

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis:

FAMILY REPUTATION IN ASIAN INDIAN
AMERICAN WOMEN: AN EXPLORATION
OF ITS IMPLICATIONS AND EMOTIONAL
CONSEQUENCES

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Asian Indian American young women are often torn between two incompatible cultures, Eastern and Western. The former promotes collectivism while the latter promotes individualism. In addition to this internal cultural conflict, there is the added obligation of maintaining one's family reputation which can create challenges for young women who are navigating these opposing cultures. The specific goal of this study was to understand how Asian Indian American undergraduate women experience and perceive family reputation, in addition to its impacts on their emotional experience, emotional coping, and mental health. The method involved semi-structured interviews with ten participants who identified as (a) Asian Indian American, (b) cis-gendered woman, (c) second-generation immigrant, (d) the child of two parents born in India, and (e) an undergraduate student at the University of Maryland. For analyses, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was used to code and develop themes that emerged from the interview narratives. Results yielded six superordinate themes that defined family reputation

through the perspective of the participants as well as their conceptualization of the various factors that are related to the construct (e.g., gender). The discussion addresses the importance of understanding this construct as it shows up for this sample given its relevance in various aspects of their lives.

FAMILY REPUTATION IN ASIAN INDIAN AMERICAN WOMEN: AN EXPLORATION
OF ITS IMPLICATIONS AND EMOTIONAL CONSEQUENCES

by

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Asian American youth are often torn between two cultures: One that promotes individualism (Western culture), and another that emphasizes collectivism (Eastern culture). Given the differences that exist between both cultures that youth must navigate, they may often feel “sandwiched” between two opposing, often incompatible, cultures (Roysircar-Sodowsky & Maestas, 2000). The emphasis on collectivism is prevalent among Asian American culture yet given the vast diversity of Asian cultures and experiences, this may look different depending on the individual. A collectivist culture emphasizes the importance of prioritizing the welfare of the group while an individualistic culture recognizes individuals as separate from the group (Le & Stockdale, 2005). There are various groups in the larger category of Asian Americans, including South Asian Americans, Southeast Asian Americans, and East Asian Americans, and it is crucial that scholars avoid lumping these groups together when conducting research (Sandhu & Madathil, 2008). Although South Asia as a geographic region consists of cultures that share common features (e.g., values, individual and family expectations) there are many differences between and within subcultures (Sandhu & Madathil, 2008). This range of diversity within the South Asian group further emphasizes the importance of acknowledging heterogeneity and avoiding generalizations from culture to culture. Collectivism is a common value in the broader Asian and Asian American racial/ethnic category, thus making it relevant for South Asians and South Asian Americans (SAA), as well. Collectivist cultural norms value the preservation of community, collective decision-making, and keeping harmony in relationships (Amin & Bansal, 2022). Family reputation is a collective construct in that, if a single family member is viewed by the community as having “dishonored” the family, the effects will ripple across to the rest of the family members. To the extent of my knowledge, family reputation has not been explicitly

written about in the literature. However, related concepts have been studied, for instance “face.” A component of collectivist values is “saving face.” The maintenance of face is often operationalized as what other members of the community think about an individual and/or a family. Overlapping constructs such as family obligation, filial piety, and face have been studied, and will be explained below in this review. Given the prominence of family reputation in South Asian American culture, it is essential to understand how individuals perceive and experience family reputation in their lives. The novel contribution of this study is to understand the experiences of family reputation as perceived by young Asian Indian American (AIA) women. Given that South Asian American youth are generally trying to juggle the expectations their families have, cultural norms and standards, and religious demands, they may face personal challenges as they make important decisions (Islam et al., 2017). In addition, SAA youth may be learning to navigate the balance between their desires with those of their parents as a way to keep harmony within familial relationships.

Family reputation is the esteem in which the family is held by the community and society at large. The reputation of the family is determined by others based on the behaviors and decision-making of members of the family. These pressures and demands may have both positive and negative implications for the mental health and overall well-being of South Asian Americans. South Asian Americans are the fastest-growing Asian American subgroup in the United States, however, the literature does not reflect this (Rahman & Witenstein, 2013; US Census Bureau 2010). This gap in the literature emphasizes the need to further understand the South Asian population(s). To the extent of my knowledge, there have been little to no studies that explore the construct of family reputation as it is experienced in South Asian American young adults. Additionally, the impact of family reputation may be particularly challenging for

young women based on their unique experiences and gendered socialization. Given the nature of family reputation, it may overlap with and be conceptualized as a part of family obligation. However, family obligation has been studied to a greater extent in Latin American and East Asian American populations (e.g., Farver et al., 2003, 2007). Relatedly, the construct of face has been studied through saving face and loss of face (LOF) in certain Asian American subgroups to explore its effects on an individual (e.g., Baig et al., 2014). Saving face is related to the individual engaging in behaviors that maintain their social status, while LOF explores outcomes within an individual once face has been lost. Face and its related constructs will be expanded on below. Family reputation is judged by members in the larger community, reflected through the actions of individuals within a family. The current study aims to uncover the relevant implications of family reputation as it plays into the lives of undergraduate Asian Indian American women through exploring emotions, emotional coping, and mental health related to the construct. This will support a further understanding of the impact of family reputation and their experiences navigating it. Additionally, given the differences in socialization that exist between AIA young men and women, focusing on AIA women will allow us to better grasp their unique experiences.

Theory

Ting-Toomey's (1998) Face Negotiation Theory (FNT) laid out the framework that individuals of all ethnic/racial backgrounds are working to maintain face in various situations. "Face," as defined in Ting-Toomey (1998), is "a claimed sense of favorable social self-worth that a person wants others to have of her or him" (p. 187). In other words, face is the positive reputation that one hopes to maintain for others through social interactions. Although the overarching concept of face is universal, the expressions and meaning attached to it shift from

time to time, from culture to culture (Ting-Toomey, 1998). Additionally, face-work is described as communicative behaviors that an individual will engage in to enact “self-face” (the upholding of one’s own face), and to either maintain, threaten, or support the face of the other party involved. FNT is associated with vulnerability in many social situations (e.g., friends, business) and can create challenging situations for interpersonal relationships and an individual’s perspective of their own social status (Ting-Toomey, 1998).

Cultural Values Conflict Theory (CVC), developed by Inman et al. (2001), has examined the experiences of navigating bicultural identities in South Asian American women to explore the potential conflicts and distress that may follow (Rahman & Witenstein, 2013; Tummala-Narra, 2013). Cultural conflicts are present in aspects of South Asian Americans’ lives such as romantic partners and career choices. This sort of conflict may be especially high in children of first-generation immigrants due to the findings that these groups prefer the host culture over the native culture (Rahman & Witenstein, 2013). Second-generation immigrants often report feelings of being “stuck” between two cultures in certain situations (Giguere, Lalonde, & Lou, 2010, p. 16). This sense of feeling stuck can, in turn, lead to internalizing conflict in second-generation youth as they are selecting what to endorse from both the native and the host cultures. When cultural conflict is present in an individual, it may result in the experience of acculturative stress (Talbani & Hasanali, 2000). Acculturative stress, as defined by Berry (1970), is when individuals undergoing the acculturation process experience changes in their lives that bring difficulties to their adjustment and life in their host culture. These changes may manifest as challenges and stressors throughout their acculturation experience, thus coining the term “acculturative stress.”

These theories loosely guide the current study’s method and analyses. FNT informs my conceptualization of family reputation, as the pressure to maintain face in social interactions

applies to the pressure of upholding family reputation. The connection between the two lies in similar emotional reactions and the motivation behind wanting to appear at a high standard to others. Additionally, the individual and cultural differences in engaging in self-face and face-work (e.g., challenge the other person's face) may converge and diverge from the experiences of working to maintain family reputation (Ting-Toomey, 1998). In addition to FNT, CVC theory captures the bicultural conflict that many South Asian American women face and sheds light on the gendered and cultural experiences (Inman et al., 2001). Thus, the combination of the two theories will help to inform the research and interview questions formulated for this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

South Asian American Background

South Asian is a term that encompasses the different regions, cultures, and religions of the South Asian subcontinent. The entire group includes individuals from various countries, including but not limited to, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal (Rahman & Witenstein, 2013). Additionally, there are diverse religions that exist within the culture, including but not limited to, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Christianity. Common values among the broader group include patriarchy, collectivism, religion or spirituality, and reticence, all of which can impact psychological well-being (Sandhu & Madathil, 2008). It is important, however, to emphasize that even with similarities within and between South Asian countries, it is still a heterogeneous population.

South Asian American History

The South Asian American diaspora is a diverse community, making it important to understand commonalities and differences among the various subcultures. Historical events and underpinnings that have been passed down through generations are important to note in the context of family reputation as they expand the understanding of the target population. The long-term Islamic Rule (i.e., Mughal Empire) of the region has influenced many aspects of tradition, language, and societal norms. Following Islamic Rule came the British colonization of what was, at the time, the entire subcontinent of India. The British Raj (i.e., British Rule) further added its own influences on aspects of culture, education, and norms. The end of the British Raj marked the beginning of the Partition. Briefly stated, this resulted in the creation of two separate nations: modern-day India and Pakistan. Partition resulted in the blurred lines between what it meant to be Indian or Pakistani, Hindu or Muslim, as well as the oppression of minority cultural and

religious groups. The displacement of, and genocidal violence against, millions of innocent people add a layer to the complex identities and intergenerational trauma that is still present today (Zaminder, 2007).

Fast forwarding to Asian Indian immigrants to the United States, the first half of the twentieth century deemed Asian Indians as “anthropologically Caucasian,” differentiating and “othering” them from other Asian subgroups (i.e., Chinese American, Japanese American) during their fight for citizenship. In 1923, the case of *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind* classified Asian Indians as a subgroup of Asians, which created a “cognitive dissonance” when it came to understanding one’s own identity (Amin & Bansal, 2022). The cognitive dissonance arose from once being considered a part of the White dominant group, to then being considered as a part of a pan-ethnic Asian group. Further, after the classification of Asian Indians as a subgroup of the pan-ethnic Asian group, many Asian Indian immigrants lost their citizenship even after having been naturalized as U.S. citizens. This may add to the cultural conflicts that South Asian Americans face today, as well as the attempts to fit in with the majority group. In addition to this cultural conflict, there may be challenges with internal conflict among individuals who identify as South Asian American and have a desire to be seen as more “American,” as to validate that part of their identity. This, in turn, may affect the weight that an individual gives to the maintenance of family reputation. Many South Asians who immigrated to the United States after 1965 are well-educated students seeking higher degrees or middle-class professionals (Farver et al., 2007). Influenced by British colonization, a large number of South Asian Indian immigrants speak English fluently and are familiar with Western values (Ibrahim et al., 1997). At the same time, South Asian Americans generally carry over traditions and values from their native countries and cultures with the intention of passing them down to their

offspring. The history of immigration in the South Asian American diaspora is not at all homogenous and should not be regarded as such (Amin & Bansal, 2022). Experiences of immigration and hardships that first-generation immigrants face may serve as a method of indirectly socializing second-generation young adults to make cognizant decisions that maintain family reputation and as a means to make their parents' sacrifices worthwhile, with potential consequences for the internal cultural conflict of South Asian Americans.

Conversely, solely speaking of hardships faced in the lives of immigrants does not do the entire immigration experience justice. In a qualitative study that employed Participatory Culture-Specific Consultation (PCSC) with Asian American immigrant families, Wang et al. (2021) found that there were many strengths associated with immigration. Participants in this study noted that the care and concern family members have for one another serve as a strength to ensure success. Further, many youths in the study recognized that their parents and immigrant family members were resilient, acknowledging the courage it took to leave a part of their life behind to start fresh in the host country. This may impact the importance a second-generation Asian Indian immigrant places on family reputation, given that the strengths of their parent's immigration and family network embody strength and resilience. Thus, it is valuable to further expand on this work by understanding the complexities of identifying as a second-generation immigrant.

South Asian American Values

Collectivistic values are generally endorsed and promoted by South Asian Americans. This collective lean emphasizes family obligation and a sense of conformity to the larger community's expectations. Children are typically expected to adhere to these expectations and "core" values (e.g., marriage) and bring honor to the family by doing so (Varghese & Jenkins,

2009; Durvasula & Mylvaganam, 1994). Compared to the nuclear American family, which is typically individualistic, South Asian families are interdependent and extended (Rahman & Witenstein, 2013). This orientation may also be beneficial in maintaining relationships in both the host and native countries. The interdependent aspect is visible in the relationship between parents and children in a strong, heightened form, given that children are often socialized to make big life decisions only after discussing them with family members. Indeed, many life decisions will not come to fruition without gaining parental approval (Ngo, 2006). An underlying goal of this study is to decrease the stereotypical understanding of family reputation and collective Asian Indian American ideals by emphasizing the rich experiences of the sample population. Recognizing that values play a significant role in what is expected of the behaviors and decision-making children engage in, family reputation is also closely associated with the adherence of such values. This qualitative study aims to uncover this complex construct and its potential implications for the emotional well-being of AIA college women through the exploration of their narratives.

Similar Constructs

Some constructs are related and overlap with family reputation which will be addressed in this section. First, the construct of family obligation resonates with the notion of family reputation and may be a component of it. According to Fuligni (2007), family obligation is a “collection of values and behaviors related to children’s assistance and support to and respect for their parents, siblings, and extended family” (p. 97). It often reflects the cultural variations and differing family dynamics that exist among immigrant populations (Milan & Wortel, 2014). In addition to cultural norms, there is typically a strong parental authority and endorsement of interdependence among family members (Phinney et al., 2000). Family obligations are not only

the behaviors and actions that are needed to fulfill such demands but also the perception one has about how much they *should* oblige and support their family (Sy & Brittan, 2008). Although family obligations are present in European American adolescents, there is a larger expectation of equality with parental figures than with obedience, creating the divergence between how family obligation manifests in Eastern and Western communities (Phinney et al., 2000; Fuligni, 2007).

Second, filial piety may reflect another component of family reputation. Filial piety is a construct that states children must respect, obey, and take care of their parents and elders in the family (Sharma & Kemp, 2011; Lam et al., 2022). Filial piety and family obligation may converge as previous literature has described filial “duty” as a component of family obligation. The concept of family obligation has been explored and studied as an individual’s filial duties toward their parents (Freeberg & Stein, 1996). Groups from Asia and Latin America, specifically, have cultural norms where children are expected to support family members from an early age (Fuligni, 2003; 2007). Others have studied this construct as a sense of ‘felt’ obligation towards a person’s parents and immediate family (e.g., Freeberg & Stein, 1996). Moreover, there has been evidence suggesting that there are sex differences in felt obligation toward parents, and women are generally more likely to feel a sense of family obligation and duty compared to their male counterparts (Freeberg & Stein, 1996). Cultural norms may influence gender norms which further underscores the importance of understanding how AIA young women conceptualize family reputation and how it impacts their sense of obligation towards their parents.

Finally, the construct of face overlaps with the concept of family reputation. Face has been operationalized as a sense of positive social standing that an individual strives to maintain in interpersonal situations (Ting-Toomey, 1998). Face is seen as a universal construct that manifests differently from culture to culture and throughout different time periods. In addition to

face, scholars have noted the concepts of saving face and loss of face (LOF) as behaviors that individuals will engage in, or not engage in, as a means to save face or avoid losing face (e.g., Amin & Bansal, 2022; Braje & Hall, 2016).

These constructs (i.e., family obligation, filial piety, and face) inform my conceptualization of family reputation. At the same time, the definitions of the constructs do not completely underscore the notion of family reputation and its significance in the Asian Indian American population. Expanding our understanding of the implications and emotional consequences of family reputation related to AIA young women, as well as the cultural values and traditions that impact the importance one gives to family reputation, will allow us to recognize the weight the construct holds.

Family Reputation and Asian Indian Americans

Family reputation is the acclaim that a family and the members of the family are held by the larger community. A vastly related construct to family reputation is *izzat*, which Oxford dictionary translates to “honor, reputation, or prestige,” while in a cultural context for many South Asians, it is a multifaceted set of societal and personal rules that one learns from a young age to protect the family honor and their own position in the community (Baig et al., 2014). However, to my knowledge, *izzat* has not fully explored what family reputation is as defined by those who experience it, especially within the diaspora, and we lack a well-rounded understanding of its impact. *Izzat* overlaps with family reputation in the sense of social interactions, respect, and holding oneself to a higher standard in the eyes of others. However, I believe that they diverge given that *izzat* is often relevant in social interactions and applicable to a single member of the family, while family reputation is all of those things in addition to the esteem that the family and all members in it are held at. To clarify, *izzat* is most closely related to

the construct of face, while family reputation may be judged because of behaviors in and out of social settings, decisions made, and values that one engages in. In the case of *izzat*, this term may hold more meaning to first-generation immigrants and young adults who are familiar with the cultural load it holds. Baig et al. (2014) employed thematic narrative analysis to analyze AIA parent and child dyads about their perspectives on face and *izzat* in familial situations. The study focused on intergenerational narratives and found three major themes: respect as a performance ritual, staging family face, and reacting to complex *izzat* emotions. Although the sample was almost evenly split between men and women, gender was not a focus of the study. Thus, the construct of family reputation may be particularly interesting to explore in a sample of AIA young women. This will further our understanding of their experiences considering that gender roles are prominent in both Indian and American cultures.

Family reputation is important to understand in the context of Asian Indian American young adults as it may be a significant element for parents to ensure that their children are on the “right track,” and to proactively pass values down to the next generation. It is both related to and different from family obligation. Family obligation may be one component of family reputation. Individual maintenance of obligations to their family may reflect how the family is viewed at large. The existing literature speaks to family obligation in East Asian American and Southeast Asian American populations (e.g., Fuligni, 2003, 2007; Trieu, 2016) but seems to be lacking research in the context of South Asian populations. Although the focus of this study is not explicitly on family obligation, the uncovering of family reputation in AIA young women may lend itself to an understanding of family obligations experienced by this sample. In addition, family obligation in Asian Indian young adults may be experienced with an added pressure of societal norms linked to what others in the community will think and say about the family unit.

This pressure may be reflected through the concept of face, given that it resonates strongly within Indian culture (Baig et al., 2014) and has negative impacts on well-being. In a study with Asian Americans, Braje & Hall (2016) examined the relationship between LOF, depression, and social anxiety. The majority of the participants (75%) identified as female ($M = 27.6$ years old) and found that LOF may increase the susceptibility to depressive and socially anxious symptoms in the population (Braje & Hall, 2016). This finding underscores the importance of exploring family reputation in AIA young women to understand the psychological impacts of family reputation.

According to Mainan & Naidu (2009), Asian Indians are “very careful about protecting people’s reputation or ‘face’ and put it above all else, even in professional interactions” (p. 243). Family reputation exists for the greater good of the family, meaning that prioritizing its maintenance and staying within traditional boundaries of what is accepted does right by the family. This implies that self-sacrifices are common, and encouraged, among youth to uphold the reputation, especially when there are conflicts between family goals and/or beliefs and what the individual wants (Shariff, 2009). The particularity around prioritizing family reputation may be a reason to encourage specific values and life choices in South Asian American youth. The pressure to do well academically and seek out careers deemed to be prestigious by the community (e.g., doctor, engineer) is common among South Asian parents. Often, parents are pushing for what will bring their children honor along with financial stability while children may be more motivated by careers that match their passions (Somerville & Robinson, 2016). This push towards certain careers and educational paths may result in conflict between generations, as well as an internal conflict among second-generation individuals when it comes to making decisions that may oppose what their parents strongly prefer. On the other hand, results have

shown positive outcomes through the push for “honorable” decisions. In the qualitative study conducted with 30 second-generation South Asian Canadians, Somerville and Robinson (2016) found that some participants shared the values and traditions of their parents which added to their motivation to take on a specific career. Additionally, participants who shared these sentiments regarding education communicated that the values served as a motivator for them to excel academically, with or without the explicit pressure from their parents. Somerville and Robinson (2016) noted that “these respondents internalize the expectations of their families, and hence there is congruence between personal and collective goals” (p. 108). As a result, it is crucial to further explore the variety of both positive and negative implications that the construct of family reputation may have on South Asian American youth. This exploration may also uncover the decision-making processes (internal, external, or both) that are at play as youth navigate these choices.

Enculturation, Generational Gaps, and Cultural Conflict

Enculturation is relevant when thinking of immigrants and children of immigrants. Enculturation is a socialization process that all children will go through to “function as competent individuals in their societies” (Farver et al., 2007, p. 186). Acculturation is usually in the perspective of the dominant culture whereas enculturation is the socialization process in the context of one’s ancestral traditions, values, and ideas (Amin & Bansal, 2022). It is beneficial to understand both aspects of the immigrant experience, especially in children of immigrants due to their unique and challenging experiences (Park, 2007, 2010). Children of immigrants and ethnic minority children are enculturated in three different ways: by the larger community, the predominant host culture, and the interaction of the two (Farver et al., 2007). This may have further implications for the psychological well-being of diverse youth, assuming they are

navigating more than one culture. Multiple shifts may occur for this group as they continue to learn and decide what they would like to retain and change from the cultures they experience (Amin & Bansal, 2022). The level to which ancestral traditions and values are endorsed may impact family reputation given that a large piece of maintaining a positive reputation aligns with adherence to and preservation of cultural norms.

Typically, when there is a large difference between the native culture and the host culture in an individual, that individual may experience more distress (Farver et al., 2002). Phinney (1996) described acculturation as the level to which one has adapted to the host culture or maintained their native culture. According to Berry's (1993) acculturation model, there are four ways in which individuals acculturate to their new environment – assimilation, marginalization, separation, or integration. Assimilation occurs when one identifies more dominantly with the host culture than with their native culture, thus leaving the native culture behind. Marginalization occurs when an individual has rejected both the native and the host culture. Separation is when there is no acknowledgment of the host culture, and the individual solely identifies with their native culture. Finally, integration is when an individual combines both the native and the host cultures based on their preferences for each, thus resulting in a bicultural identity formation. Research in this area concerning psychological well-being has suggested that integration of both cultures is adaptive and beneficial and that those with an integrated acculturation method experience lower levels of acculturative stress in comparison to those who were marginalized, separated, or assimilated (Farver et al., 2002). Additionally, Farver et al. (2002) conducted two studies and, through both, found that when AIA youth and parents are able to integrate both the host and native cultures, there were lower levels of family conflict and higher levels of psychological adjustment, when compared with families that were not integrated. Though there

is truth to this, it is important to consider that too much or too little integration can result in negative results to an individual's overall health (Amin & Bansal, 2022). An important critique of Berry's model of acculturation is that not all individuals will fit into one of four boxes; some may utilize multiple strategies depending on the context (Amin & Bansal, 2022; Ram & Bhatia, 2001). Further, a critique to Berry's model is its assumed universality, meaning that this process of acculturation will apply to *all* immigrants. This is reductive and may cause harm to the acculturative experiences of immigrants, especially immigrants who are not white. Moreover, this lens does not consider sociohistorical forces of immigration in the United States.

Bhatia and Ram (2009) further the discussion around acculturation by considering critiques about previous models. With this, they posit understanding acculturation through diasporas which they operationalize as immigrant communities in the United States who attempt to maintain their culture and connections to their native country. Thus, those that simply live outside of their native culture without holding on to native values are not automatically categorized as part of the diaspora (Bhatia & Ram, 2009; Toloyan, 1996). Given the large diaspora of Asian Indians living in America, one can imagine and consider the maintenance to their native country and culture as part of their daily lives in the West. Due to this, adherence to the host culture may be related to family reputation. If an individual is assimilated into the host culture, it may result in behaviors and values that are inconsistent with those of their native culture (e.g., Asian Indian), subsequently impacting the immediate family's reputation.

Asian Indian American youth whose parents immigrated to the States may face hardships in maintaining the relationship with their parents when ideals and values clash. Somerville and Robinson (2016) found that the adolescents in the study (second-generation immigrants) did not always share the value of their parents (first-generation immigrants) when it came to acting and

behaving in specific ways to maintain a positive image within the community. Oftentimes, parents will interpret the individualization of their children as a “loss of control,” given that youth’s autonomy is typically undesirable and may be seen as rebellious (Dosanjh & Ghuman, 1997). When conflicts arise, parents may use tactics such as guilt and shame to regulate the youth’s behavior (Shariff, 2009). The disagreement between youth and parents may cause stress and create drifts in the relationship (Baig et al., 2014). Further, acculturation differences between first-generation immigrant parents and their children can create challenges in their relationship. Existing differences between immigrant parents and their children may be due to children craving acceptance from their North American peers, while immigrant parents are seeking to maintain their heritage. Dasgupta (1998) notes that older Asian Indian immigrants may actually be holding on to the culture more than those that they left behind and/or may even be trying to preserve a version of the culture that does not exist in India anymore. Berry’s (1993) model shows that to understand the psychological functioning of immigrants, acculturation and ethnic identity should be considered. It may be that an individual’s style and level of acculturation play a hand in the maintenance of, or lack thereof, family reputation. Since a component of family reputation is dependent on the ability to follow and pass down traditional cultural practices and ideals, the lack of fitting with their native culture may diminish the family reputation as it may be viewed negatively by the larger community and reflect poorly on the parents. Thus, this may be captured through views that second-generation individuals hold regarding their desire to uphold the family reputation, as well as the emotional responses that are appraised with doing so.

Socialization

Family reputation continues to be important in relation to socialization processes because parents’ child-rearing plays a role in the values and customs second-generation children choose

to take with them. If decisions are made that do not reflect the traditional behaviors, the family reputation may be diminished in the eyes of the community. Acculturation may be influenced by socialization values and traditions that are passed on through generations. Specifically, Aycan and Kanungo (1998) note that several studies have reported the differences that first- and second-generation Asian Indian immigrants hold in regard to the host culture, flexibility, and adjusting to change. Socialization is a technique that is used in many societies to regulate behavior and pass on core cultural values (Talbani & Hasanali, 2000). Socialization refers to the process by which children are taught the necessary skills, values, and behaviors by those who are older than them to function in their environment (Maccoby, 2015) Although it is assumed that a lasting impact of the process occurs primarily in early developmental years, socialization also plays a role throughout the lifespan. As individuals step foot into novel social settings (e.g., host country) it may be necessary to learn new patterns of acceptable social behavior (Maccoby, 2015). Much of early socialization may be passed on through caregivers, transition into school years, and continue throughout places of work, religious communities, and romantic partners.

Ethnic Socialization

Racial/ethnic identity formation may be difficult and less linear for children of immigrants born in the United States, especially if they are not White (Amin & Bansal, 2022). Studies have found that ethnic identity formation can be difficult for South Asian American adolescents because of the clash of traditional values that their parents are trying to pass on with the opposing American norms (Shariff, 2009; Farver et al., 2002). For example, both romantic and platonic relationships with the opposite sex are usually disapproved of at home but encouraged at school. Additionally, ethnic identity is both dynamic and multifaceted and the participation in social and cultural practices is a prevalent indicator of one's ethnic identity

formation (Phinney, 1990; Shariff, 2009). Thus, disinterest or lack of knowledge regarding such practices can lead to a conflicted sense of identity. As it may relate to acculturation and one's relationship with their native heritage, ethnic identity might influence Asian Indian immigrants to push for their children to participate in such practices. There may be a conflict between holding on to cultural values while simultaneously acculturating to the host culture, and this may impact the push and pull of traditional values and behaviors between children and parents. Tummala-Narra et al. (2018) conducted a study with a diverse sample of Asian American college students ($M = 20.09$ years old) in which 75% of the participants identified as cis-gendered females and a majority of the sample identified as East or Southeast Asian. 77.6% of these participants were born in the United States. Results showed that a stronger sense of ethnic identity (e.g., commitment to one's ethnic identity) was associated with lower levels of help-seeking behaviors, possibly due to the notion of losing face. Moreover, the commitment dimension of ethnic identity is particularly relevant to family reputation given that individuals who prefer the host culture may face rejection from their native culture, thus resulting in negative effects (Tummala-Narra et al., 2018). Thus, family reputation may be partly maintained by an immigrant family's ability to preserve and pass down behaviors and practices that are ancestrally significant.

Gender Socialization and Asian Indians

In a study by Barry et al. (1975), gender socialization techniques were examined in more than 100 societies and researchers found that males were typically socialized to achieve and be independent while women were socialized to be nurturing and obedient. This finding, then, can be understood in the context of South Asian culture as men and women are socialized with differing expectations. It is common for more restrictive expectations to be placed on South

Asian daughters while sons are given more freedom in the choices they make (Ghuman, 1997). Talbani and Hasanali (2000) conducted a qualitative study with second-generation South Asian adolescents (girls aged 15 to 17 years old) and found that a major problem was the control in their socialization compared to their male counterparts who did not face the same restrictions. Dasgupta (1998) made a point that because of these traditional attitudes regarding gendered behavior and what is socially acceptable, parents more strictly monitor their daughters. Historically, the daughters of the family have carried the burden of practicing and passing down cultural traditions (Farver, et al., 2002). Further, women have been considered liabilities in the past, meaning that if they did something that did not fit within the bounds and expectations of cultural norms, they would be at fault for tarnishing the family reputation. This ideology may still be present today given that second-generation SAA women may be expected to carry out both modern and traditional roles which may further add to their bicultural conflict (Ibrahim, 1997; Rahman & Witenstein, 2013).

Family reputation may look different in the socialization of men and women, and this can result in differing outcomes for the two groups. An important aspect of the differences that exist in gender socialization is the ancient patriarchal system in South Asian culture (Gairola, 2002; Amin & Bansal, 2022). South Asian culture is primarily patriarchal, an ideal that has been passed down and enforced for generations, which heavily influences the methods parents use to raise their kids. Patriarchy refers to “the patriarch,” which creates male power and dominance over other genders. The system of patriarchy in Asian Indian culture, and the broader South Asian culture, is both similar to and different from the patriarchy that exists in Western society (Amin & Bansal, 2022). A key difference between South Asian and Western patriarchal systems is the hierarchical decision-making structures that exist in South Asian families. While patriarchy and

“the patriarch” may often lead to thinking of a specific family structure, the discussion here is in reference to the larger patriarchal system of oppression, in which male figures don't need to be present for the system to exist (e.g., Ahmad et al., 2004). It is crucial to recognize that this system of patriarchy is large and can have negative impacts on all genders (I will be referring to cis-gendered men and women throughout the rest of the review). The roles that the two groups are socialized to grow into differ in many ways. Women are discouraged from having multiple romantic partners, due to the fear that a man will not accept her as his wife if she is no longer “pure” (virginal). On the other hand, men are not taught restraint or self-control regarding intimate relationships with women. There are egalitarian views that a woman must adjust her own life when she marries a man by moving to where he lives, lowering her own expectations, and becoming submissive to his needs (Amin & Bansal, 2022). There is a rigid separation, meaning strict and often opposing societal rules, between the two groups. This segregation plays a significant role in the power dynamics and social rewards of those within the culture (Talbani & Hasanali, 2000). Given the strict monitoring of women and their behaviors, daughters in Indian immigrant families are held to higher standards (e.g., purity of behaviors, soft-spoken) than sons with regards to upholding the family reputation (Kallivayalil, 2004).

Although the first-generation of Asian Indian immigrants is more open to a love-marriage for their children, they often still require that it is within the same culture, and often subculture (i.e., Gujarati with Gujarati, Jain with Jain). Interracial, intercultural, and interfaith marriages are seen as a threat to the unity of the group (Schaefer, 1980). This is a primary reason the tradition of arranged-marriage has been historically preferred in many cultures, as a means to maintain group solidarity and keep resources and wealth within the community (Broude, 1995). Moreover, the caste system is a historical component of South Asian culture, and arranged-marriage ensures

that those from one caste live, marry, and die in that same caste (Amin & Bansal, 2022). It is important to note that arranged-marriages are *not* inherently forced marriages. *Izzat* is intimately connected with the historical hierarchical caste system, underscoring its importance in social and reputable interactions (Baig et al., 2014; Carlsson et al., 2009). Marriage in and of itself is a form of social control which, especially with women, is expected to be with a partner that receives parental approval (Talbani & Hasanali, 2000). This ties into the construct as marrying an individual who does not meet the expectations of one's larger community can diminish the family reputation. The traditional historical link here is that a daughter is considered the "responsibility" of her father until she gets married and then becomes the "responsibility" of her husband (Talbani & Hasanali, 2000; Amin & Bansal, 2022). Due to this historic notion, there may be values that still exist today where a daughter holds more burden in upholding the family reputation so she can be perceived as a "suitable" wife in the future. Consequently, this may result in negative affect and feelings of shame and guilt among young women who feel pressure to fit a certain role. Thus, this study aims to explore how second-generation Asian Indian immigrant women experience family reputation with the added complexities of gender-based norms and expectations.

Emotional Consequences of Family Reputation

As mentioned earlier in this review, it is important to acknowledge the heterogeneity within Asian American cultures and subcultures, while also recognizing that some values overlap, and existing literature refers to the entire ethnic group. Asian American college students hold negative attitudes toward help-seeking in comparison to their White peers (Tummala-Narra et al., 2018). There are cultural factors that have been thought to mold Asian Americans' views toward mental health and mental health services. The use of the word "crazy" is prominent in

Asian and Asian American culture when referring to mental health, and consequently the thought of help-seeking and letting others know what one is dealing with is difficult to do (e.g., Goel et al., 2022). Further, this can lead to LOF and disgrace both the individual and their family (Hwang, 2016). Sharing personal challenges is a particularly hard task for Asian heritage populations, especially given the emphasis and priority of saving face rather than seeking help. In a qualitative study conducted by Lam et al. (2022), researchers found that filial piety was both a risk and a protective factor for suicidality in Chinese women. Many of the factors that comprise filial duty rely on a woman's ability to be both a good daughter and a good mother. Authors note that through the ability to meet family obligations, Chinese women experienced reduced distress, whereas the absence of meeting those requirements led to an increase in depressive symptoms and feeling burdened by obligation (Lam et al., 2022). This finding underscores the importance of understanding family reputation as it is perceived and experienced in AIA women to better understand potential psychological impacts.

Family reputation may elicit self-conscious emotions in young women, such as guilt, shame, and pride. Common self-conscious emotions include shame, guilt, and pride. Self-conscious emotions are intrapersonal emotions that require self-reflection and self-evaluation for an individual to feel and perceive these emotions (Sznycer, 2019). Shame, according to a developmental framework, initially developed as an emotional experience to motivate individuals to fight for higher rank (Fessler, 2007). Shame is an "acutely painful emotion typically accompanied by a sense of shrinking of 'being small' and by a sense of worthlessness and powerlessness" (Tangney, 1995, p. 1134-1135). Further, the experience of shame is typically brought on by how less or defective an individual might appear to the larger group (Tangney, 1995). Guilt, however, can be described as typically less painful and related to a particular

behavior, rather than one's core identity. As noted earlier, parents may often resort to tactics of guilt and shame to regulate youth's behavior (Shariff, 2009). In the qualitative study conducted by Baig et al. (2014), the authors uncovered a prominent theme of emotions being a complex and significant component of *izzat*. They noted that for Asian Indians, *izzat* is intertwined with social interactions, and thus 'directly relates to people's emotional responses' (p. 153). In the interviews conducted, participants often used self-conscious emotions such as *shame*, *guilt*, *honesty*, and *honor* to express how they felt about *izzat*. In a similar lens, pride is a positive self-conscious emotion that emerges as a response to meeting a desired outcome (Takahashi et al., 2008). Pride may emerge as a reaction to maintaining family reputation and receiving praise for engaging in culturally traditional and accepted behaviors. Recognizing that there may be positive and negative affective responses to the construct, it is necessary to recognize that Asian Indian American young women may feel a sense of pride as they uphold family reputation.

An individual's ability to cope and stay "strong" in the face of hardships may be associated with the concept of family reputation, thus adding to the cycle of stigma that many South Asian Americans carry regarding mental health in the community (Islam et al., 2017). Oftentimes, the South Asian American community will perceive having a mental illness as an indication of failure (Amin & Bansal, 2022). The prioritization of needing to save face is one component of the stigma surrounding mental health. There may be an inherent need to show up as a "successful minority immigrant," which directly opposes facing any sort of mental health-related issue (Amin & Bansal, 2022, p. 39; Inman et al., 2014). Further, South Asian parents may associate their child's mental illness as a result of their own failures in parenting, their child's inability to face challenges, and/or the lack of religiosity present in their child (Amin & Bansal, 2022). Oftentimes, South Asians will cope in silence and intentionally hide any mental health

challenges their family members may be dealing with. This coping strategy may be harmful and related to the stigma held towards mental illness. A cross-cultural study with South Asian Americans, East Asian Americans, and European Americans found that South Asian Americans endorsed courtesy stigma at a higher level than the other two groups (Chaudhry & Chen, 2019). Courtesy stigma refers to the social devaluation of family members when an individual from the family has been diagnosed with a mental illness. This finding coincides with family reputation as if a member is looked down upon by the larger community for having a mental health condition, the impact will spread to the rest of the family.

Mental health is not widely discussed in the broader South Asian culture, possibly because the stigma around it seems to be widespread (Goel et al., 2022). Many of the challenges that second-generation immigrants face may be related to the experiences their parents had as first-generation immigrants (Farver et al., 2007). Immigration and the process of acculturation bring their own psychological impacts on an individual which can influence the parents and their child-rearing practices (Farver et al., 2007). In Goel et al. (2022), authors noted that South Asian American women over the age of 18 found that the refusal of elders to acknowledge mental health challenges creates a barrier to addressing symptoms when they first appear, thus resulting in the exacerbation of the illness. Moreover, the authors found that many participants in the study reported suspicions of their parents suffering in silence due to mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression. Silence and living with undiagnosed mental illness can inadvertently impact the way youth view and approach such health conditions (Islam et al., 2017).

Mental illness is a relatively taboo subject in the South Asian community. It may relate to the concept of family reputation given that the negative stigma associated with mental illness discourages South Asian Americans from seeking help. However, when South Asian families

have been found to seek out help for psychological distress, the most common challenges are in relation to ethnic identity and parenting stress (Shariff, 2009). Another factor that results in reluctance to seek out help may be the pressing question of “*log kya kahenge?*,” “what will people say?” The connection here is that the worry of what others will think if an individual, or a family, were to receive mental health support may tarnish the family’s reputation through ostracization, judgment, and/or shame (Goel et al., 2022).

Current Study

Our current understanding of family reputation is limited and informed through related constructs (e.g., face). Family obligation has been studied to an extent in Latinx and other Asian American populations but is largely missing the South Asian American subgroup. Additionally, *izzat* has been studied in older adults and adolescents, as well as in first-generation Asian Indians. However, there is a current lack in the literature addressing undergraduate students and the experiences of second-generation Asian Indian American immigrants. Finally, there is a gap in our understanding of family reputation in the diaspora. Thus, to address the aforementioned gaps, the following research questions were explored:

- (1) What is the lived experience and conceptualization of family reputation among Asian Indian American undergraduate women?
- (2) What are the positive and negative implications of family reputation for emotions, emotion coping, and mental health?

Chapter 3: Methods

Positionality

I want to acknowledge my perspectives as an Asian Indian American (AIA), second-generation immigrant woman. I recognize that the interpretations I provide of the data are partly informed by the combination of these identities. Though I cannot speak to direct experiences regarding the implications of family reputation from my parents, I do acknowledge its impact on the values and traditions they hold, and its impact on me and my potential interpretation of the data. Additionally, I am aware that family reputation extends to the larger community, such as extended relatives and family friends, and how these expectations often look different between women and men. Finally, it is crucial to interpret this study with the intention of better understanding this sample of participants and its possible application to the work done with AIA communities. Although some experiences are negative, they are not rooted in criticizing the culture; rather, the goal is to understand these nuanced perspectives and life experiences. Researchers are often striving for objectivity where objectivity is not possible, nor is it appropriate. My aim as a researcher is to shed light on voices and experiences that are otherwise ignored or silenced. The identities I hold and the observations I have made of these phenomena related to family reputation sparked my interest in investigating this topic.

Participants

The researcher recruited Asian Indian American undergraduate college students, particularly those who identify as cisgender women. All participants were recruited from the University of Maryland, College Park. The participants recruited fit the following inclusion criteria: (a) Asian Indian American; (b) cis-gendered woman; (c) second-generation immigrant; (d) the child of two parents born in India; and (e) an undergraduate student in the Mid-Atlantic

region of the United States. A total of ten participants were included in the study. Though religious affiliation was not formally collected, most participants shared exposure to the Hindu and/or Sikh faiths. This is an important consideration when reading and interpreting the results as members of other Indian religions (e.g., Muslim, Christian) may have had distinct experiences.

Table 1

Participant Information

Pseudonym	Indian Language(s) (spoken or exposed to)
Bindu	Hindi and Punjabi
Vrushali	Hindi and Punjabi
Gauri	Hindi
Pari	Gujarati and Hindi
Kareena	Hindi
Saanvi	Telugu and Hindi
Maya	Hindi
Ganga	Tamil
Sachi	Hindi
Sadhna	Hindi

Design

A cross-sectional, qualitative, phenomenological design was employed in this study, and data was collected via one semi-structured interview. Participants were invited to engage in a second interview as member-checking. Given my own Asian Indian American background and identifying with the inclusion criteria, I have experienced prolonged engagement with the culture and phenomenon in question. This allowed me to facilitate rapport and trust with the participants which supported a co-construction of understanding and meaning in this research (Cope, 2014).

Procedures

Prior to data collection, the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Maryland was requested. No incentive was provided for this study. Once the study was approved, participants were recruited by email through a Listserv provided by the university. Ten participants were asked to participate in interviews. Informed consent was collected from all ten participants before scheduling interviews. Both in-person and virtual options were available to participants. Given the flexibility of virtual modalities, all ten semi-structured interviews were conducted through Zoom. Interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. Interviews were piloted with two colleagues who also identified with the target population and met the study's inclusion criteria.

Data Analysis

All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed using the Descript software version 65.1.1 (2021). The researcher engaged in transcription by listening to the recording and editing the Descript transcript for inaccuracies. Additionally, transcripts were read multiple times to gain familiarity with the data and to ensure a true understanding of the participant's narratives. Listening to the interview audio while transcribing was utilized to better gauge the feelings and tone inflections that participants shared. This practice is suggested as step one in the process by Smith et. al (2009). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was utilized for the current analysis. IPA is a respected methodology in the field of qualitative research given its strengths and emphasis on three components: (a) making sense of the experience, (b) appropriately interpreting that experience, and (c) aligning the previous with what participants believe to be their experience. Further, it is heavily committed to understanding the experience rather than placing experiences into predefined or abstract categories (Smith et al., 2009). Analyses using IPA have smaller sample sizes given the nature of an in-depth approach and detailed

understanding of lived experiences. A smaller sample size supports reasonable homogeneity, allowing for similarities and differences in a single population to be studied in greater detail. Along the same lines, saturation is not always an appropriate goal in phenomenological research (e.g., Hale et al., 2008; van Manen et al., 2016; Saunders et al., 2017). Instead, the aim is to understand the participants' lived experiences through their rich narratives (Hale et al., 2008). IPA is informed by the theory of interpretation which recognizes that the narratives shared by participants will reflect their own way of understanding the experience. Further, the researcher(s) simultaneously make sense of how the participant tries to *make sense* of the account.

Two coders engaged in transcript analysis and data coding to pull out themes and subthemes. The use of a second coder strengthens coding reliability through the achievement of coding consistency (Kuraski, 2000). The coders manually coded the data rather than using software given the intensive nature of IPA. To this end, coders engaged in analysis by reading through the transcripts and pulling out significant themes based on the research questions as well as the salience, tone, etc. behind the words shared by the participant. This process further allowed the coders to become intimately familiar with the transcripts, thus making the thematic evaluation more naturally apparent (Smith et al., 2009). As an inductive approach, IPA analysis is guided by the content of the transcripts sticking closely to the narratives shared by the participants. With this in mind, both coders followed a similar process of highlighting keywords and phrases, taking initial notes, and forming initial ideas. The process of descriptive comments, as described by Smith et al. (2009), encourages the annotation and commenting of data during the initial stages of analysis. In addition, linguistic comments were incorporated during this process when considering the interrogative component of the methodology and to dive deeper into the meaning of the words. In combination with diving deeper into the participants'

narratives, this process allows the researcher to fit their own experiences into the process having already been familiar with the transcripts. Smith et al. (2009) recommend conceptual comments as a more interpretative form of analysis. Engaging with the data in this way encourages the coders' to reflect and draw on their own experiences, if applicable, to further expand upon possible meanings of the data. Although a recommended step of the IPA process, it can become blurry when the researcher uses *too much* of themselves to interpret the data. Thus, bracketing was employed to avoid using ideas from previous transcripts as support of the subsequent ones (Smith et al., 2009), and to encourage reading subsequent ones as 'blank' with processes similar to the initial one. After engaging in the development of themes individually, coders met to discuss alignment. As the process of sharing and discussing ideas occurred, coders came to an agreement on the themes and subthemes. Coders engaged in consensus coding to review any differences and discuss ideas to come to alignment (Bradley et al., 2007). Throughout this process, there were very few subthemes that required negotiation which shows the reliability of both coders' independent coding processes. Verbiage differences between the coders were not fixated on given the significance being placed on the meaning of the words and phrases shared by participants that influenced the creation of larger themes. The themes of both coders were then merged to represent an almost final set of themes. Finally, the completion of this process resulted in a final set of themes that were then shared with participants who opted to complete member-checks. Given that member-checks are part of the analytic process, the final set of themes had room for changes based on participant feedback.

All ten participants were invited to engage in member-check interviews. Member-checks allow the participants to share their expertise of their own lived experience by providing their input on the results (McKim, 2023). Six participants showed interest but only four participants

were able to complete the member-check. All four participants were sent the final set of themes to read through prior to the member check meeting. The participants were asked four interview questions in addition to other impressions they had. Two participants opted to respond through email due to scheduling concerns and two participants met with the researcher on Zoom. All four participants shared that the themes matched their experiences, the experiences of other AIA women they know, and resonated with their understanding of family reputation and its related components.

Chapter 4: Findings

Family reputation was defined by the participants both from their experiences and understanding of the concept and from their perspectives of how their parents and elders view it. Overall, the findings suggested that although their elders tend to describe family reputation as something to adhere to and maintain, the participants are hoping to leave it behind or change the meaning behind it. Participants generally defined family reputation as elevated expectations set by the larger AIA community that members of individual families must live up to. As further explained by a member-check, the judgment from the community adds pressure on parents and families. When family ideals do not align with a typical community expectation, it may lead to conflict. This pressure is then translated to the youth of the family, influencing various emotional experiences. Moreover, the sample conceptualized family reputation as a construct associated with positive and negative self-conscious emotions for members of the community. There are advantages and disadvantages to endorsing certain views, further emphasizing the nuance that exists within this construct and its manifestations for different individuals. Many participants share contexts in which they face a bicultural conflict between their two cultures. Often, this relates to gendered expectations that exist within the larger community and are passed down by elders in their families. Finally, participants share preferred methods of coping. In this section, findings are presented that answer these research questions:

- (1) What is the lived experience and conceptualization of family reputation among Asian Indian American undergraduate women?
- (2) What are the positive and negative implications of family reputation for emotions, emotion coping, and mental health?

The analytic process yielded six superordinate themes: (1) *The Pressures of Family Reputation*; (2) *Child of Immigrant Perspectives*; (3) *Cultural Values*; (4) *Gendered Expectations*; (5) *Emotional Experiences*; and (6) *Coping and Well-being*. Each theme consists of subthemes that will be further explained.

Table 2
Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes and Example Quotes
Theme 1: The Pressures of Family Reputation	<p>Academic Success <i>"...like the goal was just your entire life had to be like up to this level of standard."</i></p> <p>Pressure to Compete <i>"And there's like that in inevitable, like comparison that happens in Desi community/"</i></p> <p>Life Trajectory <i>"So it's like such like a like outline of the way that people generally expect us to live our lives."</i></p> <p>Protective Factors <i>"..and I think through that they've become so resilient that it's been such a great role model to have in my household..."</i></p>
Theme 2: Child of Immigrant Experiences	<p>Striking A Balance <i>"And I disagree in that. Like, I don't think it has to be that way."</i></p> <p>Gratitude and Acknowledgement of Parents' Immigration Stories <i>"..I'm particularly close to my family and so I think that did rub off on me and the, like, the need to make them proud, especially, um, I think growing up as a child of immigrants..."</i></p> <p>Choosing to Give Back Without Obligation <i>"I think that they would maybe describe it as an expectation versus, I might describe it as an obligation."</i></p>
Theme 3: Cultural Values	<p>Preservation of Cultural Components <i>"...I'd want them to speak Hindi so I think sort of passing down language and like traditions.."</i></p> <p>Shifting Priorities and Reducing Gossip <i>"And then I'd also wanna just like teach them more like, um, How you can, I don't know how you can overcome like, um, mental health problems with just like, um, focusing on, cuz my parents never, like, my parents don't really focus on that."</i></p>
Theme 4: Gendered Expectations	<p>Traditional Gender Roles Often Celebrated <i>"..Um, I've been praised a lot for being very like sweet and gentle. Um, versus my brother has been praised for like, being able to speak well and being able to have opinions..."</i></p> <p>Women More Harshly Judged <i>"I also think any wrong thing that the daughter does is more blown up in perspective in comparison to something wrong a guy does..."</i></p>
Theme 5: Emotional Experiences	<p>Experiences with Positive Self-Conscious Emotions <i>"...it makes me just feel good to like positively represent my family."</i></p> <p>Experiences with Negative Self-Conscious Emotions <i>"..if it doesn't align with like your inner values, I feel like sometimes that would make me like, feel kind of stressed or anxious..."</i></p>

	Bicultural conflict
	<i>"..but it also like, did kind of create a toxic environment of like, oh, like who's more Indian?"</i>
Theme 6: Coping and well-being	Coping Through Connection
	<i>"I would say like, um, I listen to music or I talk to my friends who, like, some of them, like, they may not be like Indian, but they also have like immigrant parents."</i>
	Reflection and Values Identification
	<i>"I think I'm just grateful that I'm able to understand these situations to like a greater capacity, I guess."</i>
	Hope
	<i>"I feel like I'm more optimistic about like the future and the way things are going to be."</i>

Theme 1: The Pressures of Family Reputation

Family reputation, as an understudied yet prominent construct in the lives of these participants, was further defined and clarified through their experiences. Theme 1, *The Pressures of Family Reputation*, yielded four subthemes: (1.1) *Academic Success*; (1.2) *Pressure to Compete*; (1.3) *Life Trajectory*; and (1.4) *Protective Factors*. Various pressures exist due to the overarching obligation to maintain family reputation ranging from academic to personal life choices. Participants also shared their perspective on the pressure often stemming subconsciously, as something that they do not bring to the forefront of their minds for every decision but find it often lingering in the back of their head.

Theme 1.1: Academic Success

Academic success is not unique to the Asian Indian American population. Families across the globe wish for their children to succeed in school and to be successful in a career. However, what is unique to the AIA diaspora is the emphasis on very specific majors and career paths. These fields are typically in STEM, business, or law. These expectations have created a false sense of prestige where fields that typically appear more rigorous are valued over those that are related to arts, humanities, and social sciences. Further, the emphasis placed on what it means to achieve academic and career success in a way that fits the 'norm' has induced pressure in the lives of this sample. This has often been observed as a sense of perfectionism either from the

elders, the participants themselves, or a combination of both. For example, Maya shared her experience feeling as if there was a need to be perfect at all times, sometimes even without a tangible reason. She shared this experience from her early school days:

Maya: Yeah, because I knew that they didn't have like a specific reason for wanting me to, it was, there was no specific reason for wanting me to succeed at like a specific thing. It was like an overall, just could never stop being perfect. Or like producing like, like achievements. You know, like it wasn't like I was working towards a goal that they wanted... like the goal was just your entire life had to be like up to this level of standard.

Maya's experience further underscores that this pressure to succeed is embedded early on and carries with an individual throughout their life. However, this is not to say that all pressure is through the parents. It is very much the case that participants themselves want to succeed and will therefore engage in behaviors that promote success and accolades. The distinction here is the constant added pressure from elders adds to this feeling of having to be perfect.

Theme 1.2: Pressure to Compete

Typically, the AIA community places a large emphasis on the competition between members of the same community. Participants have shared anecdotes of being compared to a sibling, a cousin, or another Indian peer down the road. Whomever it may be, chances are there has been an unnecessary theme of competing with someone who appears to be well-off and successful. The competition can be related to academics (e.g., test scores, college admissions) as well as interpersonal and life skills (e.g., marriage, cooking). This repeated competition throughout one's life may lend itself to becoming a subconscious practice that influences how individuals approach tasks.

Participants shared their experiences of the two ways this pressure to compete manifests in their own lives. The first is a positive manifestation in which one feels more motivated to do better in their own work and to strive towards achieving more success. On the other hand, participants may experience a negative manifestation of this pattern. The constant pressure to

compete may lead to constant self-monitoring of oneself, their choices, and the feedback received from making certain choices. Ganga explains her experience with the dichotomy between the positive and negative manifestations.

Ganga: I overachieved because I wanted to make my family proud. And there's like that in inevitable, like comparison that happens in Desi community between, oh, her, you know, [name] did this and she did that, or whatever. Um, and so I think it definitely pushed me to work harder and in the end, that worked out for me... I'm like, am I making, am I doing this just to like make my family proud or am I actually doing this cause I wanna do it?

Theme 1.3: Life Trajectory

Life trajectory encompasses various life contexts (e.g., career, marriage) that came up throughout interviews. Participants shared their perspectives about a sense of agency regarding the extent of decision-making power they have. Sense of agency, in this sample, refers to their understanding of *what, when, and how* they can make decisions that are true for them. Typically, participants felt that their choices were limited, although not entirely made for them. These situations were not “my way or the highway,” rather elders laid out a few choices that they expected youth to choose from. As aforementioned when considering careers and majors, many interviewees shared that parents may lay out which paths were acceptable to them and emphasize that one of those must be chosen. Veering off this path and attempting to choose something out of this box may result in high levels of uncertainty and disappointment. In addition to careers, results showed that there is an extent to which the trajectory of one’s life is already set out for them. Specifically, for AIA young women, there is pressure to oblige to the milestones that have already been set for them by the expected age range. Achieving the milestone later than expected or not achieving it all negatively impacts family reputation. Kareena shares:

Kareena: Like I have some friends going to like community college and so that can be looked down upon in the family where it's like, oh, like that's not real college, quote unquote. And so I feel like that's definitely like, it's pushed to have like these certain standards. Like...I feel like people ask like, are you going to college? ...I mean, that's not even, something that's considered like, you will go and then you'll do this and then you'll get married after. So it's like such like a

like outline of the way that people generally expect us to live our lives. That I feel like has been forced to an extent.

Moreover, there is a conflict with trying to grasp a sense of agency which may lend itself to engaging in secrecy and engaging in behaviors behind the backs of elders. Secrecy may be the response to a lack of agency and a decision made by the participant that veered away from more “traditional” expectations. Vrushali shares her experience dealing with restrictions through secrecy while Pari explains how she had to hide her major for the first few years of college.

Vrushali: Um, I can remember a specific instance when I was young and I wanted to start wearing a bikini, but it was a whole thing. And it was just kind of confusing because you know, when you think about a boy's bathing suit, like half of their body is just exposed. And I actually ended up just going and getting one myself. And then they happened to find it and they were like, what is this?

Pari: I really do love psychology and it took me until like my sophomore year to like fully like get into like psychology and take all the courses. Cuz like when I initially went like, people are like, oh my god, psychology, like, what are you gonna do with that? Like, kinda like the stigma and I was like maybe I shouldn't do this. And like, I took like a couple classes and I absolutely loved it. And like it took me for like, I guess until my junior year to tell people that I was actually like a psychology major.

Theme 1.4: Protective Factors

The presence of influential elders who did not endorse or enforce the views associated with family reputation (e.g., pursuing STEM) served as a protective factor for participants. These elders could have been a parent, an older cousin, a grandparent, or another adult that they had frequent contact with in their extended family and community. The impact of the influential adult(s) in the lives of the participants meant more flexibility in veering away from what was typical.

Moreover, there were patterns throughout interviews that touched on the impact of matriarchs in a culture that heavily endorses patriarchal views. There have been instances where the influence of an older woman in the family has shifted certain expectations. Sadhna and Sachi share their very different experiences having had matriarchal influences in their lives. Sachi

further touches on the nuances of this by considering age and other identities that allow some women to come out as matriarchs while others may be labeled as defiant.

Sadhna: Just their stories and where they came from is a big thing for me. My grandma, she was, like 20 years old when she moved to this country... She struggled a lot. And then same with my mom...and I think through that they've become so resilient that it's been such a great role model to have in my household, especially coming from a culture that I feel like is primarily patriarchal. Having two women who are matriarchs in my household, I think has just been really inspirational when I look up to them in the sense of being independent and strong and financially stable and just their values and mindset on how women should be is a big part of my life.

Sachi: Um, so my biological aunt is the one that had like all of those auntie friends, but she had always been completely different from them. So I definitely learned, um, How to... like figure out what is respectable and what's not from her. Um, but she's like, also it's within the family dynamic is another aspect of it. So, because the aunt is like the older, like matriarch in a way, she's able to do these things.

Theme 1 captures the nuanced definition of family reputation as described by this sample.

Participants share their experiences which both diverge and converge depending on unique family backgrounds.

Theme 2: Perspectives as a Child of Immigrants

The emergence of themes that revolved around the second-generation immigrant experience, specifically about being a *child* of immigrants, related to and further elevated the nuances of family reputation in this sample. Due to layers of family and cultural values, collective ideals, and the sacrifices made by immigrant parents, the participants shared their experiences and perspectives of what it means to be the child of immigrants. Theme 2 yielded three subthemes: (2.1) *Striking A Balance*; (2.2) *Gratitude and Acknowledgment of Parents' Immigration Stories*; and (2.3) *Choosing to Give Back Without Obligation*.

Theme 2.1: Striking A Balance

Having been raised with one foot on American soil and one foot rooted in Indian values, participants shared the ongoing push-and-pull between what they desire for themselves and what their parents and elders desire for them. This often meant engaging in behaviors and making

decisions that would increase or maintain family reputation, even if it did not align with their personal wants and values. At the same time, participants acknowledged that certain expectations were non-negotiable for their own well-being and goals. Ganga shares where her values and plans diverge from those of her grandmother.

Ganga: I don't place as much of a value on marriage. I mean, I definitely place the value in that I wanna get married and I want it to last, but, you know, like even now I'm turning 23. I, my grandmother has already started that it's time like start looking and get ready. And I'm like, I don't think that's that important. Um, and I think it is, it's different in that they like expect, I guess the way they grow up is like, everything's the same between spouses...it's like religion, ...where you're from. Uh, language spoken. Everything is all the same. And I disagree in that. Like, I don't think it has to be that way.

Theme 2.2: Gratitude and Acknowledgement of Parents' Immigration Stories

Participants showed an overwhelming sense of gratitude for their parents' (and often, grandparents') immigration journeys. Given that many of their parents immigrated to the States in search of more opportunities and educational prospects for their children, participants shared that they must build on their legacy rather than remain stagnant. In addition, the recognition of parental sacrifices also reinforced the closeness participants felt with their families. In this vein, many shared the desire to make them proud. Maya shares her perspective on how not being able to add to what immigrant parents built can have negative outcomes. Ganga explains the importance of giving back and making her parents proud.

Maya: I think it would just feel awful, just knowing that you've disappointed your family and knowing like that they have sacrificed for you and they've built the reputation and that you could single-handedly like, diminish it or ruin it...I think that would be like a lot of pressure to have... I think it's you don't like achieve something that is deemed as successful for the culture. Like if you just have a menial job and you make money and you get by and you don't live in the best house...you can still be happy and fine, but like you could still diminish the reputation if your parents had more than that and built more than that.

Ganga: Yes, I do think it definitely, I'm particularly close to my family and so I think that did rub off on me and the, like, the need to make them proud, especially, um, I think growing up as a child of immigrants, I feel like uh, there was this almost extra pressure. Like they sacrificed so much for me. Even if I don't agree with everything they say or they did, I wanna bring them that pride and like add to the family reputation.

Theme 2.3: Choosing to Give Back Without Obligations

Making one's parents and elders proud means different things depending on the context in which it occurs. It often appears as a double-edged sword in the lives of the participants as they navigate what it means to make themselves *and* their parents proud. They must consider the different expectations as well as the intention behind them. Further, there is the need to consider if the decisions being made are through conforming to norms and adhering to the expected demands, or if decisions are based largely on the wants of the participant. With the overarching construct of family reputation, participants share their perspectives of feeling obligated to comply due to the expectations their parents present versus various other reasons (e.g., respect for their parents, demands). Saanvi compares her interpretations of family reputation with how her parents and grandparents view it, highlighting generational differences.

Saanvi: Hmm. I think that they would maybe describe it as an expectation versus, I might describe it as an obligation. Um, and I guess maybe raising children of their own it's sort of like this feeling of wanting to be accepted in the community or maybe doing what's right by the community. So that's sort of an expectation, but when that's put onto children, it can be seen as an obligation, sometimes good or bad.

Additionally, this subtheme incorporates the difference that participants emphasized: *wanting* to give back and take care of parents versus being *obligated* to meet certain demands. In this sample, all participants shared that they hope to be able to give back to their parents and take care of them in old age. They saw this as something they personally aligned with and looked forward to, and out of respect for all their parents have given to them. The important distinction here is that this desire was, in fact, a desire, and not something that had been demanded. Family reputation, on the other hand, often felt like an obligation to them. Kareena shares her perspective of giving back with gratitude as opposed to being obligated to meet expectations by certain ages:

Kareena: Oh yeah. Def. So the part about paying them back, that feels more like it, like most of it feels more willing to me, like from my end because I feel like motivated to like be grateful for what I've been given and then like kind of given back as a way of saying like, thank you over time. But then the other one is definitely obligations. And they'll very much kind of exaggerate the idea that everything ends after a certain age and that then it's too late and then your life is kind of over unless you did this, this, and this. That's why that's more obligation.

Theme 2 underscores the shared value this sample held towards respecting their parents' immigration journeys and sacrifices. The sense of family unity and the larger notion of collectivism was apparent in their descriptions of what it means to give back to their parents. At the same time, they share their realization and push to make decisions that may not always align with the wishes of their parents, to the extent possible.

Theme 3: Cultural Values

The understanding of cultural values and the extent to which they are absorbed and endorsed by participants is an added component to understanding family reputation in this sample. Various relationships with such traditions, values, and rituals were further explained by participants both in regards to what they value and would pass down, as well as what they would hope to reduce and change for the next generation. Theme 3 yielded two subthemes: (3.1) *Preservation of Cultural Components*; and (3.2) *Shifting Priorities*.

Theme 3.1: Preservation of Cultural Components

There was an underlying sense of pride among participants for the aspects of their culture that resonated with them and the way they lived. Many of the participants were not able to fluently speak their Indian language, even if their parents were able to, because it was not reinforced throughout childhood or because English was valued more. These participants, and the ones that are fluent in their Indian language(s), noted that they would want to preserve and pass down the ability to speak and understand their native language(s). This underscored that there is a sense of pride associated with being able to speak Indian languages. Additionally, the

participants would want to preserve and pass down collectivistic ideals and family unity. Maintaining close relationships with family members is important to the participants as it represents a strong support system. Moreover, participants shared a desire to pass down different aspects of religion, such as stories that represent courage, to encourage a personally constructed view of faith. Likewise, participants hope to pass down cultural foods, music, and holidays, to the extent that feels right to them. There was a sense of belonging that was adjacent to being familiar with and exposed to various aspects of one's culture. Here, Gauri shares her desire to pass down language and the significance of cultural experience to someone as they grow up:

Gauri: Um, I feel like language is a, a big part of it. Like I have some sort of like anger towards not being able to speak Hindi so I feel like if I were to ever have kids, I'd want them to speak Hindi so I think sort of passing down language and like traditions, like even if I myself don't identify as Hindu, just cuz I'm not religious, I would still want to practice, like all the festivals. Um, I would wanna pass on like dishes and food, just cuz I think it's, I think it's really important just because I feel like if you don't have this sort of, um, cultural experience, you can feel kind of misplaced or empty.

Further, Sadhna explains that family is at the core of shared values between her and her parents. She also elaborates on family unity and protection as a means of protecting reputation.

Sadhna: I definitely think the value of family itself at the core, like I think. I think Indian people, specifically South Asian people, their core beliefs and values are just family first and sticking up for your family. And, um, the main, I feel like the main thing of this whole reputation thing stems from the fact that everybody just wants their family to be protected and, you know, valued. So I think just the prioritization of family is a shared value amongst us.

In addition, participants explained that certain values their parents had, such as work ethic and education, resonated with them, albeit sometimes in different ways. They valued the importance of education, especially considering the opportunities attaining educational achievement can provide. Nonetheless, participants explained that success can occur outside of the stereotypical AIA boxes (e.g., STEM, law, business) and they would encourage career exploration for the next generation. Here, Pari and Saanvi explain the importance of education

and work ethic. Saanvi further elaborates on encouraging room for exploration in ‘non-conventional’ careers.

Pari: I think for me, like, for like my parents, like worth ethic is like such a big thing for me. Cuz I feel like definitely like my parents' worth ethic, really. Like, um, rubbed off on me. Like even now, like taking 18 credits, studying for the LSATs and like having like a goal to like go to law school. Like I feel like a lot of that is like, I guess like from my parents..

Saanvi: Um... like the career hardworking sense. Um, of course I think that growing up as I, a second-generation Indian American, there was a lot of pressure on having a stable job growing up or being in like a high paying field. And I think that's something that I value really innately, and I would hope that my children would also want to do similarly, but I think that there would be a lot more room for exploration and growth. For example, if they have an interest in maybe a more non-conventional field, I would encourage that and I would have maybe help them take classes in that... so that they can really do what they would want to do when they grow up rather than what someone told them to do.

Theme 3.2: Shifting Priorities

Participants overwhelmingly shared that they would not pass down the habit of gossiping, competition, or judgmental tendencies that are prevalent in their communities. Instead, they prefer to prioritize mental well-being. Specifically, many share their hope to prioritize mental health over materialistic, achievement-based accolades. They further emphasized that one’s character and kindness mean more than the career they chose or the car they own. Many of these topics lend themselves to topics that are discussed under the notion of *log kya kahenge* (what will people say?). Gossip, although stereotypical, is prominent in the AIA community. Typically, youth pick up on the patterns of the *aunties* who are stereotypically known to be inclined to create and spread gossip. Much of this gossip is related to the inherent tendency to be better or to compete with others. Given the stigma that surrounds mental health in the AIA community, participants want to shift that conversation from something that is taboo to something that is a regular part of one’s life. Here, Bindu shares her own internalization of passing judgment and how she hopes to change that for future generations:

Bindu: I do catch myself like being like, oh no, I don't wanna do that. Or like, I don't wanna wear that because like, what are people gonna think when they look at me? Like, what are they gonna say? Like, you know, I do think I'm like inherently judgmental sometimes. Like, I wish I wasn't. But, I feel like that does come from coming from people who put so much pressure on and pride on having such a good and high reputation and that... We are a little bit more judgmental and like, I think that's something I definitely don't wanna pass down to my kids because there's no point in being judgmental...I feel like if I wasn't as judgmental like that would just be better off for me in general, but also intrinsically, I wouldn't always think about what other people are gonna say...I might not have like, thought twice about some of the stuff that I do... I do tend to make sure I think about all my decisions before I make 'em.

Additionally, Ganga and Gauri describe reducing stigma and emphasizing mental health moving forward. Rather than worrying about what others may think or say, they emphasize focusing on character and focusing on oneself for the purposes of health and well-being.

Ganga: I think like mental health, placing more importance on that is something I would totally pass down to my kids. I don't think Indian people are raised with that. They get better as they assimilate into the country, but it takes a lot of time for them to understand that that's a real issue and not just not working hard enough.

Gauri: And then I'd also wanna just like teach them more like, um, How you can, I don't know how you can overcome like, um, mental health problems cuz my parents never, like, my parents don't really focus on that. So like, I just wanna help them focus, like strengthen their mental health, their physical health. Just like focusing on how they can become better people and stuff like that.

Theme 3 underscores the various feelings attached to cultural norms and values.

Participants describe what they themselves endorse and would pass down, as well as what they hope to shift with future generations.

Theme 4: Gendered Expectations

Understanding gender norms and their impact on the current sample further illustrates family reputation as it relates to cis-gendered women. This theme captured relevant gendered experiences and expectations that show up for this sample either through observations at home or within the larger community, or through messages they have received throughout their lifetime. Additionally, participants shared their perspectives on the differential treatment and expectations

of men and women in AIA culture. Theme 4 yielded two themes: (4.1) *Traditional Gender Roles Often Celebrated*; and (4.2) *Women More Harshly Judged*.

Theme 4.1: Traditional Gender Roles Often Celebrated

Binary traditional gender roles (man and woman) are often celebrated among elders and those who endorse these views. There are aspects of one's upbringing and current worldview explained through the perspective of the participants. As described through the perspective of the participants, men are typically expected to be strong and intelligent. They are also *supposed* to be the providers and be financially well-off as opposed to the women in the community. At the same time, women are generally expected to be feminine, gentle, and modest. They are also *supposed* to be caretakers and homemakers which, in and of itself, implies that they must get married. Participants share that, through observations, they notice a separation of labor between men and women, even when the woman is working. In various interviews, participants shared that while the women are cooking, the men are hanging out. This passes on to the younger generation as young girls are told to learn to cook and make chai while young boys are not. At the same time, with boys, older men and women emphasize ideas of intelligence, financial stability, and prestigious accolades as their definition of success. Kareena shares what daughters are typically expected to do. Gauri and Saanvi share their personal experiences with gender norms and typical gendered expectations.

Kareena: Um, I think that like, um, I guess one thing is that we're kind of like, especially like being the daughter, I feel like we have this thing where it's like generally we're taught to conform.

Gauri: They taught me more like real life, practical stuff about life that my brother just doesn't know... Which is another thing, like my mom kind of teaches me like everything about, um, just like, I guess the big thing is caring for yourself, like cooking, cleaning, taking care of other people, like all of that sort of things. And obviously that was sort of like a gender division of labor with my dad not really participating in any of those tasks.

Saanvi: Um, I've been praised a lot for being very like sweet and gentle. Um, versus my brother has been praised for like, being able to speak well and being able to have opinions... Like that sort

of disparity is there where it's maybe like how, how a person presents themselves, I guess... Maybe career wise for a girl... I think that definitely it is important for a girl to have a good career, but maybe not as important as were a boy, in my view.

Theme 4.2: Women More Harshly Judged

Participants shared that AIA women are typically held to higher standards and therefore judged more harshly than men. Many participants brought up divorce as an example through observation of the elders in their family. When a married couple gets divorced, the woman is judged because “what will she do now?” while the men are expected to carry on and remarry. In addition, women have stricter limitations as to what they are and are not able to engage in. Many participants share the double standards they have either faced or seen throughout their lifetime with siblings, cousins, or family friends who identify as men. Because of this, they share that family reputation is more of a burden on women. Moreover, results show that women have a higher ‘ceiling’ to reach because they should be able to handle various things (e.g., careers, raising children, and household chores). Due to these expectations, there are major inconsistencies in what a failed woman vs a failed man would look like. Saanvi shares how the burden of family reputation may fall heavier on women. Gauri explains her perspective of women being judged more for mistakes. She also describes the reactions a woman may face after getting divorced as opposed to the reactions a man may face.

Saanvi: Um, and I find that girls are more subject to this than boys are, there's this notion that boys will just be boys versus with girls it's more like, wow, she's really disgracing her family. So it's harder for, I think that taboo to go away from a girl than it is from a guy. So maybe that, what will people think, falls more heavily on girls, I think as opposed to guys. Specific examples I can think of are maybe like clothing or girl might, might wear to say the grocery store, like say to someone's house, um, could be a little bit more heavily criticized even... But I do have this ingrained mentality of when I go somewhere, I think about how am I dressed. Will their parents be there? What will they think? Am I, are my shorts too short? Like should I be wearing like a higher shirt? And at the end of the day, it really doesn't matter, but it is things like that that I guess are like implicit thoughts that I will have.

Gauri: I also think any wrong thing that the daughter does is more blown up in perspective in comparison to something wrong a guy does.... So it's like when she, when a girl does something

negative, it definitely affects the family reputation more negatively than when a guy does. But a guy's victory is celebrated more than a girl is.

Gauri: I would think that like, it's definitely more a big deal for a woman. Like no one, when someone gets divorced, no one ever thinks, oh, what's the man gonna do now? It's always, oh, what's the woman gonna do now? Like, um, yeah, I definitely feel like there's more shame associated with the woman and more expectations associated with them that the man doesn't really have to experience.

Theme 4 conceptualizes the disparities that exist between men and women, as perceived by the sample, within the AIA community. Both Indian and American gendered expectations seem to show up for these participants. Higher standards are apparent for women as opposed to men. Additionally, the ramifications for bringing *shame* upon one's family are greater for women as opposed to men. This can be further interpreted through the lens of marriage, given that typically, the social standing of a woman is weighed heavily.

Theme 5: Emotional Experiences

Family reputation involves complicated, nuanced feelings given the complex nature of the way the construct shows up in someone's life. For these participants, there were shared feelings of positive and negative emotions. Additionally, there was an emphasis on bicultural/internal conflicts due to the layered identities they held and the impact that had on their mental well-being, typically due to the negative emotions the conflict caused. Theme 5 yielded three subthemes: (5.1) *Experiences with Positive Self-Conscious Emotions*; (5.2) *Experiences with Negative Self-Conscious Emotions*; and (5.3) *Bicultural Conflict*.

Theme 5.1: Experiences with Positive Self-Conscious Emotions

Positive self-conscious emotions are secondary emotions such as pride and hubris. For this sample, feelings of pride were associated with the maintenance and upkeep of family reputation. Family unity, gratitude for immigration journeys, and making one's parents proud reflected a strong sense of pride for the participants. Additionally, participants shared feeling

prideful when they knew that their parents had something to ‘brag’ about with family and friends, adding to the importance of the community’s opinions. Furthermore, participants felt joy through their accomplishments. This joy was due to having met a goal they set for themselves *and* having made their parents proud. Although joy is not a positive self-conscious emotion, it was often associated with pride for these participants.

In addition to self-conscious emotions, there were positive outcomes that were prominent for many of the participants. Family reputation, obligations, and expectations of the larger community manifested as a motivator for some participants. It allowed them to push themselves to meet the goals they had set and the goals that may have been set by their parents and/or their community at large. Moreover, the maintenance of family reputation also resulted in fulfillment and feelings of success. Participants shared that it is fulfilling to both make your elders proud and to be proud of yourself for working hard and reaching those goals. Gauri and Vrushali share their experiences of pride and joy through external, community validation. Gauri also touches on feeling proud of herself and that the community’s pride represents her family well.

Gauri: Um, probably good. Like I think to some extent I already feel a little proud, but like, I don't think I think about it too much, but like when other family members compliment me or like, Stuff like that, or like other friends or people in the community compliment me it makes me just feel good to like positively represent my family.

Vrushali: Um, well, just the other, like a few months ago, some of my grandma's siblings came over, so some of my like great aunts. And I had, I was just making them like afternoon chai. And they were like, this is so good. And like that was just so rewarding to me because for the aunties to say that your chai is good is like a whole other compliment... I think also, you know, academics of course, I think that's kind of the obvious answer, but, you know, doing well on tests and things like that of course your family's proud of you, you know, getting internships, getting jobs, getting into college and stuff like that.

Theme 5.2: Experiences with Negative Self-Conscious Emotions

Negative self-conscious emotions are negative secondary emotions including shame, guilt, and embarrassment. For the interview process, shame and guilt were the emotions focused

on. Thus, participants shared feelings of shame and guilt as being related to the outcome of diminishing family reputation. It is important to note that these individuals shared that these are their expected reactions if they were to diminish family reputation. Their experiences with shame and guilt have often stemmed from disappointing their parents rather than through the heavy outcome of ruining their family reputation. Moreover, most participants shared that their actions or behaviors would not inherently be harmful to how they lived their lives. However, they share that the consequence of disappointing their parents or other important individuals in their community would result in these negative self-conscious emotions.

In addition to shame and guilt, participants shared a myriad of other negative emotions. Concerning self-conscious emotions, participants shared that they would feel embarrassed. Other primary and complex negative emotions mentioned were anxiety, fear, stress, anger, sadness, and anguish. Anxiety, fear, and stress revolved around the expectations that they felt they had to adhere to, especially when there were set times to meet them. Further, there was a fear of resentment later in life because of the pressure that existed for them. Feelings such as anger, sadness, and anguish were described in hypothetical situations of what *may* diminish family reputation. Moreover, anger was described as being felt because of expectations, norms, standards, and behaviors that were simply used to keep up with a *facade*. Here, Kareena shares the distance between what she values and what she feels she has to keep up with and how this struggle invokes feelings of stress and anxiety. Gauri shares that she would feel angry if family reputation was to be diminished by something she did because it would reemphasize that the community perspective has not shifted. Specifically, Gauri gives an example of how her being bisexual and coming out could potentially lead to this outcome.

Kareena: But then it's a little bit like, if it doesn't align with like your inner values, I feel like sometimes that would make me like, feel kind of stressed or anxious because it's like I'm doing

something, but it's, I'm not happy about what I'm doing, like for myself, but I'm just doing it for this, like for my parents. For the reputation.

Gauri: I feel like I'd be more angry than sad just because I, I think the things that diminish a family reputation are very, subjective. Like, I wouldn't personally think that it would be diminishing. So like I would more be mad that that perspectives haven't changed more than like, I, like I did something 'bad,' you know?

Theme 5.3: Bicultural Conflict

This subtheme captures the internal conflict associated with navigating two cultures.

Participants shared that during childhood, they either felt 'too Indian' or 'too American,' never quite fitting into one of the boxes just right. Throughout their middle and high school years, they began to integrate both cultures to the extent that they could. Nevertheless, they share that they never felt like "enough" in either culture because of the othering that occurs in the States and because they did not grow up in India. In addition, a significant component of this bicultural conflict reflected what was deemed acceptable by each community. When participants engaged in something that was seen as more American, they questioned their Indian identity. At the same time, when participants engaged in something that was rooted in Indian culture, they were unsure of where they belonged in the context of America and their American peers. Ganga shares her constant battle navigating her Indian and American identities. Bindu shares her experiences of not feeling Indian *enough* in spaces with other AIA individuals.

Ganga: Um, but I always struggle with that, like Indian versus American identity where I'm like, this is, this is like accepted, or not even accepted, this is how it is an Indian culture, but American culture is so different, which, where do I, where do I fall if I do this? When I'm in an Indian crowd, I'm American. But when I'm an Indian, you know, like the vice versa.

Bindu: I think before high school. I was like I'm very in tune with my culture. But then like when I see like these people who are like, you know, some people go to the Temple every Sunday or like the Gurdwara every Sunday. Like I wasn't really one of those like kids who go to Sunday school.. or like they've been dancing on a Bhangra team for their entire lives. I feel like I was never like that. And so, in high school, I joined SASA (South Asian Student Association). And um, that definitely did help, but it also like, did kind of create a toxic environment of like, oh, like who's more Indian?

Theme 5 captures and describes the nuanced emotional experiences associated with family reputation. Positive and negative implications were shared by the participants with regard to the upkeep or downfall of one's family reputation. In addition, participants shared the complexities involved in identifying with two cultures.

Theme 6: Coping and Well-Being

Understanding how this sample copes with feelings, both negative and positive, is an important way to increase our understanding of what may be valuable to them in times of need or when practitioners intervene. The methods of coping and well-being that showed up for them reflect the values they align with. Theme 6 yielded three subthemes: *(6.1) Coping Through Connection; (6.2) Reflection and Values Identification; and (6.3) Hope.*

Theme 6.1: Coping Through Connection

Participants shared that they often choose to cope with negative situations, or to celebrate positive situations, through connections. For some, that connection may be with family members ranging from siblings to parents, to extended relatives. For others, that may be through their friends who share similar identities for validation, or different identities for an outsider perspective. Few participants share that they cope through conversation and venting with siblings as they are the only other people who have the full context of being raised in the same home. Other participants shared that they have formed deeper relationships with their parents as they got older and feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings with them. Some participants shared that they choose to share their experiences and tough situations with individuals who can relate to their identities (e.g., fellow South Asian, fellow 2nd gen immigrant) while others prefer leaning on individuals without that shared identity for an outsider perspective. Many participants shared a variety of these coping strategies and elaborated that it was dependent on the context.

Vrushali shares that her siblings are her go-to people when it comes to familial concerns. She also shares the increased trust between her and her parents that allows them to speak about such conversations. Kareena shares her preference for connecting with friends who have a similar background (e.g., child of immigrant parents).

Vrushali: I'm really lucky that I have siblings who've gone through the exact same situation as me, so a lot of times I will just go to speak with them and they'll a hundred percent validate me and understand my point of view, and kind of tell me when it's worth talking back to – like talking to my parents about it or when it's just worth not. And then also in the, in the past few years, um, maybe just becoming older or, um, the pandemic maybe gave us a lot of time together, but it's just been a lot more open communication in general. And like, I feel very comfortable speaking with them [her parents] about a lot of things. And they're very receptive now, which I very much appreciate.

Kareena: I would say like, um, I listen to music or I talk to my friends who, like, some of them, like, they may not be like Indian, but they also have like immigrant parents. So I feel like we can kind of relate on as, cause I feel like generally, um, those, those kind of parents tend to act a bit similarly in some ways.

Theme 6.2: Reflection and Values Identification

Engaging in reflection to process situations and feelings was the preferred method of coping for some participants. Reflection means thinking deeply about something to understand and process the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that may be related to it. This was significant to them as it allowed for the space to soak in and understand their feelings, process what had occurred, and potentially figure out a solution to move forward. Some participants preferred coping by being alone with their thoughts and thinking through situations. Others shared their preference for using a journal to write out and process through written words. Additionally, participants mentioned that they remind themselves of values they align with and use that to move forward. Through identifying these values, participants are able to ground themselves. In a similar vein, some participants shared that they would remind themselves of their parents' perspectives and upbringing while feeling grateful for being able to resist some of the negative family reputation outcomes. Reflection often resulted in being reminded of one's values which

connected both their experience and their coping process. Sadhna shares her process of coping with negative emotions related to family reputation.

Sadhna: And I think the easiest thing for me is like always reminding myself that they grew up in a different, like the older generation grew up at a different time. They had different resources, like they weren't able to think the way that, you know, have the same thoughts that we have cuz they weren't really open to these new ideas and things like that. So I think honestly, one of the biggest things I do when I feel anger towards these types of things is like be grateful that I have the opportunity to think this way and have the opportunity to even feel these emotions and like know that what's going on is wrong because it, at the end of the day, like the older generations, I feel like sometimes just are narrow minded on these topics. So, they're not really able to understand. But I, the fact that I'm able to first have empathy for them when they're doing wrong things and then also understand why it's wrong, I think I'm just grateful that I'm able to understand these situations to like a greater capacity, I guess.

Theme 6.3: Hope

There is strength in this outcome, as it really emphasizes what it means to move forward in a way that does not simply ignore past traditions, and instead, uses them to construct new meanings. Participants shared that hope, through various means, has been a beneficial way to cope with the negative components and emotions related to family reputation. Many shared their recognition of mindset shifts within the community and recognized their active roles as agents of change. By doing so, there is a shared understanding that their generation can continue to shift the way certain taboo topics (e.g., mental health) and stereotypical norms (e.g., STEM careers and marriage) are seen. Furthermore, many participants mentioned noticing perspective shifts within their own families. Moving through different developmental stages, participants noticed that their parents and elders were beginning to open themselves up to different possibilities and perspectives. This added to their hope and optimistic perspective for future generations having witnessed the meaningful shifts in their elders. Pari shares that she feels hopeful for the way things will be in the future.

Pari: But I feel like definitely, like, I feel like I'm more optimistic about like the future and the way things are going to be and instead of being like stuck in like a conservative mindset of this is how it's always been, so this is going to happen versus like, there's new changes to the world that's going to, that's that, that are occurring being made.

Theme 6 explains the various coping mechanisms that the sample chooses to engage in for their unique contexts and situations. Many participants had multiple methods of coping and chose the one that best accompanied their situation or the feelings they were experiencing. Though hope was not explicit, there were many mentions of how being reminded of the shifts in the culture are important to keep them going.

Finally, participants were asked to debrief their experience engaging in the semi-structured interview. Although this was not the focus of the research questions and, therefore, did not yield its own theme, there is valuable information that speaks to the themes that emerged. Overwhelmingly, participants shared their appreciation for having a space to talk about family reputation and its related components. Most, if not all, participants shared that even though this is something that is heavily emphasized within their community, it is not explicitly discussed. Additionally, the construct has not been clearly defined but is prominent in various aspects of their own lives. This study served as both a space to reflect on their own experiences of the construct as well as a reminder to continue pushing forward to make positive changes. With regard to research, specifically, participants shared that they felt represented. One participant in particular made the note that she has never been a *perfect* match for a study before, and that this work inspired her. Thus, this information is valuable when interpreting the results in the next section.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Family reputation is a nuanced construct that tends to linger in the lives of Asian Indian communities. The novel contribution of this study is an understanding of the experiences and conceptualization of family reputation and its consequences as perceived by young Asian Indian American (AIA) women. The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand how family reputation is defined by the sample, its emotional consequences, and the relevant factors that showed up for the participants associated with the construct. This sample operationalized family reputation as elevated expectations set by the AIA community, at large, that individuals and families must live up to.

Six superordinate themes emerged through data analysis: (1) *The Pressures of Family Reputation*; (2) *Child of Immigrant Perspectives*; (3) *Cultural Values*; (4) *Gendered Expectations*; (5) *Emotional Experiences*; and (6) *Coping and Well-being*. Themes 1 through 4 answered research question 1, while themes 5 and 6 answered research question 2. Theme 1 highlighted the overall pressures of family reputation experienced by this sample. In addition, this theme underscored the value of influential adults and prominent relationships within the lives of the participants that served as protective factors. Theme 2 described the experiences of being a child of first-generation immigrant parents, specifically Asian Indian parents. Theme 3 compiled various values that the participants have been exposed to and/or endorse themselves. Theme 4 emphasized the prevalence of gendered expectations and what those often looked like for this sample. Theme 5 described the emotional outcomes as they relate to family reputation. Finally, theme 6 expressed the coping strategies utilized by the sample. These results are further expanded upon and interpreted below. This discussion puts the findings in the context of existing

literature and the theories that loosely guided this study. Further, the discussion addresses limitations, implications, and future directions of the results and methodology.

Interpretation of Findings

Family reputation, as defined by the sample, is set by the larger community based on adherence to certain norms and expectations (e.g., career, marriage). Further, family reputation is often accompanied by the judgment of the outside community and this adds to the pressure that members of families face to ensure that they “look good” to the rest of the community. This result aligns with the Face Negotiation Theory (FNT) developed by Ting-Toomey (1998) as it highlights the need for individuals to engage in face-work and maintain their reputation. Additionally, FNT speaks to the challenges that may arise for an individual’s perception of their own social status. This is also consistent with the results of this study as there are various challenges for the sample, and their families, as they engage in the maintenance of their reputation. The sample underscored that although this construct has more significance to their elders, they find it important to maintain it to avoid negative repercussions for their family. This section presents interpretations of each major theme that emerged from this study.

Factors Related to Pressure

Theme 1 discusses the pressure associated with maintaining family reputation. Among these, academic choices and career paths were largely related to comparison with other youth or well-established individuals in their community. Overwhelmingly, there was a pressure to conform to stereotypical Desi career expectations (e.g., STEM, business). Participants who may have interests in areas outside of these typical categories may still choose careers that align with these expectations. In addition to career and academic choices, there was pressure to conform to certain expectations (e.g., marriage) by the “appropriate” ages. These ages may mean more to

women than men, specifically in reference to the “biological clock.” These findings may be understood in the context of “vertical collectivism,” in which there are hierarchical structures of power within a collectivist family (Chadda & Deb, 2013). This may manifest as a means to enhance family unity (i.e., cohesion) which, as seen in other results of this study, is important to the participants. Family cohesion has been found within many Asian American cultures (Yee et al., 2007) and involves filial piety, loyalty, and harmony among the family. In an ethnographic study with first-generation immigrant Asian Indian parents, second-generation AIA students, and middle and high school teachers, Saran (2007) found that “The individual and collective identity of motivated Asian Indian students is reproduced through the internalization of their parents’ achievement schemes, their desire to work hard and get ahead” (p. 74). This finding intersects with the results from this study given that participants may choose careers and define achievement through what their parents have passed on to them.

Furthermore, an interesting finding from theme 1 is the relation to perfectionism. As a participant mentioned, there was an emphasis on needing to be *perfect* that was placed on her throughout her school years. Other participants shared elders in their lives who are inclined towards perfectionism in how the family is seen by the external community. This need for perfectionism can be interpreted through the model minority myth (MMM). Previous literature has evidenced the various impacts of the MMM on the psychological functioning of Asians and Asian Americans (Shih et al., 2019). Due to the historical classification of Asian Americans as the ‘model minority,’ there is an expectation that Asian American individuals, as a broad category, are academically advanced. Here, the literature supports the findings from theme 1 as this assumption adds an unfair burden to students and families to maintain such an image, thus

leading to perfectionistic tendencies. Overall, theme 1 underscores individual, family, peer, and societal factors that influence and are part of family reputation for this sample.

Family, Culture, and Values

Theme 2 describes the samples' attachment to and respect for their parents' immigration stories. In combination with the immense feelings of gratitude, there is also a struggle that exists to find a balance that respects both *their* wants and the wants of their parents. As seen in this sample, it seems that this balance is a work in progress and largely depends on the context. Participants may hope to give back and endorse family cohesion without necessarily following all the expectations that have been laid out for them. This may be done by maintaining various familial and cultural dynamics (e.g., togetherness, harmony) without blind adherence to certain *obligations*. Thus, family cohesion is an interest for this sample and does not require conforming to parental and societal expectations. As children of immigrants, there is a recognition that *owing* one's parents is not a negative thing. In fact, there is a desire to be able to give back to their parents once they are in a position to. At the same time, expectations that are rigid, reductive, and misaligned with AIA young women can be negative and in turn have negative ramifications for relationships and well-being. These nuanced, mixed results are consistent with what has been found with other groups of Asian American children of immigrants (e.g., Choi et al., 2018, 2020). Additionally, Hahm et al. (2014) found that greater emphasis on *familism* (i.e., familismo) combined with gendered norms and expectations can increase distress among Asian American young women. This finding intersects with what may occur if that balance leans too far from what the participants value. It is important to recognize that giving back to one's parents may not always be financial or material (e.g., Trieu, 2016) and instead may be displayed through taking

care of and staying in contact with parents. Overall, theme 2 underscores how participants navigate their identities as children of immigrants with two very different cultures.

Theme 3 discusses various cultural values and traditions explained by participants about either passing them down or letting them go. Interestingly, results highlighted that language was a prominent cultural component that all participants hoped to pass down, even ones who that shared they are currently not able to speak their native language(s). There may be an increased sense of connection to one's culture by being able to speak the language. With language fluency or even familiarity, participants may feel *more Indian* if they can speak the language which can mitigate some of the bicultural conflict. Heritage language, the language associated with one's cultural background, has various benefits for ethnic minorities (e.g., Hakuta & Diaz, 1985). A study with Korean Americans aged 18 to 35 found that their ability to speak their heritage language (i.e., Korean) affected social interactions with other Korean Americans (Cho, 2000). Additionally, this ability allowed them to engage in cultural and religious activities with their families and community. This finding relates to the *anger* related towards not being able to speak their ethnic Indian language and the *desire* to learn and pass language on. Furthermore, a strong sense of family unity and the desire to pass that down was shared by the participants. embodied the collectivist ideals held by the culture at large. Consistent with the literature, the Asian Indian community tends to endorse collectivism (e.g., Chadda & Deb, 2013; Farver et al., 2007). This finding may allude to the emphasis on valuing those within one's immediate community, to the extent that feels right to the participants, rather than stretching oneself thin trying to please the community at large.

Moreover, it was found that there was a strong desire to increase mental health awareness and to pass that down to future generations. Typically, due to the stigma that surrounds mental

health in the AIA community, there is little focus on mental well-being by the community. Often, there is judgment associated with having a mental illness and/or attending therapy. Indeed, theme 3 also uncovered that participants hope to reduce the judgmental and gossip-related tendencies. Some participants noted that they have found themselves to be judgmental of others and, at the same time, question their own decisions time and time again. This intersects with previous literature (Goel et al., 2022; Islam et al., 2017) that underscores mental health being received as a taboo topic by this community. This recognition of mental health as taboo may be exacerbated by the weight of maintaining family reputation since *having* a mental health condition or attending therapy may be looked down upon. This coincides with literature that has found mental health being related to loss of face (LOF) (Hwang, 2016). Overall, theme 3 highlights numerous cultural values and traditions that participants hope to either pass down or reduce, as well as their desire to increase the importance of mental well-being.

Gender and Family Reputation

Theme 4 discusses gendered expectations as perceived, experienced, and observed by the sample. Both American and South Asian cultures are largely heteronormative and patriarchal, thus endorsing and enforcing stereotypical gender norms (Khadhijah & Nodin, 2023; Amin & Bansal, 2022; Chadda & Deb, 2013). An interesting, though not surprising, finding was related to the perceived double standards. The participants share that even if men and women were to engage in the same “bad” decision or make a mistake, the women would be judged more harshly while men would be given leeway. This is consistent with previous findings that highlight the conflict faced by South Asian women as they navigate sociocultural decisions (Rahman & Witenstein, 2012). These harsher restrictions and stricter eyes kept on young women can often lead to secrecy. The result regarding secrecy was interesting because it may be a way for women

to test their autonomy and agency while almost playing it safe to avoid major repercussions. Moreover, it was interesting to see that some participants shared that family reputation was more associated with what daughters do as opposed to sons, while a few shared that because sons are breadwinners, the gaze is on them. This is an interesting mixed finding as it points to the adherence to gender-based expectations being a significant factor for family reputation. In either case, participants are aware of this double standard and what seems like a sense of hierarchy between sons and daughters. Overall, theme 4 underscores the impact of gender on the experience of family reputation in this sample.

Emotions and Coping

Theme 5 describes emotional experiences associated with family reputation. As expected, both positive and negative self-conscious emotional outcomes are experienced by the participants. Additionally, these emotions are often nuanced, consisting of layers of positive and negative feelings. Many noted feelings of pride when they accomplish things that they know will make their parents proud. Nevertheless, it is significant to note that more often than not, what made their parents proud also made the participants proud, too. Often, this was specific to academic and career-related accolades. Furthermore, there were feelings of fulfillment and satisfaction accompanied by making parents and other elders proud. Pride, as a self-conscious emotion, requires a level of self-awareness for the individual to *perceive* the emotion (Sznycer, 2019). Some participants admit that, indeed, it felt good to be able to provide their parents with something they could later “brag” about. Moreover, this relates to the unique nature of pride for this sample and how, experiencing it, brought feelings of joy and fulfillment.

In combination with positive feelings, there were feelings of guilt and shame that coincided with even just the *thought* of diminishing family reputation. Guilt and shame are

negative self-conscious emotions that, similar to pride, require a level of self-perception on the part of the individual (Sznycer, 2019; Tagney, 1995). Few participants had examples to share that had provoked/brought on feelings of guilt and shame in the past. Others, however, could not recall such a memory. All participants, however, shared that they would feel guilt and shame if something *they* did was the reason for decreasing family reputation. Consistent with previous findings (e.g., Rahman & Witenstein, 2012), South Asian American college students have reported that they feel guilty when their decisions go against those that are expected by their family.

Additionally, participants spoke about their experiences of having to navigate their bicultural identity. This has often led to an experience of bicultural conflict which can lead to distress for the participants. Bicultural, in this sample, refers to two cultures that make up the individual's identity versus having two biological parents from different backgrounds as seen in other studies (e.g., Toomey et al., 2013). This sample shares feelings as if they are not *enough* in either context (American or Indian). There may often be a competition, as talked about in an earlier theme, of who is more "cultured" than the other. In this case, speaking the language and adhering to certain Indian norms may increase a sense of belonging in that community. On the flip side, if there is too much adherence to Desi values, there may be fewer ways to feel as if one belongs in their American contexts too (e.g., school, work). This conflict is consistent in the literature that speaks to children of immigrants navigating dual identities and having to switch between them/balance them depending on the context (e.g., Tummala-Narra, 2013; Giguere et al., 2010). Moreover, being *too* American in areas that directly oppose Indian norms can look bad or be detrimental to a sense of belonging and family reputation. Consistent with previous literature, South Asian American women are dealing with bicultural tensions as they navigate

how to integrate the two cultures (Inman et al., 2001; Witenstein, 2020). These tensions are often more salient in women as they are expected to both do well academically *and* thrive in their “traditional” homemaker roles (Witenstein, 2020). As seen in the Cultural Values Conflict (CVC) theory developed by Inman et al. (2001), South Asian women are dealing with both South Asian and American gendered norms.

One interpretation of these results is that the sample’s experiences could speak to the immigrant paradox and the challenging outcomes of being second-generation immigrants in America. The *immigrant paradox* refers to the possibility that immigrant children and adolescents appear to have less optimal developmental outcomes as they become more acculturated to the United States culture (e.g., Garcia Coll & Marks, 2012; Marks et al., 2014). Evidence has found mixed outcomes; some immigrant youth may have less optimal behavioral health while others appear resilient and adapt to their environments. It is worth considering that the overarching culture of the U.S. may result in various mental health impacts, especially with notions of white supremacy that is pervasive at systemic and interpersonal levels. There has been research over the past decade that speaks to this paradox and alludes to physical and mental health outcomes that indicate negative results when “becoming American” for immigrant youth (Han, 2006). Though theme 5 highlights the complex nature of self-conscious emotions, emotional experiences, and bicultural conflict as experienced by this sample when trying to adhere to family reputation, these processes and experiences can be related to the immigrant paradox and larger American culture.

Theme 6 discusses the coping mechanisms employed by participants as they make sense of family reputation and its positive and negative effects. Coping through connection, either with family members or peers who share similar identities was mentioned often. This preference for

copied through difficult situations, specifically those that may be related to family reputation, speaks to the emphasis on finding community and engaging in collective processing. At the same time, participants share that for certain situations they may choose to cope through community with peers who do *not* share similar identities to get an outsider's perspective. This may be especially useful when participants feel they are not *exactly* similar to other AIA individuals. Additionally, many participants shared that they choose to practice gratitude - gratitude for being able to think in more modern ways, for being able to step into the shoes of their elders, and for having opportunities to even expand their thoughts. This has helped them cope when they are upset with "traditional," old-school ways of thinking. Coping through community is consistent with previous findings in which South Asian adolescents coped with acculturative stress by connecting to their family, heritage, and community (Tummala-Narra et al., 2016). Overall, theme 6 underscores the coping strategies that this sample preferred to use when dealing with the complex, nuanced emotions related to family reputation.

Limitations

Few limitations were present in this study. First, given the qualitative nature of the study, and the use of IPA which requires a small homogenous sample, the results are not generalizable. Given the use of IPA, generalizability was not the goal. However, the results are transferable, (i.e., the applicability of the results in another setting that is *fit* for this study) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To ensure the transferability of the results, rich and detailed descriptions of the context, the sample, and the analytic process were provided for the reader. This increases the extent to which it is applicable in other settings. Additionally, the researcher did not utilize triangulation which could have further added to the validity of the results (e.g., Carter et al., 2014).

Second, the researcher identified with the demographics of the sample which may have resulted in biases outside of her awareness influencing the analysis and interpretation of the results. Though there are strengths to identifying with the research sample, there are possible limitations that were accounted for through the use of bracketing, member-checking, and intercoder reliability (ICR). Bracketing was employed during analysis to ensure that each transcript was read with fresh eyes, and not influenced by previous transcripts. The researcher also stated her positionality for the readers to be aware of. Member-checking was employed to ensure that the results, indeed, matched the participants' experiences. The use of a second coder informed ICR as both coders developed codes and themes independently first, and then came together to find alignment. These steps were taken to mitigate any validity issues.

Next, the researcher was learning IPA as she was going. However, she consulted with an IPA expert and literature numerous times throughout the process over the course of the year. This expert teaches IPA methodology and uses IPA in research. Although the researcher immersed herself in the IPA literature before and during the analytic process, she recognizes that she has much more to learn. Therefore, there is the possibility that IPA-specific opportunities might have been missed in different phases of the work (e.g., interview process, analysis, interpretation). It should be noted that IPA was chosen after the research questions had been developed; thus, for the future, research questions should be adjusted afterward to ensure that IPA is the right match. However, IPA literature and consultation ensured that the research questions were, indeed, fine for the use of IPA. In addition, both coders were coding using IPA for the first time. However, they had previous experience with other qualitative methods (e.g., thematic analysis, content analysis) which supported their ability to thematically categorize results.

Finally, due to the stigma around mental health and openly speaking about one's family unit that exists in the AIA community, broadly, some participants may not have felt 100% comfortable sharing *all* they wanted to. However, to mitigate this to the extent possible, the researcher identified as someone who shared the participants' identity. Her prolonged engagement with this community further supported rapport building and trust during the interviews. It is important to note that, although this *may* have been a concern, the participants were very motivated to be interviewed and were open to sharing vulnerable experiences. The debrief portion of the interview, as well as the member-checks, confirmed that this was a topic significant to the participants and that they were invested in the process.

Future Directions

Considering the CVC (Inman, 2001), it will be important for future research to consider these components in Asian Indian adolescents across countries with large populations of this community (e.g., America, England). Given that this study was conducted with young adults and the CVC theory was built on South Asian and South Asian American women, it will be imperative to understand these processes and conflicts in South Asian girls and adolescents. This may be a significant developmental phase to focus on given the development of ethnic identity and gender identity. There may also be an increase in acculturative stress, bullying, and differing expectations from parents during this crucial time of identity development. Additionally, it will be valuable to understand the way that AIA boys and young men conceptualize this construct for their own lives concerning the expectations placed on them. Through understanding that patriarchal norms are a driving force of some of these expectations, along with the American values of productivity and masculinity, understanding family reputation as it shows up for men will be valuable for future iterations of the study and a better understanding of their well-being.

Furthermore, future studies can investigate the relationship between the model minority myth and family reputation to better understand the pressures faced by AIA youth in schools. Evidence has shown increased rates of suicidality in Asian American/Asian communities (Leung, 2020; Wong et al., 2012), broadly, which highlights the importance of understanding the role of the model minority myth, family reputation, and their relation with psychological outcomes. Moreover, there may be a gender component that is vital to understand with family reputation and the model minority myth as it relates to the differences in which young men versus young women are able to cope and deal with such pressures.

In addition to youth and young adults, studying family reputation in first-generation immigrant parents will add to the conceptualization of family reputation in this community. Understanding its impact on their lives, possibly comparing when they were in India and now being in America, and their perspectives on what it means can lead to future iterations. Furthermore, generational differences will be valuable to capture. Considering the age of immigration of first-generation parents will enhance the nuanced experiences of family reputation being raised in India and in America versus in just one or the other. Given that immigration generations are very complex and cannot be generalized, having a relatively homogenous sample could add to those results.

Regarding self-conscious emotions, future studies may consider mixed-method approaches. A semi-structured interview to capture qualitative, rich narratives from participants accompanied by measures that gauge endorsement of self-conscious emotions could further our understanding of the relation.

Finally, it will be vital to avoid the perpetuation of negative stereotypes of this community in future studies. As emphasized previously, these results must be interpreted in the

context of systems that influence the lives of AIA women (e.g., patriarchy). The results of this study are crucial to better understanding the best practices of working with AIA individuals as well as future research in this area. The AIA diaspora is complex, extremely heterogeneous, and ever-changing. Additionally, though much of the literature has categorized Asian Americans, South Asian Americans, and Asians/South Asians broadly, future research must continue to step away from this monolithic lens. Evidence has shown the differences and gaps that exist between various aspects of these cultures, especially about income, history of immigration to the United States because of various laws, and socioeconomic status (Amin & Bansal, 2022). This is vital, especially as we understand how SES interacts with education, values, and acculturation.

Conclusions and Implications

This study was an exploration of family reputation in the lives of young Asian Indian American (AIA) women. Related constructs to family reputation have been studied previously. The major contribution of this study was exploring the notion of family reputation. Although family reputation is experienced in the lives of many AIA individuals, the construct has not yet been fleshed out in the literature. Previous studies have included *izzat*, loss of face (LOF), and family obligation as adjacent constructs. In this study, family reputation was defined by the participants as an overarching, cultural feature of the AIA community. Family reputation, from their perspective, is often lingering and adds both pressure and judgment to the behaviors and decisions made by families, largely, and individual family members. There are both positive and negative consequences associated with family reputation and its existence in the lives of these individuals. Additionally, there are protective and risk factors that accompany these underlying issues. AIA women have largely learned to live with family reputation, even without really naming what that is. Although there has not been a clear definition in the literature, or in their

lives, the participants have been able to reflect on its impact. Through observing their communities and the way they show up in spaces, they have developed their values both independently and through the values their parents and the larger community hold.

The results from this study highlight the collective values that are held in both first- and second-generation Asian Indian immigrants. These results speak to the notion that collectivism is endorsed across generations. Additionally, the findings underscore that AIA young women are beginning to define what collectivism looks like for themselves and to what extent they endorse the same values that their parents do. These results build on previous research by emphasizing that Asian American youth, broadly, have mixed feelings about their adherence to certain rigid norms and expectations from the larger community. The implications for practice are to understand family dynamics in the lives of AIA clients and to be attuned to any gendered norms that may be showing up in the room. The implications for research are using designs that compare groups (e.g., first-generation and second-generation AIA immigrants; men and women). Mixed-methods may also be valuable for future research to integrate both quantitative and qualitative methods while increasing the trustworthiness of data through triangulation. The use of mixed-methods would allow for further holistic interpretations through semi-structured interviews and surveys (Wasti et al., 2022). Furthermore, these results highlight the emotional experiences associated with family reputation. Pride is often felt by the individual themselves if it is a goal that they also align with. Guilt and shame are experienced, or expected to be felt, at the mere thought of diminishing family reputation through actions that may not be harmful otherwise. The implications of these findings are to support AIA young women as they uncover what goals are *theirs* and what they believe they *have* to do. For example, a practitioner may be able to support their client in figuring out if marriage is something they want, and if so for what

reasons, or if it is something they believe they must do because society heavily expects it from women. In a similar vein, this may apply to topics of breaking up and/or divorce. Outside of relationships, practitioners may be able to support AIA young women as they navigate decisions revolving careers that resonate with their interests and skills. Additionally, even if the career fits into a typical category (e.g., doctor), the practitioner can support any cultural values conflict that shows up for the client. These culturally-relevant practices are valuable to consider when working with young AIA women.

School psychologists should consider these results in their practice as they work with Asian Indian American students. It is important that school psychologists engage in meaningful work and assessment practices with AIA school-aged girls to ensure their proper access to education. By understanding, or even having an initial idea of *typical* AIA norms, school psychologists may be better prepared to work with these students and families. Moreover, given that AIA young women may be less likely to initiate conversations about these topics, especially if they have not yet found the words to, school psychologists can engage in appropriate discussions about salient identities to potentially encourage this dialogue. Although these results are not meant to be generalizable to all Asian American communities, there are aspects that school psychologists can be aware of as they conceptualize certain cases. For example, school psychologists should consider the model minority myth, achievement, and lack thereof in their Asian American students, broadly. The consideration of the MMM is vital in assessment processes from the referral to the recommendations.

Overall, this study contributes to the literature surrounding AIA communities, specifically in relation to family reputation and its impact on various aspects of achievement and emotional experiences. Future iterations could study the model minority myth related to family

reputation to further expand the knowledge base that is vital for school psychologists. Studies that provide further information about these experiences, commonalities, and possible influences and consequences will be vital to practice and interventions. Finally, these results can support school psychologists' work not only with students but with families and the broader community of Asian Indian Americans.

Appendix A

Interview questions

Definitions and Importance of Family Reputation

1. What words come to mind when you think of family reputation in the context of Asian Indian American (our) culture?
 - a. How do you think your parents and grandparents would define it?
 - b. Is family reputation important to you? Why or why not?
2. Who are/were the influential adults in your life? Why?
 - a. Can you share any experiences of what made them influential?
3. In what ways do your values differ from those of your parents/elders in your family and community?
 - a. In what ways are they similar?
 - b. What, if any, of these values would you want to pass to the next generation?

Experiences

4. Were there gendered expectations/roles/experiences at home? If yes, do you believe they were passed down to you?
 - a. If yes, how were they passed down?
 - b. What is your perception of the way a son contributes to their family's reputation?
 - c. What is your perception of the way a daughter contributes to their family's reputation?
5. Does *log kya kahenge* (what will people say) mean anything to you? If so, can you elaborate?
 - a. Do you believe this is an integral part of Asian Indian culture? Explain.
 - b. How has *log kya kahenge* been integrated into values/expectations that were passed down to you by elders?
6. How has family reputation influenced your choices?
7. What are the responsibilities that you feel towards your culture? Towards your family?

Emotions/Coping

8. How would it feel to maintain/uphold your family's reputation?
9. How would it feel to diminish your family's reputation?
 - a. What would that look like?
10. Can you tell me about experiences of feeling shame or guilt due to family reputation?
 - a. What about feelings of pride and joy?
 - b. Any other feelings?
11. When you have positive and negative emotions, what do you do to manage them?
12. How has family reputation impacted your well-being?
13. *Debrief*: How are you feeling now/at this moment after talking about this?

Appendix B

Member-check Interview Questions (McKim, 2023)

1. After reading through the findings, what are your general thoughts?
2. How accurately do you feel the findings captured your thoughts/experiences?
3. What could be added to the findings to capture your experiences better?
4. If there is anything you would like removed, what would that be and why?

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