaking the community's silence on marital conflicts where abuse is used by the husband to control the wife. It is a social problem that needs to be addressed by advocates in order to change policies toward South Asian immigrant victims

of domestic violence. Without policies that address oppression and discrimination in society toward immigrants, the ethnic community will not be able to mobilize to intervene on behalf of victims. In addition, academic institutions need more courses on domestic violence in immigrant communities to help deconstruct a faulty assumption among many practitioners and legal systems that immigrant cultures condone violence. Culture does not create violence. The South Asian culture does not condone abuse of women in marriages but socialization of males and females make it easier for men to control women due to the hierarchal structure of the family. Such a hierarchal structure of the family can exist in some more traditional western cultures as well.

Chapter V
Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to investigate South Asian male and female acceptance of various manifestations associated with domestic violence. The study examines how acculturation processes and mutuality moderate the acceptance of the use of abuse to manage marital conflicts. Length of stay and spousal education levels are two factors that can predict acceptance. Other factors such as length of marriage, gender and family income could not be entered into a regression analysis due to a lack of variation in the data. It is recommended for future research that this study is replicated with a larger sample, looking at more diverse acculturation processes, more diverse religious affiliations and expanded variations in socioeconomic status in the United States. A more diverse sample will help further elucidate the study's primary questions: (1) what are the cultural and interpersonal limitations to using violence methods to resolve conflict?; (2) what are the factors that moderate the South Asian community's acceptance of the use of violence by South Asian males to manage marital conflict?; and (3) if violence is seen in the community as an acceptable method of handling marital conflict, is there variation in the degrees of acceptance? Also with a larger and more diverse sample we can compare those who found the behaviors acceptable and unacceptable to see whether mutuality and acculturation processes were still predictors in these two groups.

As noted in detail in Chapter II, the sample is convenient and the method of recruitment is unorthodox. In addition, over fifty percent of participants were recruited online and through English newspaper ads. Online recruitment targets a more educated group. In order to be able to complete an online survey, the participants need to be comfortable using a computer and those who are not professionals will have more difficulty. The sampling strategy used during the data

collection can be best understood by a detailed explanation of the migration patterns of South Asians to the United States that was briefly mentioned in Chapter 1. There were three waves of South Asian immigration into the United States. The first occurred in 1820's and then again in 1920's mainly from Indian state of Punjab as railroad and agricultural workers. As previously discussed, strict legislative restrictions were implemented limiting the number of immigrants from South Asian entering so the numbers were negligible until 1965. At that time, the Immigration and Nationality Act was passed lifting all restrictions on South Asian to immigrant into the U.S. As a result, an influx of highly skilled and educated South Asian immigrants, mostly from India, came to the United States. The final wave of immigrants was after 1990 when immigration quotas for Bangladesh and Pakistan were increased. This increase allowed for current South Asian immigrants permanently residing in the United States to bring family over. This wave of immigrants were less skilled and less educated entering non-professional fields such as becoming store owners or taxi drivers, etc. Many did not speak English fluently and were not aware of immigration policies or how to access healthcare and government benefits. As the profile of South Asians in United States grew, fear among educated South Asians that discrimination and racism would serve as a backlash to the stereotype of the "model minority" changed. As a result social problems existing prior to this third wave of immigration become more taboo to discuss and in many instances were suppressed, including the issue of domestic violence.

The intersection of racism and oppression is a key reason why many South Asians are resistant to participating in research studies directly related to social problems. Understanding this cultural context, mid-way in the data collection process, it became apparent that the collection of a larger sample size requires more resources then I had available, such as grant

funding to pay for translators and research assistants to collect data. Even though there are limitations the fact remains that the findings are still significant for a number of reasons. First, a new scale (ACTPS) was created and validated that can be used in future research, with permission from this researcher. Second, the study evaluated the degree of acceptability in the use of abusive tactics to manage marital conflict. It is at this moment the relationship moves from marital dissatisfaction to domestic violence, providing a new theoretical perspective on how to assess domestic violence. The findings also showed with whom one associates and with whom one prefers to associate within the community can predict acceptance of abusive behaviors in the management of marital conflict. In addition, South Asian men, in this study, find the use of abusive behaviors as more acceptable when they feel their spouses are less responsive to the things that matter to them. For women acceptance is not associated with feelings of mutuality in the relationship. South Asian women's role in marital relationships is based on upholding duties to the family and not necessarily based on feelings of mutuality, in contrast to that of men (Raj & Silverman, 2006; Abraham, 2000; Bancroft & Silverman, 2002). As s result, it is not surprising that the findings did show female perception of mutuality in the relationship as a predictor of acceptance. Finally, the themes generated in this study provide insight into the cultural dimensions that are barriers to women leaving a relationship.

In sum, this exploratory study opens doors to future research studies in the area of domestic violence by understanding when the use of abusive behaviors in managing marital conflict is acceptable. The study provides us with a richer understanding of South Asian culture and provides quantitative data to support qualitative studies that describe the isolation South Asian domestic violence victims face. Research does not answer all of our questions on how these social problems develop or the factors associated with the phenomenon. Research that

furthers our understanding of the world we live in and provides a new theoretical lens to view a social problem is research that expands our knowledge base. This exploration is designed to expand our knowledge of marital conflicts by providing a clear understanding of when South Asian immigrants in United States find abuse acceptable and when it is unacceptable in marital conflicts. With this greater understanding, we can advocate for change in the treatment of women in legal systems, helping judges and lawyers better understand the cultural dimensions and the intersection of acculturation, racism, oppression and perception of mutuality in relationships.

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Appendix 1 – Tables of the Variables Entered into a Regression Analysis for Hypothesis I

Table A:
Frequency of Responses to Acculturation Scale Item One

		Who do you prefer to associate with?	
Multiple-Choice Item	*Frequency*	*Valid Percentage*	*Cumulative Percentage*
Almost exclusively Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals	5	10.2	10.2
Mostly Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals	13	26.5	36.2
About equally Asian groups and Anglo groups	26	53.1	89.8
Mostly Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics or other non-Asian ethnic groups	5	10.2	100

Table B:
Frequency of Responses to Acculturation Item Two

		What was the ethnic origin of the friends and peers you had, as a child up to age 6?	
Multiple-Choice Item	*Frequency*	*Valid Percentage*	*Cumulative Percentage*
Almost exclusively Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals	32	68.1	68.1
Mostly Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals	5	10.6	78.7
About equally Asian	7	14.9	93.6

groups and Anglo groups			
Mostly Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics or other non-Asian ethnic groups	3	6.4	100

Table C
Frequency of Responses to Acculturation Scale Item Three

		What is your movie preference?	
Multiple-Choice Item	*Frequency*	*Valid Percentage*	*Cumulative Percentage*
Asian-language movies only	2	4.1	4.1
Asian-language movies mostly	3	6.1	10.2
Equally Asian/English language movies	37	75.5	85.7
Mostly English-language movies	5	10.2	95.9
English-language movies only	2	4.1	100

Appendix 2: Means, Standard Deviations and Range of the MPDQ Variables

Table D
Means, Standard Deviations and Range for Eleven Predicator MPDQ Variables

	"When we talk about things that matter to my spouse, I am likely to…"		
Variable	M	SD	Range
Be receptive	4.98	.998	3
Get impatient	2.49	.960	4
Try to understand	5.07	.827	3
Get bored	2.18	1.13	5
Feel moved	4.30	1.32	4
Avoid being honest	1.95	1.09	4
Be open-minded	5.04	.918	4
Get discouraged	2.10	1.01	4
Get involved	4.75	1.16	5
Have difficulty listening	2.11	1.08	4
Feel energized by our Conversation	4.50	1.29	5

Table E

Means, Standard Deviations and Range for Eleven Predicator MPDQ Variables

	"When we talk about things that matter to me, my spouse is likely to…"		
Variable	M	SD	Range
Pick up my feelings	3.81	1.58	5
Feel like we're not getting Anywhere	2.50	1.26	5
To show interest	4.29	1.37	5
Get frustrated	2.44	1.25	4
Share similar experiences	4.29	1.33	4
Keep feelings inside	2.49	1.31	5
Respect my point of view	4.32	1.43	5
Change the subject	2.34	1.41	5
See the humor in things	3.74	1.43	5
Feel down	2.08	1.06	4
Express an opinion clearly	4.70	1.08	4

Appendix 3: Matrix of Correlations for ACTPS, Tables E – J

Table E

Correlations Amongst All Variables in ACTPS Vignette One: Husband's Work Stress on Marital Conflict

Question	1	2	3	4	5
Q1	1.000				
Q2	.338**	1.000			
Q3	.492**	.467**	1.000		
Q4	-.009	.291*	.472**	1.000	
Total Score	.513	.636**	.873**	.748**	1.000

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table F

Correlations Amongst All Variables in ACTPS Vignette Two: Change in Wife's Work Status

Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Q1	1.000								
Q2	.322**	1.000							
Q3	.578**	.293**	1.000						
Q4	.336*	.125	.374**	1.000					
Q5	.398*	.569**	.346*	.395**	1.000				
Q6	.366*	.367*	.272	.218	.500**	1.000			
Q7	-.112	-.271	-.064	-.063	-.128	-.215	1.000		
Q8	-.018	-.156	-.219	.064	-.276	-.044	-.019	1.000	
Total Score	.505**	.686**	.541**	.429**	.778**	.599**	-.458**	-.464**	1.000

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table G

Correlations Amongst All Variables in ACTPS Vignette Three: Wife Challenging Husband's Opinions in Public

Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Q1	1.000						
Q2	.011	1.000					
Q3	.362**	.186	1.000				
Q4	.362*	.139	.369**	1.000			
Q5	.136	.124	.306*	.562**	1.000		
Q6	.378**	.348*	.598**	.302*	.214	1.000	
Total Score	.675**	.256	.698**	.792**	.620**	.659**	1.000

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table H

Correlations Amongst All Variables in ACTPS Vignette Four: Wife Expected Duty to Maintain the Household Chores

Question	1	2	3	4	5	6
Q1	1.000					
Q2	.131	1.000				
Q3	-.006	.292*	1.000			
Q4	.450**	-.007	-.052	1.000		
Q5	.038	-.061	-.354*	.207	1.000	
Total Score	.033	-.091	-.093	.069	.399**	1.000

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table I

Correlations Amongst All Variables in ACTPS Vignette Five: Husband Not Allowing Wife to Develop Female Friendships

Question	1	2	3	4	5	6
Q1	1.000					
Q2	.203	1.000				
Q3	.021	.235	1.000			
Q4	-.145	-.273	-.433**	1.000		
Q5	.479**	.738**	.021	-.241	1.000	
Total Score	.309*	.595**	.649**	-.839**	.483**	1.000

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table J

Correlations Amongst All Variables in ACTPS Vignette Four: Children Witnessing Parents Marital Conflict

Question	1	2	3	4	5	6
Q1	1.000					
Q2	.209	1.000				
Q3	-.122	.024	1.000			
Q4	-.261	-.031	.028	1.000		
Q5	.497**	.090	.062	.074	1.000	
Total Score	.744**	.428**	-.292*	-.556**	.527**	1.000

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Appendix 4: Demographics Questionnaire Used in Survey

Demographics Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions. Some will require you to circle the most appropriate response that applies to your situation. Other questions require a written response.

1) What is your gender?
   a. Male
   b. Female

2) Please tell us your age?

_____

3) How long have you lived in the United States?
Specify years: _____

4) How many children do you have?
Specify number of children: _____

Please tell us what are the ages and gender of your children?

_____

5) What is your highest level of education?
   a. Less than High School
   b. High School Degree
   c. College Degree
   d. Graduate Degree
   e. PhD Degree
   f. Other, _____

6) What is your marital status?
   a. Married
   b. Separated
   c. Divorced
   d. Widowed

Is this your first marriage?_____

7) What is the highest level of education of your spouse?
   a. Less than High School
   b. High School Degree
   g. College Degree
   h. Graduate Degree
   i. PhD Degree
   j. Other, _____

8) Are you employed?
   a. Yes
   b. No

If yes, what is your occupation? (for example: engineer; medical doctor; etc)

_____

9) What is the family income (please add your salary and that of your spouse if he or she is working)? _____

10) What is your religious practice (religious affiliation)?

_____

11) How long have you been married?
Specify years: _____

12) Does your spouse work outside the home?
   a. Yes
   b. No

If yes, please state what job does she/he holds?

_____

13) What country were you born in?

_____

Appendix 5: Acceptance of Abusive Conflict Tactics Scale (ACTPS)

Vignette 1: Husband's Work Stress on Marital Conflict

Sandeep and Rita came to the United States one year ago. The culture was different from their native country. Rita felt isolated and missed her family back home. Rita started working as a receptionist at a law firm. She enjoyed her work and started making friends, some from her native country and others were non-Asians. One day Rita came home tired from work and did not have dinner ready for Sandeep. Sandeep came home, also tired. He too had a long and stressful day at work. His boss told him that his productivity was low and he needs to work harder. Sandeep already works 60 plus hours a week. He is not sure how much harder he can work when his colleagues work 40 hour work weeks and receive positive reviews from his boss. So when Rita did not have dinner on the table waiting, Sandeep became upset and told Rita that her job was preventing her from being a good wife. Rita argued back which angered Sandeep more. Sandeep slapped Rita across the face and told her that a good wife follows her husband's direction and her behaviors are due to her association with non-Asians and she is forgetting her wifely duties.

Circle the number that most nearly matches your answers to the following questions.

1) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Sandeep's response (slapping his wife) is appropriate given the stress he is experiencing at work".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

2) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Sandeep's statement that Rita is not being a good wife because she does not have dinner ready for her husband is correct".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

3) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "work stress can cause a husband to lose his temper and *any violence* that occurs when there is a marital argument is justified".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

4) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "by arguing with Sandeep, Rita caused Sandeep to slap her".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

Vignette 2: Change in Wife's Work Status

Muhammad and Rani have been living in the United States for over ten years. They have two children, one boy (8 years-old), and one girl (16 years-old). Muhammad is a corporate lawyer and Rani works part-time as a math teacher at the local high school. Muhammad and Rani live in an affluent neighborhood and money is generally not a concern. Muhammad is doing well in the law firm he works at. Rani was recently promoted to Vice Principal. After Rani's promotion, Muhammad started to change. He became increasingly upset saying she is spending too much time on her work and neglecting her family. Rani due to the new demands of her job, she has asked her husband to do the cooking and household chores on occasion. Muhammad told her directly that he is not going to help out anymore because her first duty is to the family. If her job continues to interfere with this duty then she needs to quit. Rani refused stating that she worked hard to get the promotion and enjoys working with the kids. This was the beginning of the fights between Rani and Muhammad. Muhammad told Rani to give him all her paychecks and put her on an allowance telling her she needs to be taught how to be an obedient wife again. During some of the arguments, Muhammad would hit Rani, telling her it was her own good. This method of managing their marital conflict by Muhammad continued for several years. The physical hitting would increase as the situation warranted. Rani eventually quit her job and took care of the household and family duties. The hitting stopped and would re-occur when Muhammad felt his wife was slipping away from her "duties" to the family.

Circle the number that most nearly matches your answers to the following questions.

1) To what extent do you agree with this statement: "Muhammad's has the right to hit Rani to teach her wifely duties".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

2) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Muhammad is correct that Rani's job is interfering with her duties to her family".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

3) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Muhammad has a right to take his wife's paychecks".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

4) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Muhammad has a right to put his wife on an allowance".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

5) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Rani's made the right decision to quit her job in order to decrease the physical violence in the home".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

6) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Rani should leave her husband because he is hitting her".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

7) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Rani will be satisfied with her marriage after she quits her job".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

8) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Muhammad's decision to hit his wife as a method of handling the marital conflict is abusive".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

Vignette 3: Wife Challenging Husband's Opinions in Public

Rekha and Naveen have been living in the United States for over 20 years and married for 19 years. They have one 15 year-old daughter and one 18 year old son. Naveen is a medical doctor and Rekha is a nurse. Naveen believes a wife should not challenge a husband in public. What happens in private stays private. There have been several incidents in the last 10 years where Rekha has disagreed with Naveen in front of their friends. These incidents have resulted in arguments between Naveen and Rekha. Several

arguments have ended with Naveen hitting Rekha, occasionally resulting in Rekha receiving medical treatment for broken bones and severe bruises. After these physical altercations, Naveen has apologized to Rekha, quietly explaining to her that she made him do this because she refused to follow his wishes of not disagreeing with him in public. Rekha feels she has a right to disagree with her husband privately or public ally and has openly shared her viewpoint with him. Naveen informed Rekha that she is following the "American woman's way" of interacting with their husbands which is not "our way". Rekha's family has told her that she needs to listen to her husband and that he has the right to handle any conflict between them in any manner he wishes.

Circle the number that most nearly matches your answers to the following questions.

1) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Naveen is *correct* in his view that Rekha *should not* challenge his decisions or opinions in public".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

2) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Naveen *has the right* to use whatever means necessary (including hitting) his wife as a means of ensuring compliance with his wishes".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

3) To what extend to do you agree with the following statement: Rekha is causing the physical beatings due to her attitude and behaviors toward her husband".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

4) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Naveen is sincerely sorry for hitting Rekha, when he apologizes to her".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

5) To what extent do you agree with the following statement" "Rekha is satisfied with her relationship with Naveen."

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

6) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Naveen should be dissatisfied with his relationship with Rekha because of Rekha's behaviors".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

Vignette 4: Wife's Expected Duty to Maintain the Household Chores

Gopal and Lakshmi were married in India over 16 years ago. Both live in a small town in New Jersey. Gopal owns an Indian store and Lakshmi is a Bhangra dance instructor. They have two children ages 10 and 12. Finances are tight at times and both have learned to be economical and have worked hard to provide all they can to their kids. Gopal admits he has a temper and has on occasion yelled at Lakshmi when he felt she was falling behind in the upkeep of the house such as doing laundry and cleaning the house daily. He often called her lazy and stupid for not completing such easy tasks. Lakshmi agreed that she at times she does let her duties slip and feels that her husband is correct in his assessment of her actions. The children are demanding of Lakshmi's time, expecting her to get things for them when they ask. The children have called their mother lazy which Lakshmi has repeated told them that they cannot talk to her that way. When Gopal hears the children talking this way, he laughs and tells Lakshmi the kids are just having fun and not to take them so serious. Lakshmi gets upset when her husband continually ignoring their children's disrespectful attitude toward her. This is not the only incident of the children calling their mother names.

Circle the number that most nearly matches your answers to the following questions.

1) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Gopal yelling and calling Lakshmi stupid and lazy is a justified response to her falling behind in the upkeep of the house".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

2) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Gopal's response of laughing and telling Lakshmi not to take the children serious when they call her stupid and lazy is emotional/mental abuse".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

3) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "the children are learning to disrespect their mother from their father".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

4) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "the children are learning to disrespect their mother due to her lack of attendance to household duties".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

5) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Lakshmi is satisfied with her relationship with Gopal".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

Vignette 5: Husband Not Allowing Wife to Develop Female Friendships

Swapna just arrived in the United States a year ago. Her husband, Paveen, brought her over from their native country. Paveen has been working in the United States for ten years and knows the system well. Swapna speaks little bit of English and wants to learn. Paveen does not feel this is a good idea and has told her that she cannot take ESL classes. Swapna lives in a community where her neighbors are from her native country. Swapna become good friends with the women next door. Paveen noticed that Swapna talked a lot about her friend during dinner and felt this friend is influencing her in a negative manner, teaching her to be more western. Swapna explained to her husband that her friend has been in the United States for five years and understands the system here. Paveen told Swapna she could see this woman anymore. For the next year, Swapna became more and more isolated from her neighbors who would ask her to go out and she would have to say no because her husband would not give his permission. Her husband had many friends from work and two nights a week would stay out late with them, gambling or having drinks. Paveen rarely complemented Swapna on her hard work of maintaining the house. Instead he told her that she is not doing a good enough job. Paveen told her she was a bad dresser and need to dress with more style and wear make-up to look pretty.

Circle the number that most nearly matches your answers to the following questions.

1) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Paveen's *has the right* to restrict Swapna from taking ESL classes".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

2) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Paveen's *has the right* to restrict his wife from interacting with their neighbors".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

3) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Swapna *is correct* in obeying the wishes of her husband to stop talking to her friend".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

4) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Swapna *should disobey* her husband and continue to interact with neighbors".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

5) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Paveen *has the right* to go out with friends two days a week while Swapna *should not* be allowed to develop any friendships with her neighbors".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

Vignette 6: Children Witnessing Parents Marital Conflict

Usha and Vijay were arguing about Usha's part-time job. Usha wanted to increase the number of hours she worked in order to help them financially. Vijay felt it was not necessary. He told her that he can take care of the family financial needs and she needs to focus on her husband and kids. Their children are age 10 (boy) and 6 (girl). The two children could hear the argument and were listening intently. Usha told Vijay that she felt working more hours would be helpful to the family and that she would still take care of the family needs as well. Vijay yelled at the Usha, calling her a "whore" and that the real reason she wanted to work extra hours is because she is having an affair. Usha denied this accusation. Vijay called her a liar and throw a can of soda he was holding at her. It hit Usha on the forehead, leaving a mark. Usha started crying begging him not to continue hurting her that she was tired of their fights

and arguments. Vijay told her to stop over-reacting and it was just an accident. He continued to tell her if she had just listened to him and obeyed his wishes then he would not have lost his temper at her. Both kids heard everything and started crying.

Circle the number that most nearly matches your answers to the following questions.

1) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Vijay's statement that it is Usha's fault that he lost his temper at her is correct".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

2) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Vijay is correct in saying Usha is over-reacting to their argument".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

3) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Vijay and Usha *should not* fight with each other in ear shot of the children".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

4) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Vijay calling Usha a "whore" is an example of mental/emotional abuse".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

5) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Usha is being a disobedient wife by continuing to discuss working extra hours when Vijay said no".

1	2	3	4
Disagree	*Mildly Disagree*	*Mildly Agree*	*Agree*

Coding of ACTPS

Vignette 1

Score of 5 -10 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *husband's work stress on marital conflict*, perceive the behaviors of the husband as abusive

Score of 15- 20 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *husband's work stress on marital conflict*, perceive the behaviors of the husband as non-abusive.

Vignette 2

Statement #6 needs to be reverse coded as follows: **1** = 4; **2** =3; **3** =2; **4** =1

Statement # 8 needs to be reverse coded as follows: **1** = 4; **2** =3; **3** =2; **4** =1

Score of 8 – 16 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *change in wife's work status*, perceive the behaviors of the husband as abusive

Score of 24 – 32 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *change in wife's work status,* perceive the behaviors of the husband as non-abusive

Vignette 3

Score of 6 -12 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *wife challenging husband's opinions in public*, perceive the behaviors of the husband as abusive

Scores of 18 -24 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *wife challenging husband's opinions in public,* perceive the behaviors of the husband as non-abusive

Vignette 4

Statement # 2 needs to be reverse coded as follows: **1** = 4; **2** =3; **3** =2; **4** =1

Statement # 3 needs to be reverse coded as follows: **1** = 4; **2** =3; **3** =2; **4** =1

Score of 6 -12 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *wife's expected duty to maintain the household chores*, perceive the behaviors of the husband as abusive

Scores of 18 -24 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *wife's expected duty to maintain the household chores,* perceive the behaviors of the husband as non-abusive

Vignette 5
Statement # 4 needs to be reverse coded as follows: **1** = 4; **2** =3; **3** =2; **4** =1

Score of 5 -10 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *husband not allowing wife to develop female friendships*, perceive the behaviors of the husband as abusive
Score of 15- 20 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *husband not allowing wife to develop female friendships*, perceive the behaviors of the husband as non-abusive

Vignette 6
Statement # 3 needs to be reverse coded as follows: **1** = 4; **2** =3; **3** =2; **4** =1
Statement # 4 needs to be reverse coded as follows: **1** = 4; **2** =3; **3** =2; **4** =1

Score of 5 -10 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *children witnessing parents marital conflict,* perceive the behaviors of the husband as abusive
Score of 15- 20 indicates the respondent in the given situation, *children witnessing parents marital conflict,* perceive the behaviors of the husband as non-abusive

Total Scores:

102 -136 total score indicates that the respondent perceives the behaviors of the husbands toward their wives in this survey as non-abusive and therefore overall perception is that abuse is an acceptable method of resolving marital conflict.

34 – 80 total score indicates that the respondent perceives the behaviors of the husband toward their wives in this survey as abusive and therefore overall perception is that abuse is an unacceptable method of resolving marital conflict

69 – 101 total score, indicates the respondent perceive some abusive behaviors as acceptable and some as not acceptable but do not have an overall perception that abuse is either acceptable or unacceptable method of resolving marital conflicts.

Appendix 6: Consent to participate in a Research Study (approved by Boston College IRB)

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Introduction:

You are being asked to participate in a research study on people's attitudes toward the use of control tactics to manage marital conflict, the degree of mutuality experienced in your current relationship and degree of acculturation you have experienced. You have been asked to take part in this study because you are a South Asian immigrant and you are between the ages of 18 and 100. If you take part in this study you will be one of about thirty people to do so.

Your participation is completely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will have no effect on your involvement in future Asian organizations or community/cultural events. Please ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.

The person doing this study is Satya Rao Montgomery, a PhD candidate in the School of Social Work at Boston College. She is being guided in this research by Professor Karen Kayser in the Social Work Department. No funding has been received for this study and neither Mrs. Montgomery nor Professor Kayser expects to receive any extra money for conducting this research from any organization. This research is a necessary requirement in the completion of Mrs. Montgomery's doctoral program and the findings will be published in a journal to better assist organizations in service delivery to South Asian immigrants in the United States.

Purpose:

By doing this study we hope to learn what influences people's attitude toward when it is acceptable for a husband to use controlling tactics to manage and some instances stop martial conflict.

Procedures:

This study is anonymous and data will be reported without any identifiers. The total amount of time it will take you to complete this survey is approximately 60 minutes.

In the survey, you will be asked some questions about your background such as your age, type of profession (i.e. engineer, doctor, construction worker, etc), your current marital status (single, married, divorced), the number of children you have and ages, the number of years you have been married, the number of years you have lived in the United States, your religious practice (i.e. Hindu, Buddhist, etc) and gender (male or female). Next you will be provided vignettes from which you will agree or disagree with the statements that follow each vignette. The next scale asks about the types of communications that occur between you and your spouse. The final scale will focus on assessing where your self-identity is associated with, the country of residence, your native country or a combination of both.

You are not eligible to participate in this research study if you are born in the United States and are unmarried. To participate, your country of birth needs to be one of the following: Nepal, Kashmir, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and/or Pakistan.

Risks:

To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing in this study have no more risk of harm to you than what you would experience in everyday life. However, as a result of participating in this study you gain insight into your marriage or of those close to you causing any emotional distress, you can contact Asian Task Force or Matahari, Eye of the Day for support.

Benefits:

You will not receive any direct benefit from being in this research study. Some adults may gain insight into the functioning of their own marital relationship or those of friends and family that can improve the daily interactions with your spouse. However, we cannot and do not guarantee that you will receive this identified benefit or any other benefits from this study. We hope to gather information on factors that influence when it is acceptable to use control tactics to manage conflict in marriages that will help medical and mental health professionals better meet the needs of the community.

Costs:

You do not need to pay to participate in this research study, but may have to pay for the cost to get to the library where the research study will be conducted.

Compensation:

Upon completion of the survey, you will receive a $10 gift certificate to Starbucks.

Withdrawal from the study:

You may choose to stop your participation in this study at any time. Your decision to stop your participation will not prohibit access to services provided by organizations serving South Asian immigrants.

Confidentiality:

The survey is asking for demographic information but not your name. Each survey will have a number at the top and the storage of information will be by number. In order to ensure that all participants have read the informed consent, the number on your survey will need to be connected to your consent form. This informed consent document will be stored in a locked safe, in a sealed folder in the home of Satya Montgomery. The informed consent will be destroyed by shredding three years after the results of the study are published. The anonymous surveys will be kept for use in the future research and might be shared with other researchers.

The information you give will be entered into an electronic database and analyzed. In this process, your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When I write up the study to share with other researchers in my dissertation, at meetings or in journals, I will write about this combined information. You will not be identified in these written materials.

Questions:

You are encouraged to ask questions now, and at anytime during this study. You can reach me at 617-899-2042 or by e-mail at srao2042@charter.net. If you have any questions about your right as a participant in a research study, please contact the Boston College Office for Human Research Participation Protection, (617) 552-4778.

Certification:

I have read and I believe I understand this Informed Consent document. I believe I understand the purpose of the research project and what I will be asked to do. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and they have been answered satisfactorily.

I understand that I may stop my participation in this research study at anytime and that I can refuse to answer any question(s).

I understand that my name will not appear on the survey I fill out, and that I will not be identified in reports on this research.

I have received a signed copy of this Informed Consent document for my personal reference.

I hereby give my informed consent and free consent to a participant in this study, as indicated below.

☐ **I agree to participate in this research study by completing the identified survey either in person or online.**

Appendix 7: E-mail sent for the Purpose of Recruitment to Participate in An Anonymous Survey

Hello All

I am a Boston College student trying to get my doctorate degree. In order to get through the dissertation process as quickly as possible, I need to obtain a 100 surveys. Therefore, I am humbly requesting assistance for you to complete the survey and to then ask **5 family members and friends** to fill the survey. It is on-line and my dissertation focus is on attitudes toward marital conflict. The data will be analyzed & reported as aggregate data. I have an on-line survey that asks the participant their viewpoint of the actions of the husband in the different vignettes, their acculturation status, personal relationship –communication and basic demographics. The survey will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete and it is completely **anonymous & voluntary**. I have no way of knowing who the person is since the name is not being asked. I have been having difficulty getting participants in the South Asian community to fill the survey so any assistance you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

The participant has to meet the following criteria to fill the survey:

1) 18 years or older

2) Married or divorced or separated from a marriage to another South Asian

3) South Asian (either born or parents born in Nepal, Bangladesh, India , Sri Lanka or Pakistan)

4) Only one member of the couple unit can fill the survey

5) The participant must live in the United States

I do not have much time to get the participants (1 months or so). I will need a total of 80 - 100 respondents. I have attached the link below where you can access the survey. Thank you for your assistance, it is greatly appreciated!!

LINK to Survey: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=gEdN3DLJjFruCHORzwiQDg_3d_3d

Thank you,
Satya

Appendix 8: Advertisement in *India New England* and *Lokvani* Online Magazine

SURVEY I am a Boston College student trying to get my doctorate degree. I am humbly requesting your assistance by requesting you to kindly complete the survey. My dissertation focus is on marital conflict. I have an on-line survey that asks the participant their viewpoint of the actions of the husband in the different vignettes, their acculturation status, personal relationship — communication and basic demographics. The survey will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete and it is completely anonymous and voluntary. There is no identifying information that can be linked back to an individual in the survey. In order to participate in the survey, the person must meet the following criteria below.

LINK to Survey:
www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=gEdN3DLJjFruCHORzwiQDg_3d_3d

1) 18 years or older
2) Married or divorced or separated from a marriage to another South Asian
3) South Asian (either born or parents born in Nepal, Bangladesh , India , Sri Lanka or Pakistan)
4) Only one member of the couple unit can fill the survey
5) The participant must live in the United States

Survey deadline is November 7, 2008