

PARENT-ADOLESCENT RELATIONS WITHIN THE SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY

by

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Abstract

The goal of this study is extend existing research by exploring the perception, handling and influence of adolescent-parent conflict within Punjabi families. Towards this end, six qualitative, semi-structured interviews were conducted and their content was analyzed; the methodology, analysis, and theoretical perspective were anchored in traditional North American parenting frameworks. A knowledge deficit was addressed by including interviews with parents in the sample. The results suggest that parenting style, trust and cultural values play a major role in the dynamics of intergenerational conflict within the Punjabi population. Parents who adhered rigidly to parental training-type practices tended to have more conflict with their adolescent children than parents who were willing to negotiate with their children.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Adolescence among South Asians living in North American communities can be marked by an increase in parental conflict and poor psychological well being (Aafreen, 1998; Abouguendia & Noels, 2001; Ahmed, 1998; Ghuman, 1994; O. Gupta & Gupta, 1985; Handa, 2003; Pai et al., 2003; Stern, 1999). Many South Asian parents and teenagers struggle for control, sometimes resulting in teens running away from home or openly defying their parents' wishes, and in parents feeling hurt and abandoned (Aafreen, 1998; Ghuman, 1994; S. Gupta, 1998; Handa, 2003). The literature suggests that this intergenerational conflict puts adolescents at risk for depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation (Ghuman, 1994; Handa, 2003; Mehta, 1998; Pai et al., 2003; Stern, 1999). Although increased conflict during adolescence is a salient phenomenon across North America, issues affecting the South Asian family in particular need to be explored as there is limited research regarding the dynamics of this group (Riesch et al., 2000; Smetana, Daddis, & Chuang, 2003; Smetana & Gaines, 1999; Smetana, Yau, & Hanson, 1991; Tucker, McHale, & Crouter, 2003). As the collectivist South Asian culture emphasizes the importance of the family, when parents or children experience unrest in this domain, it creates significant turmoil in all other facets of their lives (Basran, 1993; Ghuman, 1994; Kurian, 1986; Segal, 1991). Additionally, intergenerational conflict in South Asian communities is exacerbated by the clash between traditional Asian culture and contemporary Western culture. This clash is particularly influential in South Asian adolescents' lives and is a source of disagreement between adolescents and parents.

Significantly, local and national Canadian papers of recent years have reported countless stories of turmoil and unrest among South Asian families. There have been numerous stories about young South Asian males involved in gang and drug warfare, and about females committing suicide (Atwal, 2000; Boolan, 2001, 2002; Farver, Bhadha, & Narang, 2002; Petrozzi, 2002). Recently, a father stabbed his daughter 17 times because she was leaving home to live with her boyfriend (*B.C. father found guilty in daughter's murder*, 2005). A friend of the victim told the court of the following incident, which occurred a month prior to her death: "She [the victim] said her dad got a knife and went after her with it and she got scared and went to the bathroom and locked the door" (*B.C. father found guilty in daughter's murder*, 2005).

This is an extreme example of the ways in which parents might react to the negative consequences that they fear North American culture may have had on their children. Yet, even milder reactions might alienate South Asian adolescents from many aspects of North American society, including dating, socializing with peers, and becoming autonomous members of society (Handa, 2003; Kurian, 1986; Segal, 1991).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the core issues of parent-adolescent conflicts or disagreements within the South Asian Punjabi community from the perspective of traditional family development. The study is unique in that it considers the perspective of parents as well as adolescents. As such, it seeks to extend our understanding of South Asian family dynamics and the process of conflict management.

The study aims to address the following questions:

1. How are parent-adolescent conflicts perceived within the Punjabi community?
 - 1.A. How do immigrant Punjabi parents perceive conflict with their child?

- 1.B. How do Punjabi adolescents perceive conflict with their parents?
2. How are parent-adolescent conflicts within the Punjabi community handled?
 - 2.A. How do immigrant Punjabi parents handle conflicts with their son(s) or daughter(s)?
 - 2.B. How do Punjabi adolescents handle conflicts with their parents?
3. How do parent-adolescent conflicts in the Punjabi community affect the family unit?
 - 3.A. How do immigrant parents in the Punjabi community perceive the effect of conflict with their son or daughter on the family unit?
 - 3.B. How do adolescents in the Punjabi community perceive the effect of conflict with their parents on the family unit?

The researcher chose to study parent-adolescent conflict out of a desire to gain a more detailed understanding of South Asian family dynamics within a North American context. Having been raised in and currently living in a South Asian Punjabi community in North America, the researcher has first-hand experience of the impact that family conflicts have on such communities. Preliminary research revealed that despite recent awareness of this issue, what new knowledge has emerged focuses solely on adolescents' perceptions. As conflict involves two or more sides, this does not provide a complete and accurate picture of what is transpiring between parents and their children. It was also felt that parents' views needed to be acknowledged and understood. Thus, this study was conceptualized and developed.

Terminology

South Asian: In this study, the term *South Asian* applies to individuals of Punjabi Indian decent. *Indo-Canadian*, another popular term used to identify Indians living in Canada, will not be adopted as it is typically used by the media to refer to Indians who are involved in gang-related activities and carries negative connotations. Additionally, in a study by Farver (2002), an overwhelming majority of participants identified with India and not North America, regardless of whether they were born in India, the United States, or Canada. That is, they described themselves as Indian and not American or Indian-American. Therefore, when references are made to specific South Asian populations, the term that most specifically describes their ethnicity will appear in the text (i.e. Punjabi, Hindu, or Gujarti).

Adolescent: The term *adolescent* refers to individuals who are in high school and are between the ages of 13-18.

Parent: *Parents* is defined as those individuals with whom the adolescent resides and who, as primary caregivers, provide their child with both emotional and financial support.

First Generation: As *first generation* means individuals who are born in a country other than that in which they presently reside (who are immigrants to a country), in this paper it describes parents born in India who now reside in Canada.

Second Generation: *Second generation* refers to individuals who are born in the country that they reside in. In this study, it means born and raised in Canada.

Conflict: Finally, the present study adopts Ohlson's definition of *conflict* being a disagreement between two or more people (Ohlson, 1979).

As stated, it is anticipated the findings from this study will clarify family dynamics within South Asian households and enhance our understanding of parent-adolescent relationships within South Asian communities.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

Second-generation South Asians, that is, individuals of Indian descent born in North America, frequently feel as though they live an “American life from 9-5 and an Indian life from 5-9” (Mehta, 1998, p.137; Phinney & Ong, 2002). Many second-generation South Asian adolescents find themselves caught between two cultures, where they feel they must attempt to lead two separate lives; on the one hand, they aim to appease the expectations of the North American community, and on the other hand, they aim to satisfy their parents’ desires (Farver et al., 2002; Ghuman, 1994; Mehta, 1998; Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil, 1981). In an attempt to accommodate two separate ethnic identities, these adolescents may be at increased risk of developing psychological problems. This is particularly so if their immigrant parents are strongly attached to their natal culture while they are adjusting to the host culture (Farver et al., 2002).

Therefore, while adolescence is a tumultuous time for all teenagers, second-generation South Asians must cope with the additional challenge of facing this developmental change from the two cultural perspectives of North America and India. The values and beliefs of these two very different societies (one being individualistic and the other collectivistic) inevitably clash to create further stress for South Asian teenagers and their families (Berry, Segall, & Kagitcibasi, 1997; Farver et al., 2002; Segal, 1991).

Although this cultural clash is not a new phenomenon, and is not unique to this group, it warrants further research. Not all immigrant parents and their adolescent children experience the cultural tensions that pervade this group. The reason for this is that the greater the difference between the culture of the host country and the culture of the country of origin, the greater the

stress (Farver et al., 2002; Kurian, 1986). This is evident in the number of problems that plague South Asian communities when second-generation adolescents transition into adulthood (Aafreen, 1998; Atwal, 2000; Bhattacharya, 2002; Boolan, 2001, 2002; S. Gupta, 1998; Handa, 2003; Mehta, 1998; Petrozzi, 2002; Singh, 1994). As these problems receive more media attention and more social service agencies become involved with South Asian families, there is a corresponding need for greater sensitivity to the salient issues. It is of utmost importance to keep cultural factors in mind when assessing adolescent development and parent-adolescent relationships within the South Asian community. Santrock (1998) remark that an unhealthy family is one that does not allow space for the adolescent to become an autonomous individual and thereby creates a constant power struggle. This is unfortunately what occurs in many South Asian families. In India, power traditionally rests with elders, and North American patterns of adolescence are not part of the culture. Baumrind (1991) has discussed the dynamics of such traditional family systems when they function within North American frameworks. She would argue that Punjabi families have different developmental trajectories than North American families (Jambunathan & Counselman, 2002). Moreover, researchers such as Phinney (2002), Ghuman (1997), Smetana (2003), and Patal (1996; 2003) have conducted numerous cross-cultural studies, some of which have focused on Indian immigrant parents living in North America. These investigators have found that many parents from diverse cultural backgrounds expect their children to defer to their authority. Furthermore, although immigrant Indian families living in North America may have adopted certain beliefs and attitudes associated with the host culture, they are less likely to waver on traditional beliefs, such as those surrounding family dynamics (i.e. respect towards elders, female honour). Thus, while these families accept some

North American beliefs, they are less likely to accommodate those beliefs that go against traditional Indian values (Patel, Power, & Bhavnagri, 1996).

Adolescence in India and North America

Adolescence in North American society is marked by independence. It is a time of rebellion and experimentation (Aafreen, 1998; Ahmed, 1998; Collins, 1991; Jaffe, 1997). North-American adolescents therefore pursue greater autonomy and seek to carve out their identity (Jaffe, 1997; Santrock, 1998). They are no longer satisfied by simple answers as to why they have been refused a request or are disciplined; they want specific reasons (Santrock, 1998; Smetana et al., 2003). As a result, North-American families typically experience more conflict during the teenagers' early adolescence, and it lessens during late adolescence (Santrock, 1998; Smetana et al., 1991). Early adolescence is marked by accelerated biological, cognitive, and physical changes, which creates turbulence for parents and adolescents alike, but as teens mature and gain a greater sense of autonomy, the conflict diminishes (Santrock, 1998). In contrast, adolescence for South Asians is defined by a shifting role within the family structure (Ahmed, 1998; Dhruvarajan, 1993; Hennink, Diamond, & Cooper, 1999; Segal, 1991). In India, one's social position dictates one's role and status in life (Ahmed, 1998). Those who are in a subordinate position are required to obey and respect those above them, while those who are in a position of power are required to care for those they are responsible for (Ahmed, 1998; Ghuman, 1991; O. Gupta & Gupta, 1985; Steiner & Bansil, 1989).

Typical Indian family norms and characteristics are dictated by a patriarchal system in which the males are the head of the household (Dasgupta, 1998; Desai & Krishnaraj, 1987; Drury, 1991; Ghuman, 1994; Mullatti, 1995). The patriarch in the family is to be revered by all family members, children are to obey their elders, and duty towards one's family is stressed

(Desai, et al., 1987; Larson, Verma & Dworkin, 2001; Mullatti, 1995). In return for respect towards the elders, children know they are looked after and the family maintains its stability (Ahmed, 1998; Mullatti, 1995).

For South Asian adolescents, traditional Indian family norms imply that parents' and elders' orders must be obeyed and outward signs of displeasure are unacceptable (Dhruvarajan, 1993; Drury, 1991). Many find their freedom, style of dress and movement restricted once they enter this stage (Ahmed, 1998; Hennink et al., 1999; Mehta, 1998; Steiner & Bansil, 1989). Females, who enjoyed greater freedom as children, face particular hardship. As women are as seen as the medium through which cultural traditions are passed forward in Indian culture, parents' fears of assimilation are greater for their daughters (Dasgupta, 1998; Desai, et al., 1987; Farver et al., 2002; Handa, 2003).

Females are therefore often held close to the Indian family and have limited freedom to engage in outside social activities (Desai, et al., 1987; Farver et al., 2002; Ghuman, 1994; S. Gupta, 1998; Hennink et al., 1999; Kurian, 1986; Talbani & Hasanali, 2000; Wakil et al., 1981). The premise for this behaviour is rooted in the South Asian notion of *izzat*, which is loosely translated as respect and honour (Ghuman, 1994). *Izzat* not only encompasses an individual, but also the individual's family, as a person's action not only reflects upon him or her, but also upon the family (Hennink et al., 1999; Wakil et al., 1981). A woman's *izzat* is especially important because if it has been sullied, her chances of marrying a reputable man are at stake (Drury, 1991; Hennink et al., 1999; Wakil et al., 1981). As one female aptly states: "I know friends whose parents think, well you know, if you go to a club nobody's going to marry you, because you're always going out all the time and you're doing this and that" (Handa, 2002, p.111). For this reason women are typically placed in a subordinate position in Indian families, are taught to be

docile and chaste, are segregated from males, who are typically granted greater freedom (Desai, et al., 1987; Mullatti, 1995). For a family member to have tarnished his or her *izzat* also blemishes the family's *izzat* (Drury, 1991; Handa, 2003; Hennink et al., 1999; Wakil et al., 1981).

For North American teenagers, adolescence means launching into a new period of their lives, which is marked by self-discovery and relationships outside of the family. However, South Asians become more closely intertwined with their families (Aafreen, 1998; Ahmed, 1998; Basran, 1993; Hennink et al., 1999; Jaffe, 1997; Steiner & Bansil, 1989). For second-generation South Asians, the dichotomy between wanting greater personal autonomy and preserving cultural values may cause a great deal of internal distress (Aafreen, 1998; Ahmed, 1998; Handa, 2003; Kwak & Berry, 2001). While North American youth are striving for an identity separate from those of their parents, collectivistic societies endorse the opposite shift because children's identity is tied to their family of origin (Farver et al., 2002; Ghuman, 1997; Mann, 2004; Patel-Amin & Power, 2002; Segal, 1991; Tummala-Narra, 2004). The dichotomy between East and West is perhaps best exemplified in a study by Durvasula & Mylvaganam (1994), who found that first- and second-generation South Asian college students who visited their parents more often than North American students were seen to exhibit pathological dependence on their family of origin. In India, adolescence is not experienced as a time wrought with conflict. Instead, adolescents remain obedient to their parents and other adults who are in position of authority; parent's authority is seen as being final (Desai, et al., 1987). This pattern carries on into adulthood (Segal, 1991). The Western conception of adolescence is largely absent from the Indian subcontinent (Segal, 1991). Pursuing gains, which will enhance the individual over the group, are seen as selfish (Ghuman, 1997). Family is so much a central part of Indian culture that

some children will sacrifice their own aspirations for the greater good of the family (Asher, 2002; Drury, 1991; Mullatti, 1995). Although many adolescents oppose the tradition of arranged marriages, some are likely to eventually agree to their parents selecting their future partner (Drury, 1991; Stopes-Roe, 1989). Adolescents are aware of the costs of disobeying their parents: slander, rejection by the South Asian community, lack of parental support, and soiling of the family's *izzat* (Drury, 1991; Wakil et al., 1981). However, those who go through adolescence in North America are also desirous of the values endorsed by their host culture; and herein exists the cultural conflict.

The Issue of Gender

As indicated, there is clear differentiation between how females and males are treated within the South Asian community. The literature predominately refers to this as gender bias, which is "prejudice or discrimination based on sex" or sexism, and can include an "irrational attitude of hostility" (Merriam-Webster, 2005). Gender bias originates in the sociocultural history and social meanings attached to gender (Wertsch, 1991). It is powerfully rooted in the world's major religions, which are patriarchal and subordinate women to men (Dhruvarajan, 2002). For example, traditionally in Catholicism, only males can attain a position of authority in the church. In India, the Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim religions on which society is based have put forth dogma which relegates females are a lower status on the basis of their biological and physical characteristics.

A woman's *izzat* is of central importance to Indian families. There is also a sexist orientation that makes families fearful of females dating. If a female were to have sexual relations with a male, due to her physiology it would be she who showed signs of having had intercourse. Males, on the other hand, are free from these physiological consequences; one would

never know if a male had had sex prior to marriage and young men are therefore given more freedom than young women.

How Adolescents Deal With the Dichotomy Presented in Eastern and Western Cultures

South Asian adolescents born of immigrant parents have adopted various mechanisms to cope with the dichotomy of living within opposing cultures (Aafreen, 1998; Ahmed, 1998; Handa, 2003; Mehta, 1998). Many resort to lying (Handa, 2003; Mehta, 1998; Talbani, 2002). They might lead two separate lives, appearing to be the ideal South Asian youth at home while secretly engaging in the vices their parents preach against, such as drinking, dating, and dancing (S. Gupta, 1998; Handa, 2003; Mehta, 1998; Tummala-Narra, 2004). For females, lying helps to preserve the South Asian “good girl” image (Handa, 2003; Mehta, 1998). Most adolescents, however, are not happy about lying and it causes them to experience guilt, uneasiness, emotional stress, negative self-esteem, and diminished self-worth; yet, they also feel that there is no other viable option (Handa, 2002). Lying and deceiving does not solve their problems, but is rather an attempt to balance the conflicting values of two cultures. They live in continual fear that they will be found out, and the consequences of being caught in a lie are unfathomable while the cost of being honest is also very high (Handa, 2002). Those caught lying to their parents may face further restrictions on their freedom or be forced into marriage at a young age (Hennink et al., 1999; Gupta, 1998; Handa, 2002). For some, lying produces more stress than it alleviates (Handa, 2003).

Cultural Acceptance and Preservation

In accordance with the dual lives that many South Asian adolescents lead, many studies have found that these youth are forming bicultural identities which reflect aspects of the host and natal culture that are well-balanced (Farver et al., 2002; Ghuman, 1991, 1997). Parents’ level of

identification with the host culture reflects their degree of modernity, duration of living in the host society, and degree of religiosity. Immigrant Indian parents with higher levels of education are more likely to have spent a greater amount of time in urban regions of India where there is a greater influence of Western culture (Kurian, 1986). Such parents do show flexibility when it comes to attire and degrees of informality expressed within relationships to adolescent children (Kurian, 1986). Although this may ease parent-adolescent conflicts, attitudes to dating and marriage seem static regardless of one's socioeconomic level, especially when it concerns females (Desai, et al., 1987; Ghuman, 1991; Segal, 1991; Tummala-Narra, 2004). Many parents are unwilling to allow their daughters to date and expect their children to marry within their ethnicity.

Previous studies have shown that parental maintenance of the ethnic culture facilitated ethnic identity formation for adolescents of Indian immigrant parents, but not for those of Italian immigrant parents (Farver et al., 2002; Santrock, 1998). These findings suggest that perhaps ethnic identity formation is in part dependent on other factors than parent's maintenance of their native culture. Additionally, a qualitative pilot study by Segal (1991), consisting of 60 teenagers and 110 parents of Indian descent, looked at cultural variables in Indian families and found that adolescents who viewed their parents as being narrow-minded developed negative attitudes towards Indian culture. Farver (2002) noted that retaining one's cultural identity may lead to alienation from the host culture, yet at the same time, the rejection of the culture of origin could result in alienation from one's ethnic group. Developing a positive bicultural identity is complex and depends on a number of variables such as parents' degree of openness to their host culture, the host culture's degree of openness to members of other cultures, communication, and the amount of control exerted by parents (Dasgupta, 1998; Farver et al., 2002; Segal, 1991).

South Asian Immigrant Parents

The majority of the literature on second-generation South Asians focuses solely on adolescents (Aafreen, 1998; Ahmed, 1998; Asher, 2002; Dhruvarajan, 1993; Drury, 1991; Durvasula & Mylvaganam, 1994; Farver et al., 2002; Ghuman, 1991; S. Gupta, 1998; Kurian, 1991; Kwak & Berry, 2001; Mehta, 1998; Pai et al., 2003; Talbani & Hasanali, 2000). Most of the problems they face implicate problems with parents' perception of and lack of integration into the host culture (Farver et al., 2002; Kwak & Berry, 2001; Segal, 1991; Tummala-Narra, 2004). However, immigrant parents have their own difficulties making the transition to a new culture: they are "struggling to form their own bicultural identity and overcome their ambivalence" (Mann, 2004, p.150). Many immigrants tenaciously hold onto their culture, becoming more Indian than Indians in India in aiming to instill their values in their children (Farver et al., 2002). By limiting their children's contact with non-Indian individuals, they hope to enforce traditional sex roles and ensure that their children maintain traditional values pertaining to family, religion and marriage (Dasgupta, 1998). However, the culture they try to sustain on foreign soil is the culture that existed when they left India, not the culture which has since evolved (Dasgupta, 1998; Farver et al., 2002; Tummala-Narra, 2004). Further, immigrant parents have to cope with their own emotional issues, such as sadness and guilt at having left their parents and relatives behind; and the anxiety involved in starting over in a foreign country (Tummala-Narra, 2004). This psychological instability may further stress the parent-adolescent relationship, as both parents and adolescents are undergoing identity changes, psychological maladjustment may occur (Farver et al., 2002; Mann, 2004; Steiner & Bansil, 1989; Tummala-Narra, 2004).

Immigrant Indian Parental Perspectives

While second-generation adolescents are negatively impacted by the conflict that arises from generational differences, parents become frustrated with the ongoing defiance expressed by their children (Aafreen, 1998; Ahmed, 1998; Mehta, 1998). Many parents view their move away from their homeland and family as a sacrifice they made for their children (Mehta, 1998). They take pride in being able to provide their children with opportunities that may have been unavailable in India (Aafreen, 1998; Ahmed, 1998). Yet, many first-generation immigrant parents find it difficult to adjust the traditional values learned in their country of origin to a more modern society (Kurian, 1986). They cannot understand their teenagers' need to attend school dances and go on dates, as they had a vastly different experience of adolescence in India. While parents from the urban regions of India may be more liberal in their parenting than those from rural areas, most parents are unwilling to completely relinquish their cultural heritage and want to instill in their children the values that they grew up with (Singh, 1994; Talbani & Hasanali, 2000). Socialization for these parents focuses on sociocultural continuity (Wakil et al., 1981). These parents want their children to be influenced by Western values as little as possible, adopting only the perceived "good" aspects of North American society and ignoring the rest (Wakil et al., 1981).

Consequently, parents receive ongoing defiance from their children, with a sense of profound disappointment. Attempts to correct the situation are for the most part maladaptive, as parents often engage in even stricter parental control and thereby worsen an already volatile situation (Mehta, 1998). While conflict is a natural part of adolescence; the manner in which the conflict is handled is of critical importance (Collins, 1997). "Qualities of conflict resolution

between family members have been linked to interpersonal competence and to components of psychosocial maturity” (Collins, 1997, p. 179).

What little communication there is between adolescents and immigrant Indian parents appears to be very poor (Handa, 2003; Kurian, 1986; Mehta, 1998; Segal, 1991). Segal (1991) found that parents from urban regions of India were aware of poor communication, while rural parents were shocked to learn that their children were dissatisfied with the level of communication, which they regarded as being very open.

Areas of Conflict

The literature identifies these four main areas of conflict for second generation South Asians: parental authority versus children’s rights; discipline; pressure for academic success; and dating (Aafreen, 1998; Ahmed, 1998; Basran, 1993; Mehta, 1998; Kwak et al., 2001; Pai et al., 2003; Wakil et al., 1981). As stated earlier, Indian families are traditionally patriarchal. The male heads the family and makes all major decisions. Fathers are generally feared within Indian families, women traditionally take on subordinate roles (Desai and Krishnaraj, 1987; Jambunathan & Counselman, 2002; Patel et al., 1996; Roopnarine & Hossain, 1992). Unlike North American society, where children are taught to question parental and other forms of authority, Indian children are taught to obey their parents without question. This can in turn lead to a cultural clash wherein authoritarian Indian parents are confronted by children who are constantly questioning their authority (Kurian, 1986).

Gender socialization roles and double standards act to segregate second-generation Indian females during adolescence (Hennick et al., 1999; Hanada, 2002; Gupta, 1998; Talbani et al., 2000; Wakil et al., 1981). As is the norm in India, males are granted greater freedom and are not questioned about their motives or intentions when they spend time socializing with their peers

(Dhruvarajan, 1993; Ghuman, 1991; Hennink et al., 1999; Wakil et al., 1981). Females' interactions with the opposite sex are prohibited and requests for the rights enjoyed by their brothers are typically denied (Basran, 1993; Handa, 2002; Hennink et al., 1999; Mehta, 1998; Gupta, 1998).

Socialization issues are another area of contention that again largely pertains to the female population. Teenager females in particular are either prohibited or constrained from engaging in social activities such as school dances and attending parties held by their peers (i.e. watching movies with a group of friends, going over to a friend's house) (Hennink et al., 1999; Kurian, 1986; Talbani et al., 2000; Wakil et al., 1981). Parents' decisions on these matters are final and there is typically no room for negotiation. Many female South Asian youth are unhappy and frustrated with the strict restrictions imposed on them. They want to maintain a positive relationship with both parents and peers, but this becomes difficult (Handa, 2003). Excluded from engaging in social activities with peers, many who experience loneliness report that their peers do not understand their situation (Handa, 2003; Kurian, 1986).

Conflict Resolution

Researchers have suggested that conflict during adolescence functions to move the parent-child relationship from a dynamic of unilateral power to one that is equilateral (Phinney, Kim-Jo, Osorio, & Vilhjalmsdottir, 2005; Tucker et al., 2003). In a study by Smetana and Gaines (1999), it was found that parents who asserted greater control over their children were prone to more numerous conflicts, and greater monitoring of their children served to intensify these conflicts. Less intense conflict was found in families that used collaboration and compromise to resolve problems. (Smetana et al., 1991; Tucker et al., 2003). Overall, these researchers found that although adolescence is usually a tumultuous time, it can lead to a stronger parent-child

relationship wherein children are equipped with the skill to deal with conflict diplomatically (Riesch et al., 2000; Steinberg, 1990).

Researchers also recognized that there are cultural differences that affect the way in which conflict is conceptualized and handled (Phinney et al., 2005). A study conducted by Phinney and colleagues (2005) focused on how different minority ethnic groups within North America dealt with conflict. They found that when adolescents of diverse ethnic backgrounds (Korean, Armenian Mexican and American) chose to assert their own desires in spite of their parents' protests, they did so out of self-interest (Phinney, et al., 2005). It is interesting to note that individuals from these more collectivistic cultures adopted North American individualistic values in asserting their will in opposition to their parents' wishes, but continued to show concern for their parents, such concern was not evident in the North American sample (Phinney, et al., 2005). As a result, adolescents of Korean, Armenian and Mexican decent were more likely to comply with their parents for reasons such as respecting their authority, wanting to make them happy, or to avoid open confrontation (Phinney, et al., 2005; Phinney & Ong, 2002).

Many researchers found that conflict during adolescence was resolved by adolescents giving in to parental demands (Smetana et al 1991; Smentana, 1999; Phinney, 2005; Smentana, et al., 2003). However, it was found that when authoritarian means were used to resolve conflicts, adolescents felt that their parents gave their appeals little or no consideration (Phinney et al., 2005).

Socialization Processes Within South Asian Families

Very little is known about family dynamics within South Asian families. North American literature stresses the importance of reciprocal socialization, whereby children and adolescents socialize their parents just as parents socialize them. Synchrony, or parents and children being

attuned to one another's behaviour, appears to be another important aspect of parent-adolescent relationships in North America (Santrock, 1998). The extent to which these concepts are active within the South Asian community is unknown; and what family processes are operational and how effective they are has received very little attention in the literature.

Some studies have suggested that parents may be unaware of the cultural stress that second-generation adolescents face, and that parents unknowingly exacerbate the situation by placing further cultural demands on their children. Due to the dearth of literature on immigrant South Asian parents' views of adolescent development, it is difficult to assess whether they are truly unaware of the cultural and generational conflicts their children are experiencing. One reason why parents may be unaware of their children's struggle could be that their children do not articulate it. As revealed in a study by Drury (1991), Sikh adolescent girls who did not agree with their parents did not openly contest their wishes. Instead, they unwillingly conformed to their parents' requests.

Studies examining generational conflict among South Asians have also found that many youth among this group experience depressive symptoms, guilt, anxiety, low self-esteem, somatization disorders, and loneliness (Handa, 2003; Hennink et al., 1999; Kwak & Berry, 2001; Mehta, 1998; Pai et al., 2003; Shams, 2001; Steiner & Bansil, 1989). Rumbaut (1994) found that parent-child conflict was a strong predictor of reduced self-esteem and depression among second-generation adolescents. Adolescents were shown to be adopting maladaptive behaviours in order to cope with the demands and pressures of reconciling two opposing value systems (Talbani & Hasanali, 2000).

Differences Between First- and Second-Generation South Asian Adolescents

Studies have found that there is a significant difference in the problems faced by first- and second-generation youth (Abouguendia & Noels, 2001; Rumbaut, 1994). As stated, in the present study first-generation refers to immigrants to Canada, while second-generation refers to individuals born in Canada. Abouguendia (2001) found that second-generation South Asian youths had lower self-esteem than did first-generation South Asian youths. Also, depression was strongly correlated with hassles of any type (i.e. being perceived as too white, not being able to find a romantic partner, having language problems, and not being accepted by one's own ethnic group) among second-generation South Asian youths. Out-group hassles (such as a failure to be being accepted by people outside of one's ethnic group or discrimination by the mainstream population) seemed to be more salient among first-generation adolescents as a precursor to depression (Abouguendia et al., 2001).

Future Directions

With over 917,075 South Asians living in Canada, and with an increasing number being born here to grow up under the influence of mainstream North American culture, there is an increasing need to explore intergenerational issues (Statistics Canada, 2003). Ignoring another society's expectations will not alleviate problems, especially because children who are born in the host society tend to adapt much more quickly to its culture than their parents do (Farver et al., 2002; Kurian, 1986; Wakil et al., 1981). Parents and children must therefore be prepared to deal with the expectations that children will face due to living within two cultures and deal with the issues this represents; this is particularly important during children's adolescence. It is essential that "Parental belief patterns, perceptions of children and their roles in society, folk beliefs and practices, religious doctrines, assumptions of individual responsibility, parental strategies, and

the role of varying degrees of socioeconomic status” be explored (Roopnarine & Carter, 1992, p.247). Only then can the conflict that seems to emanate from the clash between “the culture and values of pre-modern and modern ways of thinking and understanding the world” be better understood (Handa, 2002, p.163).

Areas of Conflict Requiring Further Research

Previous research on second-generation South Asians has predominately focused on the situation of females; concurrently, males have been increasingly portrayed in a negative light by the media (Atwal, 2002; Bolan, 2001; Bolan, 2002). The media has focused this negative attention on South Asian males of Punjabi descent, but studies of parent-adolescent relationships within the Punjabi community make little mention of them, preferring to address issues pertaining to female teens (Aafreen, 1998; Dasgupta, 1998; Dhruvarajan, 1993; Drury, 1991; Durvasula & Mylvaganam, 1994; Ghuman, 1994; Talbani & Hasanali, 2000). However, the Federal Department of Canadian Heritage recently commissioned a report on South Asian community-based group crime in British Columbia. Although some concerns with the research design were reported, the results were interesting in suggesting that parents play a vital role in adolescent delinquency and gang membership among Punjabi males (Tyakoff & Associates, 2004).

Future Research Considerations

As indicated, teen males are underrepresented in most of the research studies focusing on cultural issues within the South Asian population (Talbani et al., 2000). Those studies that do recruit both sexes seem to have an overwhelmingly large number of female participants. Furthermore, none of these studies acknowledge their gender bias or consider ways for future researchers to overcome it. This is of particular importance because while researchers have been

studying adolescent females, it is adolescent males who are exhibiting higher levels of risky behaviour, which may in part be the expression of intergenerational conflict. The media has emphasized the gang activity of these males, whom it refers to as 'Indo-Canadians' (Boolan, 2001, 2002). Given that there are a high proportion of Punjabi males participating in gang activities, it is only reasonable that researchers take a greater interest in understanding how cultural issues have affected them.

A study commissioned by the Strategic Research and Analysis institution held focus groups with a variety of Punjabi community members that included: white collar workers; social workers; religious leaders; judicial officers; single mothers; and male and female youth. The focus group for males consisted of individuals who were 13 to 23 years of age and resided in the city of Surrey, British Columbia. A more representative sample including Punjabi individuals from many cities and municipalities might have increased the scope of this study's conclusions. Although it did seek the opinions of a male population, this study asked closed-ended questions that were often leading, rather than the open-ended type of question preferred in qualitative studies (Morse & Richards, 2002).

Another methodological issue that appears in the literature is a lack of consistency in age ranges examined in studies of intergenerational difference. Current literature suggests that identity development does not occur until later adolescence (Santrock, 1998). However, many studies base their conclusions on age ranges of 12 to 19 years (Kwak & Berry, 2001; Patel-Amin & Power, 2002), 13-15 years (Ghuman, 1991), 14 -19 (Farver, 2002), 16-20 (Drury; 1991), 18-21 (Stope-Roe & Cochrane, 1989). There obviously needs to be greater consistency in the age ranges studied, as this inconsistency not only affects the general reliability of the results, but also compromises their interpretation.

Implications of Research on South Asian Family Relationships

Although a traditional North American developmental framework has been predominately applied in research about South Asian inter-generational conflict, a sociocultural perspective is another lens that could be adopted in order to better understand this conflict. Grounded in how individuals are impacted by their environment, a sociocultural perspective seeks to explain how human action is situated in cultural, historical and institutional settings (Wertsch, 1985). Thus, it takes into account an individual's developmental history, environmental and societal influences, and way of finding meaning in and internalizing his or her environment. However, it is the intention of this study to take a traditional family developmental approach, in examining conflict, as this approach is preferred because while being primarily anchored in a North American family developmental paradigm, it remains sensitive to South Asian Punjabi issues.

In closing, this chapter has reviewed traditional developmental parenting literature in order to augment an understanding of the causes of South-Asian parent-adolescent conflict within a North America context is. It has revealed that this literature has generally failed to analyze conflict from parents' perspective. Further, while the dynamic of conflict has been documented, research has not thoroughly investigated the processes, which underlie it. Lastly, it has been noted that multiple perspectives are needed to fully understand the complex phenomenon of inter-generational bi-cultural conflict. Family interactions occur within a rich context, and such a comprehensive or multi-faceted viewpoint is essentially in order to appreciating their dynamics.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Introduction

This study employed a qualitative interviewing approach in order to examine family interactions within their dynamic context (Yin, 2003). Given the complex and multi-generational nature of family interactions, this approach provided the researcher with an opportunity to gain insights that could not have been obtained through traditional quantitative methods (Gilgun, Daly, & Handel, 1992; Yin, 2003). Therein, interviews allowed the research to generate an understanding of the meaning that individuals and families attached to their actions and experiences (Gilgun et al., 1992).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore issues pertaining to parent-adolescent relationships within the South Asian Punjabi community in the lower mainland of British Columbia. British Columbia's Punjabi community was selected because it is one of the province's largest South Asian populations within British Columbia; within it, over 87,760 individuals identify Punjabi as their mother tongue (Statistics Canada, 2003). In aiming to obtain a greater understanding of South Asian Punjabi family dynamics and intergenerational relationships, the study specifically focused on an examination of the contexts in which parent-adolescent conflict tended to arise in this community. This study's distinguishing feature is that it examined conflict not only from the perspective of adolescents, but also from the perspective of parents. As has been emphasized, little research has been conducted regarding the latter.

Research Questions

This study addresses the following questions:

1. How are parent-adolescent conflicts perceived within the Punjabi community?
 - 1.A. How do immigrant Punjabi parents perceive conflict with their child?
 - 1.B. How do Punjabi adolescents perceive conflict with their parents?
2. How are parent-adolescent conflicts within the Punjabi community handled?
 - 2.A. How do immigrant Punjabi parents handle conflicts with their son(s) or daughter(s)?
 - 2.B. How do Punjabi adolescents handle conflicts with their parents?
3. How do parent-adolescent conflicts in the Punjabi community affect the family unit?
 - 3.A. How do immigrant parents in the Punjabi community perceive the effect of conflict with their son or daughter on the family unit?
 - 3.B. How do adolescents in the Punjabi community perceive the effect of conflict with their parents on the family unit?

Participants

In order to understand the significant issues surrounding parent-adolescent conflict, six Punjabi families (parents and their adolescents) who lived in the lower mainland of British Columbia were interviewed. Six mothers and one father participated in the study. The fathers in the families selected for the sample may have been hesitant to take part in a study conducted by a female interviewer. It is also possible that they simply did not want to talk about their feelings. Indian fathers are often portrayed as stern authority figures, and they may have been uncomfortable with the idea of expressing their thoughts about a family matter; this is not a norm to which they are accustomed (Roopnarine & Hossain, 1992).

The adolescents interviewed included two females, aged 14 and 15, and five males ranging in age from 13 –16. Most of these youth agreed to do the interviews because of their parents' involvement in the study. (See Table 1 for descriptive information on study participants.) The mother of one family originally agreed to her daughter being interviewed but later withdrew her agreement. Hence, for this family, only an interview from the mother was obtained and analyzed.

Table 1. Demographic Information on Study Participants

Family	Names of Family Members Living in the Home* (Incl. Age of Children)	Age of Arrival in Canada	Level of education		Income
			Mother	Father	
Khan	Gurmit, 11 ¹ Sheila, 14 Vijay, 21 ¹ Jeevan (Mother) Jetinder (Father) ¹ Puja (Grandmother, paternal) ¹	17 (mother) Father not reported	>9	>HS	Not Reported
Kapoor	Ricky: 16 Veena, 18 ¹ Kismit (Mother) Raj (Father) ¹ Harpreet (Grandmother, maternal) ¹	15 (mother) Father not reported	>HS	>HS	\$20,000-29,000
Deols	Bobby, 13 Esha, 15 Tina, 18 ¹ Vimmy (Mother) Binder (Father) ¹	20 (mother) Father not reported	>HS	Not Reported	Not Reported
Raichand	Pummi, 10 ¹ Rahul, 13 Varun, 16 ¹ Rani (Mother) Yash (Father) ¹	16 (mother) Mother lived in England between the ages of 6-16; she left India at the age of 6 Father not reported	BA	BA	\$60,000 and above
Deewar	Akash, 11 ¹ Naina, 14 ¹ Preeti (Mother) Buldave (Father) ¹ Santosh (Grandmother, paternal) ¹	20 (mother) Father not reported	BA	BA	Not Reported
Kamals	Arjun, 15 Tommy, 13 Sonia (Mother) Siddharta (Father)	22 (mother) 29 (father)	BA	Diploma-trades	Not Reported

*Pseudonyms have been used for all study participants

¹Did not participate in the study

Adolescent Participants

The present study focused on adolescents between the ages of 13-18. As mentioned, previous studies of South Asian adolescents reported a variety of targeted age ranges, making the comparison of conclusions difficult (Drury, 1991; Ghuman, 1994; Kwak et al., 2001; Patel-Amin; Patel, Power & Bhavnagri, 1996; Farver, 2002; Stope-Roe & Cochrane, 1989). In addition, previous studies on parent-adolescent conflict have found that conflict can disrupt the family unit throughout adolescence (Phinney, 2002). For the purpose of this study it therefore seemed appropriate to target adolescents between 13 and 18 years of age rather than limiting the focus to a narrower age group such as 13-15. Qualification for participation in the study was that the parent(s) must have been born in India; that there be at least one individual 13-18 years of age living within a Punjabi family; and that an eligible individual automatically qualified any or all other members of that individual's family. Two-parent and single-parent families were likewise eligible.

Parent Participants.

Parents who participated in the study were first-generation Canadians born in India. They were required to have lived in Canada for 13-19 years (depending on the age of their child) so as to ensure that their adolescent child was born in Canada.

Recruitment.

Although notices were posted at local community centres, gurdwaras, and agencies that worked with Punjabi youth and families, they did not generate any response. The sample was therefore recruited through word of mouth. Due to the lack of male participants in previous studies, this study actively sought to recruit males.

Materials and Procedures

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data. Parents were given the choice of having their interviews conducted in English or Punjabi, and all chose English. Mothers, fathers, and adolescents were interviewed privately and separately in their homes. Prior to the commencement of the interviews, the interviewer reviewed a questionnaire with the family in order to collect demographic data needed to more accurately describe the population participating in the study. (See Appendix B, Interview Questionnaire.)

The interview questions were based on the primary goals of this study. (See Appendix C for the Interview Protocol.) They were tested on a pilot group, reviewed in consultation with the thesis supervisor, and then adjusted accordingly. Any questions that were not received well by the participants in the pilot group or seemed to be close-ended questions were modified. A common set of questions was asked of all family members so that their respective responses could be compared. While some of the follow-up questions were unique to the individual family, the questions were generally consistent across families.

Data Analysis

The unit of analysis in this study was the single Punjabi South Asian family. As the data on each unit or family were gathered from each semi-structured interview, categories for each group (parent/child) and emergent themes across the groups were identified. The categories used were based on North American concepts of traditional family development and theoretical constructs found in the literature, which included parenting perspectives and roles. The theorists utilized in adopting these frameworks include Desai and Krishnaraj (1987); Phinney (2000, 2005); Smetana (2003); and Mullatti (1995), who conceptualized the framework of Indian family norms. In addition, many of the cultural concepts discussed in the literature review, such as *izzat*

(respect) and gender differences were drawn from the work of Carson and colleagues (1999); Dasgupta (1989); Ghuman (1991, 1997); Kurian (1986); and Wakil and colleagues (1981); these concepts also helped to guide the analysis.

The parent and adolescent interviews were unitized as two groups, and initial broad categories were developed across the two groups. As the categorization process progressed, it was decided that these categories were overly general and they were modified based on the information presented in the interviews (see Appendix D Codes and Themes). This procedure resulted in more specific sub-categorization or categorization. The categorizations were still anchored in the literature, yet provided a more detailed perspective of the interviews. As the categories become more defined and more data were gathered under each category, the researcher looked for links or themes between the categories and across the two groups in order to clarify the final interpretation.

In enhancing the frameworks, which have been mentioned, the researcher's experiential knowledge (knowledge, background and personal experience) shaped the perspective from which the data were viewed (Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 1998). The researcher did attempt to maintain as objective an outlook as possible through engaging in processes such as triangulation, member checks, and having the research reviewed by the supervisor as it progressed. However, it is impossible to ignore the role that the "lens of the observer" played, (Yin, 2005, p. 39) because this lens invariably reflects the researcher's particular "worldviews, values and perspectives" (Merriam, 1998, p. 22). As Maxwell (2005) states, "the researcher is the instrument of the research" (p. 37). The researcher's experiential knowledge was therefore employed in addition to the literature in order to ensure that the coding reflected culturally

appropriate categories and themes, while still being based in a framework of traditional family development.

Each transcript was analyzed using categories and thematic coding based on these categories, which was then used to identify information on how each family dealt with the main questions addressed in the study. All adolescent transcripts were analyzed individually and then compared with each other to identify common categories; all the parent transcripts were analyzed in the same way. Finally, the categories from both the parent and adolescent interviews were compared with each other. The themes that emerged across the family unit represented concepts that permeated all of the transcripts, especially with regard to the three main questions being asked in the study.

Credibility of the Findings

The researcher categorized all the data and ensured that codes were consistently used throughout the transcripts. The thesis supervisor reviewed the categories and themes to confirm their consistency. Member checks were also conducted with participants in order to verify that participants' voices were accurately categorized.

Rigor.

To ensure rigor and accuracy, all interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Pseudonyms were used in the transcripts to ensure privacy. Extra care was taken to reassure the participants of confidentiality, because previous research had revealed that both South Asian youth and parents were reserved when it came to sharing private family matters (Commander, Odell, Surtees, & Sashidharan, 2004; Steiner & Bansil, 1989; Talbani & Hasanali, 2000).

Field notes provided detailed supplementary information regarding what transpired during the interview (Morse & Field, 1995). They also provided a record of comments that had been made after the tape recorder was turned off.

Member checks of the interpretation were also conducted. This is a method whereby study participants are shown what has been written as a result of their comments. Participants in this study were shown the categories that had emerged from their comments and asked if these categories accurately reflected what they said during the interview. They were shown only those categories that emerged from their own interviews, not those that emerged from the interviews of other family members.

The member checks took place once the data were unitized and categorized. It was hoped that this would be two to three weeks after each interview, but this was not always possible. Member checks were delayed when multiple interviews had occurred in a short time or because of difficulties contacting participants. In some cases it took about a month to contact participants. Generally, participants were disinterested in the member check process and in discussing the category summary that had been prepared. However, all the participants agreed with the summaries that were presented to them. If they had disagreed with the themes that had emerged from the analysis, they would have been asked to clarify any points they had aimed to express, and subsequent analyses would have integrated the new interpretation. As these were the participants' voices, it was important to respect their opinions and the meanings they attributed to the questions.

Triangulation and Trustworthiness.

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) model was followed in order to ensure that the findings were trustworthy, valid and reliable. The four criteria which Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested were

used and included: a) truth value, b) applicability, c) consistency and d) neutrality. Truth-value refers to whether the findings truly reflect the realities presented by participants in a study (Morse & Field, 1995). To confirm that the findings in this present study held truth-value, participants were asked if the categories that had emerged from their session accurately represented the comments that they made during the interview. During the taped interview, and before and after the tape recorder was turned on/off, the interviewee was asked to clarify any comments that seemed vague. Clarification was also obtained when comments were revealed to be unclear during the interview review.

Applicability aims to determine if the findings of a study can be applied to other situations or to different groups (Morse & Field, 1995). Demographic information pertaining to the sample was documented in the study in order to facilitate an evaluation of its applicability. Although a snowball sampling technique (a protocol in which the participants of a study recruit other participants) was used, the researcher asked various community members to help recruit participants (Morse & Richards, 2002). Thus, one individual did not recruit all the participants. Furthermore, the participants in the study had different reasons for participating. Some of the mothers were interested in the topic, others knew the community member who recruited them well, and others wanted to help the Punjabi researcher, who was a member of their community. Thus, the sample did represent a variety of individuals within its target population who had different reasons for participating.

As the third criterion of trustworthiness, consistency emphasizes the replicability of findings such that, if the same research study were to be repeated with the same or similar subjects/context, one might expect similar results (Morse & Field, 1995). When applied specifically to qualitative studies, consistency refers to the replication of various realities of

experience, rather than to identical experiences (Morse & Field, 1995). The researcher attempted to obtain a broad sample in study, but acknowledges that employing a snowball technique may have placed limitations on the diversity of the participants recruited.

The final criterion of trustworthiness is neutrality. Also known as conformability, it refers to “freedom from bias in the research procedures and results” (Morse and field, p. 144). To reduce the chance of bias marring the procedures and data, the researcher attempted to maintain an objective outlook. This was accomplished this by acknowledging biases and keeping them in check; refraining from categorizing responses according to stereotypes; and discussing the links between themes with colleagues. The researcher *does* have a personal interest in this study because she is a member of the lower mainland’s South Asian community and was born raised in North America. However, her graduate training has prepared her to take a predominately Western approach in reviewing the literature for this study, and it is important to note that this research was grounded in Western ideology

Finally, triangulation, or the use of multiple sources of data such as field notes, relevant literature, and member checks, also facilitated a greater understanding of the emerging themes. Grounding the study’s findings in the literature played a key role in ensuring that the researcher did not arbitrarily make sweeping assumptions or generalizations about her sample; the supervisor’s regular reviews of the findings provided further assurance of this.

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS

Introduction to the Participants

The following section provides a brief introduction to each of the six Punjabi families who participated in the study.

The Khans are a family of five. The parents, Jeevan and Jetender, have three children who were age 11, 14 and 21 when this research was conducted. Sheila, the 14-year-old, took part in the study, as did her mother, Jeevan. The father, Jetender, grandmother Jeeto, and Sheila's two brothers, Gurmit, 11, and Vijay, 21, did not participate in the study. Jetender owns his own business; he did not complete his secondary studies while living in India, and had not thought to resume them after coming to Canada as a young man. Jeevan works part-time in addition to being responsible for household duties. She came to Canada when she was 17 and was placed in her high school's grade 9 class; she graduated from high school at the age of 22. During her interview session, she reflected on her schooling in Canada and talked about feeling out-of-place in classes with students who were considerably younger than her.

Participants from the Kapoor family included Kismet, the mother, and son Ricky, 16. Ricky's stepfather Raj, his sister Veena, 18, and his grandmother Harpreet all chose not to participate. However, Harpreet was curious about what was taking place and would come into the room where the interviews took place every now and then; at these times Kismet politely insisted that her mother leave the room. Kismet was a very soft-spoken woman and there were moments during the interview when she seemed very tentative and required reassurance' as she was initially hesitant and then relaxed. Ricky, on the other hand, was more confident, bubbly and talkative. He seemed rather fond of his mother and often spoke about how he liked to talk with,

joke with, and hug her. Neither Kismet nor her husband Raj had completed their high school studies, and Kismet had come to Canada when she was 15 years old.

The Deol family have three children: Tina, the eldest at 18, did not participate in the study, but her two younger siblings, Esha, 15, and Bobby, 13, did; their mother Vimmy also participated. Their father, Binder, was absent from the household when the interviews took place. Vimmy had come to Canada when she was 20 and had not completed her secondary education; she was unsure about her husband's level of education. She was hesitant about being interviewed in the beginning, but soon became more comfortable with the process. She said that she had been diagnosed with stress disorder syndrome and felt that her children were not very receptive to her needs. Additionally, she and her children seemed disconnected in that they focused on their own activities and did not spend much time together. Comments made by Vimmy as well as Esha and Bobby disclosed that these two younger children as well as the eldest, Tina, preferred to stay at home and did not partake in many social activities outside of the home with their peers.

The Raichand family have three children. Their mother, Rani, came to Canada when she was 16 years old; both she and her husband, Yash, earned a Bachelor of Arts at a Canadian university. Rani and Rahul, the middle child at 13, took part in the interviews. The youngest, Pumi, and the eldest, Varun, were not in the household at the time of the interviews. Their father, Yash, was at home when the interview took place but declined to participate in the study. The Raichands appeared to be a very cohesive family unit and spent a lot of time together.

The Deewars are a family of five: father Bludave, mother Preeti, daughter Naina (who was 14 at the time the research was conducted) and son Akash (who was 11). Initially, both Preeti and Naina agreed to participate in the study. However, Preeti eventually decided that her

daughter would not be interviewed, and the reason for this decision remains unknown. Thus, Preeti was the only member of the Deewar family to be interviewed. She was born in India and came to Canada when she was 20 years old. Both she and her husband had a Bachelor of Arts degree from a university in India.

The Kamals are a family of four, all of whom participated in the study. Siddharta was the only father among the families sampled who agreed to be interviewed. He had a trade diploma from a Canadian institution. His wife, Sonia, had a BA earned in India. Siddharta came to Canada when he was 29 and Sonia immigrated at age 22. Their two sons, Tommy and Arjun, were 13 and 15 when they were interviewed. Both boys appeared to be active teenagers and keen Nintendo players. Siddharta and Sonia appeared to allow their children a great deal of personal freedom in most areas of their everyday life, except when it came to activities, which involved safety-related issues.

Research Question One: How are parent-adolescent conflicts perceived within the Punjabi community?

In approaching this question, the researcher sought to understand how both parents and adolescents viewed the conflict taking place within their family.

The major themes that arose when the data from this question were examined across parents and adolescents reflected parenting practices, which traditionally emphasize obedience and respect toward elders and are advocated by a majority of Indian families. These practices will be referred to as parental training in this study (Chao, 1994; Ghuman, 1997; Desai & Krishnaraj, 1987). The term parental training has been selected because the obedience and strict parental practices preferred by the parents in this sample seem to emanate from their concern and love for their children. These parents also wish to pass on and instill in their children the same

Indian values and virtues that have been bestowed upon them; hence the choice of the term parental training (Chao, 1994; Stewart, 1999). Furthermore, themes of Westernization and socialization were also identified in perceptions of conflict. Categories and themes that emerged from the interviews are summarized in Appendix D.

The term *mother* will be used in summarizing parents' response, as a majority of the parents in the sample is comprised of mothers. This may at times include the one father in the sample as well.

Parental Perspective: How do Parents Perceive Conflict With Their Adolescents?

Parents' perceptions of conflict were greatly affected by their perceptions of parenting roles. Salient categories that emerged furthering the understanding of how parents' perceived conflict with their adolescent children were: norms; the handling of conflicts; affiliations; the subcategories of family values; authority; and the influence of peers. Parents who strongly advocated Indian family values, a subcategory of norms, were of the opinion that power and authority rest with adults. These parents were more restrictive and expected obedience from their children (Ahmed, 1998; Desai, et al., 1987; Ghuman, 1991; Ghuman, 1997; O. Gupta, et al., 1985; Segal, 1991; Steiner, et al., 1989). In contrast, parents who negotiated privileges with their children and allowed them greater responsibility as they matured tended to be less restrictive (Carson, Chowdhury, Perry, & Pati, 1999). Within the category of handling conflict, parents' views regarding socialization fell into one of two sub-categories: mothers either negotiated with their children or expected unconditional obedience. Mothers' issues "followed" their children when they socialized outside the home. During their interviews, the mothers revealed that if they were concerned about the influence that Western culture or peers might have on their children, they were less likely to allow their children to go out with their friends. On the other hand,

mothers who did not state such concerns were more likely to allow their children to spend time with their peers. The theme of socialization was thus strongly influenced by the categories of affiliations and norms.

Mothers who did not exhibit a parental training type of power (in that they did not expect absolute obedience from their children) trusted that their children would make the right decisions when socializing with friends. Under the norms category, these mothers were less likely to strongly adhere to traditional Indian family values. Furthermore, their conflict-coping strategies did not predominately focus on the subcategories of authority or compliance. This is illustrated by following excerpt from an interview with Rani Raichand, in which she talks about trust:

Rani: I think because we've always had that trust within them [the children], we trust them, and therefore we trust them to tell us the truth, and if they have occasionally done something, then okay, we need to sit down and talk about it, but there's not that huge tremendous amount of punishment.

Rani's eldest child, Varun, attended a house party that ended in violence; Rani said she had been tense and upset that Varun had placed himself in a potentially dangerous situation. Rani, Yash, and their three children all sat down together and had a family meeting regarding what should be done if any of them ever found themselves in a situation where their personal safety was at risk. Varun was not restricted from attending future house parties as a result of this incident. Rani was concerned about Varun attending house parties, especially ones where there would be a large number of Indian teenagers, as they tended to end in violence. However, she explained that she trusted that her son to do the right thing, and then described how he handled the next party he went to:

Rani: So then he was at another party, it was with mixed friends, they weren't predominately Indians. But it got to be again where a lot of kids started showing up. So it got to be a bit out of control kind of thing. So, this time he did leave the party, and another friend and him went away for a while.... They went back, the party was still kind

of a little bit out of control. So, then they decided to walk back to the mall, and the other guy phoned his father, then the father came and picked him up and took him home.

Rani trusted that Varun would make the right decisions when he was out with his peers; although she was fearful, she did not let her fear affect how she parents and it didn't cause her to restrict Varun's privileges. Instead, she explained to Varun what she expected of him if he were placed in a situation that she viewed as being unsafe. This example illustrates how the Raichand family's norms (one of the categories used to unitize the data) related to the values, rules and restrictions that were involved in the parent's perception of conflict with their children. It is worth noting that in making her decision as to whether Varun could attend house parties, Rani did not tell him to avoid his group of friends; rather, she cautioned him to be careful when certain other peers, who tended to be disruptive, were present.

Parents in the second category had more of a more parental training outlook, which means that they preferred that their children be obedient to their authority. Mothers of this type tended to have a more traditional Indian parenting style. For example, Jeevan, who came from a family where children obeyed their elders, explained her frustration with Sheila for questioning her authority. Jeevan:

Jeevan: I just get angry for a little while that she's asking to go out again. I explained to her that, that she can't go every weekend. And she says I understand, but I don't know. I don't like, [her going out] every week. I say not every week. I say once in a while they [Sheila's friends] can come over; once in a while you can go over. You can go to the, to the mall or the movie, but not every weekend. But if she says, comes every week, mom can I go to Sara's house tonight, I say well you just went there last week, and I don't want you [to] spend the night [there] again. So, that's what I explain[ed] to her. How come they are going, I don't want you to go every weekend.

Many South Asian parents expect their children to respect their decisions (Ghuman, 1997). As has been noted, South Asian Punjabis typically come from a cultural background where elders are to be respected and their authority is not to be questioned. Accordingly, the

parental training type of mothers (and one father) in this study valued obedience. Their need for control and obedience may also reflect a concern for their children to be healthy, drug-free, and living in accordance with traditional Indian norms, such as not dating and having an arranged marriage (Ghuman, 1997; Handa, 2003). Although the restrictions imposed by Punjabi parents of this type may seem confining to some, mothers seemed to invoke such limitations in order to protect their children from affiliations with certain peers and Western influences. Categories of norms and affiliations and their associated subcategories therefore appeared as aspects that contributed to the decisions made by parental training-type mothers.

Under the category of affiliations, parents worried about their children's safety and their ability to make sound decisions when in the presence of peers. Jeevan, Rani, Kismet, Sonia and Siddharta suspected that their children would succumb to peer pressure and do something that they would find unacceptable or inappropriate; consequently, the children were not allowed to engage in certain social activities:

Preeti: Last time she, [Naina,] had like a grade 12 friend, she was having a birthday party in [a] limo. They were going to ride [around] and go to some restaurant afterward. So she really wanted to go and they invited her, but I wasn't too happy about it you know. I heard stories about kids, you know, they go in the limo and they pick up guys along the way and then they drink in there; and she's too young, she's only 14. So I said no. If [she were]... having the party at home, I would let you go. If she was having the party at a hall I would let [her]...go there for a few hours, but I don't know where they're going to be driving and who's going to be there; there's nobody else you know, so I really have no idea what's going on there.

Interviewer: Do you have any doubts that your daughter would do something that she shouldn't in your eyes?

Preeti: I pretty much trust my daughter. We always talk about alcohol, drugs and guys and all that; but when you're in that company and everybody's having drinks, having fun, have boyfriends and all that, then you feel left out; so then even though you probably don't want to do it, then you just give into [it]. Sometimes maybe I should trust her and not care about her friends and what they do. Yeah, so many things go on and she gets mad, and you don't want her to get mad, or you're not saying that you don't trust her or anything like that it's just, you know, you cannot just give into what you're feeling, there has to be limits for everything.

Most of the Punjabi parents in this sample feared that peer influence and Western beliefs would negatively impact their children (Dasgupta, 1998). In particular, Jeevan, Sheila's mother, had many fears about how Western beliefs and Sheila's peer group would influence Sheila. She voiced her fears about how cultural influences could negatively impact Sheila:

Jeevan: I just worry because, when the kids are together,... one kid do[es] something wrong, and then they try to do the same thing. Sometimes you have to support your friends when you're there; you don't want to chicken out. Look, I don't want to do this because--; they don't accept that. They have to come to the understanding, they have to be smart enough to either tell them this is wrong, you're not allowed to do this. That is the only thing that kind of makes me worried, that they'll take the wrong step.

Interviewer: What kind of things do you worry that they might do, when they go out with their friends?

Jeevan: Right now, this is the age that I'm worried they might do something foolish. And I tell them, look don't you do this Sheila; I tell her not to, um, jump into the Western.

Interviewer: What, what, are some of the difference between [Indian and Western culture]?

Jeevan: ...culture is the only thing that makes me really worried. I don't, [but] maybe their parents allow their kids to smoke and also to start seeing [start dating], you know they're only fourteen, and seeing the other [boy].

Interviewer: Right, dating and things like that?

Jeevan: Dating, you know. The time will come, but [now] don't: stay away from that stuff right now. That's it. That's the main thing that worries me.

These statements touch upon Indian norms surrounding ethnicity, health, gender, and sexuality. Jeevan and Preeti's beliefs as to what Western society is like seemed to govern the restrictions that they placed on their children, regardless of how legitimate these beliefs were. Neither Jeevan nor Preeti admitted to catching Sheila or Naina behaving inappropriately, but these adolescents were still subject to social restrictions.

The norms categorization also played an important role in what parents were willing to allow their children (especially their adolescent female children) to do. While traditional Indian families are opposed to dating in general, they specifically prohibit their daughters from being courted (Ghuman, 1991; Ghuman, 1997; Segal, 1991; Tummala-Narra, 2004). The previous interview excerpts demonstrate, that drugs, alcohol, and sexual encounters were associated with

Western socialization for the Khan, Kapoor, and Deewar families, and to a lesser extent, the Kamal family. Jeevan and Preeti particularly wanted their children to avoid any vice that might taint either their or their family's reputation (*izzat*).

The notion of *izzat* (which in this study is a subcategory under norms) arose in the previous examples where Preeti prohibited Naina from attending a limousine party and when Jeevan prevented Sheila from going out with her friends to the mall because neither mother wanted her daughter to engage in dating behaviours. Dating is discouraged in Punjabi culture because it could prove costly to female adolescents' reputation. It could also taint parents' honour in the eyes of the community, and this consequence is to be avoided (Handa, 2003). An individual who has ruined his or her *izzat* is at risk of being ostracized by Punjabi society, and when it comes time for marriage, men from reputable families will not marry a woman who has been dishonoured (Desai, et al., 1987; Dury 1991; Handa, 2003). This undoubtedly makes parents more cautious about their children's activities. They restrict their children's activities in order to keep a closer watch over them and are particularly vigilant with female adolescents. This is consistent with what has been reported in the South Asian parenting literature (Ahmed, 1993; Desai, et al., 1987; Hennick, et al., 1999; Segal, 1990).

During her interview, after the tape had been turned off, Preeti commented that she had not anticipated how overwhelming her daughter's transition to high school would be. She elaborated that she had not been prepared for all the arguments that she and her daughter had experienced. When Naina had been in elementary school, she had not been invited to many social events. However, when she reached high school she received an increasing number of social invitations and Preeti felt she had to place more restrictions on her activities. For example, Naina was restricted to attending only those parties held by close friends, and even then, she

could only attend for approximately two hours. Jeevan placed similar restrictions on her daughter Sheila, who was only allowed to go out with her friends once or twice a month. For both these mothers, restricting their daughters' social lives would decrease the likelihood of them being involved with peers who were perceived as "wrong friends" or violating traditional Indian norms. They believed that restricting their daughters' freedom would keep them close to the family. The limitations they imposed coincided with their fears that their daughters' reputations could be jeopardized. By having them at home, Jeevan and Preeti felt assured that their daughters remained out of harm's way. However, restrictions on social activity were not reserved exclusively for daughters; Kismet sought to restrict her son's social activities because she believed that he would become involved with the wrong group of friends.

Both the Khans and Kamals wanted to ensure that their children remained out of trouble when they went out, so they engaged in monitoring activities. Under the category of monitoring, parents reported accompanying their children when they went out with peers, spying on their children, and prohibiting their children from socializing with their peers. For the Khans, monitoring included Jeevan and Jetinder personally accompanying their daughter to the movie theatre:

Jeevan: Sometimes, and we go with them to the movies. We sit far enough back in the theatre.

Interviewer: And how does Sheila feel about her parents coming to the movies with her?

Jeevan: Oh, I think she feels fine. And, ah, if we go together, me and Jetinder will [sometimes] go to see a different movie in the same complex.

Interviewer: [So, for your concerns about her safety,] you feel more comfortable with it [accompanying her to the theatre]?

Jeevan: I'll instruct them not to go out, you know. Stay in the building.

This passage expresses Jeevan's concern about her daughter's safety and desire to watch over her. The Kamals expressed similar concerns:

Siddharta and Sonia Kamal frankly admitted to spying on their children:

Siddharta: Once in a while if I'm off [work] we just go by [the school] and see if anybody's outside [the school], yeah. But we didn't find them, never.

Sonia: Just it's when, when it's time to finish the school, then it's oh let's see how they come out, when they come out, who they walk with, yeah.

In keeping with Siddharta's belief that his children should not mix with "bad society," that is, affiliate with negative role models, he also restricted his sons from socializing with certain children outside their home:

Siddharta: Bad society. So we keep eye on that. Yeah, if somebody comes in our house, if we know the kid is no good, their family background, we don't let them go. There is one kid that comes we don't like him and we don't let him go to his house, he can come here. He can come here but, he was saying "come to my house," "come to my house;" but you could judge, you know, [that] he was sort of different and single-parent child; I shouldn't say native Indian and looks different but is okay; but I don't trust my son to go there.

The Raichands were also concerned about their children's safety. However, Rani and Yash believed that they had built a foundation of trust and understanding between themselves and their children, and that consequently there was no need to monitor or spy on their children. Rani explained that when her children left home, they would need to know how to make responsible decisions, as she would no longer be looking over their shoulders:

Rani: My oldest actually has a computer in his room, but again I don't go into monitoring and reading and watching that. I try and sort of lay that foundation, self discipline, what is appropriate, what are computers for, what are not good places to go. And just laying that kind of foundation. 'Cause you know what, when they're gonna be 18 or 19 and, say they're at university, am I going to be in their room and watching their MSN chat or watching where they go, or what websites they watch? I'm not, right. So then it's about trying to teach them now to begin to monitor what is a good behaviour.

Interestingly, the Deol family did not share many of the concerns expressed by many of the other families. Vimmy Deol did not impose many rules on her children, and concerns as to her children's safety did not arise during the interview. Perhaps this was because her children voluntarily spent the majority of their time at home, preferring to watch television than to go out. Yet, Vimmy suffered from stress-related problems. During her interview, she revealed that she

had a conflict with her eldest daughter, Tina. It was Vimmy's conviction that Tina did not believe that she had a stress disorder. In Vimmy's words, Tina thought her mother "is not that sick, she just thinks she is sick" and did not have any sympathy for Vimmy.

Vimmy also stated that she was frustrated with Tina's lack of compliance with her requests. She pointed to occasions when she had asked Tina for assistance, and Tina had replied, "Okay, my show is on. Okay, one minute." However, by the time Tina would come, Vimmy would already have completed the chore. Furthermore, Tina seemed to disregard her mother's wishes. For instance, (according to Vimmy) when Tina would not get up until lunchtime: "She doesn't want to miss 'All My Children,' so I [Vimmy] say no, go eat in the kitchen, right, and she doesn't. She says oh no, mom, my show is coming; I can take a tray this time." Vimmy stated that she would like her daughter to be more compliant, but does not press the matter.

Adolescent Perspective: How do Adolescents Perceive Conflict With Their Parents?

Categories that played a predominant role in how adolescents perceived conflict were: affiliations (adolescents reported that their parents were not comfortable with them going out with their peers); how conflict was handled (in particular what teenagers perceived as a lack of discussion regarding decisions made by their parents); and norms (how adolescent's perceived family values and rules).

Adolescents who perceived their mothers as imposing restrictions or having no room for negotiation reported that their mothers' actions were unjust and that they did not understand the reason for these actions. The adolescents' need for greater autonomy and independence (wanting not to be so close to the family unit and to go out with friends) also affected their perception of conflict. For example, Jeevan's daughter Sheila stated that her mother's restrictions felt unfair:

Sheila: 'cause, everyone else gets to do it, go out [with friends]. I don't know, they just always like to say no. They don't let me go out to movies and stuff without them. I don't

know why, but every time I ask to go out, they just, they don't, like, trust me to go out with my friends. I don't know why.

Sheila wanted to be allowed to go out and interact with her friends. She wanted to be like her peers who engaged in Western activities such as sleepovers, going to the movies, or hanging out at the mall. She did not understand why her mother insisted on being so different from the parents of her non-Indian friends.

Throughout the interview Sheila emphasized that she did not understand why certain restrictions were imposed on her. In fact, Jeevan explicitly placed very few rules and restrictions on Sheila. Interestingly, it was the lack of boundaries and impositions that puzzled Sheila and made her wonder why certain activities were deemed inappropriate while others were not. For instance, although Jeevan did not allow Sheila to go out to movies or visit her peers, she had no problem allowing Sheila to attend school-hosted social functions. Jeevan explained that this was so because she felt that when Sheila attended a school event, there would be trusted adults present to supervise. However, Jeevan said:

If she goes to a party, I don't know what kind of friends are going to be there... they might be 20 years older, and they can take advantage of her. You understand, I'm not gonna be there to look, right? That's why I tell Sheila, you can't go out to other people's houses where I do not know the people.

According to Sheila, Jeevan did not articulate the reason for this restriction. However, Jeevan said in her interview that she does tell Sheila why she cannot go out with her friends. Clearly, the lines of communication between this mother and daughter were blocked. Jeevan explained very clearly to the interviewer why she sometimes does not allow Sheila to socialize with her peers. Ricky, Kismet's son, shared a perspective similar to Sheila's. He stated that his mother sometimes suddenly restricted his social interactions with friends from childhood. He

perceived the reason for this to be fear that he and his friends would “do trouble” when they were together. Ricky summarized his mother’s sudden change in behaviour as follows:

Ricky: My mom will, like, I’ll tell her I’m going out with my friends or to their house for a sleepover. And she knows my friends really well ‘cause I’ve had all my friends since I was a little kid. Actually, like, the day before yesterday and I’ll, like, [be] talking her into going again. It’s not really an argument, it starts off, like, no you’re not going and I’m, like, please.

Ricky was under the impression that his mother’s reactions were unjustified, especially when it came to denying him the privilege of interacting with his childhood friends:

Ricky: Ah, every summer in July my friend has a really big birthday party like my best friend down the street. I was always tell[ing] my mom, I’m going to his birthday party ‘cause it’s in the summer, but then she’ll start using it against me, like she’ll go “you’re not allowed to go to your friend’s birthday party.

Ricky reported that Kismet suspected that he and his friends were up to no good, but he did not like being accused of acts that he had not committed. Furthermore, he wished she would not suddenly try to restrict him from visiting friends he had known since childhood. Interestingly, when the interviewer asked Kismet if Ricky had ever committed any acts that she deemed to be unacceptable, she said no.

Sheila, Naina, and Ricky all wanted to engage in typical Western activities associated with adolescence. They did not appear to appreciate the cultural fears that prompted their mothers’ decisions as to what was and was not appropriate activity for their children. *Izzat* did not penetrate these adolescents’ cognitive schema and loom large in the perception of why they were not allowed to engage in certain social activities. These adolescents’ main concern was not *izzat*, or personal and family reputation, but simply whether or not they could spend social time with their peers.

As indicated, the Deol parents were different from some of the others in that they set few rules for their children. Esha, Bobby and Tina did much as they pleased, although they did not go

out often. Bobby would sometimes play in the neighbourhood, but for the most part, watching television was all three children's preferred activity. Furthermore, Vimmy was very accommodating of her children, driving them when they needed to go somewhere, taking them shopping, and giving them money when they asked for it. The family also seemed disjointed or dissociated: according to Vimmy, Binder had little interaction with his children. However, Esha and Bobby said that they did not have many problems with their parents. This may reflect the fact that Vimmy did not tell them that she was disappointed when they did not comply with her requests for them to do chores, nor punish them for this

The Raichand family had established rules their children knew had to be obeyed in order to earn certain privileges. Rahul understood the family rules, and although he might have asked to go out, he knew when he would not likely be granted such a request. Again, under the category of norms, how this family set up family rules and restrictions affected how their children understood and dealt with conflict:

Rahul: well if I wanna go with my friends to the mall and it's late and I only have a little bit of time, they want me to stay. I knew that I probably wouldn't be allowed. I just asked why, and she said 'cause you have homework to do. I was okay with it 'cause I sort of knew already.

Since the Raichands went to great lengths to let their children know their expectations, Rahul knew what he must do if he wanted his parents to let him go out.

The Kamal children reported few conflicts with their parents. When either Tommy or Arjun asked their parents to buy them something and were denied, they would save up their allowance to purchase the "forbidden" goods. Tommy and Arjun reported being frustrated that their parents did not know what was "in," and wouldn't let them buy the latest style or video game. They also stated that they often disregarded their parents' desire for them to dress according to Indian standards. Tommy added that he was frustrated when his parents did not

listen to him: “‘cause they don’t know fashion. They always go for the stupid-looking stuff. So, yeah, we just gotta tell them this is not India, we don’t wear that kind of stuff anymore.”

Arjun thought his father Siddharta unreasonable for prohibiting him from associating with certain peers because of their appearance. Arjun did not agree with his father that it was fair to judge people on the basis of their appearance, and felt that his friends’ actions and behaviours were far more than how they looked. This was an area of persistent conflict, and father and son also disagreed about how the conflict should be resolved. Further, although Siddharta stated that he would keep his children away from “bad society,” Arjun said that he would assure his father that his friends were fine and then, apparently without waiting for a response, associate with the individuals his father had deemed unacceptable. All in all, the children interviewed seemed more willing to comply with their parents’ rules when they knew the reason for these rules. However, when this was not the case, they tended to feel that they were unfairly treated and this feeling provoked resentment towards their parents. Many of the adolescents in the sample just wanted to go out with and be like those friends who did not have so many restrictions placed on them.

Summary of Parents’ and Adolescents’ Perspective: How Parents-Adolescent conflict is perceived in the Punjabi Community

Westernization, socialization, trust, and parental training emerged as themes or attributes that described how parents perceived conflict with their teenage children. The interviews demonstrated that parents’ concern for their children’s safety played a vital role in their relationship. Mothers who were fearful that their children would take the wrong step were more restrictive than those who trusted their children’s ability to be careful of their safety. The fear that the Khan, Kapoor, Deewar, and Kamal families expressed seemed to centre upon the larger issue of Westernization and cultural dilution. These parents seemed to perceive Western cultural

influences as negative and wanted to protect their children from these influences. However, it is important to keep in mind that perceptions of the parents might have restricted their contact with the host culture because they perceived it to threaten to their traditional values. Keeping their distance, as it were, would in turn prevent them from examining the accuracy of their beliefs (Segal, 1991). Perhaps greater socialization within Western culture and forming closer relationships with native 'Westerners' would decrease parents' apprehensions regarding the host culture.

Trust affected both mothers' willingness to allow their children to socialize with peers and adolescents' interpretation of mothers' decisions. The question of trust seemed to arise for adolescents when they were denied a request. The adolescents interviewed sometimes felt that their mothers didn't let them go out with their friends because they didn't trust them. Finally, the adolescents did not seem to value mother's expectations that their orders were to be obeyed. They seemed to want a clearer, more in-depth explanation as to why they were not being allowed to socialize with their peers. Hence, the constraints of parental training seemed to limit communication between parents and adolescents.

Research Question Two: How is Conflict in the Punjabi Community Handled?

Before discussing how conflict is handled, it is important to understand the areas of conflict. Everyday family life was one such area for some of the families. The issues of conflict included chores, homework, want of material goods, use of appropriate language, and amount of television usage. The other major area of conflict pertained to socialization practices. When, where, and if adolescents could socialize with their peers appeared to be a major source of controversy.

Additionally, trust and parenting roles arose as major themes in parents' and adolescents' handling of parent-teen child conflict.

Parental Perspective: How do Parents Handle Conflict in the Punjabi Community?

The main categories and subcategories that emerged when parents discussed how they dealt with conflict were norms; authority; rules and restrictions; coping with conflict; and discipline. Each of the six families interviewed had their own unique means for handling conflict. However, in all families this means seemed to be based on whether or not the parents expected unquestioning obedience from their children. Parents who did not emphasize parental training practices appeared to be more open to negotiating with their children. Rani Raichand was one parent who strongly advocated the practice of talking over conflicts with her children and was open to negotiation. For instance, if Varun wanted to stay out an hour past his curfew, he needed to make sure that he had completed all his chores and homework, and given his mother with a sound reason as to why he needed the extra time. In making decisions, Rani, also took Varun's past behaviour into consideration. When Rani was faced with a conflict as to whether she should let her children do something, she went through the following questions with them: Who are they going out with? What are they planning to do? Where are they going? Why are they going? When are they going and when will they be back? She explained her process as such:

Rani: So something came up with Rahul, it's um, saying I wanted to go do this, and my husband, Yash, is saying no; and then my husband might call me and say he's asking for this and I've said no; and what do you think? And, okay, what's going on, where does he want to go? What does he want, and then we have a discussion around it. And it can be in relation to what the child did that we didn't like. So then it's like okay he, you know, my husband is trying to discipline him, and the child is saying well no, no, no. Then we might say okay, let's call the other spouse over.

Significantly, in the Raichand household, if a child and a parent disagreed about a decision, one party did not have the final say in the matter. Rather, the other parent was brought in and all three individuals openly discussed the situation. There was a clear sense of negotiation and the scope of permissible parent-adolescent boundaries was explicitly defined.

In families where there was less negotiation, there tended to be more of a focus on the authority held by the elders. For example, Preeti expected her daughter to do as she was told and was not concerned with decisions made by other parents. Nor did Preeti want the decisions she made to be questioned. Although she would explain her decisions to Naina, she reported that she perceived Preeti to be continually nagging her and did not appreciate it:

Preeti: I say let their parents worry about them. I don't want to worry about them. I have enough [to worry about]. I don't know about their family. They're probably more open. Or some parents just let their kids do whatever they want to do; so I say let their parents worry about them. I have no control over those kids; and I can only tell you what to do or not to do, what is good for you.

Here Preeti stated that she tells Naina what she can and cannot do. Additionally, she said that her parenting strategies resemble those she was raised with: "[When we were growing up] we didn't have any limits. Our parents always told us not to do this and that was it, and we never asked questions why, how come. [Then] it's totally different."

Jeevan, like Preeti, did not like her daughter questioning her authority. However, Jeevan she did not always adequately explain why Sheila was not allowed out with her friends. To complicate matters, Jeevan would sometimes change her initial decision and allow Sheila to go out. When this happened, the reason was never made apparent to Sheila:

Jeevan: Sometimes Sheila says she wants to go to the mall with her friends. And you know, you [say you] can't go, and then she'll get upset about [it] and then.... Sometimes I understand okay, this is the age they gotta go. And I'll say okay [but] you gotta be careful, don't do this and don't do this. I don't like, you know, [want her to do certain things done in Western culture]... and so I try to tell [her] not to, um, do those kinds of things. You should not do it, and then she understands.

Jeevan further revealed that she felt pressured by Sheila's tantrums, which undermined her authority and caused her, to give in to Sheila. Her ambivalent decision-making practices and lack of clarity in defining boundaries may have in turn provoked Sheila's anger and irritation. When Sheila was questioned about why she thought her mother suddenly changed her mind, she was dumbfounded and could not provide an answer. Her only response was "They just let me go". Sheila was thus unable to understand or articulate why her mother changed her mind about a parental decision. It is also important to note that while the adolescents in the Khan and Dewar families complied with their mothers' wishes, it was an unwilling compliance in that they objected to the decisions that their mothers made. Preeti's daughter Naina was never interviewed, but the accounts given by her Preeti indicate that Naina's was also unwillingly compliant. When she really wanted to attend dances or parties, she would argue with her mother and yell at her, but never actually defy her mother's decision.

The Kamals were similar to the Deols in that the parents did not have many rules for their children. Despite spying on their children, Siddharta and Sonia saw Tommy and Arjun as "good kids," and for the most part allowed them to do as they pleased. The majority of conflicts in the Kamal household revolved around the purchase of material goods. Tommy and Arjun liked to play video games, but Siddharta and Sonia declared that the boys had too many games already and that the games were all the same. Therefore, they refrained from buying their children new games on a demand basis. As a result, Tommy and Arjun would purchase video games with their allowance money, in spite of their parents' disapproval. When there was clothing that Tommy or Arjun wanted, they would often purchase it with their allowance, Tommy, the youngest, might beseech his parents until they gave in and bought him what he wanted.

Siddharta and Sonia may not always have approved of the things their children bought, but they never disciplined or punished their children for buying these things. However, if Tommy or Arjun ever did anything to hurt their parents' feelings, an apology was requested and given. Siddharta said: "Sometimes if Tommy or Arjun have done something wrong, then Sonia will tell the boys to apologize to me. But if they did something to me, Siddharta, then...Sonia, goes and says...[say you are] sorry to dad."

Siddharta emphasized the importance of him and Sonia having a good relationship with their children. He himself had not had a good relationship with his own parents when he was growing up. He expressed his desire for what he had never known, an open relationship between parents and children wherein both parties were comfortable talking to each other. Hence, the Kamals had a more relaxed approach to parenting than some of the other parents and were not so shocked when their children "talked back" to them. They were more accommodating because they perceived their children as "nice kids," who (unlike so many kids) voluntarily stayed at home and tended not to go out with friends.

Having said that, the Kamals admitted that on occasion they would resort to enticing their children to comply with their wishes by offering to buy the children certain things in return for doing chores. Similarly, Tommy or Arjun's requests were more likely to be granted if they helped out around the house. The boys also understood that they would be more likely to get the things they wanted if they complied with their parents' wishes. :

Arjun: Like, if we haven't done anything in the house,... you know, none of our chores,...and we go off and ask them, then they're sort of like in a bad mood, and they're like you didn't help us with doing anything [so] why should we get it for you? 'Cause we have to earn it, right. If we do something good like help them out, they usually soften up.

In contrast, in the Kapoor household, Ricky was unable to predict how his mother would react to his requests. Kismat sometimes made a firm decision that Ricky could not go to a friend's home, but she could be persuaded to change her mind if Ricky complained enough.

The Deol family experienced very few conflicts. As noted, Vimmy for the most part allowed her children to do as they pleased. The only area of contention was that Vimmy felt that her children, especially her eldest, Tina, could have helped out more around the house; yet, Vimmy did not press or punish Tina for not helping with chores.

Consequences of defiance also emerged as a category in this section. The extent to which mothers reprimanded their adolescent children and set clear boundaries seemed to influence how the children responded to their mothers. From the examples cited above, indicate that the Deol children were cognizant that if they did not do what Vimmy asked, they were in no danger of having their privileges revoked. However, this lack of discipline was a source of confusion and frustration for Sheila and Ricky because they could not understand why their mothers made the decisions they did.

It was interesting to note that the Deols, Kapoors, Khans and the Kamals did not deal with conflict by meting out consequences when their children disobeyed their parental rules. On the other hand, the Raichands had clear guidelines regarding what would happen if rules were not followed. Their children were aware of the boundaries that had to be respected and also knew what was required for them to get what they wanted (such as permission to visit friends or attend a sleepover).

As explained, the Deewars and Deols tended not to punish their children's misbehaviour. A pattern seemed to develop within the Deol and Kamal families wherein parents' authority was in correspondence to their children becoming increasingly assertive. This pattern was contrasted

by the Raichand family, where the parents' set more explicit boundaries and a willingness to negotiate with their children translated into a more ready compliance on the part of the children.

Adolescent Perspective: How do Adolescents in the Punjabi Community Handle Conflict?

The main categories and subcategories that emerged from the data regarding how adolescents dealt with conflicts were norms; rules and restrictions; how conflicts were handled; and consequences for defiance. Adolescents' perspective on conflict seemed to be influenced by how open to negotiation their parents were. The Raichand children had a clear understanding of their parents' rules and boundaries. Rahul stated that he understood why his parents wanted to know if he had completed his homework and chores before he went out, and as a result he knew what he had to do to be allowed to go out. In other words, he understood the family rules and complied with them in order to have his requests granted.

The Kahn, Dewar, and Kapoor mothers were more restrictive but also unclear about what exactly they expected of their children. As discussed, there would be times when both Jeevan and Kismet would be very firm in their decisions but then give in to their children's demands. Ambivalence seemed to affect their decision-making, but the interviews did not reveal any clear reason for this ambivalence. However, it was abundantly clear that their children were unsure of the rules and puzzled as to why socializing was sometimes permissible and sometimes not.

Both the Deol and Kamal children were self-assertive to the point where they sometimes pressured their parents to comply with their demands or punished their parents by ignoring them. For example, when Tommy Kamal accompanied his parents shopping and he wanted something, he would repeatedly ask and beg his parents. If they stood their ground and refused, he would respond by ignoring their presence:

Tommy: I keep asking them, and if they say no, I just don't say anything. And then when they try to ask me something, they get angry.

Interviewer: And then what happens when they get angry?

Tommy: They usually get me the thing I want.

Interviewer: Is that what usually happens, you don't talk to them, and then they buy it for you?

Tommy: They come back and they have it.

Interviewer: And when you're not talking to them, what's it like in the house? Is it kind of tense? Like they know you're ignoring them?

Tommy: I usually talk to them when I go home, just at the mall [I don't talk to them]. Then they go back and buy it.

Interviewer: Do they go back and buy it for you after you come home?

Tommy: Yeah, or, or right there.

Interviewer: And why do you get mad?

Tommy: 'Cause I want it badly.

On this occasion and others, Tommy's parents gave in to him and bought him what he wanted because he "keeps asking" or nagging them. They also knew that he would ignore them if they refused. Arjun Kamal, the eldest child in the family, had a similar attitude to conflict:

Interviewer: Like, say, you want to buy some shoes and they're, like, [saying] no, who has the final say?

Arjun: They do. I just listen [to] them. If they say no, alright.

Interviewer: What about the times when you go out and buy it with your own money?

Arjun: Nothing will happen after that. They will just say alright. That's it. They say you could have waited, or you could have asked us some other time [and] we could have gotten it for you. That kind of stuff. You could have still had your money. You should have waited a little bit.

Both these examples highlight how the Kamal adolescents dealt with conflict: they either nag their parents to the point of exasperation or they openly defy their parents and use their allowance to purchase the "forbidden" goods. It is important to note that neither of these children received any form of punishment for having gone against their parents' wishes, and they realized this.

The Punjabi sample interviewed indicates that adolescents exhibit two patterns of response when there is a conflict regarding parental requests for compliance: they argue with their parents and then unwillingly submit to the parents' authority, or they simply did as they

wished in the first place. It also appears that adolescents' attitude toward conflict reflects the tone of parents' discipline. If parents show any signs that they can be persuaded to change their minds, their children push the matter until they gave in; such nagging behaviour was demonstrated by Tommy and Ricky. However, if parents are firm and set clearly defined limits, their children might talk back but are unlikely to defy their parents' orders.

Summary of Parents' and Adolescents' Perspective: How is Conflict in the Punjabi Community Handled?

The two dominant themes that emerged from this section on how conflict was handled were parental training and discipline. Parental training played a major role in how conflicts were handled within Punjabi families. Mothers who strongly adhered to parental training practices expected their children to be obedient without protest. The adolescents did often protest, but in the end, usually willingly or unwillingly submitted to their mothers' demands.

Parents who did not rigidly adhere to the parental training model were more open to discussing possible options with their child when a conflict arose. Their children also seemed to be aware of what needed to be done if they wanted to maintain their privileges. The more defined the boundaries were for a child in these households, the greater the degree to which children understood what was permissible.

Lastly, discipline affected how far adolescents would push an issue. Those whose parents upheld parental training practices argued with their mothers but never crossed the line of disobeying their authority. However, those whose parents did not impose disciplinary action for their behaviour were more likely to assert their own desires, in spite of their parents' disapproval.

Research Question Three: How do Parent-Adolescent Conflicts Affect the Family Unit in Punjabi Families?

The researcher posed the following questions in order to understand how conflict affected the family unit: Does conflict lead to animosity? Does conflict in the household create tension among family members? Is the interaction between family members affected by conflict? In seeking answers to these questions, the theme of parental training arose in relation to how families were affected by conflict.

Parents' Perspective: How do Parent-Adolescent Conflicts Affect the Family Unit in Punjabi Families?

Each family had their own unique perspective on conflict. In the Khan and Deewar families, Jeevan and Kismet were frustrated when their daughters repeatedly asked them why they could not go out. The categories and subcategories of norms and authority arose when unitizing the data on how mothers viewed the effects of conflict on the family unit.

Jeevan became angry with Sheila if she continually asked why she was not allowed out. Jeevan explained that she had told Sheila why she could not go out, and that this should be the end of the discussion. Jeevan admitted to being unhappy about the distress she caused Sheila by not allowing her to socialize, but said that she needed to protect Sheila from dangers that she might encounter when out with her friends. Preeti voiced similar concerns in the face of Naina's negative reaction. Preeti asked herself:

What am I doing wrong? Sometimes I think maybe I am not giving the right answer. Or maybe, I don't know. Or maybe I should let her go. Sometimes maybe I should trust her and not care about her friends and what they do. Yeah, so many things go on, and she gets mad, and you don't want her to get mad, and I'm not saying that I don't trust her or anything like that. It's just, you know, you cannot just give into what you're feeling; there has to be limits for everything. You don't want her to get mad, but you can't let her go either. Then you just... you don't know what to do. You're just upset.

When things get intense between Preeti and Naina, she will tell Naina:

Go away, I don't want to talk, this is over. Then I wait till I'm calm so we can talk later. And sometimes you just scream and yell. When, um, there's tension, I'd rather not talk, rather not talk to her, 'cause then she's mad and you're mad and you end up saying things or yelling, so it's not going to bring anything. Naina, if she wants to go somewhere, she wants to come back and talk again. Sometimes when we're having a discussion,... she screams at that time and, you know, she yells.

Preeti's strategy for coping with conflict seemed to be to withdraw and say nothing, particularly when there was emotional intensity; she didn't want to provoke a situation where both she and Naina might say things that they later regretted. Moreover, the interview revealed that conflict in the Deewar household could become very intense when Naina objected to her mother's decisions.

Rani Raichand admitted to becoming tense when there was an issue needing to be discussed. She stated that she was more anxious when she was upset with her children. She explained how her anxiety affected the family when her eldest son Varun attended the party that ended in violence:

Rani: Um, I think the other two, Pummi and Rahul, knew that we were tense about the party, and ...they knew that we were angry at the oldest. And so they would go to bed without saying anything because mom and dad are irritable, [so] who knows what they'll say.

Interviewer: So are they more careful around the house?

Rani: Careful.

Interviewer: And then what are you and your husband like when you're tense?

Rani: Ah, he's irritable when he's tense. When I'm tense, I can be sort of uptight and sort of a bit restless. So, not as grounded and calm.

In this family, tension was pervasive until conflict was resolved.

Unlike Rani, Vimmy mentioned no feelings of irritation or annoyance in response to her daughter's non-compliance. When Vimmy asked her daughter Tina for help with chores and was refused, Vimmy would do the work herself instead of pressuring her daughter. Nor did she reprimand her daughter for deliberately defying her request. According to Vimmy's comments,

there was no unpleasant outcome for either herself or Tina when Tina refused her requests. However, Siddharta said his wife became irritable with her children when they shirked their chores and then ignored them. He said that the children would become more compliant and complete their chores when they observed this reaction. Sonia's children would also engage their mother in conversation on topics they knew she liked to discuss when they noticed she was upset with them. Tommy's comments during the interview made it evident that he would approach his mother and talk to her in order to help her to feel better and become less upset. The Kamal children likewise seemed to try to appease their mother Sonia (rather than rebel against her) when she was upset with them.

Distinguishing themselves from the other families interviewed, the Deols indicated that there was no disruption in daily household routines when they had a conflict. In the Raichand household, conflict created a "walking-on-eggshells" mood; the parents would become tense and this would cause the children to be more careful not to upset their parents and make them even more irritated and upset. In contrast, when Sonia Kamal became upset, it would elicit a more cooperative response from her children. In the Khan and Deewar families, mothers got angry when their children questioned their authority, which was inviolate according to the parental training model.

Adolescent Perspective: How Does Conflict Affect the Family Unit in Punjabi Families?

Faced with not getting what they wanted, such as going out or being bought something, Ricky Kapoor and Arjun Kamal would simply put their attention on something else. This strategy seemed to work for them, as neither child seemed to become deeply or persistently concerned over being denied their privileges. Therefore, such disagreements did not disrupt the family's equilibrium. Ricky acknowledged his parents' authority without apparent resistance,

and explained that he should be respectful of his parents' decisions "because I know that they're sort of in charge." Therefore, when Ricky's mom told him he could not go out, he would tell his friends that he could not visit them, and then do something else such as going to the mall or watching a movie. However, Ricky's mother Kismet contradicted what he said in his interview. In her mind, there were times when Ricky became very angry and talked back to her because she did not allow him to go out. She said that, at such times, he needed time to calm down before she could talk to him.

Similarly, Sheila also needed time to calm down when she was upset. In her interview she noted that although conflict with her parents did not disrupt daily routine, it did take some time for her anger to subside. Lastly, the Deol children mentioned that a situation never really arose wherein their mother forbade them to go out or do something they wanted to do. If they needed something, all they had to do was ask their mother and she would usually give it to them.

The degree of respect that mothers expected from their children played a significant role in how the children reacted to their decisions and whether resentment and tension pervaded the atmosphere in a situation of conflict. If the adolescent felt unfairly treated and the parent was unbending (as perceived by both Sheila and Naina), the emotional aftermath of a conflict would be proportionately greater. In contrast, in families where there was a spirit of negotiation, or alternatively, where the children knew there would be little repercussion if they disobeyed, the aftermath of conflict seemed negligible.

Summary of Parents' and Adolescents' Perspective: How Conflicts Affect the Family Unit.

If an adolescent disregarded the rules and restrictions regarding certain family norms, mothers would become anxious until the matter was resolved and they had had an opportunity to discuss the matter with their child; the level of anxiety depended on the severity of the

objectionable behaviour. Furthermore, if mothers were upset during a conflict, their emotions seemed to affect the rest of the household. Likewise, adolescents who reacted adversely to their parents' directives could affect the emotional tone of the entire family.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

Family trajectories in the present study appeared to be different for parents and adolescents. Parents viewed family relationships as becoming closer-knit as children grow older, whereas adolescents saw themselves as moving away from the family unit and becoming more autonomous individuals. While adolescence in the North American context is generally understood as a period during which children mature and are given more freedom and responsibility, many of the adolescents in the present study did not experience balanced relationships with their parents wherein both parties had an equal say (Ghuman, 1997; Tucker et al., 2003). It appeared that the adolescents in this study were primarily concerned with being teenagers in the North American sense, but they could not count on receiving the gradual increase of freedom and responsibility that would be granted to their Caucasian peers. Rather, their freedom seems to be consistently constrained throughout adolescence. Wanting to go out with friends and not be constantly under the watchful eye of their mothers was therefore a common cause of aggravation for the Punjabi adolescents interviewed (Farver, 2002; Ghuman, 1997; Patel et al., 1996).

The majority of mothers in the sample were unlikely to discuss their decisions with their children. Many of them practiced what has been referred to as parental training and accordingly expected complete obedience and respect from their children. As shown, parental training reflects the notion that children should unquestioningly obey and respect their elders' or parents' final authority (Carson et al., 1999; Ghuman, 1997; Jambunathan & Counselman, 2002). From the interviews it appears that parental training, socialization, Westernization, trust, and discipline

played prominent roles in the way that parents and adolescents perceived, handled, and responded to conflict.

This section will discuss how these themes relate to the three leading questions of this study: 1) how are parent-adolescent conflicts perceived within the Punjabi community?; 2) how is parent-adolescent conflict within the Punjabi community handled?; and 3) how does parent-adolescent conflict in the Punjabi community affect the family unit? The ways in which these themes are related to previous research on parent-adolescent relationships will also be discussed, as will the limitations and strengths of the present study; and directions for future research.

Parental Training

It seems that many mothers are accustomed to traditional Indian parenting practices, which assert that children should listen to their elders without questioning their authority (Carson et al., 1999; Ghuman, 1997). Although teenagers may be looking for more negotiation with their parents, mothers are expecting obedience (Patel-Amin & Power, 2002; Steiner & Bansil, 1989). This difference in agendas or desires forms the basis of conflict between Punjabi adolescents and mothers.

Mothers' insistence on unquestioned obedience reflects the first theme, which emerged from the interviews: parental training. As has been indicated, parental training demands that children obey parental decisions without question whether they like it or not. Consequently, mothers whose children disobeyed their authority often became very displeased and angry. Some adolescent's felt that their mothers' parental training style served to silence them and that the demand for unconditional obedience was such that they were not listened to. This tended to cause frustration, anger, and resistance to maternal authority (Segal, 1991; Smetana, 2005).

North American values run contrary to traditional Indian values that endorse submission to elders (Ghuman, 1997; Jambunathan & Counselman, 2002). Generally speaking, North American adolescents are taught to question authority and to strive for autonomy (Ghuman, 1997; Stopes-Roe, 1989). Consequently, North American Punjabi adolescents with parental training-type mothers were inclined to argue with them about their decisions (Farver et al., 2002). Despite these adolescents' protests, many Punjabi mothers remained firm and unwavering in their resolve. This led to both anger and unwilling compliance on the part of the adolescents; yet those who were unhappy with many of their parents' decisions were often unlikely to oppose them. Some parents in the present study expressed unhappiness about the relationship they themselves had had with their own parents while growing up, and did not feel that engaging in rigid parental training practices with their own children was desirable. As a result, these parents strove for more negotiation with their children and granted them more freedom. Adolescents from these families did not perceive conflict as necessarily negative. This marked a contrast with those adolescents who were unable to persuade their parents to reconsider their decisions (Carson et al., 1999). These adolescents tended to see conflict as consistently negative.

Socialization and Westernization

The norms and cultural values that determine what is and what is not seen as appropriate also influenced the ways in which parents handled conflict. Norms and rules regarding gender, sexuality, health, religion, and ethnicity all played a pivotal role in how parents reacted to their children's requests and how they perceived and responded to conflict. For instance, within the Punjabi community, it is not acceptable for adolescent females to date; mothers may therefore restrict their daughters' activities in order to prevent them from dating during adolescence (Desai, et al., 1987; Farver et al., 2002; Ghuman, 1997; Handa, 2003; Patel et al., 1996).

Similarly, parents are likely to restrict both male and female children's interaction with peers who engage in behaviour that the Punjabi community views as a vice (Hennink et al., 1999). Cultural ramifications, specifically family shame and dishonor (*izzat*), may prevent parents from allowing their children to participate in certain activities. For instance, if a parent were aware that one of their children's friends was in an intimate relationship, they might be less inclined to allow their child to associate with that individual. In the present study, parents who demonstrated parental training styles were more likely to enforce rigid restrictions on their children than parents who did not demonstrate parental training styles.

Socialization was an important theme for parents in the present study, specifically as it pertained to their children mixing with peers. Many parents were generally worried about the negative influence that Western culture would have on their children. They expressed concerns that their children might succumb to peer pressure to engage in behaviours seen as inappropriate, especially when socializing with North American peers. For example, some mothers in the sample feared that their children might start smoking or dating. The fear of their children becoming Westernized thus caused mothers to view their children's requests to spend time with certain peers in a negative light, and they became more inclined to deny these requests and restrict their children's social life (Wakil et al., 1981).

It is important to note that parents who did not practice parental training tended to place greater trust in their children. They were less likely to prohibit their children from socializing with peers, constrain their children's capacity to become more autonomous, and worry about what their children might do when out with their peers.

Trust

Trust is another theme that emerged from the interviews. Conceptualized as the extent to which parents are confident that their children will make the right decisions and choices, it was found to play a vital role in mothers' tendency to grant their children some level of autonomy. Again, mothers with a parental training style were less likely to trust their child, more concerned about what their child might do when out with friends, and more insistent that their child uphold Indian cultural norms.

Many of the adolescents who were interviewed said they felt their parents did not trust them. Their parents, however, said that they did trust their children. At the same time, these parents' fears about what their children might do when away from home made them restrict their children's social activities. Apparently, they did not in actuality trust their children to practice the traditional cultural values they sought to instill in them (Segal, 1991). The children reported being frustrated with their parents' lack of trust, but this didn't cause their parents to consider negotiating with them.

Discipline

Lastly, discipline seemed to play an important role for many of the families in the sample. Some of the adolescents interviewed mentioned that their mothers sometimes unexpectedly prohibited their participation in certain activities or, just as unexpectedly, allowed them to participate in activities that would usually be disallowed. As a result, these adolescents seemed confused as to what was and was not appropriate behaviour. Mothers who expected unconditional obedience from their children seemed less likely to clearly articulate the reasons for their decisions than parents who did not (Segal, 1991; Stern, 1999). As demonstrated by some

of the adolescent interviews, not knowing the reason for their mothers' decisions sometimes left children confused, angry and upset with their mothers.

When parents did not clearly define boundaries, adolescents were confused about when it was appropriate to go out with their peers. On the other hand, when boundaries were more clearly defined by parents, adolescents seemed to better understand what their limitations and options were. When no boundaries were presented and adolescents were free to do as they pleased, they appeared to have little incentive to be respectful of their parents' authority.

Essentially, parental training practices seemed to constitute the foundation of one way for parents and adolescents to respond to and handle conflict. Therein, these practices impacted how conflict affected the family unit. Mothers who were unwilling to negotiate with their children and who expected unquestioning compliance from their children were more likely to rigidly enforce cultural norms and values and less likely to trust that their children would make the right decisions.

Parental training practices clearly have drawbacks and negative connotations. Yet, this style of parenting must be acknowledged for its capacity to keep a family close and connected, preserve a family's name and reputation, and deters children from engaging in behaviours that are seen as vices (Drury, 1991; Hennink et al., 1999; Segal, 1991; Steiner & Bansil, 1989).

However, the clash between parenting training on the one hand and the expectations of adolescents on the other contributes substantially to ongoing conflicts between Punjabi parents and teenage children. The difference between the younger and older generations' ideologies and desires may be another factor at play in these conflicts. Parents and adolescents in the sample seem to perceive and deal with conflict from two different conceptual frameworks. Parental training mothers were for the most part concerned with reinforcing Indian cultural values such as

honour, respect and family cohesion, whereas adolescents growing up in North America tended to focus on autonomy. The adolescents in the present study were either less aware of Indian cultural norms than their mothers or placed less emphasis on them than their mothers. Hence, there appeared to be a fundamental state of discord or dichotomy between parents' and adolescents' expectations and desires. Furthermore, the host culture does not advocate and reinforce traditional Indian values, and this may have discouraged parents from allowing their children to socialize outside the home environment.

Limitations of the Present Study

In aiming to gain meaningful insights into a South Asian community, it is crucial for researchers to build trust with research participants. Indians' hesitation to express their feelings about private family matters to outsiders further emphasizes the need for trust (Commander et al., 2004; Desai, et al., 1987). It is important to note that such hesitance on the part of participants in this study may have meant that the information gathered was inaccurate or incomplete and/or limited the researcher's rigor. That many of the participants were reluctant to discuss the categories presented to them during the member checks may reflect a lack of trust or confidence in the researcher. Alternatively, the participants may have been wary due a lack of understanding about the research process. Indians who study issues pertinent to South Asians may find themselves caught in a paradox. On the one hand, having a South Asian conduct studies within the South Asian community can be an asset. Research participants may feel more comfortable speaking to an individual that they can identify with and speaking an Indian dialect can be extremely useful when conducting interviews, as language carries socially constructed meanings. On the other hand, research within the medical profession shows that Indians are less likely to disclose personal information to other Indians, especially when it pertains to family

dynamics. The reason for this is fear that the researcher might discuss the information with other individuals in the South Asian community who should not be privy to it (Commander et al., 2004; Farver et al., 2002; Steiner & Bansil, 1989). In addition, South Asians might also worry that the information they shared might be discussed with other family members. South Asian researchers working within the South Asian community therefore need to go to extra lengths in order to reassure participants that all the information they give is completely confidential.

Another limitation to this study was the fact that this it was retrospective: participants were asked to recall past incidents. Their memories may not always have been accurate, especially with regard to the emotions they experienced at the time of the events in question. The retrospective aspect may also have limited participants' ability to accurately recall the effect that conflicts have on the family unit. Furthermore, it was difficult to obtain a complete picture of the family dynamics because many of the fathers in these families did not want to take part in the study. This might have affected the ecological validity of the study.

Lastly, researcher bias may also have affected the results. The researcher was born and raised in Canada as a member of British Columbia's Punjabi community. Although measures such as triangulation aimed to ensure that the data were analyzed in an objective and culturally sensitive manner, this may nonetheless have slightly influenced her interpretation.

Strengths

Much of the literature on parent-adolescent conflicts has focused on adolescents' perspective. Parents have been largely portrayed in a negative light as being overbearing, strict and uncompromising. In considering their perspective as well as that of their children, this study not only extends the existing body of research on intergenerational conflict within South Asian families, but also provides a more realistic portrait of parents. The interviews with the parents in

this sample highlighted parents' motivation for adopting parental training practices and the key values that these practices embody. Although parents did not always clearly articulate the reasons for their decisions, parental training essentially acted as a means by which to transmit Indian cultural values and beliefs. In emphasizing a family's harmony and cohesion, it also reflected the collectivist nature of Indian culture. Yet, it seems that just as parents wanted to instill Indian values in their children, children wanted to instill Western values in their parents, and neither side was willing to explore the other's cultural values and beliefs.

Future Directions

As the researcher is an instrument of the research, the framework of traditional family development, which was employed in this study, reflected the researcher's perspective, background and training (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). Using this particular theoretical framework to analyze and interpret the data shaped the findings in causing them to follow a particular developmental trajectory. Thus, it was not possible to pursue the particular insights, which would have been generated by assuming a sociocultural perspective.

Since much of the research on South Asian family dynamics, especially that pertaining to parent-adolescent conflict, has been rooted within a predominately traditional North American developmental psychology parenting literature, it would be beneficial to approach the problem from different perspectives. A study, which took a sociocultural perspective, could allow for an analysis based on family members' unique histories and particular environmental factors. Using it to examining the role of power and control in inter-generational conflict may yield greater insights into the struggles that adolescents and parents face when it comes to issues of autonomy. As noted, the values embodied by parental training practices appear to be an integral part of family dynamics within Indian communities. Therefore, it might be important to examine the

ways in which second-generation Punjabi adolescents express and attain autonomy and the ways in which first-generation parents who have a parental training style respond to their children's efforts to achieve greater autonomy.

If such a study were to be undertaken, the concept of 'launching' should be taken into account and a greater age range than that used in the present study should be targeted accordingly. In a North American parenting context, launching refers to parents allowing their children to become more independent and preparing their children to leave home (Santrock, 1998). It seems likely that Punjabi parents would have a vastly different perception of "launching" than North American parents. The typical traditional family trajectory for Punjabi families is for children to leave their parents' home once they marry, and to then live with their in-laws and/or their husband. Even Punjabi children who live in Canada are unlikely to leave their family of origin until they are married (Mullatti, 1995). It may therefore be practical to study individuals between the ages of 13 to 25 in order to examine whether any changes occur in the amount of freedom that they are granted or gained. It may be that teens are allowed greater privileges as they mature into their 20s, or conversely, that battles over autonomy intensify when Punjabi youth (particularly females) reach their 20s.

Finally, cross-sectional longitudinal studies could further illuminate the issue of bi-cultural identity and its impact on South Asian families. It is possible that some South Asian adolescents grow into adults who are adept in two cultural milieus and have high regard for the way in which their parents raised them. Alternatively, others may feel that they were denied a chance to be fully conversant in the ways of the host culture and hold resentments towards their parents. Such a study would provide a fuller picture of long-term family processes and distinguish between cultural, individual, environmental and community factors.

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Publication.

APPENDIX A
CONSENT FORMS

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Department of Educational & Counselling
Psychology & Special Education
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6K 1Z4
Tel: (604) 822-0091
Fax: (604) 822-3302

Consent Form South Asian Family Interaction Study Parent Version

Principal Investigator:

Laurie Ford, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Educational and Counselling
Psychology and Special Education
2125 Main Mall.
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

Co-Investigator:

Surita Jassal
Graduate Student
Department of Educational and Counselling
Psychology and Special Education
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

Dear Parent,

Please read the following carefully. This is a request for you to take part in the study that we are doing with families in the South Asian community.

Purpose of the Study:

We want to learn more about the family life experiences of South Asians living in Canada. South Asians are one of the fastest growing populations in Canada, yet very little is known about South Asian families. Through this study, we hope to learn more about South Asian family relations, especially interactions between parents and their teenage children.

If you agree to take part you should know:

- The project is part of the master's degree requirements for Ms. Jassal.
- You will be interviewed at a location we all agree upon.
- You and your teenage child will be interviewed separately.
- If you have more than one child who is eligible to take part in the study we will interview all eligible children who want to participate.
- Each interview will take about one hour.
- The interview will be audio taped so we can review it more carefully when the interview is completed.
- You will also be asked to answer some questions about your family background.
- No real names will be used on transcripts to protect the identity of the participants.
- Your interview will be conducted by a member of the research team supervised by Dr. Laurie Ford.

- If you do not want to take part you may stop at any point or withdraw your agreement to take part.
- This information is confidential. **No individual information will be reported and no parent or child will be identified by name** in any reports about the completed study.
- The only people who will have access to the information you give us are the researchers working with this project.
- If for some reason information is obtained regarding the abuse of minors it will be reported as is required by law.
- If as the result of taking part in this study, you would like to receive some information on ways to help support your family, the researchers will give you the name of someone in your local community where you can receive support.
- All documents including the audiotapes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in Dr. Ford's research lab at the University of British Columbia. Only people working on this study will have access to this information.
- To thank you for helping us, each family member who takes part in an interview will receive \$10.
- If at any time you have concerns about your treatment or rights as a person taking part in a research study, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at the University of British Columbia at (604) 822-8598.
- If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact either of the researchers at the number listed above.

South Asian Parent Interaction Study

Parent Participant Consent Form

Please check one of the following:

Yes, I agree to take part in the project

No, I do not wish to take part in the project

Participant signature (please sign):

Participant name (please print your name):

Date:

Interviewer (Witness):

Your signature indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form (Pages 1-3) for your own records.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Department of Educational & Counselling
Psychology & Special Education
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6K 1Z4
Tel: (604) 822-0091
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Assent Form South Asian Family Interaction Study Adolescent Version

Principal Investigator:

Laurie Ford, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Educational and Counselling
Psychology and Special Education
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

Co-Investigator:

Surita Jassal
Graduate Student
Department of Educational and Counselling
Psychology and Special Education
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

Dear Participant,

Please read the following carefully. This is a request for you to take part in the study that we are doing with families in the South Asian community.

Purpose of the Study:

We want to learn more about the family life experiences of South Asians living in Canada. South Asians are one of the fastest growing populations in Canada, yet very little is known about South Asian families. Through this study, we hope to learn more about South Asian family relations, especially interactions between parents and their teenage children.

If you agree to take part you should know:

- The project is part of the master's degree requirements for Ms. Jassal.
- You will be interviewed at a location we all agree upon.
- You and your parents will be interviewed separately.
- Each interview will take about one hour.
- The interview will be audiotaped so we can review it more carefully when the interview is completed.
- You will also be asked to answer some questions about your family background.
- No real names will be used on transcripts to protect the identity of the participants.
- Your interview will be conducted by a member of the research team supervised by Dr. Laurie Ford.
- If you do not want to take part you may stop at any point or withdraw your agreement to take part.
- This information is confidential. **No individual information will be reported and no parent or child will be identified by name** in any reports about the completed study.

- The only people who will have access to the information you give us are the researchers working with this project.
- If for some reason information is obtained regarding the abuse of minors it will be reported as is required by law.
- If as the result of taking part in this study, you would like to receive some information on ways to help support your family, the researchers will give you the name of someone in your local community where you can receive support.
- All documents including the audiotapes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in Dr. Ford's research lab at the University of British Columbia. Only people working on this study will have access to this information.
- To thank you for helping us, each family member who takes part in an interview will receive \$10.
- If at any time you have concerns about your treatment or rights as a person taking part in a research study, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at the University of British Columbia at (604) 822-8598.
- If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact either of the researchers at the number listed above.

South Asian Parent Interaction Study

Adolescent Participant Assent Form

Please check one of the following:

Yes, I agree to take part in the project

No, I do not wish to take part in the project

Participant signature (please sign):

Participant name (please print your name):

Date:

Interviewer (Witness):

Your signature indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form (Pages 1-3) for your own records.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Department of Educational & Counselling
Psychology & Special Education
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6K 1Z4
Tel: (604) 822-0091
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Consent Form South Asian Family Interaction Study Parent-Adolescent Version

Principal Investigator:

Laurie Ford, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Educational and Counselling
Psychology and Special Education
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

Co-Investigator:

Surita Jassal
Graduate Student
Department of Educational and Counselling
Psychology and Special Education
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

Dear Parent,

Please read the following carefully. This is a request for you and your child to take part in the study that we are doing with families in the South Asian community.

Purpose of the Study:

We want to learn more about the family life experiences of South Asians living in Canada. South Asians are one of the fastest growing populations in Canada, yet very little is known about South Asian families. Through this study, we hope to learn more about South Asian family relations, especially interactions between parents and their teenage children.

If you agree to take part you should know:

- The project is part of the master's degree requirements for Ms. Jassal.
- Your teenage child will be interviewed at a location we all agree upon.
- You and your teenage child will be interviewed separately.
- If you have more than one child who is eligible to take part in the study we will interview all eligible children who want to participate.
- Each interview will take about one hour.
- The interview will be audiotaped so we can review it more carefully when the interview is completed.
- Your child will also be asked to answer some questions about your family background.
- No real names will be used on transcripts to protect the identity of the participants.
- Your child's interview will be conducted by a member of the research team supervised by Dr. Laurie Ford.

- If your child does not want to take part or you do not want them to participate in the interview your child or you may stop at any point, or agreement to take part can be withdrawn.
- This information is confidential. **No individual information will be reported and no parent or child will be identified by name** in any reports about the completed study.
- The only people who will have access to the information you give us are the researchers working with this project.
- If for some reason information is obtained regarding the abuse of minors it will be reported as is required by law.
- If as the result of taking part in this study, you or your child would like to receive some information on ways to help support your family, the researchers will give you the name of someone in your local community where you can receive support.
- All documents including the audiotapes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in Dr. Ford's research lab at the University of British Columbia. Only people working on this study will have access to this information.
- To thank you for helping us, each family member who takes part in an interview will receive \$10.
- If at any time you have concerns about your child's treatment or rights as a person taking part in a research study, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at the University of British Columbia at (604) 822-8598.
- If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact either of the researchers at the number listed above.

South Asian Parent Interaction Study

Parent Participant Consent Form

Please check one of the following:

Yes, I agree to for my child to take part in the project

No, I do not wish for my child to take part in the project

Parent/Guardian signature (please sign):

Parent/Guardian name (please print your name):

Your Child's Name (please print their name):

Date:

Interviewer (Witness):

Your signature indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form (Pages 1-3) for your own records.

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

South Asian Family Study Background Information
PARENT VERSION
 (Completed by Interview)

Respondent: _____ Father _____ Mother _____ Other

How many children under the age of 19 live with you? _____
 Specify Ages: _____

How many other adults live with you in your home? _____
 If any, specify what other adults live in your home (e.g. grandmother, aunt, cousin)

How old were you when you came to Canada? _____

What year did you immigrate to Canada? _____

Where in India did you live? _____
 Is this a Rural or Urban area? (circle one)

Did you marry in India?
 If no, where did you marry?

What is your highest level of education and where was that education completed?

Level of Education	Mother		Father	
	India	Canada	India	Canada
Less than Grade 9				
Less than High School Diploma				
High School Diploma				
Some college, trade school, university				
Diploma/Certificate college/trade school				
Bachelors Degree				
Post-Baccalaureate Diploma or Graduate Degree				

What is your current employment status? (specify one)

- a. Working full time
- b. Working Part time
- c. Full time student
- d. Part-time student
- e. . Not employed

What best describes your annual income:

- a. Less than \$14, 999
- b. \$15, 000 - \$19, 999
- c. \$20, 000 - \$ 29,999

- d. \$30,000 - \$39,999
- f. \$40,000 - \$59,999
- g. \$60,000 or more

South Asian Family Study Background Information
ADOLESCENT VERSION
(Completed by Interview)

Respondent: _____ Male _____ Female

Age: _____ Grade: _____

How many children under the age of 19 live in your home? _____
Specify Ages: _____

How many adults other than your parents live with you in your home? _____
If any, specify what other adults live in your home (e.g. grandmother, aunt, cousin)

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

South Asian Family Study Interview Protocol

(To Be Conducted With Mothers, Fathers, and Adolescent Children)

1. What does the word family mean to you?
 - a. What are your daily routines?
 - b. What are you not allowed to do?
 - i. Inside the house
 - ii. Outside the house
 - iii. Who can't you talk to on the phone? What can't you do on the internet?
 - c. What is a typical school day or weekend like regarding peer and family interactions?
 - i. Are there certain aspects about the day that you have to keep from either your friends or family? Can you give me a concrete example?
 - ii. Parents:
 1. What do you know about your child's school day (what did they do, who did they talk to, hang out with)?
3. What do disagreements between you and your family surround?
 - a. What do you do that gets you in trouble?
 - b. What are family rules regarding what you can and can't do?
 - i. Are you allowed to date?
 - ii. Go out to parties/school dances/movies?
4. How do you feel when there is a conflict between you and your child/parent?
 - a. Are you angry, depressed?
 - b. Do feel like you are about to lose control of your temper?
 - c. What do you feel like doing?
 - i. Do you ever think about running away?
 - ii. Hurting yourself?
 - iii. Do you ignore your parents?
5. How are these disagreements handled?
 - a. For instance is there a discussion that takes place?
 - b. Does one person have the say in the matter?
 - c. How do you respond to comments made by your parents/child?
 - d. Is there a lot of arguing?
 - e. What happens at the end of the conflict (will draw on an example that has been mentioned earlier)
5. How would your father handle the conflict about X (issue mentioned above)
 - a. Would your father handle this conflict differently with one of your other siblings? If yes, how so?
6. How would your mother handle the conflict about X (issue mentioned above)
 - a. Would your mother handle this conflict differently with one of your other siblings? If yes, how so?
7. Question for Parent (in place of question 5 & 6): how do you react to a conflict about X (as mentioned above parents' response to question)
 - a. If the parent has more than one child how do you (the parent) handle this issue with X?
8. How do you react after a conflict/after the discussion?

- a. Is the environment in your house the same as it was before?
 - b. Is there more tension between you and your parents?
 - c. Is there a difference in how you behave towards your parents after the conflict (ignore parents, rude, act out)?
9. How do you feel about the conflicts' resolution or how it ended?
- a. Do you feel satisfied?
 - i. What specific incidents about the conflict are causing you to feel satisfaction or dissatisfaction?
 - b. Do wish things had gone differently and how so?
 - c. How do you wish the situation had been handled?

APPENDIX D

CATEGORIES AND THEMES FOR DATA ANALYSIS

Categories	Sub-Categories
Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interacting with peers ▪ Rules and Restrictions ▪ Dating
Affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not allowed to go out ▪ Restrictions ▪ Limited contact with peers
Consequences for defiance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Privileges taken away ▪ No consequence ▪ Lecturing
Handle Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compliance ▪ Forced Compliance ▪ Self assertion ▪ Argue ▪ Yell ▪ Ignore ▪ Incitement
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent accompanies child ▪ Limiting contact with peers

Themes from Interviews with Punjabi Families

Parental Training

Socialization

Westernization

Trust

Discipline
