ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation:	VELLATHINAI DHAHIKUNNA VEZHAMBAL (AS A BIRD SEARCHES FOR THE RAIN WATER) SOCIAL PERCEPTIONS OF INDIAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH WITHIN HOME, SCHOOL, AND COMMUNITY SPACES
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Broadly, this dissertation study examines the role of space, human agency, and structures in influencing social perceptions of Indian American youth and the ways these spaces and perceptions influence their schooling experiences This study is exploratory and qualitative in nature, drawing on interview data from 7 Indian American youth (5 girls and 2 boys) who attended high schools in a single district located in the mid-Atlantic, United States and archival documents, specifically the school district's English and history standards. To make sense of the study data and findings, I used a conceptual framework composed of key concepts from intersectionality, structural racism, and spatiality. Three key conclusions emerged from the present study: 1) teachers' and peers' perceptions of participants influenced their schooling experiences; 2) participants' assigned importance to social aspects of school as much as and at times perhaps more than academic aspects; and 3) participants experienced racial/ethnic bias in their interactions with teachers and learning materials which also influenced their schooling experiences.

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SOCIAL PERCEPTIONS OF INDIAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH
WITHIN HOME, SCHOOL, AND COMMUNITY SPACES

by

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For Dad, Mom, Chris, Cyril, & Chief: My five-pointed star.
Shining as true North, and always helping me find my way home.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

There is a poetic notion in the Malayalee culture that when the Vezhambel, or the Hornbill bird, cries out to the heavens for water to quench her thirst, her prayers are always answered, and the rains come. I am the Vezhambel. I am crying out for the day that all people regardless of their caste, color, and creed can be accepted, loved, and cherished. My participants are the Vezhambel. They are crying out for the day that all youth can believe in a world that is not so engendered by injustice and the desire to dominate one another. Together, we are the Vezhambel. We are crying out for the day that all can live together in harmony and without social divisions amongst us. We keep our eyes to the skies and make our cries. Hoping that the rains will come and bring with it Stillness. Peace. Softness. And the desire to be of one Heart.

Statement of the Problem

Indian Americans, who began immigrating in large numbers in 1965, are the fastest growing ethnic group in the country (Hoeffel, Rastogi, Kim & Shahid, 2012). Despite their long-standing and growing presence in the U.S., they remain an overlooked and stereotyped population. Mainstream American discourse racializes Indian Americans, as model minorities: who are: 1) "good" people of color because they are "quiet, uncomplaining, and hard-working" (Lee, 1996, p. 7), 2) self-reliant and able to pull themselves up by their bootstraps instead of relying on social safety nets, and 3) a model for other people of color to follow because they uphold traditional American family values that foster academic motivation and success (Ngo & Lee, 2007; Poon et al., 2016).

Popular media draws from this discourse to portray Indian Americans as highly educated, highly successful, nerdy doctors, engineers, and techies who are foreign-born, culturally different, and non-native English speakers (Ansari, 2015; Mahdawi, 2017).

Some would argue that the racialization of Indian Americans as a model minority group in the U.S. is favorable, complimentary, and accurate. However, discrepancies exist between these sterotypical representations and the lived experiences of Indian Americans (Johnson & Sy, 2016). While American discourse suggests that Indian Americans' relative academic and economic success has resulted in full acceptance and assimilation into economic and academic realms of American life, this is not the case. While Indian Americans may be represented in the general workforce, very few hold positions of power in their respective fields. For example, a 2015 report found that while Asian and Asian Americans compose 27% of the general workforce at Google, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, LinkedIn, and Yahoo, they held only 19% of management and 14% of executive positions (Gee, Peck, & Wong, 2015). Likewise, 2012 data show that Asians (includes Asian Americans) hold only 1.5% of corporate office positions in Fortune 500 companies (Johnson, & Sy, 2016). Thus, while mainstream discourse portrays Indian Americans as highly educated and highly successful, these statistics suggest that limits are placed on their success. Ultimately, their lived experiences defy the model minority narrative that Indian Americans do not face discrimination and raise questions about how they are racialized and how this racialization affects their opportunities in the U.S.

Recent sociopolitical shifts have also challenged the model minority narrative. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Indian Americans have experienced an increase in racial profiling, racial harassment, and hate crimes especially those who identify or are

identified as Sikh or Muslim (Lee, Park, Wong, 2017; Mishra, 2017). For example, in 2012, a mass shooting occurred in a Sikh Temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin in which a White man shot ten people, killing six of them (Yaccino, Schwirtz, Santora, 2012). Also, after the 2016 presidential election, the White House issued an executive order banning travel from seven Muslim-majority countries and framed it as "protecting the nation from foreign terrorist entry into the United States" (see Office of the Press Secretary, 2017). Although the Supreme Court deemed parts of the ban unconstitutional, the ban has been cited as promoting anti-Muslim sentiments in the country (Stein, 2017). This ban was followed by proposals to limit H1b visas whose beneficiaries are over 70% Indian (see U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2016) and violent attacks against Indian Americans in Kansas, Washington and South Carolina (Maizland, 2017). These anti-immigrant, racist, and religiously oppressive views have been tied to rises in alt-right and Neo-Nazi movements that uphold White supremacist, racist views (Goldstein, 2016).

The shifting racialization and fluid perceptions of Indian Americans permeate school boundaries and impact Indian American youth's schooling experiences. Research on Indian American students' K-12 experiences uncovers how they face racial discrimination in schools, intense pressures around school success, and academic struggles, contrary to the model minority stereotype (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Bhattacharya, 2000; Kao, 1995; Saran, 2007). When viewed alongside more recent anthropological, sociological, and counseling studies on Indian American adolescents and schooling, these studies reveal that Indian American youth struggle with the complex ways they are perceived by their teachers and peers in school. Not only do teachers and peers view them as model minorities but also as terrorists, perpetual foreigners,

emasculated or hyper-masculine boys, and submissive or oppressed girls (Durham, 2004; Shankar, 2008; Shankar, 2011). Ultimately, these stereotypical perceptions have detrimental effects on Indian American youth's everyday lives.

The current empirical literature on Indian American youth is extremely limited and that which exists is sorely lacking in racial analyses. Examining Indian American youth's experiences through the lenses of race, racism, and discrimination is important because perceptions that this population has experienced relative success as non-Whites is often used as evidence that racism does not exist and that current structures that uphold White supremacy can remain unchanged. Stereotypes like the model minority function as racist, discursive tools that negatively affect Indian American youth and other Youth of Color. Applying the lenses of race, racism, and discrimination to Indian American youth's schooling experiences pushes back against narratives that suggest Asian Americans' experiences are evidence of an equal opportunity society. Likewise, these lenses are needed to understand the role of social structures in Indian American youth's schooling experiences and how they might operate in oppressive ways that maintain White supremacy.

Not connecting Indian Americans youth's schooling experiences to larger systems of power (e.g. racism, classism, sexism), current racializations, ideologies, and perceptions that shape their experiences in schools and society will continue to justify silence regarding their challenges, discrimination, and intense pressures to succeed. This silence regarding Indian American youth's experiences is particularly concerning when considering mental health research on Asian American youth. In 2014, the Centers for Disease Control reported suicide as the leading cause of death for Asian American

females aged 15-19 and the second leading cause of death for Asian American males aged 15-19.

Silence regarding youth's difficulties and focus on their academic success is also concerning because it ignores the role of broader social forces that shape youth's career aspirations. Indian American parents often pressure their children to pursue math and science related careers because these careers have financial security (Asher, 2002). As a result, some youth pursue career pipelines that do not reflect their interests but promote their economic well-being in the U.S.

Pressures to succeed in school threaten youth's mental health and lives and fears of failure push them into narrow career pipelines. As a result, Indian American youth's opportunities to realize their full potential in school and in their adolescent lives are unfairly limited. Therefore, there is a pressing need to break the silence and illuminate how social processes and systems of power shape Indian American youth's schooling experiences so we can provide them with opportunities to live healthy lives throughout adolescence and become fully participating members of American society.

Study Purpose and Research Questions

Broadly, this dissertation study examines: 1) the role of space in influencing social perceptions of Indian American youth and the ways these spaces and perceptions influence these youth's schooling experiences and 2) the role of human agency in and larger structural influences on Indian American youth's schooling experiences. This study is exploratory and qualitative in nature, drawing on interview data from 7 Indian American youth (5 girls and 2 boys) who attended high schools in a single district located in the mid-Atlantic, United States and archival documents, specifically the school

district's English and history standards. To make sense of the study data and findings, I used a conceptual framework composed of key concepts from intersectionality, structural racism, and spatiality. I specifically used these concepts to resist reductionist portrayals and examine how Indian American youth understand themselves and their experiences in terms of race and ethnicity, their other social identities (e.g. gender, class), and their individual perspectives.

This study was guided by the following three central research questions:

1. What spaces do Indian American youth occupy in their homes, schools, and communities, and how do they understand others' perceptions of them in those spaces, particularly as related to race and ethnicity?

2. In what ways are these perceptions and space related, and how do these relationships influence these youth's schooling experiences?

3. How are school policies and practices implicated in the relationship between spaces and perceptions and their influences on Indian American youth's schooling experiences as particularly related to their race and ethnicity?

Ultimately these research questions, my conceptual framework, and my data for this study broaden discussions about the relationship between perceptions that shape Indian American youth's schooling experiences and the larger social meanings that guide these perceptions.

A Note on Labeling: Racial and Ethnic Identifications

Throughout this study I use the terms "Asian American," "South Asian American," and "Indian American." I recognize that the history of Asians in the U.S. is not well known amongst scholars, so I must clarify my use of the terms. I specifically

refer to all of these groups as "American" to push back against mainstream perceptions of them as only immigrants in a foreign land and to assert that they have made important contributions to American society in past and present.

Figure 1: A Progression of Racial and Ethnic Identifications
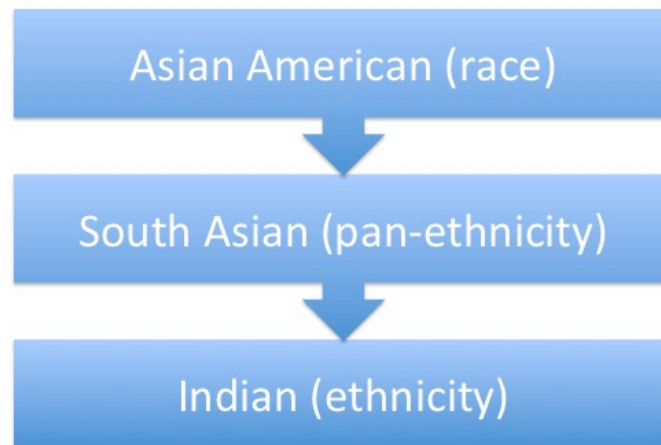
Figure 1 captures the progression of terms I use in this study. When I refer to "Asian Americans" (see in Figure 1), I refer to the racial classification of Asians in the U.S., as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. As many Asian American scholars have noted, the designation of "Asian American" is a monolithic term because it does not capture the ethnic differences amongst various Asian groups in this category (Lee, 1996; Lee, 2006). However, I still use the term Asian American to invoke its political significance in American history. In the 1970s, many Asian ethnic groups came together under the umbrella term of Asian American to argue for affirmative action and human rights for Asians. Likewise, much of the scholarship on Asian Americans provides the foundation for recent studies on South Asian American and Indian American youth. As a result, I reference this racial group and research on this group to provide context for the present study.

I also use the term "South Asian" or "South Asian Americans" in this study to reference an Asian ethnic group in the racial group of Asian or Asian American. I define South Asian more in depth in my literature review for this study. South Asian Americans are just one of many pan-ethnic groups in the Asian American category, including Southeast Asian, Pacific Islander, and East Asian. I use the term South Asian American because it encompasses Indian Americans. I cannot discuss the history of Indian Americans or their current struggles without recognizing that their experiences intersect and at times, overlap with other South Asian groups (e.g. Pakistani or Bangladeshi). I also use South Asian scholarship outside of the U.S. because the current research on South Asian Americans' and consequently Indian Americans' educational experiences are so limited. I discuss this inclusion in more detail later in the study, but put simply, I use the South Asian American and South Asian scholarship to help me understand racializations or perceptions of Indian Americans that are currently missing in the extant literature.

Finally, I use the term "Indian American" as an ethnic designation while recognizing that "Indian" also denotes a nationality. It should be noted that the term "Indian American" is a fairly new term especially considering that modern day "India" only came after the Partition of India in 1947. Notably, my use of Indian American is not to diminish the incredible cultural and ethnic differences amongst peoples in India and the influence of these differences on their lived experiences. Rather, I use the term Indian because my participants described themselves as Indian suggesting that their ethnic and regional identifications as Malayalee and from Kerala did not emerge as significant for them at least in this context. Thus, I recognize that while my participants' experiences

may supplement existing research on Indian Americans and their schooling experiences, they do not speak for the totality of Indian Americans and their lived experiences in school.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Although this study focuses on Indian American youth's schooling experiences, this chapter reviews extant literature on South Asians' schooling experiences since the literature on Indian American youth and South Asian American youth, more broadly, is extremely limited. Specifically, this chapter examines literature on perceptions of adolescent South Asians among their teachers, peers, and family members in the home and schooling environments and how these perceptions inform South Asian students' schooling experiences. This review includes research in the U.K., Canada, and U.S. contexts to provide insight into South Asian youth's experiences in predominantly White but diverse Western countries. I began my search using library catalogs and electronic databases such as ERIC, EDIndex, EdSource, PsycInfo, and WorldCat (limited to libraries worldwide) using the following search terms: "South Asians, South Asian Americans, youth, adolescents, identity, student, high school, ethnic or racial, cross-ethnic, friendship." I also referred to studies' bibliographies to identify other relevant sources (Booth, Colomb, Williams, 2008).

I limited the parameters of my search to peer-reviewed, empirical studies from 1995-present since critical scholarship on the model minority stereotype and Asian American representations became prominent in 1995. I included studies if they contained: a) data specifically on South Asian students; b) high or middle school students as a part of the sample; or c) connections between South Asian youth's experiences and education, friendships, and/or their emerging identities. I excluded studies focused on: a) South Asian adult reflections of their own adolescent experiences; b) South Asian college

students' experiences; and c) analyses which aggregated adult and adolescent experiences. I reviewed 31 studies in total (see Appendices A, B, C).

To situate the literature review, I first provide definitions for terms used throughout the review. I then give an overview of studies' purposes and samples to contextualize studies' findings and themes. Finally, I detail the findings in one major section: perceptions of South Asian students. In this section, I have four subsections that focus on these perceptions in the home and school, based on youth's intersectional social identities. In each subsection, I highlight similarities and differences across U.S., U.K., and Canadian contexts.

Definitions

Perception

Perception is the meaning making process of seeing and assigning meaning to one's relative surroundings and experiences (Butler, 1993). An individual's perception is embedded in a frame of reference or point of view that is influenced by broader social, political, and cultural understandings (Butler, 1993). Societal perceptions are driven by normativity established by the dominant group (e.g. white normativity) and can be used to create positive or negative perceptions of a minoritized group (Butler, 1993). For this review, I focus on perceptions of South Asian youth among their teachers, peers, family members, and members of their ethnic and residential communities.

South Asian

In this review, the term "South Asian" refers to people who ethnically identify with the "Indian subcontinent," which consists of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka (Lai & Arguelles, 2003). "South Asian" includes both

South Asian immigrants to and citizens of the U.S., U.K., or Canada. I focus specifically on South Asian youth and adolescents, age 13-19 years old. First generation South Asian youth are those who have recently immigrated to the host country and 2nd generation South Asian youth who have one foreign-born parent or children who were born abroad but moved to the host country before age 12 (see Portes & Zhou, 1993).

School Practices, Policies, and Experiences

I define school practices as school personnel's actions. Examples include but are not limited to: curriculum development, classroom instruction, and tracking. School policies include school, district, state, or federal policies that influence students' schooling experiences. I consider schooling experiences broadly as experiences related to a K-12 school setting—academic, psychological, and sociocultural (Rahman & Witenstein, 2013). Research shows that schooling practices, policies, and experiences influence children's perceived self-concepts, social identities, and academic engagement (Saran, 2007).

Framing the Review

This section provides an overview of studies' purposes and samples in order to contextualize studies' findings and themes. I reviewed 14 U.S. studies, nine U.K. studies, one U.S. and U.K. study (Warikoo, 2007), and seven Canadian studies comprising 31 studies in total (refer to Appendices A, B, and C for charts with more in-depth descriptions of studies by country). Canadian and U.K. studies focus on the intersection of students' identities pertaining to race, gender, class, ethnicity, and religion. These studies also have diverse participant samples capturing South Asian youth of different religious and class backgrounds and genders. U.S. studies also consider identity but more

so at the intersections of race and gender; they had the least diverse participant samples of the three contexts. The following sections further elaborate on Canadian, U.K., and U.S. studies' findings.

<div align="center">**Perceptions of South Asian Students**</div>

The literature shows that South Asian youth encounter several similar social perceptions across the U.S., U.K. and Canadian contexts. In the school and residential community, non-South Asian youth and teachers form perceptions of South Asian youth based on race and ethnicity, religion, nationality, and gender. It should be noted that the U.S., U.K., and Canadian literatures overwhelming focus on non-South Asian peers' and teachers' negative perceptions of South Asian students. In the family and ethnic community, parents and South Asian peers create perceptions of South Asian youth based on race and ethnicity, religion, and gender. This section elaborates on previous study findings on perceptions of South Asian students in their homes, schools, ethnic and residential communities in the U.S., U.K, and Canada.

Perceptions of South Asian Youth in School Based on Ethnicity, Nationality, and Religion

Research in the U.S., U.K., and Canada indicates that non-South Asian peers and teachers form social perceptions that position South Asian youth as racially, ethnically, nationalistically, and religiously different from their non-South Asian peers (Crozier & Davies, 2008; Saran 2007; Robinson, 2009; Ruck & Wortley, 2002; Tirone, 1999; Tirone & Pedlar, 2000). For example, they capture how non-South Asian students use name-calling to racially and ethnically discriminate South Asian students. Canadian and British studies highlight how White Canadian and British students call South Asian students

"Paki," a historically racist slur originating from Britain and used by the British during a period of increased immigration of South Asians to the U.K. (Crozier & Davies, 2008; Tirone, 1999; Tirone & Pedlar, 2000). Likewise, studies in the U.S. and U.K. show that non-South Asian peers began calling South Asian students terrorists after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the London bombings (Maira, 2004; Tummala-Narra, Deshpande, Kaur, 2016; Crozier & Davies, 2008; Franceshelli & O'Brien, 2015). These studies indicate that non-South Asian peers use these names regardless of whether or not these South Asians identified as Pakistani or Muslim.

Research also reveals that non-South Asian and South Asian peers perceive some South Asian youth as racially, ethnically, and nationalistically other. Specifically, U.S., U.K., and Canadian studies capture non-South Asian perceptions of South Asian youth as unassimilable or perpetual foreigners (Fisher, Wallace, and Fenton, 2000; Crozier & Davies, 2008; Malson, Marshall, & Woollett, 2002; Shankar 2008; Shankar, 2011; Tummala-Narra, Deshpande, & Kaur, 2016; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert, 2016). In one Canadian study exploring South Asian students' incidents of racism in exploring leisure activities, Rani, a South Asian female high school student describes how her peers perceive her as unassimilable based on her phenotypic differences from White people. According to Rani, she cannot "totally assimilate" because "there is always going to be people, like, especially if you have a different colour skin or different eye shape, or whatever. That is always going to stand out. You can't change that whatever you do" (Tirone, 1999, p. 99).

The U.S and U.K. literatures show how non-South Asian and some South Asian students perceive South Asian students as foreigners (Crozier & Davies, 2008; Malson,

Marshall, & Woollett, 2002; Shankar 2008; Shankar, 2011; Tummala-Narra, Deshpande, & Kaur, 2016; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert, 2016). Two U.S. studies found that some South Asian students framed other South Asian students as FOBS, a term used to describe recent immigrants, due to their use of ethnolinguistic codes (Shankar, 2008, 2011). Two other U.S. studies examining South Asian students' acculturation, racial group memberships, and acculturative stress at home and in school, however, note that non-South Asian students perceive South Asian students as foreigners when they struggle to master English (Tummala-Narra, Deshpande, & Kaur, 2016; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert, 2016). Non-South Asian students often tease or exclude South Asian students who struggle to master English despite these their efforts to learn the language, connect with their peers, and participate in school activities (Tummala-Narra, Deshpande, & Kaur, 2016; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert, 2016). Findings from these four studies are notable because they show that South Asian students struggle to fit in with their schooling peers regardless of their immigration status (e.g. recently immigrated or born in the native country), language proficiency, and assimilation efforts.

Research found that some U.S. and U.K. youth responded to being racially, ethnically, and nationalistically "othered" by combining ethnic and mainstream language, music, and clothing to resist stereotypical labels, share their ethnic culture with their peers, and transgress racial, ethnic, and gender boundaries imposed upon them by ethnic and mainstream/host behavioral perceptions and expectations (Asher, 2008; Farver, Narang, Bhada, 2002; Franceschelli & O'Brien, 2015; Frost, 2010; Islam, 2008; Malson et al., 2002; Shankar, 2011; Warikoo, 2007).

Perceptions of South Asian Youth in School Based on Ethnicity, Religion, and Gender

Research in the U.S., U.K., and Canada shows that non-South Asian teachers and schooling peers perceive South Asian students as different based on ethnic, religious, and gender differences. Specifically, they perceive South Asian boys as deviant and South Asian girls as oppressed. More specifically, research highlights how local news media outlets, non-South Asian teachers, residential community members, or local police who perceive South Asian male students as hyper-masculine, aggressive, or gang-like (Crozier & Davies, 2008; Frost, 2010; Goodey, 2001; Shankar, 2008). Crozier and Davies (2008), in their study on South Asian students' experiences and teachers' constructions of "Asian gang culture," quotes a non-South Asian female, technology teacher who explains that for South Asian boys:

> Fighting's a huge problem. Gangs, they get themselves into gangs. The boys especially and then take it upon themselves to solve any problems themselves you know. We've had them coming into DT [detention] for hammers and all sorts, to try and sort things out.

While several teachers in this study describe Asian gangs in the school, three of the four school sites in this study had less than 12% of South Asian students and only the fourth 25% of South Asian students (Crozier & Davies, 2008). Goodey (2001) in her study on Asian criminality involving British, Pakistani youth uncovers how non South-Asian residential community members and police officers perceive South Asian boys and young men as gang members resulting in tensions with residential community members and unfair police encounters. In the study, a South Asian boy mentions a fight with non-

South Asian residential community members occurred after some community members became concerned by the group of South Asian boys playing football together at a local field (Goodey, 2001). Another South Asian boy reported that two non-South Asian officers arrested him without due cause (Goodey, 2001). This study is notable because it captures how South Asian boys are hyperaware of how they congregate in public non-South Asian spaces which prompts them to question why their non-South Asian neighbors perceive them to be "criminals" when they perceive themselves to be harmless (Goodey, 2001). Uniquely, this study captures how South Asian boys recognize that police officers disproportionally target them and Black boys, in comparison to their White peers, suggesting that skin color and anti-black views contribute to negative perceptions of South Asian boys (Goodey, 2001).

U.S., U.K., and Canadian literature also discuss how non-South Asian peers and teachers perceive South Asian female youth as oppressed by patriarchal norms in their families. U.S. and U.K. studies detail how non-South Asian peers perceive South Asian girls as victims, subject to arranged marriage, non-competitive, and unsophisticated (Malson, Marshall, and Woollett, 2002; Stride, 2016; Tummala-Narra, Deshpande, Kaur, 2016). U.K. and Canadian studies detail non-South Asian teachers' perceptions of South Asian female students as passive, in need of protection, and submissive (Bakhshaei & Henderson, 2016; Crozier & Davies, 2008). The research suggests that non-South Asian teachers adopt these perceptions based on their misunderstandings of South Asian culture.

Bakshaei's and Henderson's (2016) study on South Asian females' educational persistence in Quebec schools details how non-South Asian teachers and staff discuss

South Asian female students as high-performers who come from cultures that promote passivity, silence, and self-harm. While South Asian female students in this study did note different behavioral expectations between school and home related to gender identity, which caused them stress (similar to other South Asian female students across other Canadian studies), their interpretations of their struggles seem to link to their status as poor immigrants rather than their South Asian cultures. Thus, South Asian girls' reports strongly suggest that these teachers' presumptions about how the girls' cultures impact their development are simplistic and influenced by deficit-oriented understandings of South Asian cultures.

Perceptions of South Asian Youth in School Based on Ethnicity and Schooling Capabilities

Studies in the U.S. context discuss how non-South Asian peers and teachers as well as South Asian peers and family members perceive South Asian youth as "high-achieving" or "model minority." Canadian research did not uncover these perceptions while two U.K.-based studies (see Abbas, 2003; Basit, 2013) focus on students' educational aspirations. Basit (2013) found that South Asian parents and grandparents who had difficult immigration experiences expected and encouraged their children and grandchildren to do well in school and be educationally accomplished due to their own educational limitations. Abbas (2003) found similar expectations amongst parents for their South Asian daughters to be well educated.

In the U.S., non-South Asian and South Asian schooling peers, non-South Asian teachers, parents, and members of the South Asian community perceive South Asian students as "high achieving" based on their academic performance or the "model

minority" (see Lee, 1996; Ngo & Lee, 2007), a term which posits that Asian Americans are successful on their own without any special assistance (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Saran, 2007; Shankar, 2011; Tummala-Narra et al., 2016; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert, 2016). In a U.S. study on how the model minority stereotype affects South Asian students' educational experiences, Faiz, an eighth grade South Asian student describes Indian-Americans as a "model minority" by noting that they are

> …good students. We do not get in trouble. In this school all Indians are doing well. I do not know about other schools…my cousins, my friends' brothers and sisters all are in good colleges...All Indian people try to work hard, live well, and make sacrifices for their children (Saran, 2007, p. 73).

Teachers', schooling peers', and parents' perceptions influence students', like Faiz's, self-concepts and understandings of their social identities. Non-South Asian teachers generally believe that South Asian American students excel in school, are respectful and quiet in the classroom, and will enter professional careers (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Kao, 1995; Saran, 2007; Shankar, 2011; Tummala-Narra et al., 2016; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert, 2016). At times, research captures how students feel oppressed by these perceptions because they cloud teachers' abilities to notice South Asian students' struggles with academic achievement or English language proficiency or their alienation in the school environment (Bhattacharya, 2000; Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Saran, 2007; Tummala-Narra et al., 2016). Shankar (2011) also discusses how non-South Asian teachers do not consider

South Asian students for academic or social activities at school when they do not adhere to teachers' perceptions.

Research also suggests that members of their families and ethnic communities perceive South Asian youth as "high-achieving." Studies detail how students understand their parents' expectations that they receive straight A's, score 100% on course exams and standardized tests, take advanced classes, and pursue well-paying and high-status careers (Asher 2002; Asher, 2008; Saran, 2007). Studies note, however that some parents base their perceptions and expectations on hopes of security and stability for their children (Asher, 2002; Bhattacharya, 2000; Saran, 2007). For example, when Anita, a high school student, told her parents that she wanted to be a teacher, they were disapproving because

> they don't think it's a high . . . high enough paying job. They think if I want to be a college professor, it is fine—that pays well. But kindergarten . . . I want to teach, like, children, but they don't like that because it's not, like, high, like, well-paying enough (Asher, 2002, p. 286).

Reflected in Anita's quote is her parents' value for the returns on education. Across the studies, students note that their parents value education because they believe it be the only route for career success and economic security since it allowed them to leave the subcontinent and pursue job opportunities in the United States (Asher, 2002; Bhattacharya, 2000; Saran, 2007).

Perceptions of South Asian Youth at Home Based on Ethnicity, Gender, and Religion

U.S., U.K., and Canadian studies describe how South Asian parents, other family members, and members of their ethnic communities perceive South Asian youth as ethnically and religiously different from their non-South Asian peers. By perceiving their children as ethnically and religiously different from their non-South Asian peers, South Asian parents expect their children to retain ethnic, religious, and gender values different from the dominant Canadian, UK or US culture.

U.S. and Canadian studies uncover how South Asian boys' and girls' discussions of how their parents encourage them to be "ethnically and religiously different" for fear they will completely assimilate into the host culture or adopt deviant behaviors associated with the host culture (Asher, 2008; Durham, 2004; Rajiva, 2006; Subramanian, 2013; Tirone, 1999; Tirone & Pedlar, 2000; Tummala-Narra et al., 2016). Examples of parental fears associated with the host culture include: undervaluing education, underage drinking, smoking, and non-marital sex (Asher, 2008; Durham, 2004; Tirone, 1999; Tirone & Pedlar, 2000; Tummala-Narra et al., 2016).

Research also points to parents treating their daughters and sons differently resulting in different expectations regarding ethnic and religious values. Specifically, South Asian girls in these studies explained that their parents' expectations of them are different from boys because they want to protect their daughters from a host culture that seems to threaten their chastity. In Tirone's & Pedlar's (2000) study on how South Asians' leisure activities influence their identity formation and in Durham's (2004) study on media's influence on identity development, girls note that their parents reinforce

certain ethnic and religious behaviors because of fears associated with sexual activity, drinking, and drug use. Some girls in these two studies noted that exaggerated stereotypes and inaccurate representations of adolescent life in the host media influence parents' perceptions of the host culture and their subsequent privileges and restrictions (Tirone & Pedlar, 2000; Durham, 2004). South Asian girls across studies also recognize that parents internalized these media messages and consequently did not allow them to date and/or limited their participation in certain schooling activities such as sports or dances (Durham, 2004; Malson, Marshall, and Woollett, 2002; Tirone & Pedlar, 2000; Talbani & Hasanali, 2000). These youth responded to these perceptions by adhering to parents' expectations to be ethnically and religiously different (Bakhshaei & Henderson, 2016; Tirone & Pedlar, 2000; Tummala et al., 2016; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert, 2016). They also responded by respecting their parents' restrictions on participating in schooling events and engaging with non-South Asian peers (Bakhshaei & Henderson, 2016; Tirone & Pedlar, 2000; Tummala et al., 2016; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert, 2016).

Finally, the literature discusses how parents' perceptions of their children as ethnically and religiously different are influenced by religious norms. U.K. studies focus on Muslim, South Asian youth and how they navigated parental and familial expectations (Abbas, 2003; Islam, 2008; Stride, 2016; Malson, et al., 2002). British South Asian, Muslim girls in this research did not always find these religious expectations cumbersome or oppressive (Islam, 2008; Malson et al., 2002; Stride, 2016). Rather, they integrated these expectations into their own genuine expressions of themselves (Islam, 2008; Malson et al., 2002; Stride, 2016).

Ultimately, these parental perceptions of South Asian youth as ethnically other or religiously different may create boundaries around how South Asian students perceive themselves in the host culture and may contribute to their positioning as an out-group amongst their non-South Asian peers. For some girls, these perceptions manifest in expectations that limit opportunities to connect with their non-South Asian peers and non-South Asian culture.

Discussion

The findings of this review reveal that South Asian youth across the U.S., U.K., and Canada experience a spectrum of social perceptions based on intersections between their identity categories. Specifically, the literature captures how broader sociopolitical perceptions permeate school boundaries and contribute to teachers' or peers' perceptions of South Asian students. For example, U.S. and U.K. studies note that major sociopolitical events beginning with increased immigration, the 9/11 attacks, the London bombings, and the War on Terror influence broader and shifting perceptions of South Asian students that undergird racist name-calling. Intriguingly, research in the U.S., U.K., and Canada suggest that South Asian youth may share similar experiences with Black youth rather than other Asian youth in terms of perceived discrimination in schools and racial profiling in residential communities. Yet some of these studies are quantitative in nature, and so it is unclear as to how and why South Asian and Black students may share similar experiences in terms of discrimination.

Interestingly, the U.S. literature uncovers seemingly positive and negative perceptions of South Asian students (i.e. model minority vs. terrorist) among non-South Asian peers and teachers while the U.K. and Canadian studies mostly capture negative

non-South Asian perceptions (e.g. Paki or terrorist) used to justify police encounters, and stereotyping of, particularly, South Asian male youth as gang members. The literature does not unveil as many positive perceptions of South Asian youth, and it is not clear if the lack of positive perceptions is the result of South Asian youth only identifying negative perceptions or researchers predominantly focusing on negative perceptions of South Asian youth. Nevertheless, the differences in U.S. and U.K./Canadian findings on these negative perceptions may be attributed to studies' sample selection. A majority of U.S. studies sample high-achieving, middle-class, able-bodied students from families with professional backgrounds, who are probably more likely to be labeled as "model minorities" than low-income, disabled, and/or low-achieving youth. U.K. and Canadian studies' participant samples include more low/middle class youth disabled, lower-income, and/or academically struggling youth, and, thus, capture a greater range of school experiences and identity development.

While research does not discuss the influence of policy on social perceptions of South Asian students, differences in non-South Asian peers' and teacher' perceptions of South Asian youth across the U.S., U.K., and Canada can be attributed to the historical legacy of immigration policies. Specifically, the perception of South Asian students as model minorities in the U.S. may be the legacy of the Immigration Act of 1965 which opened the borders almost exclusively to highly educated, professional Asians (see Lee & Zhou, 2015). As a result, the model minority perception is likely based on the characteristics of first wave, well-resourced, high-income, professional Asian immigrants. In the U.K. and Canada however, South Asian immigration was less restricted and occurred throughout colonialism and post-colonialism in order to fulfill

needs for low-skilled labor (Naujoks, 2009; Walton-Roberts, 2003). While the U.K. and Canada restricted South Asian immigration in the 1960s, racist perceptions of South Asian youth as terrorists, gang-like, aggressive, and oppressed seem to be rooted in the historical, post-colonial legacy of low-income, low-skilled South Asians immigrating to Canada and the U.K.

U.S. research also unveils how South Asian students find seemingly positive perceptions like the model minority to be oppressive. Findings show that labels such as "the model minority" or "high-achieving" reduce youth's complex experiences into stereotypes that mask their schooling difficulties, marginalization, and discrimination. Likewise, existing literature in the U.S., U.K., and Canada contest the model minority perception and reveal that some schools are not adequately responding to South Asian students' struggles with accessing English language services, passing their classes, seeking mental health services, and engaging in schooling activities. The lack of structural supports for South Asian students in these studies imply an under-assessment of educational need (e.g. being identified as an English Language Learner) and subsequent lack of resource allocation to these students because they are either stereotyped as high-achievers, delinquents, or ethnic and religious outsiders. The use of these social perceptions and lack of structural supports ultimately indicates that schools may place responsibility for academic success and social well-being on students and their families rather than on schooling structures, policy, and personnel.

CHAPTER THREE: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The current literature on Indian American and South Asian American youth more generally unveils that teachers, peers, parents, same ethnic community members, and non-ethnic community members hold various perceptions of them and these perceptions influence their schooling experiences. These perceptions cast them as model minorities, terrorists, perpetual foreigners, emasculated and hyper-masculine boys, and submissive or oppressed girls (Durham, 2004; Maira, 2004; Shankar, 2008; Shankar, 2011; Tummala-Narra, Deshpande, & Kaur, 2016). While these images provide an emerging picture of Indian American and other South Asian American youth and their schooling experiences, studies on this topic are few in number. Moreover, the few that explicates perceptions of Indian American and other South Asian American youth do not analyze the role of social structures on youth's schooling experiences.

The conceptual framework for this study is composed of key concepts from intersectionality, structural racism, and spatiality and attempts to understand the role of human agency in and structural influences on the schooling experiences of Indian American youth. I specifically use intersectionality, structural racism, and spatiality to resist reductionist portrayals, which suggest that Indian Americans' shared racial, ethnic characteristics result in uniform experiences amongst Indian American youth in schooling environments. In other words, all youth who identify as Indian American do not share similar schooling experiences. Rather, other identity categories, such as gender, religion, citizenship status, and income, along with race and ethnicity, result in varied and unique schooling experiences amongst Indian American youth. I also use concepts from intersectionality, structural racism, and spatiality to resist the over-emphasis on the model

minority stereotype in explaining Asian American youth's schooling experiences (see

Poon et al., 2016).

This chapter unfolds in five sections. The first, second, and third sections discuss:

1) intersectionality, 2) systemic racism, and 3) spatiality, respectively. Each of these

sections includes a subsection that discusses the implications of each theory for research

on South Asian American youth and their schooling experiences. The fourth section

explains I use these theories together to provide a new lens of understanding Indian

American youth's schooling experiences. The final section provides two important

implications of this framework for the study of Indian American youth's schooling

experiences.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality explores how peoples' social identities (e.g., race, class, gender)

operate together to structure peoples' experiences in society (Andersen & Collins, 2015).

The theory posits that society positions individuals based on relationships between their

interlocking identity categories rather than considering their various identities as static

and bounded (Andersen & Collins, 2015; Brah & Phoenix, 2013; Crenshaw, 1991;

Gillborn, 2015; Manuel 2007). Intersectionality not only acknowledges that people's

identities are formed from different categories, but it also interrogates the influence and

power of social structures to privilege and oppress certain identity categories (Manuel,

2007).

Intersectional scholars posit that mainstream knowledge reflects binaries (e.g.

White-Black racial binary) that ignore the complexities of human experiences and the

role of current and historical systems in the oppression of minoritized peoples (Andersen

& Collins, 2015; Brah & Phoenix, 2004; Lorde, 2004). As a result, mainstream

knowledge can mask complex and interconnected forms of oppression that affect

minoritized peoples' lives. For example, Chun, Lipsitz, and Shin (2013) found that

intersectional frameworks helped their organization Asian Immigrant Women Advocates

to consider how the participating women experienced labor discrimination not only based

on their immigrant status but also their language proficiency, gender, and citizenship

status. They found that challenging mainstream notions of immigrant women helped

them consider how overlooked social identities also contributed to their marginalization

in the job market (Chun, Lipsitz, & Shin, 2013). As a result, reconstructing and

challenging current streams of knowledge are necessary because mainstream knowledge

of different social groups informs how we view and act towards them (Andersen &

Collins, 2015; Dotson, 2014). It also pushes policymakers, educators, and researchers to

reconstruct knowledge about excluded groups by questioning mainstream knowledge

about minoritized peoples.

Contribution of Intersectionality to Research on South Asian American Youth

Early educational research on Indian American and other South Asian American

K-12 students focuses predominantly on the influence of the model minority stereotype

on students' schooling experiences (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Kao, 1995; Saran, 2007).

These empirical studies were amongst some of the first to discuss issues impacting Indian

American and other South Asian American students. When viewed alongside more recent

anthropological, sociological, and counseling studies on South Asian American

adolescents and schooling, these studies reveal that Indian American and South Asian

American youth contend with complex perceptions among their teachers and peers which

can impact them in negative ways. Not only do teachers and classmates view them as model minorities but they also consider them as terrorists, perpetual foreigners, emasculated or hyper-masculine boys, and submissive or oppressed girls (Durham, 2004; Maira, 2004; Shankar, 2008; Shankar, 2011; Tummala-Narra, Deshpande, & Kaur, 2016).

These early studies use an intersectional approach in their studies and unearth that youth's oppression exists at the intersections of their identity categories. For example, teachers' perceptions that Indian American adolescent girls are submissive and oppressed is based on their knowledge of how South Asian women are treated in South Asian cultures. As a result, issues of race and gender inform these teacher perceptions. While these studies recognize that students' identity categories are in relationship with one another, they do not interrogate systems of power that result in oppression based on intersections between identity categories. In other words, studies do not interrogate how larger systems of patriarchy, sexism, classism, religious oppression, and racism permeate home and school spaces. For example, studies discussing teachers' perceptions of Indian American girls as submissive or oppressed do not explicitly connect those perceptions to the systems of power (e.g. patriarchy, racism, cultural incompetence) that influence them. As a result, the current body of research inadvertently shifts responsibility for oppression away from institutions and places it on Indian American and other South Asian American youth's inability to adequately navigate teachers' perceptions. The failure of these studies to connect students' experiences to larger systems of oppression point to the need for an intersectional analysis which empowers researchers to account for systems of power (e.g. schooling system) that marginalize youth in their various spaces.

Finally, intersectionality provides tools to reconstruct knowledge about Indian American youth. As noted in my literature review, the U.S. is the only context in which studies uncover teachers', peers', parents', and same ethnic community members' perceptions of South Asian youth as model minorities. Far more studies in the U.K. and Canada, however, discussed how teachers', peers', same ethnic community members', and parents' perceptions of South Asian youth's ability status, academic performance, race, class, and religion influenced their schooling experiences. In the U.S., a majority of the studies focus on Indian American youth's schooling experiences and sample high-achieving, middle-class, able-bodied youth from families with professional backgrounds (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Durham, 2004; Farver, Narang, & Bhadha, 2002; Saran, 2007; Shankar, 2008; Shankar, 2011). These studies uncover that Indian American youth experience discrimination in their schools. For example, Saran (2007) in her study captured Indian American youth discussing how their teacher treated them and Black students harshly compared to White students. Likewise, Shankar (2011) captured how teachers suggested that Indian American students who spoke in their ethnic language needed ELL services although these students only spoke in their ethnic language with their same-ethnic peers to build rapport amongst each other. These studies point to teachers' deficit views of Indian American youth but more research is needed on how Indian American youth, especially those who are low-income, disabled, and/or low-achieving, experience discrimination in schools. More research on how Indian American youth experience difficulties in school related to discrimination and oppression could help challenge how researchers, educators, and policymakers define this population and their educational need. This kind of research is essential to challenging arguments that

Indian American youth do not experience difficulties in school, based on educational

attainment and income statistics (see Hoeffel, Rastogi, Kim, and Shahid, 2012).

Systemic Racism

To comprehensively define systemic racism, I define race and racism first. Race is

a social category based on phenotypic and sociohistorical concepts of Whiteness and

Blackness (Andersen & Collins, 2015; Omi & Winant, 1994). Whiteness does not

necessarily refer to White people but rather to the reinforced power of White interests and

identifications that have maintained and sustained racial inequality throughout history

and into the present (Gillborn, 2005; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Leonardo, 2002).

Likewise, Blackness 'does not necessarily refer to those of African ancestry but, rather, is

White supremacy's positioning of people it designates as "Black" and who are assumed

to be inferior to "Whites" in various ways' (Prashad, 2000, p. 159). Some scholars argue

that race is socially constructed and thus not real or applicable to analysis and praxis

because the genetic make-up of humans is consistent across people of different races.

While it is true that race is socially rather than biologically determined, it still carries real

and differing effects depending on whether one is racialized as Black or White (Andersen

& Collins, 2015; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). For example,

individuals racialized as Black are more likely to attend poor quality schools than

individuals racialized as White (Orfield, Kucsera, & Siegel-Hawley, 2012). Thus, race

matters because societies use the construct of race to establish Whiteness as superior and

Blackness as inferior. They also use race and racial differences to justify systemic

privileges for those associated with Whiteness and systemic discrimination against those

associated with Blackness (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). This discrimination is also known as

racism, the system of power and privilege in which society advantages or disadvantages people by racializing them as White or Black in order to maintain White privilege (Andersen & Collins, 2015; Bonilla-Silva, 2006). As Bonilla-Silva (2006) explains people racialized as White experience material benefits associated with their whiteness and in an effort to protect those privileges maintain a racial system that positions non-Whites as inferior in society. Racism is based on a historical racial binary in which White is the norm or superior and Black is the deviant and inferior (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Feagin (2014) describes systemic racism as a "diverse array of practices such as: the unjustly gained economic and political power of Whites; continuing resource inequalities; a rationalized White racial frame; and the creation of major institutions to preserve White advantage and power" (p. 9).

As noted earlier, Whiteness and Blackness is not only used to define White or Black people. Rather, American society uses the Black-White racial binary to racialize other groups of people, including recent immigrants. Several Asian American scholars have noted how American society has applied concepts of Whiteness and Blackness when racializing different Asian American groups (see Lee, 2005; Prashad, 2000; Takaki 2008; Wollenberg, 1995). In the case of South Asian Americans, before 1965, American law and policy racialized South Asians under the umbrella of Blackness in two notable ways 1) by denying the opportunity for South Asians to be citizens based on the premise that they were not White as White was "commonly known in the European sense" (see majority opinion in U.S. vs. Thind, 1923) and 2) by enacting the 1924 National Origins Act which barred immigration from Asian countries but had no restrictions on immigration from European Countries. However, as Prashad (2000) notes, the 1965

Immigration Act, prompted American society to racialize South Asians against Blackness by coining them as the "model minority" who some saw as honorary Whites (Lee, 2005). In fact, South Asian scholars have noted how the racialization of South Asians as model minorities has been used to justify systemic racism against non-Whites (see Kibria, 1998; Thangaraj, 2012) because it upholds the myth of meritocracy and equal opportunity and suggests that systemic reforms are not necessary to account for historical discrimination against non-Whites. This shift in racialization is notable because it did not necessarily mean that American society now considered South Asians to be White but rather it racialized South Asians against Blackness in order to discipline Black people and reinforce White supremacy. As Lee (2005) explains, Asian Americans who embrace Whiteness or are racialized as honorary Whites still do not achieve the status and privileges associated with Whiteness. In other words, systemic racism does not allow for White privileges to be conferred to non-Whites.

Critical race scholars in education argue that structural racism is embedded in education policy and practice in order to promote racial inequalities between White students and Students of Color. Some have supported this argument by uncovering racist admissions policies that favor Whites over Students of Color in college admissions (see Yosso, Parker, Solorzano, and Lynn, 2005); disproportionate suspensions of Black and Latino students in K-12 school systems (see Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Gillborn, 2005; Gillborn, 2015); and the lack of targeted interventions to meet the educational needs of Southeast Asian students and help them graduate from high school and college (Lee, 2007). By uncovering these discrepancies, they argue that racism persists, is deeply embedded in institutions, and serves to maintain White privilege (Gillborn, 2005;

Gillborn, 2015; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Yosso, Parker, Solorzano, and Lynn, 2005).

Other scholars have also noted how Asians respond to structural racism and discrimination through what Sue and Okazaki (1990) term as "relative functionalism." According to Sue and Okazaki when Asian American parents encounter prejudice or discrimination their value for education increases because they believe education is the most reliable means for social mobility (Sue & Okazaki, 1990). In other words, Asian American parents value education as a means for mobility when they believe other non-educational avenues are blocked (Sue & Okzaki, 1990). Importantly, Sue & Okazaki posit that relative functionalism may be a better indicator of Asian American student achievement. Other Asian American scholars have also discussed how Asian Americans pursued education due to workplace discrimination or limits on inclusion in society (Suzuki, 1977; Connor 1985). These studies importantly show that systemic racism places a role in Asian American parents' educational expectations and students education aspirations.

Contribution of Systemic Racism to Research on South Asian American Youth

Most studies on Indian American and other South Asian American youth note that teachers, peers, and non-ethnic community members have discriminatory perceptions of South Asian American youth and their families (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Bhattacharya, 2000; Fisher, Wallace & Fenton, 2000; Maira, 2004; Tummala-Narra, Deshpande & Kaur, 2016; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert, 2016; Saran, 2007; Shankar, 2008; Shankar, 2011). In fact, presumptions of Indian American youth as model minorities or high-achieving reduce these youth's complex experiences into stereotypes that mask any

schooling difficulties, marginalization, and discrimination they may face. Existing literature reveals that some schools do not adequately respond to Indian American students' difficulties in accessing English language and mental health services, passing their classes, and engaging in schooling activities. The lack of structural supports for them implies an inadequate assessment of educational need (e.g. needing English language supports) and subsequent lack of resource allocation to these students may be attributed to teachers and administrators stereotyping students as high-achievers, delinquents, or ethnic and religious outsiders (see Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Shankar, 2008; Shankar, 2011). Due to stereotypes and lack of institutional support, schools may, ultimately, place more responsibility for academic success and social well-being onto Indian American students and families than on school structures and personnel.

While extant studies capture issues of discrimination related to Indian American youth's intersectional identities, they do not critically analyze racializations or stereotypes of South Asian youth as they relate to broader issues of race and racism. In other words, while studies note that Indian American youth experience discrimination, they do not interrogate how White supremacy, anti-Blackness, or anti-immigrant sentiments influence these young people's experiences. For example, some studies recognize that the model minority stereotype is a racial stereotype, but they do not connect the stereotype to how it functions to discipline other people of color while maintaining Whiteness in structures that undermine racial equity in education (see Poon et al., 2016).

It should be noted that analyzing issues of race and racism may be outside of purposes and scope of at least some existing studies' on Indian American youth. But analyzing these youth's schooling experiences through a systemic racism lens is

important in understanding the nuances and complexity of racism as it pertains to South Asians and People of Color, more broadly, and how schooling structures may hinder students' academic success and social well-being. First, engaging in a systemic racism analysis can connect youth's schooling experiences to the unique history and present racialization of Indian Americans in order to illuminate how their racialization as non-Whites subjects them to racial bias and discrimination in schools (see Lee, Park, & Wong, 2016). A systemic racism analysis, applied to Indian American youth's schooling experiences, may help unveil how they are used to uphold the myth of meritocracy and equal opportunity in education (Saran, 2007). Analyzing seemingly positive perceptions of Indian American youth among their teachers and peers may uncover nuances of White privilege in school structures and how it is used to justify the lack of structural supports that would advance equitable educational opportunities for Students of Color.

Spatiality

Space is physical and material (e.g. infrastructure or landscape) as well as abstract and social. Space is often defined and bound by the temporal (Casey, 1993). Bodies also mark and differentiate space (Casey, 1993). Bodies and spaces are co-produced; as they move through it, bodies create and define space while space simultaneously compels bodies to operate and move in certain ways (Lefebvre, 1991). As people move through space and build attachments to it, they impose affect on spaces in an effort to anchor and orient themselves (Casey, 1993).

In theory, everyone or every body has the ability to produce, move in, and define space. Yet in practice, social meanings[1] influence how people interact with space and one another. Specifically, social meanings influence peoples' perceptions of each other, which drives how they treat each other (Lefebvre, 1991; Leonardo, 2002). Negative social meanings of certain social groups can influence negative perceptions of them that consequently prompt negative actions towards them om a space. For example, non-ethnic peers calling South Asian students terrorists are likely built on social meanings post 9/11 that brown-skinned people who look Arab are terrorists (see Maira, 2004). As Maira (2004) notes, South Asian youth who contend with this negative name-calling feel alienated in their schooling spaces. As this example shows, perceptions based on negative social understandings of social groups can threaten someone's well-being in a space and can be used to uphold discriminatory actions against minoritized peoples (Andersen & Collins, 2016; Butler, 1993; Foucault, 1975; Gramsci, Hoare, & Nowell-Smith, 1971; Lefebvre, 1991; Said, 1978). As a result, understanding social and individual perceptions is important in a spatial analysis because it can unveil greater social meanings and understandings that underlie people's perceptions and consequent actions that either do or do not allow others to safely inhabit space.

Power informs perceptions and the differentiation of bodies, and understanding the role of power in a space is important because it uncovers: 1) *who* can create or contribute to space; 2) *why* people create or contribute to a space and 3) how those who

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[1] In this case, I consider social meanings to be linguistic, structural and/or cultural factors that mediate interpersonal relationships (Bernstein, 1964).

contribute or create enforce certain *rules, scripted norms, or behaviors* to maintain notions of superiority and inferiority in a space. It is important to note that even those who are deemed inferior in a particular space have certain modes of power (as exercised through their human agency) to resist scripted rules, norms, or behaviors (Foucault, 1975; Gramsci, Hoare, & Nowell-Smith, 1971). In other words, power is not always repressive; it can operate from the top-down (e.g. repression) or the bottom-up (e.g. resistance). People can also subsume power, as it is manifested in dominant ideas or norms, by self-surveillance and surveillance of others (Foucault, 1975). In other words, people can buy-in or consent to dominant ideas and norms which guide their behaviors and their neighbors' behaviors (Foucault, 1975; Gramsci, Hoare, & Nowell-Smith, 1971). Subsequently, power is manifested in everyone even if they operationalize it differently (Foucault, 1975).

Power also informs culture because it is used to justify dominant ideologies, norms, and behaviors that govern a society. Specifically, Gramsci's (1971) term "cultural hegemony" describes how the general masses consent to norms and beliefs proliferated by the dominant group. Gramsci's cultural hegemony becomes especially important when applied to the Occident (the West) and the Orient (the East). As Said (1978) argues, cultural hegemony justified "the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures" (p. 7). This European superiority undergirds what Said refers to as "Orientalism" which describes how European's justified their imperialism and of non-European (e.g. the Orient) peoples and cultures by casting them as depraved uncivilized peoples in need of a European savior (Said, 1978). I specifically include Orientalism in my discussion of culture because it

informs the legacy of British colonization in India and the deficit and inferior views of Indian peoples and cultures around the world. It also provides the epistemic resources to understand majoritarian (i.e. White, European) influence on culture and minority groups (e.g., Indian and Indian American) responses to the majoritarian view.

Majority and minoritized peoples' relationship with culture can be understood through cultural implacement and displacement. Cultural implacement is when people embrace a space and create emotional connections to it in order to feel a sense of "at homeness" (Casey, 1993) in the space. Cultural displacement can also be passed down through generations in which a sense of loss of both land and self is subsumed in peoples' understandings of space, feelings of belonging, and their overall identities (Casey, 1993). The passing down of displacement can be understood through the experiences of diasporic populations. For example, a second generation South Asian American youth could experience cultural displacement based on a concept of a native home articulated by their parents even if they themselves never lived their family's country or origin.

Contribution of Spatiality to Research on South Asian American Youth

Current research on South Asian American youth focuses almost exclusively on South Asian youth in their home and classroom spaces (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Bhattacharya, 2000; Farvar, Narang, & Bhadha, 2002; Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Kao, 1995; Saran, 2007; Shankar, 2008; Tummala-Narra, Deshpande, & Kaur, 2016). However, recent research on Asian American youth, more generally, has started to consider community spaces and schooling spaces beyond the classroom (e.g. after-school programs and hallways) and how these spaces impact youth's schooling experiences. Specifically, Reyes (2007) and Tokunaga (2011a; 2016) explore how underserved Asian

American youth benefit from after-school programs and from congregating by themselves. For example, Tokunaga found that Asian American girls in a high school created a borderland community (see Anzaldua, 2007)[2] called the "Basement Group" in which they would meet in the basement of their high school and share their difficulties concerning isolation in their family homes and alienation in formal classes. She found that through this borderland community, Asian American girls felt they could affirm each others' cultural diversity, provide inter-ethnic support for each other, and help each other "fit-in" at school (Tokunaga, 2016). Ultimately, this research on informal spaces shows that youth can create their own spaces in formal environments in order to reduce the stress of acculturating into American culture and feeling "othered" in school settings.

To date, current research on South Asian American youth has not explicitly explored the significance of informal spaces to youth's schooling experiences. In fact, only three studies mention South Asian American youth's experiences beyond home and classroom settings to include the community, after-school programs, or online spaces (Shankar, 2011; Subramanian, 2013; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert, 2016). Only one of these studies explicitly analyzed spatiality by considering how a South Asian American youth uses social media platforms as spaces in which she could negotiate

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[2] Anzaldua (2007) defines border culture as two worlds coming together to form a third. For example, those who live on the Mexican border form a culture in which they are both Mexican and American rather than only Mexican or only American. As a result, a borderland community is an expression of hybrid culture composed from several cultures.

cultural expectations of their ethnic and non-ethnic peers, family, and community members (Subramanian, 2013). Analyzing South Asian youth's schooling experiences through the lens of spatiality can reveal how and why South Asian youth construct and occupy specific spaces and how they use spaces to cope alienation in school and either conform or resist dominant schooling cultures. Thus, spatiality can be used to unveil power dynamics in schools related to who can construct, contribute to, and participate in certain spaces in school that positively or negatively influence schooling experiences. Exposing power dynamics is important because they ultimately drive the distinctions of superiority and inferiority in spaces (see Andersen & Collins, 2015; Foucault, 1975); without identifying power, schooling spaces, structures, and systems cannot be changed to achieve equitable schooling practices for marginalized youth.

Likewise, spatiality's notions of culture acknowledge hybridity or the idea that people define themselves dynamically to include their identity categories, interests, and histories (Bhabha, 1994; Asher, 2008). Using concepts such as cultural implacement or displacement and applying them to South Asian American youth's schooling experiences allows for a more holistic portrayal of how they participate, create, or resist schooling cultures based on their various identity categories and interests. Studying how South Asian American youth interact with various cultures may provide insights into how they create nuanced, hybridized representations of their genders, ethnicities, race, and other identifying characteristics in schools. Cultural implacement and displacement also recognizes the interplay between cultures and structures by examining how structural mechanisms, policies, practices, and perceptions position South Asian as either in-group or out-group members of schooling environments.

A Conceptual Framework to Study Indian American Youth

In this section, I discuss how the three theories described above provide a framework for studying Indian American youth's schooling experiences in a more robust manner than those used in previous studies on this topic. This framework draws on the three theories to highlight the influence of both structural factors **and** human agency on South Asian youth's schooling experiences. In this way, the framework can contribute to existing research on South Asian youth's schooling experiences, which places a strong focus on individual experience.

While highlighting how Indian American youth navigate home and school environments is valuable for research and policy, it is unclear as to how social structures operate to racialize and position Indian American youth in schools and U.S. society, more broadly. Through different perspectives and using different conceptual tools, intersectionality, systemic racism, and spatiality reveal how various structures, manifested through policy and practice, influence Indian American youth's schooling experiences. While these three theories contribute to a strong structural analysis of Indian American youth's experiences, they do not discount how youth can exercise human agency to resist social structures. Concepts such as resisting power (captured in spatiality) can be used to challenge deterministic views and interpretations of South Asian youth's schooling experiences.

As depicted in Figure 2 below, spatiality, intersectionality, and systemic racism and the concepts that inform these theories (e.g. power and cultural implacement and displacement) work together to help us develop more complex understandings of Indian American youth's schooling experiences.

Figure 2: Conceptual Map to Study South Asian American Youth's Schooling Experiences
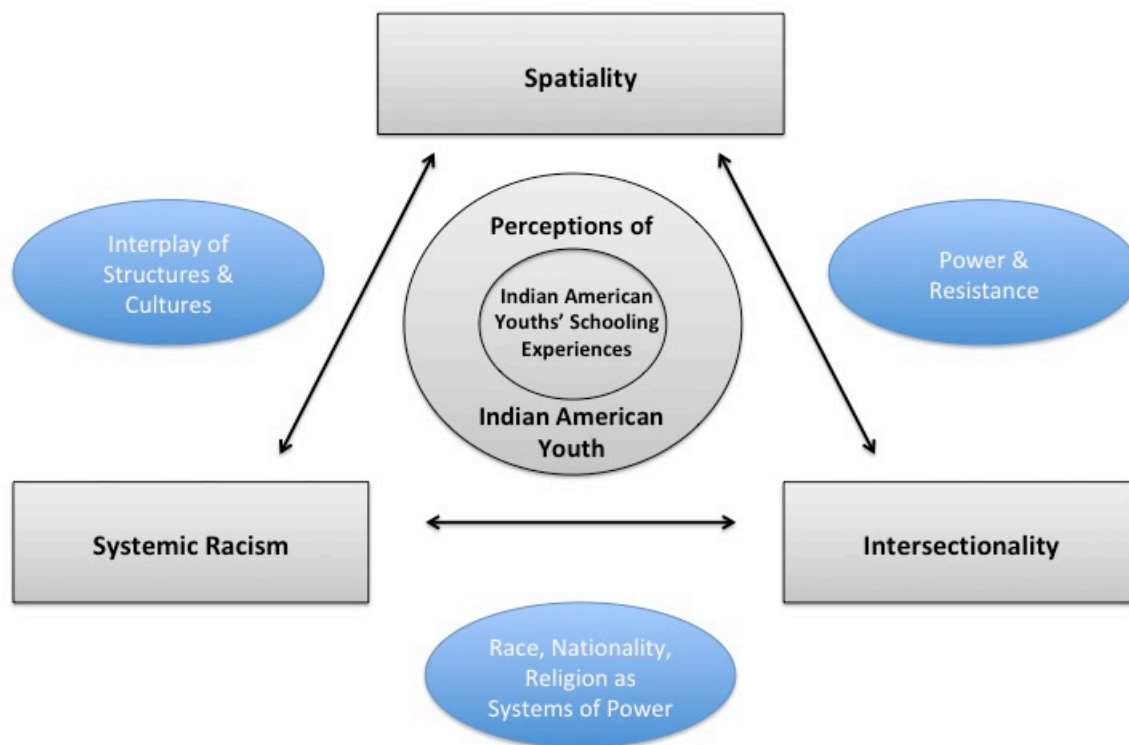
In this framework, spatiality informs intersectionality by providing a power analysis that can unveil: (1) who has the power to create scripted norms and values in spaces and (2) how they use these norms and values to privilege or oppress certain social identities in various spaces. Adding a power analysis to intersectionality is important because it unveils spatial conditions that prompt oppression against certain peoples and how people and structures operate to create distinctions of inferiority and superiority. Intersectionality informs spatiality by showing how different identity categories and the perceptions of those identity categories might allow them more power or less power in a given space.

Spatiality also informs and deepens understandings of systemic racism. More specifically, the concepts of cultural implacement and displacement recognize that

cultures and structures work together to explain human behavior and subsequent outcomes. The concepts of cultural implacement and displacement expand notions of culture beyond race and ethnicity, allowing for a more nuanced analysis of how people follow or resist cultures in various spaces (see Giroux, 1983). Likewise, it resists deterministic interpretations that people cannot exercise human agency to resist structures. Further, the structural nature of systemic racism informs spatiality by providing tools to recognize that structures inform human experience. It ultimately establishes that discrimination does not only exist interpersonally but systemically. As a result, examining South Asian youth experiences with the interplay of structures and cultures in mind can help unveil the complex ways in which youth experience discrimination in schools and respond to it.

Regarding intersectionality, scholars propose that systemic racism, classism, and gender bias function as systems of power that influence social perceptions of people and how they are socially positioned in society (Andersen & Collins, 2015). Systemic racism provides insight into the role of social structures in racializing individuals and groups. In this framework, I center systemic racism but not to the exclusion of other systems of power, such as those related to race, class, gender, and religion. I center systemic racism because, as noted earlier, not much is known about how school structures influence racial framings of South Asian American youth in ways that impact their schooling experiences. Multiple social identities influence the ways individuals and groups are racialized in the U.S.; in this way, intersectionality helps to explain how particular individuals and groups experience systemic racism. I use systemic racism as an entry point into understanding the roles of school structures, represented by policy and practice,

to understand South Asian American youth's schooling experiences as related to the multiple identities to which they subscribe and are ascribed to them by others.

Conclusion: Implications of the Framework

This framework provides two important implications for the current study on Indian American youth. First, it allows for complex structural analyses that unveil the role of school policy and practice on Indian American youth's schooling experiences. Existing research suggests that social policies and their historical legacies influence teachers', peers' parents', ethnic community members', and non-ethnic community members' perceptions of South Asian students. Yet it does not explicitly analyze policy or practice influences on their perceptions resulting in an ahistorical and incomplete picture of how broader social and schooling conditions influence Indian American youth's schooling experiences. I use this framework, which has various vantage points from which to examine structural influences, to provide a more complete picture of how school policy and practice shape the experiences of South Asian youth in schooling spaces.

Moreover, the framework provides a more nuanced understanding of how individuals, social groups, and social structures define people by the intersections of their identity categories (e.g. race, class, and gender). As noted earlier, oppression does not occur through one system of power but rather the interactions of multiple systems of power. The current literature captures Indian American youth and other South Asian American youth intersectional identities but does not connect them to larger systems of power. This framework provides the means, through an interrogation of relationships between various identity categories and racism, as manifested in structures, to better

understand how, why, and under what conditions people perceive and perhaps oppress youth based on their intersectional identities. Understanding these nuances of oppression is important in not only showing how this population experiences racism but in showing that prominent racializations are also informed by views of immigrants, language, and non-European cultures.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODS

This dissertation study examines: 1) the role of human agency in and larger structural influences on Indian American youth's schooling experiences and 2) the role of space in influencing social perceptions of Indian American youth, and 3) the ways spaces and perceptions influence these youth's schooling experiences. My study is guided by the following three central research questions:

1. What spaces do Indian American youth occupy in their homes, schools, and communities, and how do they understand others' perceptions of them in those spaces, particularly as related to race and ethnicity?

2. In what ways are these perceptions and space related, and how do these relationships influence these youth's schooling experiences?

3. How are school policies and practices implicated in the relationship between spaces and perceptions and their influences on Indian American youth's schooling experiences as particularly related to their race and ethnicity?

Rationale

In this study, I use qualitative methodology because it encompasses methods—specifically, interviewing and document analysis—that help me understand the everyday schooling experiences of Indian American youth. The study focuses on relationships between structures, spaces, and perceptions as they pertain to Indian American youth's schooling experiences.

Currently, the preponderance of social science research on Asian Americans is statistical and quantitative in nature, which can mask their lived experiences and challenges. Specifically, statistics on income, academic achievement, and educational

attainment suggest Asian Americans fair well when compared to other People of Color. This portrayal may contribute to the exclusion of Asian Americans from education policy and reform discussions (Lee, 1996; Ngo & Lee, 2007; Lee, Park, & Wong, 2016; Park & Liu, 2014). Statistical studies tend to focus on narrow aspects of achievement (e.g. test scores and credentials) while obscuring the processes, settings, and interactions that contribute to Indian American youth's everyday experiences in school.

I used qualitative methods in this study to discover "how," "why," and under what conditions Indian American youth might struggle or succeed in schooling spaces (Bogdan & Biklin, 2007; Merriam 1998; Smith, 1999; Yin, 2009). I use participants' photographs to help me understand the spaces they occupy and the affective associations they have with those spaces. I also use interviews to capture participants' lived experiences in order to disrupt stereotypes that simplify Indian American youth's experiences and mask their difficulties (Smith, 1999). Finally, I use archival documents to understand the role of educational institutions and policies in shaping spaces and perceptions of Indian American youth. Documents helped me critically analyze how school structures and practices socially position Indian American youth inside schools and in U.S. society, more broadly.

Research Design

This study critically analyzed social and cultural systems by examining various perceptions of Indian American youth in their home, schooling, and community spaces to uncover how larger social meanings influence these perceptions (Lipman, 2002). Subsequently, the study sought to understand perceptions of Indian American youth, particularly those related to race and ethnicity that shape their schooling experiences.

This study drew loosely from qualitative case study methodology because the multiple pieces of data (i.e. photographs, interviews, district data) served as multiple vantage points to help me understand the nuanced perceptions of Indian American youth, the spaces the occupy, and the relationship between space and perceptions on their schooling experiences (Baxter, & Jack, 2008). I focused on youth's stories that emerge from interviews. I used these stories to complicate the current narrative of them as model minorities and focused on the details of how they understand themselves and their interactions with others in various home, school, and community spaces. I specifically chose the home-school-community framework due to the current literature's overwhelming focus on academics that at-times does not provide a clear picture of Indian American youth's well-being in all facets of their life. As Phelan, Davidson, and Yu (1998) explain, youth traverse multiple worlds (e.g. home, school, and community) and their experiences in these multiple spaces inform their schooling experiences. In combining their stories with photographs of spaces important to them as well as school-related documents, I contextualized participants' stories about how they interact with and were racialized by others in spaces that influenced their schooling and the role of schools and the school district in shaping their experiences (see Creswell, 2007).

Study Context

All study participants attended either "Mountain Springs" or "Forest Preserves," two public high schools in "Blue County" located in a mid-Atlantic state. Both schools are minority-majority schools and Asian American students are the second largest racial group after White students. They are known for their academic performance however, Mountain Springs is known nationally for its academic performance and Marshall and

Ashley, who attended this school, explained that community residents attributed the school's academic success to Asian American students.

Blue County has a population of approximately 300,000 people with a median household income of approximately $100,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). Blue County is majority White residents but in recent years has experienced greater racial diversity. Blue County Public Schools (BCPSS) is well known in the state for its quality public schools. I chose Blue County because of the growth of Asian students enrolled in its public school district. I also chose BCPSS as a study setting due to its status as a suburban district. As researchers have noted, many suburban school districts are experiencing significant increases in racial and ethnic minority and socioeconomically diverse students but are unprepared to accommodate these changes in policy and practice (Holme, Diem, & Welton, 2014; Turner, 2015; Tyler, Frankenberg, and Ayscue, 2016).

Recruitment

Seven Indian American youth—2 boys and 5 girls—composed the participant sample of this study. All participants identified as Indian American and Christian 2) had at least one parent who immigrated to the United States from India, and 3) attended a public high school in Blue County. I specifically chose youth with at least one immigrant parent to capture differences between first (parents') and second generation (participants') experiences and views in the U.S. and I specifically chose high school youth because they are more mature and more analytic which would allow for deeper conversations about their schooling experiences as particularly related to race and ethnicity. I also chose Indian American **and** Christian youth because not much is known in the current literature about this group's experiences.

I recruited two of my participants through an Indian American vacation bible school at the church I attended as a child. This year, I served as a teacher for the high school youth, which allowed me to identify these two participants who I did not know prior to the vacation bible school. I asked for their contact information, sent study materials over email to their parents and offered to meet their parents in person to discuss my study. They declined my offer to meet but provided written consent for their children's participation. I recruited the five other participants through a community leader in the Indian American Christian church community. He identified five youth in his church who fit my participant criteria and invited me to their church to meet them and their families. I attended a Sunday service at this church, met the participants and their families, and asked for their contact information so I could send them information about the study. I attended another Sunday service to acquire consent from parents and answer questions they had—all five participants' parents provided written consent for them to participate.

Participants: Who Are These Youth?

Table 1 summarizes basic demographic information of participants in this study. As demonstrated in the figure, participants' ages ranged from 14-17 and their grade levels ranged from 10-12th grades. Four of the seven youth had Western, English names while the three others had Indian ethnic names and all seven chose White, Western, English names. Importantly, two of the youth chose pseudonyms originating from strong female characters in young adult literature. Their choice of White, Western, English names is notable because some of these participants, as I will discuss in future chapters, experienced difficulties in the school space as a result of their ethnic names. Thus, their

choice of these White, Western, English names suggest desires to fit in with their White,

American peers.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Study Participants

Name of Participant	Age of Participant	School Attending	1, 1.5, or 2 Generation and Nationality	Dad Occupation	Mom Occupation
Marshall	16	Mountain Springs High; Junior	1st Generation; Indian Citizen	Pharmacy Tech	Phlebotomist
Ashley	15	Mountain Springs High; Sophomore	2nd Generation; U.S. Citizen	Works in Federal Government	Dentist
Tris	17	Forest Preserves High; Senior	1.5 Generation; U.S. Citizen	State Correctional Officer	Nurse
Arabella	15	Forest Preserves High; Junior	1st Generation; Indian Citizen	Gemologist	Manager for Software Company
Meredith	16	Forest Preserves High; Junior	1.5 Generation; U.S. Citizen	Manager at Toll Company	Pharmacist
Hazel	16	Forest Preserves High; Junior	1.5 Generation; U.S. Citizen	Works for Postal Office	Nurse
George	14	Forest Preserves High; Sophomore	1.5 Generation; Indian Citizen	Engineer	Nurse

On the surface, this group of participants shares similar identifiers; they all ethnically identify as Indian and religiously identify as Christian and attend high school. Yet, my interviews with them revealed how very different they are from each other. Each had a unique personality, set of interests, and collection of stories that revealed their critical interpretations of themselves, their experiences and the world around them. In this section, I describe each participant in my sample as individuals to highlight their uniqueness and push back against the model minority stereotype that Asian American youth, including those of Indian background, almost singularly focus on academic achievement. The expressions of their individual personalities and their individual narratives of their interests, desires, perspectives, and experiences allowed me to analyze their collective schooling experiences in complex and nuanced ways. Below, I introduce participants who attended Mountain Springs High School and next, those who attended Forest Preserves High School.

Mountain Springs High School

Marshall was 16 at the time of the interview and a junior at Mountain Springs High School. His family immigrated to the United States from Kerala when Marshall was eight years old. His family immigrated to the United States through a family-sponsored visa and has only lived in Blue County. They first lived in an apartment and then moved into a townhome located in a new neighborhood. Although these two respective neighborhoods were only a couple of miles away from each other, Marshall noted that he was very reluctant to move because he was happy living in the apartment. Marshall's father was a pharmacy technician and his mother was a phlebotomist. He has one older sister. Marshall identified as Indian and Christian. He intentionally identified as Indian as

opposed to Indian American and stressed the importance of adhering to his Indian traditions and roots because they informed his core values in life. Marshall's Christian identity was also important to him. He served as the altar boy in his church and he felt compelled to take on this responsibility because church played an important role in his family life when they lived in India. Marshall also loved football and playing sports and expressed the importance of being athletic. He had a dry and witty sense of humor that appeared when he recounted funny experiences with friends and family members. He was not shy about making jokes during our interviews.

Ashley was 15 years old and a sophomore at Mountain Springs High School. She was born and raised in the United States and lived in Blue County her whole life. However, her family lived with her grandparents, eventually rented an apartment, and then moved to her current house when Ashley was in elementary school. She has one older sister. At the time of the study, Ashley's mother was a dentist and her dad worked for the federal government. Ashley's identity seemed strongly linked to her family's immigration story which incorporated her grandparents' and parents' experiences in the United States. Ashley identified as Indian American and Christian. She was the only study participant who attended a racially diverse church with Black, White, Latino, and Asian congregants as opposed to an Indian American church. She loved to act and was an avid fan of theater. She demonstrated an advanced language for speaking about inequality in society. For example, she explained that she did not believe in equal opportunity and that a Person of Color had to "work very, very hard" compared to a White person. She even seemed to have a burgeoning understanding of the myth of meritocracy because she expressed that that her hard work did not necessarily guarantee her opportunities. She

expressed that some People of Color only received certain opportunities because "[employers are] allowed to discriminate against you." and that even then her hard work would not necessarily change someone's discriminatory views of her.

Forest Preserves High School

      Tris was 16 at the time of our interview and a senior in high school. She has one older sister. Tris's family immigrated to the United States from Saudi Arabia when she was six years old. Her family immigrated through the H1B visa process. Upon immigrating to the U.S., Tris's family moved around quite a bit before settling in Blue County. We did not get into the specifics of how often she moved because she seemed to express discomfort with discussing the moves. Her mother was a nurse and her father was a state correctional officer. Tris was involved in her school, community, and church. She was the president of the South Asian Club at school; she was a volunteer at a senior citizen home with her fellow youth group members in their local residential community; and she was a Sunday School student at her church. Tris identified as Indian American and Christian. She also attended church with George, Marshall, Arabella, and Meredith who described her as the person who looks out for everyone in the church youth group. In my interviews with Tris, she appeared to prioritize others' well beings and feelings, as the other participants described her, and I had the sense that she did prioritized others from a genuine desire to look after people important to her. In my interviews with her, she frequently spoke about her desire to do academically excel in school but not the point that she prioritized her academic accomplishments over other important aspects of her life (e.g. her emotional well-being, her Christian faith, her family).

Arabella was a junior in high school and had one younger sister. She and her sister and parents had immigrated to the United States from Dubai through a family-sponsored visa right before Arabella began high school at Forest Preserves. Arabella's mother worked as a manager for a software company and her father worked as a gemologist. He traveled back and forth to Dubai to continue his work. Arabella was born and attended some of elementary school in India before her family moved to Dubai for job opportunities not available to them in Kerala. She identified as Indian and Christian, but was open to the idea of being Indian American as she had lived in the U.S. for the majority of her life. Arabella was an artist—she loved to paint. She also volunteered at a local senior citizen home during the week. As I will discuss in later chapters, Arabella shared about her difficulties as a recent immigrant in school and how this positioned her as an outsider amongst her peers. Her stories highlighted her resilience to not only academically excel but to also make friends and be involved in school.

Meredith was a junior in high school, and she has one younger sister. Her family immigrated to the United States when she was eight years old from Dubai where she was born. Her parents moved to Dubai from India in order to obtain job opportunities not available to them in Kerala. Meredith's family immigrated to the United States through a family sponsored visa. At the time of the study, her mother was a pharmacist and her father worked for a toll company. Meredith placed a high value on having racially diverse friends and, more importantly, on having friends who supported her and appreciated her for who she truly was. Meredith volunteered at the senior citizen home with Arabella. She participated in the South Asian club and Class Board at school and attended Sunday school at her church. Meredith demonstrated vulnerability and maturity when discussing

her struggles with anxiety particularly in middle school regarding some peer friendships. She discussed how she actively pursued support from her family and friends in order to overcome her anxiety.

Hazel was a junior in high school. She has one younger brother. Hazel's father immigrated to the United States through a family sponsored visa and she and her mother followed when Hazel was about a year old. Her brother was born in the U.S. Hazel's emigration to the U.S. at a young age made her unique amongst the participants. Although she would be considered a 1.5 generation immigrant because she emigrated before the age of 10, many of her views reflected a second generation immigrant youth because she considers the U.S. as the only place and home she has ever known. Hazel's mother was a nurse and her father worked for the post office. She also identified as Indian American and Christian. Hazel was a talented violin player who has been playing since she was eight years old. She said she often thought about orchestral pieces as she wrote her exams. She participated in the Red Cross club and ran track. Hazel was not shy to show her "goofy" side. As she showed me photos that she sent her friends on Snapchat, it seemed that she had an appreciation for jokes especially because one of the photos featured her face pressed up to her orchestra locker, her mouth half open, and the caption, "I'm so tired" with a laughing emoji.

George was a sophomore in high school and had not brothers or sisters. He told me he loved being the only child because he "liked being around [his] parents." He is also Marshall's cousin and noted that they were good friends. George's family immigrated to the U.S. when he was in pre-school through a family sponsored visa. His father was an engineer and his mother was a nurse. George identified as Indian American

and Christian. He was competitive and this became apparent to me when he shared his desire to win at the games he played with his neighborhood friends. demonstrated in him sharing how he wanted to win when he played games with his neighborhood friends. George was on the wrestling team his freshman year and was also a member of the South Asian club. George was quiet when we first met but became talkative as the interviews continued. He was also witty and this became apparent when I hosted an "end of interviews" pizza party for participants and was not shy to make jokes about Marshall.

Researcher Positionality: Who Am I?

I personally identify as a second-generation immigrant, female, Asian American, Indian American, Christian. On the surface, I reify the model minority stereotype. I was a high-achieving student in high school, attended one of the best public universities in the United States for my undergraduate studies, and entered a Ph.D. program straight after college. When I share these details with most people, they assume that my parents are doctors, engineers, or Ph.Ds. and that their professional backgrounds encouraged my professional pursuits. In other words, they assume my parents' professional backgrounds helped them accrue social capital that made it easy for me to pursue a Ph.D.

Below the surface, my story disqualifies the model minority narrative. I am the daughter of a nurse and a car technician and both of my parents have Associate degrees from India. I was actually a first-generation college student and the first in my family to pursue a graduate degree. I did not know much about how to apply to college except for what my older brothers told me about the process. In fact, I did not even know about a Ph.D. in Education until my junior year of college when I was selected to participate in a summer research program for under-represented people in education research.

My story further challenges the model minority stereotype because I experienced racial discrimination attending K-12 public schools in a well-resourced, majority White county. I was often the only Student of Color in my higher-level classes throughout elementary, middle, and high schools. I knew what it was like for White teachers to single me out in the class or send me to the principal's office. I also knew what it was like to be "made fun of" by schooling peers for being Indian. Their taunts usually featured speaking to me in an Indian accent because they watched Apu on the *The Simpsons*; referring me to as Mowgli from *The Jungle Book*; and asking me if Indian children looked like the malnourished kids they saw on UNICEF commercials. As a child, I did not know that any of these experiences qualified as racism or discrimination. All I remember is the frustration of not being considered the same as my peers. And the shame associated with feeling dirty, unworthy, and less-than my White friends.

My experiences of not being a "model minority" inspired me to do research that challenged the stereotype as it is applied to Indian American people. I have witnessed the ways in which research, public discourse, mainstream media, and policy have portrayed Indian American students as model minorities and thus silenced them from speaking out about their discriminatory experiences. As a result, I dedicated this project to connecting social perceptions of my participants to larger social meanings in order to establish that Indian American youth experience discrimination contrary to the model minority stereotype and that perceptions are rooted in deficit understandings of their race, histories, and cultures.

It should be noted that I attended schools in the same district as my participants and that in some ways we shared similar social identifications. Sharing similar

characteristics to my participants provided advantages in the research. First, our shared identification as Indian seemed to help my participants speak freely about difficulties at home, in school, or in their communities because they perhaps assumed that we shared some similar difficulties. Second, similar experiences of growing up Indian American helped me challenge other non-Indian researchers' understandings deficit perceptions around parenting, values, and culture.

Sharing similar characteristics to my participants also presented challenges to developing the research. I constantly checked my interpretation of participants' viewpoints to make sure they resembled the participants' life experiences and not my own. For example, I felt tempted to show ways in which they resisted the stereotype without focusing as much on how they conformed to the stereotype. This potential omission resulted in my advisor pushing me to think about how the stereotype could twist a seemingly good desire such as being hard-working, into an oppressive expectation. Similarly, I struggled to present outliers in the research, such as Marshall, who did not identify with his racial and ethnic identity in the same ways that the other participants did. This struggle prompted my advisor to encourage me on thinking about monolithic presentations of my participants. As I discuss further in this chapter, I used certain methods to help me be mindful about my biases.

Data Collection

This study employed in-depth data collection from multiple sources of information (Creswell, 2007). Data sources included photographs, interviews, and archival documents.

Artifacts (Photographs)

Burke, Greene, and McKenna (2016) note that photos can help youth share their counterstories and develop a shared narrative with adults. They explain that photographs can help "reframe how others view who they are and where they live, to represent their social worlds and name the experiences that matter to them." (Burke, Green, & McKenna, 2016, p. 146). I used photographs in this study to help youth think deeply about the spaces that are important to them and center them as experts on their experiences. The youth participants' photographs provided me an entrée into their worlds and helped them to: 1) identify spaces that were significant to them and in which they spent time; 2) discuss how material, social, and affective manifestations of space contributed to others' perceptions of them in those spaces; and 3) allowed them to use their own language and perspectives to discuss how they felt about these perceptions.

I asked each participant to take photos on their phones of places most significant to them. I asked each participant to take a total of 6 photos with at least one photo in their school, community, and home spaces. I left the selection of specific spaces open because I wanted the youth to choose those important to them. After participants took their photos, they sent their photos to me and I saved them as separate folders on my laptop.

In a one-on-one interview, I asked participants to explain: 1) what was in each photo and what we saw in it; 2) how they described the space; 3) with whom they shared the space; 4) why they photographed each particular space; and 5) what, if anything, they would change about these spaces (see Appendix D). These discussions helped me learn about the spaces participants occupy in their everyday lives and how they perceived

themselves and others in those spaces. Photographs are not included in the dissertation but I describe youth participants' photographs in my findings chapters.

Interviews

Interviewing is an apt method for uncovering peoples' realities and how they make sense of their worlds (Kvale, 1996; Stake, 1995). Interviews provide insights into the unobserved and allow people to describe and interpret specific events or occurrences from their own perspectives (Merriam, 1998). In other words, interviews can add nuance to and challenge simplistic characterizations of people, places, and situations. In this study, I intended interviews to position youth as the experts on their lived experiences. The interviews provided them with a space to reflect upon, explain, and question how they navigated various spaces and the perceptions they experienced in those spaces. In these conversations, I was interested in how these spaces and perceptions impact participants' schooling experiences.

For this study, I conducted two interviews with each participant. Each interview was 60-90 minutes in length and conducted at the public library. Both interviews followed a semi-structure format (see Kvale, 1996; Merriam, 1998), which allowed youth to share topics and convey perspectives that were significant to them but may not be addressed by my research questions. This format also allowed me to ask follow-up questions, based on youth's stories that were not included in my interview protocol.

The first interview focused on youth's photographs and addressed the questions and topics outlined in the previous section. I also asked youth to identify any other important spaces that they did not included in their photographs. The overall purpose of this interview was to answer my first research question about spaces that youth occupy

and others' perceptions of them. In this interview, I also encouraged youth to describe themselves and their interests (see Appendix D). The second interview focused on home, school, and community spaces and the perceptions they experienced in these settings. I asked participants to make connections between interactions, perceptions, and larger social meanings and prompted them to share, free of input, about themselves in these spaces. I also asked pointed questions about perceptions in these spaces as related to their race, ethnicity, and other social characteristics (see Appendix E). Finally, I used a portion of the interview time to clarify or further explicate emerging themes from the first interview. Each interviewee responded to the same set of interview questions, and I audiotaped interviews. I then sent the audio files to an online transcription service and they transcribed the interviews verbatim.

Documents

Creswell (2007) notes that documents can be useful in providing context for participants' stories in narrative inquiry. Documents can also help to situate youth's stories in the spaces, cultures, and historical contexts that influence their stories (Creswell, 2007). Yin (2009) notes that documents are useful to "corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (p. 103). In this study, I analyzed district English and History standards. I used these documents to situate the youth's accounts in school and community contexts and better understand the racial framings of Indian Americans in school policy.

Organizing the data

Keeping data organized is an important aspect of the data analysis process. I stored participants' photographs onto my laptop. I categorized participant's photographs

into separate folders designated by participant name, date, and time. A transcription service transcribed interviews verbatim into Microsoft Word documents and I organized transcriptions by interviewee, date, and time. I listened to each interview and read the transcripts to check for errors. Afterwards, I uploaded all transcripts into my coding software. I collected documents via the district website. I labeled each document by title, author, and year and uploaded all documents into my coding software.

Data Analysis

As Merriam (1998) notes, data collection and data analysis are simultaneous activities because each interview, document, or observation helps the researcher refine their understanding of the data. In other words, data analysis is a dynamic and iterative process that refines data collection in order to produce reliable and trustworthy findings (Merriam, 1998). The following section discusses my data analysis plan organized by the research questions.

Research Question 1

What spaces do Indian American youth occupy in their homes, schools, and communities, and how do they understand others' perceptions of them in those spaces, particularly as related to race/ethnicity?

I analyzed youth's transcripts from both of the interviews to answer my first research question. In the first round of coding these data, I used descriptive codes to identify the spaces youth occupied and perceptions of them in these spaces. I coded deductively for school, home, and community and inductively for more specific spaces that hold significance for youth (see Appendix F for initial code list). In coding for perceptions of youth, I used deductive codes, such as *school perception, home*

perception, and *community perception* as well as sub-codes, such as *teacher*, *peer*, *parent*, *sibling*, and *ethnic community member*. I also coded inductively for other participant-identified perceptions relevant to the research question and not captured by my deductive codes. Likewise, I developed codes to capture how participants made meaning of these perceptions.

After descriptive coding, I conducted a second round of analytic coding using concepts from my framework as they related to the research question. I deductively coded for key concepts in intersectionality, systemic racism, and spatiality (refer to Appendix F for initial coding chart). I also referred back to the original photographs to gain more insights into youth's descriptions of the spaces they occupied. Examples of these deductive codes included *social identity, structural intersectionality, epistemic oppression, race and racism, interest convergence, power, and cultural implacement*. I used these concepts as analytic lenses to more deeply analyze participants' understanding of perceptions in particular spaces and to connect them to broader social processes and structures. After this cycle of coding, I wrote an analytic memo describing insights I have gained about the data from both cycles of coding.

Research Question 2

In what ways are these perceptions and spaces related, and how do these relationships influence these youth's schooling experiences?

I gathered all of my codes from the first and second cycle of coding and analyzed them to see if any codes captured similar perceptions across different spaces. I then created new codes that captured these similar perceptions across spaces. For example, if a

youth participant noted that their parents and teachers perceived them as high-achieving, I wrote a new code titled *high-achieving, home and school.*

For this cycle, I also created new codes to capture youth's schooling experiences. These four codes reflected three dimensions of schooling experiences as identified in the literature review*: academic, psychological, and sociocultural*. I then deductively coded interview transcripts again using the perception/space relationship codes and the schooling experience codes. I also coded inductively for other related perceptions and spaces as well as schooling experiences not captured in my code list but associated with the research question. After this cycle of coding, I wrote an analytic memo describing emerging themes and ideas from the data as it connects with my research question. Afterwards, I developed themes from code mapping, the three cycles of coding, and analytic memos written after coding cycles and included them in my write-up of study findings.

Research Question 3

How are school policies and practices implicated in the relationship between spaces and perceptions and their influences on Indian American youth's schooling experiences as particularly related to their race and ethnicity?

I used youth interviews and district documents to answer the third research question. I also used descriptive codes to capture the role of school and district policies and practices on the relationship between perceptions of Indian American youth and the spaces they occupied. I coded deductively for school and district policies using deductive codes such as: *school practice/policy and district policy/practice.* I also inductively coded

for any policies and practices that explained the relationship between perceptions and spaces that are not captured in my deductive codes.

After this round of coding, I wrote an analytic memo describing emerging themes and ideas from the data that aligned with my research question. I then did a second cycle of coding this time using concepts from my conceptual framework as they related to my research question. I deductively coded for key concepts in intersectionality, systemic racism, and spatiality (refer to Appendix F for initial coding chart). I used these concepts to think more deeply about how school and district policies and practices represent broader social structures that influence Indian American youth's schooling experiences. After this cycle of coding, I wrote another analytic memo describing further insights I gained about the data, as related to the conceptual framework. Afterwards, I developed themes from the two cycles of coding and the analytic memo after the coding cycle and used them in the write-up of study findings.

Validity

Validity in qualitative research it is not about uncovering the unmitigated truth but clearly and accurately portraying participants' lived realities (Merriam, 1998). In an attempt to accurately and clearly portray participants' lived realities, I performed member checks, triangulated data, and checked for researcher bias (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Wolcott, 1990).

Regarding member checks, I invited interviewees to review their interview transcriptions and my write-ups of preliminarily analyses to determine I correctly interpreted their statements and represented their experiences (Stake, 1995). I triangulated (see Stake, 1995) data from photographs, documents, and interview data to substantiate

claims about spaces Indian American youth inhabit and social perceptions of them. In triangulation, I did not always find consistent patterns but I was more concerned with understanding their perceptions and how they framed their experiences rather than the veracity of their accounts (see Wolcott, 1990).

Finally, I kept a reflection journal to identify and reflect on my own biases and how they shaped my interpretations and judgments of the data. At times, I was tempted to interpret interviewees' experiences through the lens of my own adolescence especially since I shared identifying similarities with participants (see Biklen, 2004). These temptations pushed me to journal about my distinct and differing positionality from participants. I also wrote about my own racial, ethnic, and cultural positionalities and how this affected the data collections and analysis process.

Managing Confidentiality and Risk

To maintain confidentiality, I replaced all identifiers and names for interviews and photographs with pseudonyms so that comments and quotes could not be traced back to the participant. For example, I replaced participant name, friends' names, school names, church names, and localities with pseudonyms. Likewise, I did not include photographs in study findings. I only included participants' descriptions of photographs in the data analysis section. Finally, I held participants' conversations in confidentiality and did not share them with parents, community members, other youth, or schools. Before letting participants begin photo collection and participate in interviews, I informed them and their parents that they could choose to stop participating at any time if they experienced discomfort during photo collection (in which they take photos of their spaces) or during both interviews. Likewise, I informed them that any time during photo collection or

interviews they could choose to not take photos, skip interview questions, or ask me to stop recording the interview if they felt uncomfortable. As a result, youth and anyone affiliated with them incurred minimal risk.

I stored data collected from interviews (includes audiotapes, photographs, transcriptions, notes on interviews) on a password-protected laptop. I also changed all identifiers in transcripts and data to pseudonyms. Only I, as the principal investigator, had access to the original interviews. All data collected in this study will be destroyed six years after the study concludes.

Consent Process

I gave all participants and parents a copy of the participant assent form (See Appendix G) and parental consent form (See Appendix H) and asked them to review forms for questions. Then I followed-up with participants and their parents, in person, to review the assent and consent forms with them.

During my review of the consent and assent forms with participants and their parents, I described the purposes, expectations, risks, and uses of the study. I answered any questions they had, and informed them they could continue to ask questions both during and after the study. I also made clear that they were free to discontinue their participation in the study at any time, without penalty, and if they choose to withdraw, I would destroy any data I collected from them. After these disclosures, I asked parents and participants to sign forms and provided them with copies of the forms.

Study Significance

This study provides two important implications regarding Indian American youth and their schooling experiences. First, it provides for complex structural analyses that

unveil the role of school policy and practice on Indian American youth's schooling experiences. Existing research suggests that social policies and their historical legacies influence teachers', peers' parents', ethnic community members', and non-ethnic community members' perceptions of Indian American students. Yet, it does not explicitly analyze policy or practice influences on their perceptions resulting in an ahistorical and incomplete picture of how broader social and schooling conditions influence Indian American youth's schooling experiences. I applied my conceptual framework, which has various vantage points from which to examine structural influences, to participants' interviews and documents to provide a more complete picture of how school policy and practice shape the experiences of Indian American youth in schooling spaces.

Second, it discusses how teachers' and peers' perceptions of Indian American youth reflect prominent racializations of Indians in American society. Specifically, this study connects these racializations to larger social meanings regarding race, nationality, religion, gender, and class are used to racialize Indian American youth in their schools prominent racializations of Indian American youth and how these racializations are connected to larger social meanings. In other words, this study works to show that these racializations do not exist in a vacuum but are informed by mainstream American societal views on non-White immigrant peoples. This is an important implication of the work because as race scholars note, American society discusses race in a Black-White binary. As a result, this study attempts to uncover racializations of Indian Americans in an attempt to move the dialogue of race beyond the Black-White racial binary and uncover more nuanced representations of oppression hidden by binary views of race.

Limitations

This study relies primarily on interview data and the perspectives of Indian American youth. Future research should include the perspectives of parents and school district personnel to foster broader understandings of how educational policies and practices impact Indian American youth and students of color writ large. Likewise, since this study focuses on how Indian youth perceive others' perceptions of them, a study in the future including parent, teacher, and peer voices could add nuance to Indian American youth's statements.

CHAPTER FIVE: SIGNIFICANT SPACES IN HOME, SCHOOL, AND

COMMUNITY

In this chapter, I answer the first part of my first research question examining spaces Indian American youth occupy in their homes, schools, and communities. To answer this question, I asked participants to photograph at least two spaces that they deemed to be significant in their respective home, school, and community. The purpose of this photo activity was to help youth: 1) identify spaces that were significant to them and in which they spent time and 2) discuss how material, social, and affective manifestations of space contributed to others' perceptions of them in those spaces. I stressed that the photographs should be representative of participants' definitions of home, school, and community especially because I wanted them to use their own language and perspectives to discuss how they felt about these spaces.

I organized participants' identification of significant spaces into three sections. In the first section, "Family is the Most Important," I describe participants' descriptions of significant spaces in home and the role of family and school responsibilities in how they spend at home. In the second section, "I Go to School So I Can See My Friends," I explain participants' identification of non-academic spaces in school and the importance they placed on non-academic, social activities in school. In the final section, "A Place Where You Can Be Free" I discuss participants' varying descriptions of community and how these spaces helped them express their ethnic and religious traditions.

Family is the Most Important: Significant Spaces at Home

All participants discussed at least one significant space in home that they shared with family members, and Tris, Meredith, George, Ashley, and Arabella photographed

these shared spaces. Tris showed me a photo of her kitchen table where she ate dinner with her family every night. George and Arabella took photos of a couch in front of a television and George explained that he and his parents "mainly watch Indian movies" in that space. Ashley had a photograph of her seated between her grandparents on a couch in her living room. Meredith provided a photo of her backyard and told me about how she spent time there in the summer with her family. These participants happily explained the significance of these spaces in their family lives. Specifically, Tris described how the kitchen table symbolized the importance of her family.

> I said family is the most important and I feel like if someone asked what is the most important thing that you value I feel like its family. Because coming together that's what I value the most like I don't think I value school as much as I value family. I feel like family and church are like really high on my priority list. (Tris)

Tris's quote suggests that the kitchen table symbolized her priority for family togetherness in her life. Arabella also described cherished time shared with her family when they watch TV together.

> My parents and my sister, it's around after dinner. We sit like this and we watch something on TV, and we used to do that every day. Every day after once my dad came home, we used to sit and watch like this. And I love to stand like. We just cuddle up, we four of us cuddle up and we just watch whatever it is. And slowly, I see that studies are stopping me from going there. And I really love this time. This is one time, I study and try to finish it fast, just because okay, I can go watch

movie with them, or I can watch, maybe it might just be the news, but still.

(Arabella)

Arabella's quote shows that like Tris, she also prioritized family in her life and her choice of words of "cuddle up" suggests that her family was affectionate with each other and that she valued this affection between them. Furthermore, Arabella's quote illuminates how she felt like her school responsibilities inhibited her ability to spend this quality time with her family. She seemed to value her family above her academics especially since she tried to finish her homework quickly to watch TV with them.

Other participants provided photos of home spaces that engendered positive feelings for them in other ways. Hazel photographed her dog seated in a patch of grass outside of her front door. She described feeling "safe" in this place with her dog and "really happy." Hazel did not explicate what she meant by "safe" but she did mention the presence of her parents and neighbors in this space and how her "parents will say hi to all to all the neighbors." It is possible then that Hazel felt safe in this space because her family knew most of their neighbors and was friendly with them. Marshall showed me a photo of his neighbor's, green, 1970 Pontiac Firebird that sat on the curb of his neighbor's house. Marshall was an avid "car enthusiast" and described how he hoped to "own 25 cars at one time so I can drive one every single day." While Marshall loved this car because he had an appreciation for "old cars" he also described the significance of seeing this car for the first time and how it helped him cope with moving.

And so we found this house and I don't want to move because I like where I am. When we went to go look at this house I was like, "Nah, I'm good. I don't want to move. I'm just going to stay in my apartment." We were living in an apartment

before we moved, before we bought our house. So as I was leaving the open

house I saw this car drive by and park. And so that just sold me on the house. I

was sold on this house because I was able to see this car every single day.

(Marshall)

Marshall's quote suggests that this car helped him accept moving into a new house but

that it also possibly helped him experience cultural implacement in a new setting.

Marshall stated how much he "loves cars" and perhaps seeing this car everyday meant

that Marshall could define his new home space to be reflective of his interests and

passions, in this case cars.

Interestingly, my conversations with participants about home usually incorporated

aspects of school; most identified the role of school in dictating how they spent their time

at home. Meredith, Tris, Ashley, Arabella, George, and Marshall explained that they

spent most of their weeknights at home completing homework and school projects. In

fact, Tris and Arabella photographed their desks in their rooms and described it as a

significant space because they spent a lot of time there finishing assignments. Meredith

described how she sometimes prioritized homework over sleep.

There's just days when you know you have a lot of work, so I go to bed at 11:00

and then I get up at 2:00 and then just stay up because I'm more awake then rather

than… (Meredith)

2:00 in the morning? (Caroline)

Yeah. (Meredith)

Wow, okay. (Caroline)

I'm more awake at 2:00 than if I stayed up, because my eyes are just closing. So, if I get that little nap, I get to stay up more. (Meredith)

So, you'll wake up at 2:00 and then stay up through the whole day? (Caroline)

Yeah. It depends on how much [work] is left. (Meredith)

Although Meredith had the most demanding schoolwork schedule, the other five participants noted that they did not sleep very much; went to bed at about midnight and woke up early in the morning before school to finish homework; or fell asleep while attempting to finish homework. Study data do not suggest these participants stayed up late to finish homework because they solely self-identified as high-achieving, hard-working, or studious. Rather, they seemed to spend a substantial amount of time on homework due to the sheer volume of work, difficulties with time management, or procrastination. Marshall noted that because it was hard for him "to do time management [between] football and homework" he stayed up until "2:00, 2:30[am] just finishing homework" George, however, seemed to stay up late to complete assignments because he procrastinated and thus, did not give himself as much time to finish the assignment before the deadline.

I mean, it's like I choose to be lazy sometimes because I know I can do better, but I just choose to be lazy and slack off. (George)

Okay. Because? (Caroline)

I'm just lazy. (George)

So, give me an example of when you slack off. (Caroline)

Because if my teacher assigned me an essay due in like three months, most kids would do [the assignment] one week at time or something, but I would just do most of them [the assignments] on the last two days or something. (George)

You just crunch in the two days. Okay. (Caroline)

The last two days I'm filled with Red Bull and just do it all night. (George)

George's quote demonstrates his agency in choosing which assignments he puts his best effort forth in. George's description of himself as lazy contradicts the stereotype of Indian Americans students as extremely conscientious, single-minded about, and motivated by academic work. Participants' photographs and descriptions of spaces indicate that school and schoolwork are just one of many aspects of their lives and maybe not always the most significant. Ultimately, participants' photographs revealed how they valued family time and how these spaces engendered positive feelings for them, such as security, happiness, and affection. Importantly, participants' value for family above school complicates existing mainstream notions of Asian American youth, their parents, and their families as only valuing education and focusing their family life around academics rather than on spending quality time together.

I Go to School So I Can See My Friends: Significant Spaces in School

Six of the seven youth photographed and discussed significant spaces in the school space; interestingly, they were almost all non-academic spaces. Arabella did not take any photographs in school, and this may be due, in part, to her difficulties in school, which I describe in the next chapter. The photographs from school featured spaces they occupied with their friends. Their stories suggested these spaces helped them feel less stressed, and more connected to their friends and to the school community.

Hazel showed me a photo of her and her friends on the high school bleachers during a pep rally. She also showed a photo of herself with face pressed up to her orchestra locker as she described a hallway where she and her friends congregated before school. Marshall photographed the football field where he had sports practice; the bus he had "ridden for two years;" and the bus stop right outside of his house. Intriguingly, he categorized the bus stop as a school space because "that's where [he] starts his school day." George presented photos of chairs in the library where he chatted with his friends before school and the outdoor courtyard where he ate lunch with his friends. Tris showed me a photo of the senior class mural; Meredith and Ashley took photos of the cafeteria; and Ashley showed me a photo of students working on various activities during a club meeting.

Meredith photographed her chemistry class in session. This was the only photo of school that portrayed academics. Meredith explained that she took this photo because she spent most of her school day in classes. Similar to how Tris and Arabella described the photos of their desks in their rooms, Meredith did not consider the classroom as a "significant" place based on affective associations but on the significant amount of time she spent there. On the other hand, the positive affective associations participants had with the non-academic spaces they photographed in school were clear in their photos and through their descriptions.

Participants' identification of non-academic spaces in school as important corroborates other data in this study that suggests participants value social interactions and relationships as important, and in some cases possibly more important, than academic achievement. Their photos demonstrate that they value sociocultural aspects of school

such as building friendships, expressing themselves, and being a part of a community, as essential schooling experiences. As an example, Marshall described how being on the football field with his teammates made him feel important.

 [I felt] Important, basically because I felt like they [teammates] needed me. I felt like uh… (Marshall)

Why did they need you? (Caroline)

Because I was one of the bigger kids on the football field. And there was no one to fill in for my position. I was needed because I was the only one who could play that position. And at guard and defensive end or the one who could do it better than anyone else. (Marshall)

When Marshall spoke of the football team he was passionate and excited to tell me about his accomplishments on the field and the joy of playing on the team. In fact, Marshall seemed to value non-academic, social experiences more than the academic experiences in school explaining, "I like the classes, but I go to school so I can see my friends and just interact with them."

Hazel also mentioned the importance of friends when describing how she had been meeting them in the hallway outside of the orchestra room, in the morning, since their "freshman year." She explained that this hallway was important to her because it was the only place where she saw all of her friends because they did not share classes. Hazel indicated that she felt most comfortable in school during these times when she was with friends. Throughout her interview, Hazel described herself as "really shy," and she said she "won't talk a lot" in classes, without her close friends. However, around friends she was "out-going, goofy," and more willing to speak in class. Similarly, Tris, Arabella,

and Meredith also described feeling more comfortable at school amongst their friends and less willing to speak in class if they did not have at least one friend in the class.

Tris and Ashley described non-academic spaces that seemed to signify their service to their schools. For example, Tris showed me the senior class mural and talked about her contributions on Class Board. She said, "I dedicate a lot of time" and noted how her and a few friends worked on a class float that represented the whole senior class noting, "We'll be working on a float while the rest of the people are home getting ready for homecoming." Likewise, Ashley expressed pride in her contributions as "social media manager" for the Make A Wish chapter at her school. She explained that she was "super involved" and enjoyed the club because of the "the [racial] diversity of the school." Both participants' accounts indicated that they spent a significant amount of time on sociocultural and service activities that benefitted others.

Ultimately, participants' photos, descriptions, and choices of non-academic spaces as significant in the school suggest that, overall, non-academic spaces in school, as opposed to academic spaces, were most important to them, and these spaces helped them express themselves freely and develop friendships. The data also indicate that participants valued non-academic, social schooling experiences as times more important than academic schooling experiences because they only discussed their academic experiences when I prompted them in interviews about their photographs.

A Place Where You Can Be Free: Significant Spaces in Community

Participants' photos revealed varying definitions of community. Meredith and George described community based on their residence. Meredith shared a photo of the cul-de-sac on which she lived while George shared a photo of a field between two houses

where the neighborhood kids played various games. Marshall, Arabella, and Hazel also described community based on their residence but went beyond geography to describe the affective and relational dimensions of community. Marshall characterized community as "a place or entity where you can just be free, talk to your friends or talk to those around you and be happy basically. I don't think a community should be sad." To ground his description of community Marshall shared photos and told stories of the playground where he and his friends played as middle schoolers.

Unlike Marshall, Hazel and Arabella did not provide explicit descriptions of community. Hazel shared a photo of her and a friend trying on dresses in a shop in the "downtown" area of her town and described the shop as a "a creative atmosphere, and like positive vibes." Hazel noted that she felt "safe" in her town. Likewise, Arabella showed me a photo of a Baskin-Robbins that she and her father and sister frequented after her SAT classes and described the ice cream shop based on how it made her feel with her sister and father.

And [our visit to Baskin Robbins] is just some time I get to talk. I get so happy. It's like, ice cream is not the thing that makes me happy. It's just, we three sitting there, and we talking about [things]. And every time we laugh. Sara says that I'm gonna take something different [than the Mississippi Chocolate flavored ice cream] and it never happens. It's just some time I like to spend with her.

Arabella's quote suggests that spending time with her family after SAT classes that she "didn't like" made her feel happy and helped her decompress from SAT preparation. For Arabella, Baskin-Robbins signified special time with her family in the context of the

increasing demands of school (e.g. college entrance exams, homework, AP exams), which infringed on the time she could spend with her family.

Tris, Arabella, and Ashley also described community based on ethnic and religious components. All three identified church as an important community. Tris characterized her church as "an extended family" where she did not "feel uncomfortable about talking to anyone there." When I asked Tris why she chose to photograph the church sanctuary, she described it as a place that grounded her spiritually.

> I guess that's the most peaceful place. And in the basement of our church is more where everyone talks. And I like how peaceful it is. It's not like when you enter the sanctuary it's not like you can be running around places and everything. I like that it's something I want to be like. I want to be able to think about myself and what I'm doing. And that's something that I struggle with. Slowing down and thinking about what I am doing. So that's something I'm working on. So that picture really describes who I want to be." (Tris)

Tris's quote shows her consideration of her personal development and desire to be more contemplative and present in her life. Tris's quote importantly pushes back against mainstream portrayals of Asian American youth as only pursuing academic and career advancement as opposed to personal and spiritual development.

Arabella also viewed church as a place where she could be herself and make friends more easily than she could at school. Arabella described how she felt "more open" with her friends at church because she did not feel hyperaware of her actions as did with her friends at school. For example, Arabella noted that one of her friends, Raina, was "dramatic" at times and that some of their "miscommunications" about homework

could turn into an unintended fight between them. Arabella noted, "I might just be more careful when I talk to her, because I don't want our friendship to break, because she means a lot to me." Tris and Arabella appeared to feel comfort in communities of their ethnic peers in which they could establish relationships without feeling culturally different from their peers. Ashley also shared photos of her church during vacation bible school and of her all-girl youth group. Unlike Tris and Arabella, however, Ashley's description of community was based more on racial/ethnic and religious similarities. Incidentally Ashley was the only study participant who did not attend an Indian American church. I asked Ashley if her youth group made it easy or hard for her to be herself and she explained,

> I think my community space [youth group] makes it so much easier to be myself and to talk about how I'm feeling and to talk about just how school is going. I think there are a lot of people of different races in here, but I think being so different, even though we may not look the same or I may be darker than you, but we still have if anything like two stigmas, one being Christian and the other being of color, so I think it makes it so much easier to talk to them about what I'm going through than maybe my friends at school because at school I think it is diverse, but I don't think it's as diverse as my youth group so it's so much easier to talk about how I'm feeling with them because they know two parts of me or understand two parts of me that my school friends may only understand one of two. (Ashley)

Ashley experienced comfort in her youth group due to her racial identification as a Person of Color similarly to how Tris experienced comfort in her same-ethnic church

community due to her ethnic identification as Christian and Malayalee. Ashley's quote suggests that she thrived in a diverse environment that allowed her to feel comfortable with her minoritized identities (e.g. Christian and Person of Color). Her community helped her to cope with being "othered" in the school environment and provided her a place to express herself without judgment.

While participants had varying definitions of community, they associated positive emotions with their community spaces. Tris, Arabella, and Ashley's identification of church as an important place seems rooted in how they value their religion and their ethnic traditions. Likewise, Marshall valued his community as demonstrated by his photograph of the playground and his description of feeling safe in that space. As I will describe in the next chapter, communities served as sites of cultural implacement for participants.

Summary

Participants' photographs of significant spaces at home revealed their value for family members and prioritizing time spent with family. Their stories of shared spaces with family members seemed to help them feel security, safety, and affection. Participants' photographs ultimately complicate existing mainstream perceptions of Asian American youth and their families as only valuing education and focusing their family life on academic achievement. Ultimately, participants' photographs and descriptions show how they cultivate meaningful relationships amongst each other.

Participants' photographs also revealed their value for non-academic spaces in school and how these spaces help them express themselves freely. Importantly, their stories about these spaces unearthed the significance they had for non-academic social

activities, spending time with friends, and serving their schools. Their stories about school and their desire to share about the social aspects of school pushes back against mainstream notions of Asian American students that suggest they only care about their academic achievement and career advancement.

Finally, participants' photographs and descriptions showed how they all defined community differently. They defined these spaces based on the physical geography of their neighborhoods, affective associations, and shared identities with others who share the spaces with them. Regardless, participant's descriptions of their respective communities reflected their desire for racially diverse and same-ethnic peer interactions. Their stories of their interactions with friends in their neighborhoods or friends at church seemed to help them feel safe and secure which is similar to their descriptions of home spaces. Their discussions of community further complicate mainstream perceptions of Asian American youth as only focused on their academics because they showed how participants actually prioritized play, spending time with friends, and focusing on their personal development.

Finally, participants' choices of significant spaces in home, school, and community revealed how they purposely spent their time in spaces that generated positive feelings for them such as safety and security. Their choices of spaces across home, school, and community importantly showed their value for a diverse array of experiences that often did not reflect their academic pursuits or achievements.

CHAPTER SIX: PERCEPTIONS OF INDIAN AMERICANS IN SCHOOL

In the following chapter, I address the second part of my first research question and examine how participants understand others' perceptions of them in school. The chapter unfolds into four sections. The first, "Just Go Back to Your Country," discusses participants' understandings of some of their peers' perceptions of them as perpetual foreigners and terrorists. The second, "Spelling Bee Winners," describes participants' views of their peers' and teachers' perceptions and expectations of them as high achievers. The third, "Nerds and Girls with Glasses and Two Braids in Her Hair" describes participants' accounts of peers' perceptions of them as nerds. The final section applies the conceptual framework to important findings in this chapter in an effort to highlight prominent racial framings of Indian American youth in school and to discuss participants' power in resisting or conforming to these framings.

Just Go Back to Your Country: Stereotypes of Indian Americans as Anti-American

Participants reported that some of their peers employed racial stereotypes of Indians in the U.S. that impacted their non-academic, social, and academic experiences. These stereotypes made them feel uncomfortable, marginalized, and at times unsafe in school. Participants implied that these stereotypes existed at a societal level, permeated school boundaries, and influenced their interactions with non-South Asian people in the school space. Tris, Ashley, Hazel, and Arabella seemed most affected by these stereotypes and identified two major stereotypes of Indian Americans in their school: 1) always a foreigner, never an American and 2) likely to be a terrorist. Their stories suggest that the combination of their race/ethnicity, class, gender, nationality, and language positioned them as unassimilable and, at times, threatening in the school space.

Participants described the "always a foreigner" or perpetual foreigner stereotype as the assumption that they recently emigrated from India and, thus, could not be characterized as American. The effects of this stereotype on participants differed based on how recently they immigrated to the United States. Arabella immigrated just before her freshman year of high school. Her stories about her known status as a **recent** Indian immigrant seemed to position her as an automatic outsider amongst her peers, impacting both her non-academic, social, and academic experiences. Arabella described how her difficulties understanding cultural aspects of schooling in the U.S. and her peers' interpretation of her accent limited her ability to make friends and participate in class. Regarding the cultural aspects of schooling in the U.S., Arabella described her schooling experiences in India as very different from those in the U.S.

> I think I changed after I came to US. I really see that, because in India, we all have this one classroom, and in one classroom, there's like 30, 40 kids. And it's just this 30, 40 kids you're spending your whole school year with. So, I was very social in India, but then once I came here, I think I started talking to people and they found that Americans are more to themselves. And they don't want to express what they feel. They do, they do to their group of people. The first time I went to class, the first thing I saw was there's like seven groups of people. They're just talking in circles and circles. I was like, "Where would I go?" And it was hard for me the first two years. (Arabella)

Arabella's quote suggests the differences in the classroom structure in India and the U.S. and in American and Indian students' communication styles contributed to her feeling isolated and different from her peers. Arabella also noted that due to her peers' reactions

to her Indian accent, she spoke as little as possible in school. Arabella described how

other students could not understand and would misconstrue what she was saying although

she was speaking in English.

> …my accent, it was a problem. And people wouldn't like, I still remember, I said
>
> "yearing." The earrings that you put in, and someone said, "urine." I'm like,
>
> "What are you saying?" And then they're like, "What are you saying, urine?" I'm
>
> saying earring. And then I was like, "Okay, people are not understanding what I'm
>
> saying." So, then I would stop talking, because I just didn't want to start a big
>
> issue. And then I wouldn't raise my hand for teachers or anything. I was like, I get
>
> what you're saying, I'm not gonna ask anything. I would just go like that.
>
> (Arabella)

Arabella indicated that peers' understanding of the way she spoke English embarrassed

her, and she was subjected to teasing because of how she spoke. Arabella grew up

learning English while attending primary school in India and was a fluent English

speaker. Yet, her peers interpreted her accent in a way that positioned her as a non-Native

English speaker and thus, different from them. Arabella explained that an incident in gym

class with another student over her confusion with gym lockers was a culminating act that

led her to be anti-social in school.

> Like in my gym class, I'm so confused with the lockers, because it was, no. I
>
> didn't even know what to do, so my locker was on the side, and there's another
>
> girl's locker on my left side. So, by mistake, I was trying to open, she's like, "Are
>
> you trying to steal my stuff? Get out of here." And that was one of the saddest

moments for me. And then I just stopped talking. That was, my only way was just

to be in my own world. (Arabella)

The locker experience traumatized Arabella and prompted her to stop speaking in school.

Ultimately, her experiences with her peers regarding her accent, her difficulties

understanding American school norms, and her inability to define herself as anything

other than an immigrant in school prompted her to avoid people at school as much as

possible. She often spent lunchtime alone in the school bathroom reading. Arabella's

account indicates that being perceived as a non-English speaking, immigrant student can

lead to socially isolating and traumatizing experiences in the school environment. She

largely faced her social isolation in school alone because she did not have immigrant

peers in her classes who could relate to her difficulties.

While Arabella described the most tramautizing experience, Tris, Ashley,

Marshall, Meredith, and Hazel—all of whom are considered 1.5 generation because they

to the United States before the age of 10 or 2nd generation because they were born in the

U.S.—also spoke about how peers cast them as perpetual foreigners in the schooling

space. However, their experiences differed from Arabella's. They described the

stereotype as evidenced in how their non-Indian peers: 1) assumed they knew nothing

about American culture and society and 2) ascribed a racial/ethnic identity to them that

was solely Indian and never American. Tris aptly described being framed as a perpetual

foreigner.

But some people are like because you're Indian, you weren't born here. And it's

like I've spent just amount of time here as everyone else and so, and um, they

think you don't understand everything that's going on in our country. But we put

in just as much as effort as everyone else does into knowing what's going on.

(Tris)

These participants discussed other cultural stereotypes used to frame Indian Americans as perpetual foreigners and suggested that their non-South Asian American peers used these stereotypes to reinforce Whiteness and White culture as inherently American and Indian identity and culture as foreign. These stereotypes included: Indians only eat curry; Indians come to the U.S. to "steal our jobs"; Indians originate from a third world country; and Indians speak Hindu[3] and cannot speak English. They noted incidents in which non-South Asian peers cast them as "try-hards[4]" or FOBs[5] and in which White peers told Indian American youth in school to "go back to your own country" and to "speak English, you're in America." These two statements reflect a contradiction in peers' views in which they expect participants to assimilate to American culture by speaking English and yet expect them to also go back to India.

Racist and anti-foreigner views of Indian American youth were most pronounced in Ashley's and Meredith's references to their peers calling South Asian American students terrorists. Meredith recalled a conversation with her friend who talked about being called a terrorist multiple times because he was South Asian American and

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3 This reference to Hindu reflects that non-South Asians confuse the Hindu religion and the language Hindi.

4 A person who tries too hard to fit in.

5 Denotes "Fresh off the boat" a term used to describe recent immigrants to the United States

Muslim. Ashley spoke about an incident during her freshman year in which a student bullied her because, she believed, he associated her Indian American status with being a terrorist.

> I can remember one time when I was walking through the halls in high school, and I remember just walking through with my backpack, and someone looked over to me and he was like, "Hey," and I looked up and was like, "Oh hello," and I think he was a Senior, This was last year when I was a freshman, and he goes, "You better control your people because you know." I was like, "What?" He was like, "You better control your people. I mean at some point, we're going to start coming after them." I remember feeling so confused like who are you and why are you talking to me and I didn't do anything to you. I'm walking through this hallway. I've never seen you. It was kind of weird to feel like you're looking at me like this and you said it, but how many of the other people in the school are looking at me like that and just haven't said it. I've been called a terrorist and I've been called like ... I can't even remember all the names. I think terrorist is a big one that people look at me and think (Ashley).

Reflected in Ashley's encounter with this White student is the idea that in being of Indian descent, Ashley is not only a foreigner, but she belongs to a group that is a threat to American people. As recounted by Ashley, the White student saw his harassment of her as justified by the perception of Indian American people as foreign and potential terrorists. Ashley's reflection of this experience conveyed fear, lack of safety, and confusion about racial profiling and racially motivated harassment.

Hazel, Ashley, Meredith, Arabella, Tris, and Marshall were critical about perpetual foreigner and terrorist stereotypes which insinuated being from an immigrant background made them not American or even anti-American. Ashley pointed out that, "Unless you're 100% Native American, no one is truly 100% American." She and other participants pushed back against these stereotypes which they saw as limiting their opportunities in school spaces. For example, both Hazel and Ashley described incidents in kindergarten in which White girls told them they could not play with them because they had brown skin. They cited these incidents as moments or realizations that their non-South Asian American classmates would always consider them to be different. Arabella spoke about how her peers' responses to her accent and the gym incident prompted her to participate less in class and sit out of gym activities. Marshall discussed the stereotype that Indians are not athletic and recalled how a teammate bullied him after he made the football team because he was Indian. These examples demonstrate how perceptions informed by racial/ethnic stereotypes influenced participants' academic and non-academic, social schooling experiences and contributed to their social marginalization in the schooling environment.

Spelling Bee Winners: Peers' and Teachers' Stereotypes of Indian Americans as High Achievers

All of the participants spoke about their peers' and teachers' perceptions of them as academically high achieving, which they identified as a common racial stereotype of Indian Americans in school. This stereotype influenced their academic and psychological experiences. Furthermore, participants said their peers conveyed multiple stereotypical images that conflated high academic performance with their racial status. These images

framed Indian American youth as: "super high-achieving," "spelling bee winners," "Merit Scholars[6] on the PSAT, Honor award recipients, A+ students with high GPAs," and Gifted and Talented (GT) or Advanced Placement (AP) students. The "high achieving" stereotype regarding their academic achievements also shaped others' expectations for their future careers. Tris, Meredith, and Ashley all noted that teachers and their peers expected Indian American, South Asian American, and Asian American youth to pursue careers as "doctors, engineers, or lawyers." Meredith explained that that most non-Indian Americans stereotyped Indians as high achievers.

> Not like I'm saying White people. In general, all the Americans. They just think we're supposed to be up there trying really hard, because we are up there. We're always the engineers and the doctors and get paid a lot, and we're always the ones in the higher classes in school. (Meredith)

Meredith's quote suggests a link between being an academic high achiever and being a doctor or engineer. As a result, the stereotype of being academically high achieving may be linked to the stereotype of Indian Americans pursuing STEM-related jobs such as doctors or engineers.

While the high achieving stereotype may, initially, appear flattering or beneficial, participants revealed the complex and sometimes negative implications of this stereotype. First, being seen as "super smart" placed exceedingly difficult pressures on some participants to succeed academically. These pressures seemed greatest on Meredith, Hazel, Tris, and Ashley. They did, in fact, appear to be more academically successful

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6 Those who score in the top 1% on the PSAT are considered for this award.

than many of their peers. However, they explained that the stereotype made them feel pressured to continually improve their academic performances. They felt the high achieving stereotype encouraged them, their peers, and their teachers to compare their academic achievement not to that of their peers but to an abstract and unachievable standard. When I asked Hazel if she would describe herself as a high achiever, she said, "I guess so, I kinda feel like I've put my goals too high, I guess you could say." When I asked her how that made her feel she replied,

> At times when you don't achieve it, for example if you want an A on a test and you end up getting a C on test, like I'll feel bad, like I'll be like, "Oh wow, really stupid." And I'll feel bad about it. Yeah, for the most part. (Hazel)

Hazel indicated that her goals might be too high and even unattainable at times. She did note, in other conversations, that she set high academic goals for herself, in part, because she felt pressured to keep up with her Indian American peers or extended family members, and her quotes suggests that when she did not meet these goals, she condemned herself. Her choice of words, "really stupid," implies that she defined herself partly based on her academic performance.

The high-achieving stereotype also made these four girls feel they had to achieve all As in difficult classes in order to be perceived as smart. For example, Tris seemed to place importance on peers' perceptions of her as intelligent, which resulted in her struggling to ask for help.

> Like I feel like there's no way out of it. Like when I'm struggling. With the AP class or with school related thing I feel like who do I talk to now. Because I don't want to sound dumb... it's been a lot of my personal thoughts of trying to be high-

achieving. I've never had counselors push me towards that. My counselors have never been like that but yeah. But I feel like that kind of contributes to my struggle to ask for help. Because it's hard for me to—I kind of tell myself "why don't I know this." And it's kind of surrounded by people who already know it and maybe I should just figure it out on my own. And maybe I don't know it creates this mental struggle while I'm trying to figure it out because I'm stressed out like I don't know how to figure it out and you just get really panicked and everything. (Tris)

It is likely that the high achieving stereotype and Tris's desire to be perceived as smart contributed to her difficulties in asking for help with schoolwork when she needed it. It also appears that the combination of these factors added to her stress and anxiety about school.

All four girls described intense stress and anxiety associated with trying to fulfill others' expectations that they academically achieve at high levels. Ashley's and Meredith's stress and anxiety seemed to come from their parental expectations. Meredith expressed frustration when describing her parents' perception that "A "B" is bad to them. Why? I tried my best. Sometimes I feel like they expect so much." It appears that Meredith believed her parents' expectations did not account for her best efforts if they were not satisfied with the outcome.

Tris's and Hazel's stress and anxiety seemed to come from perceived pressure from peers and teachers to always perform at a high level. Hazel described the emotional toll of feeling like she under-performed.

At times, yeah, I'll be like, I could've done better. Like, now that I look back to last year, sophomore year, I'm just like, if I had studied a little bit harder I think I would've gotten better grades. I could've actually done it, like, you know. And it kinda makes me feel bad. And also when you hear like, for example, next year, they're ranking us based on our GPA, and it's even worse 'cause you're just like, now you're gonna be ranked, now you have to, now you're labeled by a number, now you're just like, oh now you have to be like, oh I have to make sure I get a higher GPA than this kid or this kid, and you kinda push it a little too far. Like, I feel like I push myself too much, like if my friends get like, let's say they get a A in a class and I end up getting a B, I'll be mad at myself. And my friends will be like, that's fine, you tried your best, you do you just don't care about anybody else, I'm like, I wish I could, but I can't though. And my parents are really chill about it, which is a nice thing. (Hazel)

Hazel's quote displays several negative emotions such as regret, feeling bad about, and angry with herself. She was aware of how her academic performance and class rank were used to reduce her personhood to just a number, and competition with her peers over grades seemed to foster some of the negative emotions she expressed towards herself.

The high achieving stereotype did not seem to psychologically affect Arabella, George, and Marshall as much as the other participants. All three participants acknowledged their peers' perceptions of Indian American youth as high academic achievers and they too, appeared to be academically successful compared to their peers. Marshall even suggested the importance of being perceived as smart when telling me he

wanted peers to consider him as a "nerd jock[7]." None of these participants seemed to exhibit the same consuming stress and anxiety about being academically successful in school as the other participants in this study. Arabella indicated that she had stress and anxiety in school because of her move from regular to GT classes in which she struggled to keep up with quick pace of learning. Arabella explained "In the regular classes you study one topic for three days, in GT class, you study four or five topics a day." Even then, she noted, "I am stressed, but that does not stop me from having fun or anything."

Marshall also seemed to exhibit less anxiety than some other participants because he was able to carve out stress free spaces in school, at home, and in his community. In his interviews, he shared photographs of only spaces that he designated as stress free: the football field, the playground, and the school bus. His photos indicated that he coped with academic stress, at least in part, by focusing on the positive aspects of his school, home, and community.

George, on the other hand, was most unlike the other participants in how he handled school stress and anxiety. He was the only participant who described himself as: "lazy all the time," "procrastinates a lot," and "loves sleeping." When I asked him if he was hard working academically, he said, "If I choose. I mean, it's like I choose to be lazy sometimes because I know I can do better, but I just choose to be lazy and slack off." George's description of himself suggests a cavalier attitude towards school and that he did not have feel the same pressure as some of the other participants to be always be academically high achieving in school. George, however, indicated that he applied

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7 Someone who was talented in academics and athletics.

himself more in his favorite subjects. Specifically, he aspired to be, and was an A student in mathematics because, as he said, "after high school, I want to do something with finance, and finance, it has a lot of numbers in it, and math can really help." It is also possible that he put more effort into mathematics than other classes because it was his favorite subject. He explained, "I just love numbers. It's fun. It's like puzzles." George may not have experienced the same pressure to be always be academically high achieving as other participants because he did not choose to excel in **every** subject. Ultimately, participants' accounts demonstrate how perceptions of their academic abilities as advanced or exceptional influenced their academic and non-academic, social schooling experiences as well as their psychological well-being.

Nerds and Girls with Glasses and Two Braids in Their Hair: High Achieving Stereotype and Indian Americans' Non-Academic Schooling Experiences

While the high achieving stereotype had academic and psychological implications for the participants, it also influenced their non-academic, social experiences in school. Hazel, Arabella, Meredith, and George discussed how the stereotype positioned most Indian American youth as "nerds" at Forest Preserves High. These participants explained that the high achieving stereotype led their peers to think they only cared about the academic and not non-academic, social aspects of school although all of them were involved in sports, cultural clubs, or Class Board[8]. They felt the nerd perception rendered

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8 A student government club for Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior classes respectively that works with the Student Government Association to determine school sanctioned events.

them invisible in the broader school environment. Tris noted that "it would be hard" to be noticed in school if she was not a part of Class Board because of the high achieving stereotype. Likewise, Hazel told me about how the Indian and Asian students were the "smarty AP kids, or I guess you'd call them the nerds" in school suggesting that they were only known in school for their academic performance and not their participation in non-academic, social activities.

These youth seemed to cope with their social invisibility in school by participating in South Asian Club. Tris, Arabella, Hazel, Meredith, and George talked about the ease they felt in sharing a school space with other Indian American and South Asian American youth. George described differences between how he felt in South Asian Club compared to other spaces in school.

> I feel more similarities between the people in the South Asian Club cause they're all my skin color and they're all Indian but outside that club it's like everyone's different and even though everyone's treated equally, they are different. No matter how hard you try to make them equal, they're so different. (George)

George's quote infers he may have had a harder time finding similarities with peers from different cultures and backgrounds than he did with other Indian Americans and South Asian Americans. Hazel also said she "loved" the South Asian Club, in part, because she shared similarities with her same-ethnic peers.

> It's kind of nice how you go somewhere and you see people that you can actually relate to. You can talk to them about funny things. Because basically you guys can relate on a lot of different concepts and stuff. (Hazel)

Participants' membership in South Asian Club and the similarities they experienced with same-ethnic peers may have helped them cope with social marginalization in school as a result of being known only for their academic performances. It also seems that the similarities among South Asian Americans youth helped them "celebrate" their culture without the pressure of the high achieving or nerd stereotypes.

While participants at Forest Preserves High discussed the nerd perception and the difficulty of being noticed outside of academics, participants at Mountain Springs High had different experiences. Ashley acknowledged that the high achieving stereotype was connected to the social perception of Indian American youth as nerds. When I asked her if Indian American and Asian American students were only noticed in school because they were academically high achieving she said, "Yeah. Definitely." Unlike the other study participants, however, Ashley explicitly resisted the nerd perception.

> I think people see that I ... I think the stereotype is I don't know go to school with two braids in my hair and I don't have glasses and I'm not in all GT AP classes so I think for me, people look at me and they say, "Oh well she's always going shopping and she gets her nails done and she is straightening her hair. (Ashley)

Ashley implied that because she did not dress conservatively, was not enrolled in all advanced courses, and did not singularly focus on schoolwork, she did not fit in the nerd category. However, Ashley recognized that her lack of modesty, lack of conservatism, and her academic performances that are not typically associated with Indian Americans garnered different opinions from her Friends of Color and White peers. She believed that her Friends of Color, including Indian Americans, classified her as "whitewashed" because of her choices.

I honestly think my Indian friends would say that which is kind of funny because it's maybe White people don't want to classify me as this, but my other friends of color if anything are the ones who are saying, "Oh you're so whitewashed." Maybe it's because they want to see you embracing your color because they don't want to feel like you're trying to get away from that... (Ashley)

Ashley seemed to believe that her Friends of Color saw her choices as moving away from her Indian culture and towards White culture. Interestingly, she expressed that her White friends, on the other hand, saw her as "so Indian."

I think if one of my friends was asking, "I don't want to offend you, but it's funny; you don't seem like the typical Indian yet you're so in love with the culture- (Ashley)

What do you think she meant by "the typical Indian"? (Caroline)

I think she meant like again like I'm not so super studious and I'm not stuck in my room all the time studying and I don't get straight A's. I don't eat Indian food every single day so I think for her it was why is that? Why do you feel the need to always express that? I said, "I think it's because I don't want people to feel like I'm getting away from my culture because I love being Indian. I love our dresses and our weddings and our food and just our culture and our language, and I don't want to get away from that, but of course being in a country for so long... but I think it's just me embracing my American identity, but also I love to embrace the Indian identity. (Ashley)

Ashley's understanding of how her Indian American and non-Indian American peers perceived her suggests that the high achieving and nerd stereotypes are tied to racial

framings of Indian American people in the U.S. Her discussion with her White friend reflected the perception that the "typical" Indian is one who is academically high achieving and spends all her time in her room doing schoolwork. Ashley also indicated that she had difficulties balancing her Indian and American identities amongst her peers.

Marshall, alternatively, was the only participant in the study who did not discuss the nerd perception at all in our interviews. The reason for the lack of discussion is not entirely clear but may have had to do with his lack of concern regarding others' perceptions of him being Indian.

> Cause I live by the code that I don't need to join a club or I don't need to show people that I'm Indian. If they ask me about it, sure I'll tell them, but it's not for me to go around saying that, "Hey I'm Indian. Tell me this, tell me that. Ask me this, ask me that." (Marshall)

Marshall's quote seems to indicate that his Indian identity was not essential to his schooling experiences and as a result, he did not view his schooling experiences through a racial/ethnic lens.

Discussion

When viewing participants' understandings of their peers' and teachers' perceptions through the lens of the conceptual framework, three important themes emerge: 1) the role of the perpetual foreigner and terrorist perceptions on racial framings of Indian American youth; 2) the role of power in participants conforming to or resisting the high achieving stereotype in their academic performance; 3) and participants' power to create spaces that helped them cope with the social implications of the nerd stereotype.

Racial Framings of Indian American Youth in School

All of the participants discussed how their non-Indian American peers' employed racial stereotypes of Indian Americans as perpetual foreigners and terrorists. Their accounts suggest that these racial framings existed at the intersections of their race, ethnicity, skin color, class, gender, nationality, and language and positioned participants and other South Asian American youth as unassimilable, anti-American, and unsuitable for full inclusion into American society. Notably, participants' explanations of these perceptions revealed racist depictions of Indian Americans that run contrary to the model minority framing of this population. Participants' accounts also suggested a connection between the perpetual foreigner stereotype and prominent cultural stereotypes of Indian Americans. These stereotypes position Indian American students as perpetual outsiders because they reinforce Whiteness and White culture as inherently American and Indian identity and culture as foreign and anti-American. They suggest that because Indian people come from a "third world" country, they are unworthy of citizenship in a "first world" country like the United States; because they have a non-White immigrant ancestry, they are taking away jobs from true Americans; and because their English is spoken with an undesirable accent, it is an affront to American spoken English. The anti-American racial framing of Indian Americans was further reflected in Ashley's descriptions of her peers calling her a terrorist and a White peer's racial harassment of her in the school hallway. This racial framing of Indian Americans as terrorists, which positions them as threats to American society and, thus, unsuitable for full inclusion reflects White supremacist views of who can and cannot be American.

These participants' accounts of the perpetual foreigner stereotype and the terrorist moniker corroborate research on how racist stereotypes negatively impact Indian American and South Asian American youth's schooling experiences (Lee, Park, Wong, 2017; Maira, 2004; Saran, 2007; Tumalla-Nara, Deshpande, & Kaur, 2016). Their discussions of their schooling experiences indicated that their peers, particularly non-immigrant students, policed the boundaries of insiders and outsiders and who is assimilable —in both theory and practice. Peers' views of these Indian and Indian American participants as unassimilable may have been used to justify excluding them from certain social and academic activities in school. Ultimately, these stereotypes unveil how broader societal racism and xenophobia directed at non-White, immigrant peoples in the United States inform others' perceptions of and actions towards Indian American youth in school.

Conforming or Resisting the High Achieving Stereotype

Participants discussed the high achieving stereotype as a prominent racial framing of Indian American youth. Hazel, Arabella, George, Meredith, Tris, and Ashley said their peers conveyed multiple stereotypical images that conflated high academic performance with their racial status. Existing research has established the connection between the model minority stereotype and racial framings of Indian Americans (Asher, 2002; Tumalla-Nara, Sathasivam-Ruekert, 2016). As Asher (2002) explained, the model minority stereotype intertwines with racialized and ethnic perceptions of Indian Americans and subsequently impacts their "academic achievement, career choice, and professional path" (p. 269). Existing research also suggests that most Indian American students conform to the high-achieving stereotype resulting in their feeling burdened by

how the stereotype informs their academic performance (Asher, 2002; Tumalla-Nara,

Sathasivam-Ruekert, 2016). Findings discussed in this chapter supported this existing

research as Tris, Hazel, Ashley, and Meredith indicated they conformed to the stereotype

and experienced stress and anxiety as a result. It is possible that they conformed because

their parents also expected them to be academically high achieving. Experiencing this

expectation in both home and school, these participants may have felt like they had no

other option but to conform.

Findings in this chapter depart from existing literature on South Asian American

and Indian American youth in that study participants did not only define or value solely

as high achieving in the school context. Their stories are important because they show

that Indian American youth do not only define themselves by their academic

performances, but rather, they exert human agency in choosing when and how they focus

on their academic goals. Arabella, George, and Marshall may have felt empowered to

resist the high academic achieving stereotype at times because their parents did not

necessarily expect them to always excel academically. Since they did not experience the

high achieving stereotype in multiple spaces, they might not have felt constant pressure to

conform to the stereotype. Interestingly, study participants' resistance to or rejection of

the normative view of Indian Americans as high achievers resonates with Willis's (1977)

"lads" and "earoles" as well as Shankar's (2011) "FOBS" and "Desis."

Power Dynamics and Dealing with Invisibility in School

Notably, all of the study participants except Marshall connected the high

achieving stereotype to their non-academic, social experiences in school. While most of

the current literature focuses on the implications of this stereotype on Indian American

youth's academic and classroom experiences (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Kao, 1995; Tummala-Narra, Saran, 2007; Sathasivam-Ruekert, 2016), this chapter's findings revealed how the high achieving stereotype contributed to peers' perceptions of Indian Americans as nerds and rendered them invisible in terms of many non-academic and social dimensions of school.

Participants dealt with their school invisibility in various ways and their actions provide important insights into: 1) who can create and contribute to space in school and 2) why individuals choose to contribute to this space. Most participants' accounts suggested that peers and teachers mostly recognized Indian American youth for their academic contributions in school. Participants' membership in South Asian Club implies that interacting with their same-ethnic peers was a means of coping with their marginalization and invisibility in school. In the South Asian Club, they shared similar experiences with other Indian American and South Asian American students which may have helped them feel they could be more than nerds or high academic achievers in school. Participants' accounts also implied that they valued this club because they could express their ethnic traditions and interests without concern that they would be viewed in deficit-oriented ways. Their conversations about invisibility in the larger school environment and participation in this cultural club also supports existing research on the importance of immigrant youth-created spaces that value their cultures and help them cope with their alienation in school (Tokunaga, 2011; 2016).

CHAPTER SEVEN: PERCEPTIONS OF INDIAN AMERICANS IN HOME AND COMMUNITY

In this chapter I address the second part of my first research question examining how participants understood others' perceptions of them in their homes and communities. I also address my second research question and discuss how others' perceptions of the participants as Indian American youth and spaces in which these perceptions were present are related. This chapter unfolds into five sections. The first, "Just Be All You Can and Enjoy Your Life" explains how some participants' parents expected them to do academically well in school but also valued social activities in school. The second, "I Have to be the Perfect Person," describes how some parents held the expectation that their children should be high academic achievers. The third, "Unbreakable Bond," discusses participants' understandings of their neighborhood friends' and church members' perceptions of them. The fourth section, "Expected to Live a Different Way," examines why others' perceptions of participants did not appear to be present across home, school, and community spaces. The final section applies the conceptual framework to the findings to uncover the interplay of structures and cultures on parents' expectations; the importance of participants' intersectional identity expression with their neighborhood peers and church members in participants' communities; and how participants culturally "code-switched" when they encountered different perceptions in home, school, and community.

Just Be All You Can and Enjoy Your Life: Parents' Flexible Schooling Expectations

Hazel, Arabella, Marshall, and George explained that their parents supported them in academic and sociocultural school matters. According to these four participants,

their parents expected them to try their best in school but did not expect them to earn all A's or to only enroll in AP courses. For example, Arabella said her father told her, "you need to really calm down. Don't study so much. It's fine if you don't get an A, it's fine if you don't get a B, it's fine if [you get] a C." Similarly, Marshall described his parents' expectations as "Just make sure to get good grades...Just get a good education." All four participants also said their parents were flexible and open to their career interests and continually reminded them to be happy, stress-free adolescents. For example, Arabella noted her parents telling her, "Don't take AP classes and stress yourself out." Likewise, George explained that his father did not "expect all A's from me or anything." These participants reported that their also parents encouraged them to participate in social activities in school including extracurricular activities, dances, and spending time with friends. In an effort to understand these participants' accounts of their parents' expectations, I focus on two themes: 1) the role of generational openness and trust on parents' expectations of their children and 2) the role of these expectations on participants' schooling experiences.

When I asked participants why their parents expressed flexibility with their academic and career interests, they described their grandparents' openness and support to their parents' career interests. For example, Hazel explained that, regarding her parents, her grandparents took the position that "you can do what you want," and her parents took the same position with her. She explained, "they're not like, oh you have to be engineer or doctor, like they're, 'Go do what you want, and you'll be fine.' Yeah, so they're very open about it." Likewise, George explained his paternal and maternal grandparents did not pressure his father and mother into certain career paths, and his parents wanted the same

for him. In fact, George noted that his parents expressed support for his decision to pursue a career in finance if it "made him happy the way he wanted to be happy."

The study participants also noted that their parents provided allowed them to participate in the non-academic and social aspects of school because of established trust between them and their parents. Participants described some of these non-academic and social aspects related to school as having their own social media accounts, spending time with friends outside of school, and participating in extracurricular activities. Marshall felt his parents gave him freedom because he spent time with his parents in ways that other Indian American and Asian American youth did not.

> I spend time with [my parents] more often, so they give me more freedom to do whatever I want. But they also give me restrictions that I have to obey. But the other kids, especially Asians, I feel like they spend so much time improving their academic life, they don't spend a quality family time with each other, and so I feel like that plays a big role in this. (Marshall)

Marshall's quote expresses a belief that the focus on academic achievement did not allow some Indian American and Asian American youth to spend quality time with their families that fostered trust between parents and children.

According to Marshall, Hazel, Arabella and George, their parents encouraged them to participate in the social aspects of school such as dances or attending parties with friends from school because they trusted their children would act in accordance with their basic expectations. According to the participants, these expectations included: "do not do drugs or drink alcohol," "do not date" meaning their parents did not want them to enter into a committed relationship with another teenager, keep your grades up by putting in

your best effort, and "be respectful of others." Because participants met these expectations and had open communication with their parents, they were allowed to attend school dances and be on sports teams.

Parents' flexible expectations also seemed to help participants feel less stressed about their academic performance and made it easier for them to seek support from their parents regarding school. For example, Arabella discussed how she confided in her parents about her stress regarding AP classes and her parents responded by saying, "regular classes were perfectly fine" and she could "go back to regular." Likewise, George discussed how he could talk to his father about "schoolwork and teachers" and when he talked to his father about how his government class stressed him out, his father responded with "just try to do everything on time and don't worry about the grade that much." Similarly, parents' flexible academic expectations and value on non-academic school activities helped participants pursue their passions and pursuits in school. For example, Hazel described how important playing the violin was to her and Arabella discussed how much she loved taking art classes in school. Similarly, both George and Marshall participated in sports. These activities seemed to help these participants cope with their academic responsibilities.

Ultimately, Arabella's, Hazel's, George's, and Marshall's accounts showed that their parents had flexible academic and career expectations of them in which their parents expected good grades but not all A's and allowed them to choose career paths based on their interests. Their accounts also revealed that their parents allowed them to partake in non-academic and social activities in school which helped them cope with their academic pressures.

I Have to Be the Perfect Person: Parents' High Academic Schooling Expectations

Unlike Arabella, Hazel, George and Marshall, Meredith, Tris, and Ashley reported that their parents held higher academic and career expectations for them. These girls described their parents' academic expectations as "getting all A's," "finishing high school with a certain kind of [high] GPA," and getting college credits during their senior year of high school. They also reported that their parents expected them to pursue high status, high paying jobs. For example, Tris explained, "My parents are also like, be a doctor, engineer, or lawyer or something as high paid." Likewise, Meredith believed her parents encouraged well-paying careers so she could be "stable" without their financial help. To make sense of these parents' expectations, I focus on two themes: 1) the role of difficult immigrant experiences on parents' high academic and career expectations and 2) the role of these expectations on participants' schooling experiences.

Meredith, Tris, and Ashley believed their parents expectations were influenced by the employment difficulties they experienced upon immigrating to the U.S. Tris discussed how her father worked different jobs before finding stable employment as a state correctional officer. Meredith explained that both her parents struggled for a couple of years to find stable jobs in the U.S.

> They had really good jobs in India, not India, Dubai. And then they came here, but my mom had to take a lot of tests, because she was a pharmacist, and she had to learn all the new medicines and things. That was really hard for her because she graduated a long time ago, right? So, it's hard for her to review all those things. But she eventually got a job, but it took her two years to finally get a job. And that was here, that's when we came here. And then my dad found a job. He worked in

those retail stores first, and then he became a manager... He's not really happy

with it (Meredith)

As a recent immigrant, Meredith's mother experienced difficulties securing stable, well-paying work in the U.S. although she was a licensed pharmacist in India. Meredith also noted that her father did not finish college and his difficulties finding a job in the U.S. influenced his high academic expectations for her because "he regrets not doing something in college. And so, he doesn't want that to happen to me."

Similarly to Meredith, Ashley referenced her paternal grandparents' and mother's immigration stories when discussing her parents' high academic and career expectations. Ashley's paternal grandfather worked "multiple jobs in order to support the family" when they immigrated to the U.S. in 1984. Likewise, Ashley's mother, a practicing dentist in India, attended dental school again at New York University to be credentialed as a dentist in the U.S. She also discussed her mother's experiences of discrimination in acquiring a job as a dentist in the U.S. and how these experiences informed her parents' academic expectations of her.

Ashley explained, "patients would come [to my mom] and be like, 'I don't want you. I want the White dentist.'" Ashley further explained how these discriminatory experiences informed her parents' schooling expectations.

[My mother] went to NYU and did it all over again. When my mom and my dad,

and my mom saw how much hard it was being Indian, in a country that ...

Because this was I think the 90s. That was still back when, being from a different

country, that was still kind of ... She was like, I have to work so much harder, and

if you get a job, it's gonna be hard if you don't get a job like medicine where you

can easily find, there is a lot of jobs for medicine, because you are so qualified.

That was something where they were like, I don't want you to struggle, not only

because the job isn't stable, but because you are not like everyone else. (Ashley)

Ashley indicated that her parents understood how discrimination against Indian people in

the U.S. could present challenges for her acquiring a stable job therefore resulting in their

attempts to guide her career interests. Her quotes further suggest that her parents guided

her towards the medical profession because they believed there was an abundance of jobs

in that field. They also seemingly believed that the high educational credentials required

of doctors or dentists would help her chances at securing a high paying job.

Ashley's, Tris's, and Meredith's explanations reveal difficult immigrant

experiences that are not commonly associated with Indians in the U.S. Most mainstream

American perceptions of Indians suggest that they come to America as highly educated,

highly paid professionals mostly in the medical or technology sectors. However, Ashley

and Meredith's stories in particular, complicated these mainstream perceptions. They

revealed how their parents lived with other family members because they did not have

enough money to support their family, how they had to go to school again in order to be

licensed professionals in the U.S., and how they often worked low-income jobs (e.g.

pharmacy tech) or were unemployed due to policies that did not observe their educational

credentials to be on par with American educational credentials. These girls' accounts

importantly show that some Indian immigrants struggle in the U.S. in order to establish a

stable life for their families and not **all** Indians experience financial and job success in the

U.S.

While Meredith, Tris, and Ashley connected their parents' academic expectations to their immigration experiences, they also explained that their parents' academic expectations caused them stress and anxiety regarding school. All three girls described reluctance to tell their parents when they did not get all A's. Ashley attributed her anxiety to the fear of letting her parents down and not meeting expectations. As she described,

> I've sat in my room and just been like, I have too many expectations ... I have to be this perfect person. It's what if I don't reach everyone's expectations? I feel like I take that on more than ... For them I think it's just one talk, but for me it's I'm disappointing everyone. I'm not working hard enough to what I should be. That's something that's really stressed me out and caused me so much stress, at the point I don't even tell my parents when I have a test because I'm so scared like, if I get a bad grade they'll be so disappointed. That's something that's really prevalent.
> (Ashley)

Ashley appeared to interpret her parents' expectations as the need to achieve perfection, and not meeting this goal led to negative emotions such as stress and disappointment in herself. It appears that she incorporated her academic ability into her identity and perhaps felt inadequate when she did not meet those expectations.

Meredith, Tris, and Ashley also recognized that their parents' intense focus on academic achievement may have limited their participation in non-academic social activities in school. They did not have the same freedom as the other four study participants to shape and choose their schooling experiences. This relative lack of freedom appeared connected to their parents' focus on academics. Tris aptly explained

how her parents limited her participation in extracurricular activities as she entered high

school.

> I remember [my parents] were like, "Aren't you going to have a lot of stress in
>
> high school," and I was like "I guess." I don't know but [dance] was still
>
> something I wanted to do but… and I guess I understand why they said that. But I
>
> didn't have anything else other than school to worry about. But I wish when I
>
> came back from school I just had like some sport or something to take my mind
>
> off of it and things, and I guess that's sort of the things that I do in church. (Tris)

Tris's quote shows how extracurricular activities could have relieved some of the

pressure she felt regarding academics because it might have taken her mind off of

schoolwork. In attempting to alleviate her stress by limiting her involvement

extracurricular activities, her parents may not have considered that participation in these

activities could have helped Tris to destress.

Therefore, Tris's, Meredith's, and Ashley's accounts revealed parents strict

academic expectations for them to achieve all A's, be enrolled in AP classes, and pursue

high paying and high status jobs. These participants believed that their parents held these

expectations as a result of difficult immigration experiences reported that the

expectations caused them stress and anxiety in school and in some cases limited their

participation in the non-academic, social aspects of school.

Unbreakable Bond: Neighborhood Peers' and Ethnoreligious Community Members' Perceptions

Unlike their descriptions of school and home, participants said only positive

things about their communities. As discussed in previous chapters, participants described

their communities differently in that Marshall, Meredith, George, and Hazel described their communities as their residential neighborhoods while Ashley, Tris, and Arabella described their communities as their churches. Their descriptions of their communities suggest that these places were sites of cultural implacement because they embraced these spaces and shared positive aspects of interacting with their peers and community members. Likewise, they shared how these spaces allowed them to feel a sense of "at homeness" due to sharing similar values, beliefs, and traditions associated with being Indian, American, Christian youth. In this section, I focus on two important aspects of community as articulated by participants: 1) racial diversity in their neighborhoods and 2) ethno-religious solidarity in their churches.

Only Marshall and George provided in-depth conversations of their neighborhoods as sites of cultural implacement. In both of their interviews, they appeared to value racial diversity, and this value surfaced in relationship to their perceptions of their neighborhoods. Their descriptions of their neighborhoods and their experiences in them often reflected appreciation for interactions among youth of different genders, ages, and racial backgrounds. For example, Marshall described the time he spent with neighborhood friends as "pretty nice actually because we were, uh, having fun. We were just joking around. We were interacting with each other in a positive way." Likewise, George expressed, "anybody could play" and in reference to openness and acceptance of his neighborhood friends noted that "everyone is pretty nice."

Marshall said his neighborhood friends came from a variety of racial backgrounds and accepted each other. He felt "safe around them and they feel safe around me. And I feel like it's a safe environment." Marshall also described his neighborhood as one of the

few spaces in which he could forget about school-related stressors and just be himself. Likewise, George shared stories of playing with friends in his neighborhood and how youth of different genders, races, and ages often met in a field between the houses to play together. When I asked George if people ever fought, he said, "Yeah, sometimes there's cussing at each other. But it doesn't really last that long, because everyone wants to play outside, so everyone just keeps calm."

George and Marshall noted that they regularly spent time with their friends in their neighborhood but did not see their neighborhood friends in school as regularly. Marshall identified the school bus as one of the few school-related spaces where he interacted with neighborhood friends. George said because he took higher-level courses and his two close neighborhood friends of different racial backgrounds took regular courses, they never had overlapping classes or lunch periods. These boys' accounts suggest that tracking contributed to racial segregation in school, a circumstance that is well documented in educational research (Gandara & Orfield, 2012; Moody, 2001; Oakes, 1985)

While George and Marshall expressed how the safety and security they experienced in their neighborhoods, they, along with other participants, described how their churches also served as sites of cultural implacement because they could freely express their ethnic and religious identities in these spaces. All of the youth, except Ashley, attended Indian American churches and Tris, Arabella, Meredith, George, Hazel, and Marshall all discussed the benefits of belonging to ethnoreligious communities. Their churches represented extended families in which they did not experience judgment or feel markedly different from their peers. In fact, Arabella described Meredith, who attended

the same church as her, as her "other sister" because they both "have stuff that is [in] common" perhaps due to their racial/ethnic and religious background and Tris described feeling supported by other youth in the church when she shared her schooling experiences with them. She said, "I know the other people in my grade [at my church] are experiencing what I'm feeling. They're feeling all these like other influences and stuff. So it's kind of nice to feel that comfort with someone else." Marshall also spoke about an "unbreakable bond" with George and their other church friend, Reagan; they called themselves "the Three Musketeers." Church was a space in which these youth could develop same-ethnic friendships that appear to have helped them cope with difficult schooling experiences, such as social marginalization.

Church also allowed participants to express their identities as Indian American **and** Christian. All of the youth indicated the importance of Christian religious practices in their lives. For example, Marshall described feeling a "void" if he did not attend church on Sunday. Likewise, George said he "followed the rules of Christianity" and attempted to be "nice to everyone, follow the commandments, and the culture." Arabella also talked about her spirituality and stated, "God has always helped me."

Participants explained that being Indian American and Christian was different from being Indian American and of a different religious background. For example, Ashley and Tris noted different traditions between Indian American Hindus, Muslims, and Christians. However, they both explained that in school non-South Asian Americans peers saw South Asians as culturally monolithic but in different ways. Ashley discussed how she was mistaken as Muslim noting, "even though I'm not Muslim, I'm looked at [by school peers] as if I am... My skin color is brown so obviously I'm affiliated with that."

Tris also discussed peers use of a cultural stereotype that "all Indians are Hindu." Participants also described how being Indian and Christian was different from being of a different racial/ethnic background and Christian. Ashley described how "being of color and Christian" helped her understand the racial and religious discrimination present in the Muslim travel ban enacted by the Trump administration in ways that her White, Christian friends did not.

Church was a place where participants could express their complex identities as Indian, American, and Christian without encountering stereotypes of Indian Americans. It was also a place where they could celebrate and practice their cultural traditions and experience acceptance amongst their peers and other church members in ways that they did not experience in school spaces. Both their churches and their neighborhoods were places of cultural implacement for the participants because they were surrounded by others who had positive perceptions of their racial/ethnic and religious identities. These communities encouraged and allowed for the youth to express multiple aspects of themselves without feeling "othered" or devalued.

Expected to Live a Different Way: The Relationship Between Others' Perceptions of Indian American Youth and Home, School, and Community

In this section I respond to my second research question and examine how others' perceptions of the participants as Indian American youth and spaces in which these perceptions were present are related and how these relationships influence participants' schooling experiences. Some participants identified how their parents and ethnic community members shared similar expectations. No participant, however, identified a perception that they experienced in all three contexts of home, school, and community.

Following, I examine participants' discussions of similarities in parents' and ethnic community members' expectations of participants. I also provide explanations for why participants may have not reported a perception that they experienced across home, school, and community.

Only Arabella and George noted similarities between their parents' expectations at home and their ethnic community members' expectations at church. One such similarity was that their parents and their fellow church congregants expected them to observe Indian and Christian cultural practices in both spaces. For example, Arabella noted the consistency between her parents' and her church congregants' expectations and pointed out that they both reflected Christian beliefs. She noted, "community is more like home for me. And then church is like whatever my dad says, my mom says, is the same thing the church says. That's my community, so I think it's the same." George also discussed similarities between church and home and how his parents' and fellow congregants' expectations were different from peers' and teachers' perceptions of Indian Americans at school. George expressed, he was "more Indian at church than school" because "there's more use of my own, our language and the clothing they wear, the food we eat." He also noted, "at home, I'm not American [even] a little bit. I'm full, 100% Indian with my parents...I talk in my native language to my parents...I have Indian food." His quotes suggest that similar Indian cultural observances in his home and church resulted in similarities between the two spaces while school was distinct from these two spaces because it seemed to prioritize American culture.

While Arabella and George talked about similarities between their homes and their ethnic communities, none of the participants identified a particular perception that

they experienced across the home, school, and community contexts. This lack of reported overlap may be because they acknowledged a potential connection between home and community due to both spaces reflecting their Indian and Christian cultures and beliefs and school reflecting their American culture and beliefs. Arabella, Marshall, George, Ashley and Hazel identified different norms and rules for behavior in each space and suggested they adapted their actions accordingly. For example, Ashley discussed how she did not interact with her youth group peers in school because they're "a lot more social in the sense that they're more popular, they play sports, so I think I see them and I see who they hang out with, and it's so different from when I see them at youth group." She explained that she was "very open about being Christian in school whereas they may not be, so I don't want to put them in that awkward place of, 'Oh I saw you at youth yesterday,' and then their friends have no idea." Ashley suggested that her youth group peers behaved differently at school than in church because they hung out with different people and participated in different activities in the two contexts. She also implied that in church they could openly share their religious beliefs but did not feel that same openness in school.

George, Marshall, Arabella, and Hazel also discussed differences between spaces when explaining "being Indian" at home and in the community and "being American" at school. Their insights suggest that White students and teachers set the school culture because they acknowledged pressure to shed their ethnic expression and conform to White norms, behaviors, and modes of communication in school. As noted earlier, George said he was more Indian at home and in his community than in school. Marshall also noted differences in what it meant to be Indian at home and at school.

Being Indian at home, I feel like there's more responsibilities upon you. I feel like

you're supposed to act a certain way while you're Indian at home... I don't think

being Indian makes much of a difference at all in my school community. My

friends treat me like I'm a normal guy. They don't see any ethnicity at all, cause

I'm so different from what you would call a normal Indian. (Marshall)

Unlike other participants, Marshall's quote suggests that his friends treated him like a

"normal guy" because he did not show his Indian culture in school but presumably

observed American culture. Marshall went on to describe a "normal Indian" as "an Indian

person in school [who] would interact with more Indian people, rather than interact with

people with different races."

Interestingly, Marshall described how his teachers also treated him differently

because he was "so different from other Indians that are around school, 'cause I act

differently. Especially my accent, 'cause my teachers say I don't have an Indian accent."

Marshall further explained that "I don't interact with the Indian kids at school that much.

Yes I have Indian friends, but I'm not talking to them about Indian movies." When I

asked him why, he said that he had a group of racially diverse friends and did not want

them to feel excluded when he spoke about Indian culture. As he put it, "I don't like to

bring up topics that separate me and my friends, like racially or ethnicity wise."

Marshall's choice of not showing his culture or having an accent seemed to make

it easier for him to gain acceptance amongst his non-Indian peers and helped him foster

inclusivity amongst his friends. Marshall likely accepted his school's privileging of

American culture and chose to participate in these norms in order to fit in amongst his

peers and teachers. To be clear, Marshall's choice to not show his Indian culture at school is not because he was ashamed of it. Rather, he adamantly told me

> I wasn't brought up in this culture. Yeah I do follow the trends of this culture has to offer. I'm not American, I was born in India I was brought up in India so I stick to my roots, my values, my traditions and follow those rather than those of here. (Marshall)

Marshall's quote suggests that he likely followed and respected American trends while in school because it made his school life manageable but that he did not necessarily adopt these trends or traditions and incorporate them into his home or community spaces. Rather, Marshall demonstrates cultural "code switching" and perhaps knew that his academic and social success in school depended, to an extent, on his ability to display mastery of American culture.

In her interview, Arabella further supported the idea that "being Indian" had a different meaning at home than in school. Unlike Marshall however, she explicitly discussed how "unknown rules" in the school environment restricted her from expressing her Indian background. In school, she said, "you should dress as Americans do, you cannot wear a skirt, you cannot wear a sari and go to school. It's going to be so awkward." She also stated, "when you come to school, you're more like an American. You should act like how an American does in school." Arabella explained what it meant to "act American in school."

> More like your accent, more like how you talk, and the way how you talk. Americans use a lot of the hands, and movements, and that you need to get more

into that. You need to speak a lot more, you need to be more open in classrooms,

but I'm not that open, so that itself is a big thing. (Arabella)

Arabella believed there were certain "American" cultural norms in the school

environment that did not include her Indian cultural norms, and she indicated that she

changed her behavior to observe American and school-based culture and norms. Like

Marshall, Arabella understood that her academic and even social life in school to an

extent hinged on her ability to perform "American-ness" especially because, as discussed

in earlier chapters, her peers bullied her due to her known status as a recent immigrant.

Participants' accounts show they were aware of similarities and differences in

expectations and cultural norms across the home, community, and school contexts, and

the importance of observing the norms in each space to meet parents', church members',

and peers' expectations. They understood that at home, they observed their Indian and

Christian beliefs while at school they observed their American culture. In ways, they

seemed to understand that they needed to **show** that they were American in school in

order to fit in with friends and teachers.

Study participants had varying interpretations of how being Indian and Christian

at home and in community and being American in school impacted their schooling

experiences. Hazel did not seem impacted by parents' and church congregants'

expectations to be Indian and peers' and teachers' expectations to be American because

she described herself as the "same person" across home, school, and community. She did

not appear to feel the need to change her behavior as she traversed these spaces. Unlike

Hazel, Ashley and George and Marshall and Arabella experienced different impacts from

code-switching in home, school, and community

George and Ashley seemed uncomfortable with neglecting aspects of their dynamic and complex identities in particular spaces. For example, George explained that it was "very hard to be part of two cultures" because he was "getting more used to the American culture but it's harder cause I'm getting away from the Indian culture." When I asked George if he thought he could merge Indian and American culture, he said he had "one foot in one and then one foot in the other." He did not describe his bicultural identity in more detail but it is possible that he might have felt exhausted by trying to fulfill different expectations respectively related to being American and Indian.

Likewise, Ashley described how her parents encouraged her to "keep the [Indian] culture" and "remember who [she was]." However, as discussed in the previous chapter, Ashley described experiencing borderland identity because she felt her Indian American friends viewed her as "whitewashed" while her non-Indian American friends viewed her as "so Indian." This inconsistency in her ascribed social identity across home and school seemed to cause Ashley confusion and feelings of cultural displacement.

> I think even now, going to school, being Indian like I have to be a certain way, because I'm not supposed to be like [non-Indian people]. Being born in America, I've been really Americanized, that almost took some of who I am. People don't think that I'm truly Indian. It's like, I'm not like the white kids, I'm not like the Indian kids, what am I supposed to be? That's been something that's like, I'm not like everyone else. (Ashley)

Ashley's quote suggests that assimilating to the American culture took some of her power to self-identify as Indian American. Her quote also suggests negative feelings about

feeling like she does not fit in or completely belong in either the American or Indian culture.

Interestingly, Ashley and George may have found code-switching between home, community, and school difficult due to identifying as Indian American and respectively being 2nd generation and 1.5 generation Indian Americans. Without spending time in India at all in Ashley's case, or very little in George's case, they could not claim to know and incorporate Indian culture into their lives like Marshall and Arabella did. Rather, most of what Ashley and George knew about India and Indian culture came from their parents, extended family members, and church members transmitting information to them. So it might have felt harder to merge American and Indian cultures or even preserve their knowledge of Indian culture without having experienced it directly and when only experiencing it at home and in their ethnic communities.

On the other hand, Marshall and Arabella did not seem as uncomfortable with code-switching likely because they were first generation immigrants who identified as Indian as opposed to Indian American. As a result, it may not have been as important to them to merge the two cultures as it was for Ashley and George. Likewise, they may not have struggled to maintain their Indian identity in the same ways as George and Ashley because they had formative memories of India and immigrated to the U.S. later in their respective lives. As a result, they were rooted in their Indian identities and did not feel the same sense of loss as Ashley and George did when partaking in American culture. Rather, they seemed to partake in American cultures in school in order to fit in amongst their peers and teachers. Ultimately, both Marshall and Arabella's identification of the school's privileging of American cultures provides further evidence of the "anti-

foreigner" perception articulated in earlier chapters. Their way of coping with this perception was to move away from their Indian culture when in school.

Discussion

This chapter described participants' identification of parents' expectations and neighborhood friends and community members' perceptions. It also described participants' accounts of similarities and differences in others' expectations and perceptions of them in their home, school, and community contexts. Overall, in this regard, there were some similarities between home and community, and school stood out as notably different and isolated from the other two contexts. In analyzing these findings through the conceptual framework, three important themes emerge: 1) the interplay of structures and cultures on parents' expectations, particularly their academic expectations for their children; 2) the importance of intersectional identity expression; 3) and the role of cultural "code-switching" on the lack of overlaps in others' perceptions of participants across the three contexts.

Interplay of Structures and Cultures on Parental Expectations

Arabella, Marshall, George, and Hazel discussed their parents' support of their participation in non-academic activities. Their accounts of their parents' expectations, particularly as related to school, show the role of culture, as represented through generational flexibility and trusting parent-child relationships. As noted in Chapter 6, these relationships with their parents may have even encouraged them to resist the high achieving stereotype in school and in their academic performances. Notably, these participants' accounts of open and trusting parent-child relationships push back against popular American framings of Asian parents as "tiger parents" and of Asian cultural

values as restrictive, authoritarian, and inflexible (Chua, 2011; Guo, 2013; Sue & Okazaki, 1995). Their accounts also complicate existing research on South Asian American youth which stresses parents' high academic and career aspirations for youth (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Kao, 1995; Saran, 2007; Shankar, 2011; Tummala-Narra, Sathasivam-Ruekert, 2016) and a lack of communication and understanding of American and Indian cultural differences in parent-child relationships (Durham, 2004; Tumalla-Narra, Sathasivam-Ruekert, 2016). Notably, participant samples in these previous studies included South Asian American students from various ethnic and religious backgrounds (e.g. Sikh Punjabi, Hindu Indian, Muslim Pakistani) and did not analyze the experiences of many Indian American and Christian youth. Therefore, some findings from the present study related to parents' expectations for their children, that are different from prior research on South Asians, may be connected to participants' identities as Indian American and Christian.

While Arabella, Marshall, George, and Hazel described their parents' openness regarding their expectations, Meredith, Tris, and Ashley described their parents as having high and comparatively less flexible academic and career expectations. Their parents' difficult immigration experiences implicate the role of structures on parents' expectations. As Sue and Okazaki (1990) note, the degree to which individuals and groups values educational achievement increases when they perceive non-educational pathways for social mobility to be limited. Applying this structural lens to the girls' accounts suggests their parents might have held high academic expectations for their children because they believed high academic achievement would give them access to a profession that provided job security and financial stability especially given their own

difficulties and discrimination in the job market. It also suggests that the girls' parents' limited social capital, due to their immigrant status, may have led them to see high levels of formal educational attainment as the only route for financial success in the U.S. This finding aligns with the work of Bhattacharya (2000) who also found that low-income, South Asian parents with limited English proficiency valued education as the "only tool" for their children's success. Importantly, the girls' accounts also show that difficult immigrant experiences can directly and indirectly influence the schooling experiences of Indian and Indian American youth. This finding complicates media and research representations that suggest **all** Indian immigrants are highly skilled professionals who experience professional success in the U.S. (Zong & Batlova, 2017; The Economist, 2016).

The accounts of some participants in the present study corroborate existing research which asserts that South Asian immigrant parents have high academic and career expectations of their children (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Kao, 1995; Saran, 2007; Shankar, 2011; Tummala-Narra, Sathasivam-Ruekert, 2016). Only Asher (2002) and Shankar (2011) discuss *why* parents' hold these high achieving expectations. Asher argues that parents' desire for high paying and high status jobs for their children drive their high academic expectations while Shankar postulates that parents' high educational attainment may drive their high academic expectations for their children. In light of these findings, this study provides an alternative explanation for parents' high achieving expectations with a specific focus on their immigrant experiences.

Intersectional Identity Expression in Communities

Findings in this chapter also highlight the importance of participants'
neighborhoods and ethnic communities in their lives. Andersen and Collins (2015) argue
that peoples' identities are dynamic, complex, and informed by multiple social identifiers.
As noted in the previous chapter, participants discussed how stereotypes about Indian
Americans informed their peers' and teachers' perceptions of them reduced their complex
identities to academic high achievers and nerds. They also discussed how their peers and
teachers viewed South Asian Americans as culturally monolithic. This chapter's findings
dovetail with those of the previous chapter by showing how participants used their
community spaces to resist stereotypical representations of Indian Americans to express
their identities in complex and dynamic ways. In fact, their intersectional identity
expressions—or the ways they expressed multiple identities simultaneously—in their
community spaces can be considered as acts of resistance to the narrow perceptions of
them in school.

Participants' accounts also suggest that their intersectional identity expressions
helped them experience cultural implacement in their communities where they could
express their ethnic traditions, religious beliefs, and interests without feeling judged or
othered. As noted in the previous chapter, some participants felt that it was easier to
relate and find support amongst to their same-ethnic peers than to their non-South Asian
American peers. It is likely that these participants also experienced cultural implacement
at church where they could interact with their same-ethnic peers who also understood and
valued their cultural and religious beliefs and traditions. Participants' accounts reflect
existing research which shows that ethnic pride and observance of religious traditions can

foster resilience and self-esteem among South Asian American and Indian American youth (Farver, Xu, Bhada, Narang, and Lieber, 2007; Mahalingam, Balan, Haritatos, 2008; Shankar, 2008; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Ruekert, 2016).

The "Hidden Curriculum" & Cultural "Code-Switching"

Finally, study findings suggest participants did not experience the same perceptions of Indian American youth at home, school, and community. They recognized how different cultural norms were privileged and deemed socially acceptable in these different spaces. These findings are consistent with recent research on South Asian Americanss which also found discriminatory perceptions of South Asian American students in school and culturally inclusive perceptions of them in home and community (Shankar, 2008, Shankar, 2011; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Ruekert, 2016; Tummala-Narra, Deshpande, Kaur, 2016). Interestingly, discussions about American culture in school among participants in this study reveal a "hidden curriculum" (Giroux, 1983) in which school practices and norms reflect an "American" culture rooted in White, middle class cultural norms (Paris, 2012). As Paris (2012) notes, these school practice and norms "position languages and literacies that [fall] outside those norms as less-than and unworthy of a place in U.S. schools and society" (p. 93). Viewing participants' accounts through this lens reveals a "hidden curriculum" that encouraged them to assimilate to American culture while simultaneously discrimination for their social identification as Indian. More specifically, school norms and practices built on Whiteness encouraged them to shed their Indian accents, their cultural styles of dress, and their modes of communication and adopt an American accent, American styles of dress, and American communication styles that are more direct and individually focused. Participants

recognized this push towards assimilation and some chose to conform because it was academically and socially advantageous. For example, Marshall appeared to gain acceptance from his peers and teachers by distancing himself from his Indian culture. Arabella discussed how her immigrant status and cultural observances positioned her as an outsider amongst her peers at school. In response, she adopted "the American way" most likely as a survival strategy in a context that was unfriendly towards immigrant students. Interestingly, participants only spoke of assimilating to American culture in the school context, and their accounts suggest that, in their homes and communities, they exerted their power to maintain their ethnoreligious ties and heritage. As Leonardo (2004) explains, "Communities of color have constructed counter-discourses in the home, church, and informal school cultures in order to maintain their sense of humanity" (p. 144). It is likely that participants did just that, they maintained these ethnoreligious ties at home and in community in order to feel their humanity as Indian American people. This sort of cultural "code-switching" may have also helped them maintain both their American and Indian cultural identities while also fulfilling peers' and teachers' expectations to be American in school and parents' and their fellow church congregants' expectations to be Indian at home and in their same-ethnic church.

CHAPTER EIGHT: DISTRICT AND SCHOOL PRACTICE AND POLICY IN SPACES, PERCEPTIONS, AND SCHOOLING EXPERIENCES

In response to my third research question this chapter examines how school and district policies and teacher practices influence participants' schooling experiences and participants' understandings of how they are perceived by peers and teachers in the school space. Specifically, I focus on teachers' practices and actions and BCPSS's English and History standards because curricula shape teacher practice and what students do and do not learn about their cultures in school (Ball & Cohen, 1996; Ball, 2000). This focus on curricular standards highlights how the inclusion or exclusion of participants' cultures informs teachers' and peers' perceptions of them in school.

Drawing from participants' accounts and district standards, this chapter unfolds in four sections. In the first section, "Say My Name," I focus on participants' understandings of teachers' classroom practices and actions towards Asian American and South Asian American students. In the second section, "It's Their Land," I examine participants' accounts of English texts and BCPSS English standards as related to the experiences of Indian Americans. In the third section, "I'm From There," I examine the exclusion and inclusion of Indian American and Indian histories in the district and schools where participants were enrolled. The final discussion section maps findings from the previous three sections onto the study's conceptual framework to explain how the lack of cultural inclusion in policies, practices, and curricula results in the district perpetuating stereotypes about Indian American and other Asian American youth.

Say My Name: The Role of Teachers' Practices and Actions in Perceptions of Indian

Americans in School

All of the study participants recognized teachers as important to their schooling experiences, and they felt teachers' perceptions of them and Youth of Color, more generally, informed classroom practices. Participants placed teachers in their schools into two categories: 1) teachers who treated students differently based on race/ethnicity, gender, and nationality and 2) teachers who treated all students fairly regardless of students' social identifiers. Teachers in these two categories, through their practices and actions, had different effects on participants' academic, sociocultural, and psychological experiences in school.

Regarding teachers who treated students differently, Ashley described a White, male science teacher who made specific comments about Asian American girls in class. According to Ashley, this teacher told boys in the class, "Oh my wife is Asian so I'm just telling all the guys, don't marry an Asian girl. They can be a little crazy sometimes." She also explained how he incorrectly identified a Pakistani American student as Indian American, and when the Pakistani student corrected him, he responded to her by saying, "Oh same thing." Ashley believed that this teacher felt entitled to make reductionist comments about Asian Americans because he was married to an Asian American woman. She explained,

> We're [Indians and Pakistanis] from different places. Some people there's
>
> different cultures, different languages. You can't just say "same thing." I think
>
> him being married to a Woman of Color made him feel so entitled to say these
>
> things...You haven't been through those experiences, and you don't even know the

experiences she's [his wife] been through. You can't just group people together. I

don't know. It made me so uncomfortable to hear that he had said stuff like this.

(Ashley)

In the two incidents Ashley described, the teacher made generalizations about

groups of people and disregarded how students identified themselves and wished to be

identified by others. The teacher's choice of words that Asian American girls are "crazy"

and his dismissal of the Pakistani American girl reflects fetishized and essentialized

views of Asian American women as submissive yet simultaneously exotic, demure, and

hypersexualized (Espiritu, 2000; Lee, 2006; Lee & Vaught, 2003). The incidents also

highlight the greater power teachers have compared to their students, which can give

them license to disrespect students without consequence. Ashley noted, "student[s]

should be allowed to challenge [teachers]" but would not because they would "always

think about [their] grade." Ashley felt a teacher's power over grades diminished students'

power to challenge how their teachers' thought about and acted towards them.

Tris talked about a White, female teacher who she believed treated students

differently in her class based on their race. According to Tris, this teacher appeared to

like her White students more than her Students of Color. She explained,

I know one of my teachers now, they may not mean to. They answer any question

that anybody has, but you can notice that they have more of a liking towards the

students, she interacts more with students that are of the White community that's

grown up like she has. I guess that in a way, I'm like okay, that's fine. But, it kind

of makes other students [of color] feel like why don't I have a strong interaction, a

connection with another teacher? It's kind of something that's very important. If

you don't have that one teacher that you can talk to or if something's going on at

home, if you can't tell them, then it's very hard to continue doing the best that you

can when someone doesn't understand you, I guess. (Tris)

Tris believed that this teacher favored White students because she shared their racial

background and upbringing. Tris also believed that such favoritism toward White

students could lead Students of Color to question the quality of and feel insecure in their

relationships with their teachers. Further, Tris suggested that this teacher's implicit bias is

not conscious making it more difficult for the teacher and the students to detect than overt

racialized favoritism.

Meredith shared her experiences with two teachers who struggled to say her name

and how that made her feel.

I had teachers last year that didn't even try to say my name because it was too

hard. I know that's not really a big deal, but sometimes it's like ... I remember my

engineering teacher last year, it was halfway through the year and he still didn't

know who I was. (Meredith)

Really? How did that make you feel? (Caroline)

Honestly, I felt really bad. He recognized me, but he didn't know my name. I was

like, "I come to school every day, no?" I know [him not knowing my name] was a

joke, but he did it in front of everyone. I felt like he didn't care about me. And

then I also had another teacher, but he didn't do that in front of people even

though he couldn't say my name. He did call on me and everything, but the other

teacher ... I know he didn't mean to be rude, but it did sound really rude when he

did [not know my name and say it] to me, yeah. (Meredith)

Okay, do you feel like they did that to other students, too? (Caroline)

I don't know. They all had normal names, I guess. Because my name's really long... It's really hard for them to say, but he didn't even try to learn it. Even the other engineering teacher I had, they all tried to say it. I don't even care if they messed up. They could've just said something. I really don't care. He just said he doesn't even know my name. Really? I come to you, I ask you questions. How do you not know my name? (Meredith)

Her teacher's choice to not say her name or even learn how to say her name made Meredith feel badly and as though the teacher did not "care" about her. In referencing other students' seemingly more pronounceable names as "normal," she seemed to understand her Indian name as aberrant and outside of the bounds of "American-ness." The teacher's disregard of her name made Meredith feel invisible in the classroom. Her quote: "I come to school every day, no?" suggests she felt her teacher did not acknowledge her in class, day after day.

Although Tris, Meredith, and Ashley identified teachers who seemingly lacked cultural competence, Arabella, Marshall, George, Ashley, and Hazel identified teachers who they felt treated all students fairly and with whom they had a personal relationship. They described these teachers as "role models, very understanding, energetic," "approachable," "entertaining," and "always happy." Their accounts suggest these teachers taught passionately, engaged students in learning, displayed empathy, pursued personal relationships with students, and as Ashley said, allowed students "to talk about how we felt and how things affected us." These five participants noted teachers of

different racial and ethnic backgrounds who exhibited these characteristics and supported

positive academic, sociocultural, and psychological schooling experiences.

Arabella's relationship with Ms. Green seemed to be particularly impactful.

Arabella described Ms. Green as energetic and supportive in her teaching. She was

empathetic to Arabella's difficulties as a recent immigrant and encouraged her to take

higher level math courses. Academically, Arabella noted that she was a "C and D math

student" prior to entering Ms. Green's class. However, Ms. Green's "teaching style" and

passion for math seemed to spark Arabella's interest in the subject. Arabella soon became

an A student in Ms. Green's math class. Her improved academic performance suggests

that Ms. Green helped Arabella develop her skills and confidence in mathematics.

Arabella said Ms. Green was the "one teacher who I'm never gonna forget in high

school."

> She changed my life so much. My parents met her the last parent conference. She
>
> was like, "I want to see your parents. It has been so long. I want to see how they
>
> are." It is a teacher student relation, but it just, I just like her so much, and every
>
> birthday, I made her something and this summer I went and saw her. (Arabella)

Arabella described how Ms. Green made efforts to develop a personal relationship with

both her and her parents and even scheduled time to visit with Arabella in the summer.

Ms. Green appears to have helped Arabella adjust to the sociocultural environment of

school by not only being a teacher but a friend as well. It should be noted that Arabella

made no references to Ms. Green's understanding of Indian culture or different

racial/ethnic groups in the U.S. Instead, Ms. Green simply treated Arabella with kindness,

empathy, and compassion and helped Arabella experience cultural implacement in school.

Marshall and Ashley also noted the importance of caring teachers. Marshall told me he really liked his math class and his math teacher, Mr. Purple, because "he's actually a really nice guy. He jokes around with you." Likewise, Ashley talked about Ms. Pink, her Chinese American Social Studies teacher, and how she "loved her, and I think it was because she was Of Color so whenever she spoke, she would never classify because she had probably been classified in her lifetime."

In each of these relationships, Arabella, Marshall, and Ashley respected and liked their teachers for being funny, kind, and empathetic. They spoke passionately and thoughtfully about these teachers most likely because they demonstrated care in the classroom. For example, Arabella's and Ms. Green's relationship exhibited the power of demonstrating empathy for a student adjusting to a new culture; Marshall's and Mr. Purple's relationship showed how a teacher's kindness and humor can make an academic subject more accessible and enjoyable for students; and Ashley's and Ms. Pink's relationship displayed how a teacher's open-mindedness can encourage students to comfortably share their experiences.

The two categories of teachers identified by the participants contribute to perceptions of Indian American youth in school in two ways. First, participants described teachers who they identified as treating students differently based on race and ethnicity as being disrespectful to Indian American and Youth of Color, more broadly. Teachers demonstrated the disrespect by dismissing a clearly justifiable correction from a Pakistani American student, demonstrating implicit bias towards Students of Color, and refusing to

say an Indian student's name. It is possible that this disrespect is rooted in teachers' deficit oriented understandings of Indian people and Youth of Color more broadly and their respective cultures. Participants pointed out that teachers engaged in these behaviors in front of the whole class, possibly sending the message that it was acceptable for other students in the class to disrespect and disregard Indian American youth, and Youth of Color and their cultures.

To the contrary, participants described teachers who treated all students fairly as perceiving Indian American and Youth of Color positively and interacting with them in respectful and culturally sustaining ways (Paris, 2012). Ashley noted that Ms. Pink let students share their feelings during class and was careful to not prejudge them, which suggests that Ms. Pink allowed youth to define themselves rather than essentializing them based on their social identifiers. Likewise, Ms. Green made efforts to meet and develop relationships with Arabella's parents, which implies she honored Arabella's immigrant and Indian backgrounds and her familial relationships as essential aspects of Arabella's personhood. Both teachers' actions suggest that they did not perceive and define participants' by stereotypical representations of Indian Americans but allowed participants to define themselves and share aspects of their identities they deemed important to them.

It's Their Land: The Role of English Curriculum in Perceptions of Indian Americans in School

Participants' accounts suggest that their English curriculum, as represented through selected reading materials, did not consider Indian American experiences. This section focuses on the lack of texts by Indian American writers and attention to Indians'

and Indian Americans' experiences in the English curriculum and participants' reactions to this lack of inclusion. I draw from district policies regarding English standards to provide context for curriculum choices at the school level. Some of the participants felt the exclusion of Indian American experiences negatively influenced their school experiences.

Only one participant, Hazel, read a book, assigned by a teacher, that was focused on an Indian character. The remaining six participants reported they did not read any books in school focused on or authored by South Asian American or Indian American people. In fact, most participants reported reading only one or two books focused on non-mainstream White experiences[9] or People of Color. For example, Tris said she read *The Kite Runner*; Meredith said she read *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*; and Arabella also read *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Ashley and George, on the other hand, reported reading no books focused on or authored by People of Color. Ashley said she was reading *Into Thin Air* and noted that the main character was "not of color, but the people in it, there was a few that are Of Color." Hazel and Marshall were the only participants who read multiple written works focused on People of Color rather than White mainstream experiences. Hazel reported reading *The House on Mango Street*, *Persepolis*, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, and *Life of Pi* while Marshall reported reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Black Like Me*, and *In the Time of Butterflies*.

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[9] White mainstream refers to White, Western European and White, American experiences (see Milner, 2005)

Some participants, particularly Hazel and Tris, expressed appreciation for reading books authored by and focused on People of Color. Hazel said the book *Persepolis*, in which the author describes her experiences in Iran during the Islamic Revolution, "gave us a whole new perspective on all of those issues [pertaining to Iranian history and culture]. It was nice. It did a lot." In her interview, Hazel suggested she welcomed *Persepolis'* perspective on Iran given U.S. media representations of Iran as a hostile, religiously fundamentalist, and culturally repressed country. Tris also seemed to value reading books like *The Kite Runner*, which discusses the fall of the Afghani monarchy and the Soviet intervention. But she noted that only AP English classes were exposed to complex and higher level texts like *The Kite Runner* and explained, "I don't think the regular classes got the opportunity to [read] that [book]... I feel like [when] you're in more higher classes they give you that opportunity just to think about other cultures."

Marshall and Arabella did not seem to place importance on reading books authored by or focused on People of Color. I specifically asked Marshall how he felt about that absence of books authored by Indian Americans in the English curriculum, and he said, "I don't really pay attention to that, cause it's not something that I give high value to. Yeah sure they may be White or Black, but I mainly focus on the experiences that they went through." In fact, he mentioned *Night* as a book that he "really liked" because he could "see the experiences [the author] went through. I could imagine them." Marshall seemed to place greater importance on identifying with the characters' experiences than on sharing social identifiers with them. His value on experiences rather than social identifiers is consistent with previous findings that Marshall does not incorporate expressions of his Indian identity in school.

Likewise, when I asked Arabella about the lack of focus on Indian Americans, she replied,

I'm fine with it. I'm okay, because it's their [White Americans] land. They have a lot to talk about their land. If no one is going talk about their land, who's going to talk about it? I'm fine with it, seriously, but when they talk about India, I'm like, "Oh India," I'm like, "yay," and I know stuff so it's easier for me, but still I don't feel bad. (Arabella)

Arabella's reasoning was unlike any of the other participants. Importantly, her identification of the U.S. as "their land" and thus not her land implies that she believed she had no claim to learn about Indians or Indian Americans in school. Similarly, the reference to "their land" suggests that she did not believe that her school or teachers were obligated to teach about Indians or Indian Americans in school. Her word choice of "yay" infers that she saw the inclusion of Indian content as a treat rather than an entitlement. Her self-identification as Indian rather than as Indian American may explain why she described the U.S. as "their land" and did not seem to place importance on reading about Indian American experiences in English class.

I was surprised that participants reported reading so few books authored by Indian Americans, South Asian Americans, or People of Color; however, their reports were corroborated by BCPSS's English standards. I reviewed BCPSS's selection of approved instructional materials for 2017-2018 and found only 43 of the 265 approved novels, non-fiction essays, poems, short story collections, and plays were written by or focused on People of Color (Blue County Public Schools, 2017). Only two of the 265 books focused on Indian experiences and none focused on Indian American experiences;

these two books, *Life of Pi* and *Siddhartha,* were written by a Spanish Canadian and a German author, respectively. These books written by non-Indian people do not actually capture Indian peoples' lived experiences and they uphold fantastical views and images of India as the "Orient," a place in need of European colonialism, imperialism, and subjugation by foreigners (Said, 1975; Said, 1993; Prashad, 2000). Subsequently, the inclusion of these books upholds European colonialist perceptions and interpretations of Indians that further perceptions of them as uncivilized subaltern, of their culture as the "Other," and of the subcontinent as the mystical Far East (Maira, 2004; Prashad, 2000; Said, 1975; Spivak, 1988).

The perceptions of Indians reflected in these books like the *Life of Pi* and *Siddhartha* contribute to and inform cultural stereotypes of Indian Americans, as identified in earlier chapters. Notions of Indians as exotic, strange, and deviating from the religious and cultural norms of the more advanced and enlightened countries of the West undergird these stereotypes and further posit that Indians are not suitable for full inclusion in American society. These notions are captured in stereotypes that "all Indians are Hindu" which is used to portray Indian people as religiously inferior to Europeans and the Judeo-Christian faiths and that "all Indians eat curry" which is used to characterize the food and thus their culture as the "Other." Notably, BCPSS standards did not include any books on **Indian American** or **South Asian American** experiences, which likely perpetuated the perception of Indian Americans as perpetual foreigners whose histories and cultures can only be traced back to India. This perception was reflected in participants' descriptions of how their peers regularly reminded them that they could not be characterized as American, as noted in previous chapters.

I'm From There: The Role of History Curriculum in Perceptions of Indian

Americans in School

In this section I discuss the representation of Indian American and Indian; South Asian American and South Asian; and Asian American histories in the U.S. History, American Government, and World History curricula. Overall, participants' accounts revealed little discussion about Indians and Indian Americans in these content areas, which had clear implications for their psychological, academic, and social experiences.

According to Meredith, Ashley, Arabella, Marshall, Hazel, and George, their learning experiences in their U.S. History classes did not include South Asian American or Indian American histories. All six participants said they did not learn about the role of Asian, South Asian, or Indian American political leaders in U.S. or the civic participation or contributions of these groups to U.S. society. Marshall explained why he believed this was the case in his U.S. History and American Government classes.

> …'cause in freshman year it was U.S. history from Civil War on to modern day
> and in sophomore year it was government, talked about American government
> that's it, like how the government functions, but this year we're going through
> World History, but we have to backtrack, and we started from the very beginning,
> so we may make to India by fourth quarter. I'm not sure yet. (Marshall)

Marshall implied that he did not expect to learn about Indian Americans in U.S. History or American Government but India might be included in World History; he expected to learn about Indians only in reference to India and not to the U.S.

When I asked these six participants what they learned about Asian Americans, three mentioned the Japanese internment. Ashley also recalled, "We talked about the

railroads building and how a lot of Chinese immigrants came and built this railroad."

Talking about Japanese Americans, Marshall noted, "we didn't really talk about the

contributions that they made, and to this day I have no idea what are the contributions

that any Japanese Americans made to the [U.S.]." While Marshall learned about the

mistreatment of Japanese by the U.S. government, he did not appear to learn anything

about their value to U.S. society.

To make sense of participants' accounts, I reviewed BCPSS' standards for U.S.

History (mainstream and GT) and did not find a single reference to Asian or South Asian

Americans in the unit overview for immigrants. I did however, find one learning concept

applicable to Asian immigrants: "Analyze patterns, trends and projections of population

growth with particular emphasis on how the Immigration Act of 1965 and successor acts

have affected American society" (BCPSS, 2017). Moreover, I only found one key

concept that mentioned Asian people: "New and increasing immigration to the United

States has been taking place from many diverse countries, especially Asian and Latin

American countries" (BCPSS, 2017). Similarly, in the 9th grade GT U.S. History, which

is the only grade in which U.S. History is taught, "Course Outline and Topics," I found

only one learning objective regarding Asian Americans: "Japanese Internment" (BCPSS,

2017). Standards for both 9th grade mainstream and GT U.S. History classes show that

district standards incorporate very little about Asian Americans and are important in the

degree to which Students of Color learn about their own histories and cultures. Ashley

told me in a conversation outside of our interviews that she asked her History teachers

about when South Asians arrived in the U.S. and that her teachers told her that they did

not know. Subsequently, without standards, Students of Color like Ashley are forced to learn about their own histories and cultures outside of school.

Meredith, Ashley, Hazel and Marshall spoke briefly about their American government classes. As Meredith describe, "It [the class] was all in the political perspective, never culture, because that was government. They did compare our government to other countries' governments, but that was it. It was mainly, we're learning how a government functioned." However, Ashley and Hazel noted classroom activities in American Government that helped them connect their life experiences and cultures to the course content. For example, Ashley described how her teacher required students to complete "current events" assignments for each quarter. As she described,

> Students have to find a current event that happened in the past 30 days and write
> about it, our perspective on it, what's going on. Different things like that, but we
> don't discuss the current events in class. It's more like we write it, we submit it,
> and then he grades them.

Through this assignment, Ashley's teacher's incorporated students' perspectives into the course curriculum.

Hazel described an assignment in her American government class in which she researched the racial and gender make-up of Congress.

> [The teacher] gave us this packet once that basically talked about Congress and
> what the racial makeup is and how many women, how many men, and the
> percentage for each race. So, we got to see that as well. And we did learn about a
> couple, and he did bring to light a couple of people in Congress that were the

first... Like for example, the first Latino, or the first Asian American. So, he did show us all that as well. (Hazel)

To contextualize these participants' accounts, I reviewed the College Board's AP Government & Politics curriculum since all four were enrolled in the AP course. The "course description" stated objectives such as: "describe and compare typical facts, concepts, and theories pertaining to U.S. government and politics" and "interpret basic data relevant to U.S. government and politics" (College Board, 2014). I found no language referencing comparisons to other governments or to connections between culture and the functions of the government. Thus, the stated course description and objective is consistent with participants' views that AP Government and Politics classes covered the form and function of U.S. government. According to Hazel and Ashley, however, their teachers provided opportunities to connect the course content to their own lives. The current events assignment allowed Ashley to choose a topic relevant to her own experience. In examining the racial and gender makeup of Congress, Hazel had the opportunity to identify female and Indian political leaders. This assignment likely contributed to Hazel's conviction that Indian Americans could "definitely" be representatives of U.S. government. Unfortunately, the other study participants did not believe Indian Americans could fill these roles in government.

Tris, Marshall, Hazel, Meredith, and Arabella spoke about their World History courses which they had completed or were enrolled in at the time of interview. In discussing these classes, they described learning about India. Hazel, Arabella, Meredith, and Marshall said their World History and Modern World History classes included Indian history. For example, Arabella said she learned about India in the context of "different

world religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity" in her Modern

World History courses. Similarly, Marshall described his Modern World history class as

"very diverse" because "from the beginning of the history class we talked about the

Muslim empire, the ancient Indian empire, the Chinese empire, the Roman empire, stuff

like that."

To the contrary, Tris said that in her World History AP class they "talked about

European culture so much, and we didn't talk about any other culture." She expressed

that the sole focus on European cultures "infuriated" her, and she asked the teacher if

they were going to "talk about any other culture because it's World History." According

to Tris, her teacher replied, "We're going to talk a little bit about this and about that."

However, Tris said she "really didn't see a difference," in the focus of the class over the

semester. Tris explained she was disappointed by the emphasis on European cultures

because, "that doesn't like represent everyone else in our school. I don't feel like they did

a good job of doing that in World History." Tris implied that she expected her World

History class to be representative of diverse cultures and histories rather than only

European cultures. Tris's apparent feelings of entitlement to learning about different

cultures, including her Indian culture, stands in contrast to the lack of entitlement

Arabella expressed in reference to learning about Indians. Importantly, Tris may have felt

entitled to learn about her Indian culture because, as mentioned in previous chapters, she

identified as Indian American and saw herself embedded in American society. She

referred to the U.S. as "our country," which suggests she saw Indians as a part of

American society. Therefore, Tris may have expected to see herself, her experiences, and

the experiences of other people from different cultures represented in her curriculum.

Notably, Meredith and Arabella explicitly expressed happiness regarding learning about India in their classes. For example, Meredith described learning about Vasco de Gama coming to India in an activity where they mapped his journey.

[It was] cool because I think he landed somewhere next to Kerala. I was telling my friend, I was like, "Oh my god, I'm from there!" It was on Wikipedia, it was, I think, Calicut? That's in Kerala, right? So I was like, "Oh, that's where I'm from," because that's where he went first or something. (Meredith)

Meredith appeared pleasantly surprised that this learning activity incorporated her ethnic origins, and she demonstrated excitement about sharing this discovery with her friend. Meredith's surprise echoes the way Arabella ascribed learning about India as a treat rather than an entitlement in her education. Interestingly, I asked Meredith if she learned any critical or Indian colonized peoples' perspectives on Vasco de Gama and the Portuguese's colonization in India and she replied that teachers "didn't talk about those kinds of things."

Arabella also expressed elation over learning about India in her Modern World History course and suggested that this was not common in her education.

It was a religion unit, a world religion unit, so that's why India, but I was surprised that India actually came by into it. Hinduism came, Buddhism came. I'm actually happy that they put it in together. That was a difference. I didn't see that until now, I barely heard teachers talk about India. So, whenever this teacher talks about India, I'm like, "Oh my God," I'm happy that it's part of [class]. (Arabella)

Arabella and Meredith's quotes further support the notion they did not expect to learn about Indian or Indian American histories or cultures reinforcing the district's notion that

Indians and Indian Americans, their histories, and their cultures are exclusive to India and do not require inclusion in the American narrative.

I reviewed the College Board's AP World History Course Description document provided on BCPSS's website and BCPSS's Modern World History standards. The AP curriculum made several references to "trade," "iron works," and "textile production" in India which provides context for Meredith's comments about Vasco de Gama (College Board, 2017). Likewise, the Modern World History standards had a specific topic area— "World Religions and Belief Systems"—which pertains to various religions and the empires responsible for spreading them (BCPSS, 2017). What participants said they learned about India aligns with these curricula. It mattered to Arabella, Meredith, and Hazel that India was included in their history classes because it spoke to their ethnic backgrounds, family histories, and life experiences and the pride they had in being Indian. Given Tris's disappointment in the lack of cultural diversity in her World History class, we can assume that learning about India would have been meaningful to her as well. It is unclear if the representation of India and Indians would have been significant for Marshall, who said he did not care about racial/ethnic representation in English texts, as noted earlier.

These participants' accounts and the district standards raise questions about the relationship of Asian immigrant populations to American historical narratives. The interview data show that all participants except Hazel learned about Asian American history in terms of Japanese internment. Ultimately, curricular references to Japanese internment and the Chinese building the railroads glosses over the complex and troubling histories of how Asian groups have had to fight for inclusion in American society

(Takaki, 2012; Prashad, 2001; Wollenberg, 1995). Likewise, references to Japanese Americans and Chinese immigrants in the school curriculum and the exclusion of other Asian subgroups implicitly suggests that these two ethnic groups represent the totality of Asian American experiences which may help to explain why study participants described others' perceptions of South Asian people and cultures as monolithic (Lee, 1994; Lee, 2006; Ngo & Lee, 2007; Pang, Han, & Pang, 2011). The presentation of "Asian Americans" as a monolith may explain, in part, why participants did not learn about South Asian American or Indian American histories; the curriculum developers and educators may have assumed that in covering some Asians, they had covered all Asians.

The exclusion of Indian American or South Asian American histories in U.S. History standards and their inclusion in World History is concerning because it upholds widespread perceptions of Indian Americans as perpetual foreigners who do not have their own histories in or contributions to the U.S. As researchers have noted, Indian American and South Asian American communities existed well before the 1965 Immigration Act opened immigration from Asian countries (Bald, 2013; Leonard, 1994; Prasad, 2000). Likewise, the histories of Indian Americans and South Asian Americans reveal their contributions to agricultural development, racial equality, and labor rights for People of Color in the U.S. (Bald, 2013; Leonard, 1994; Prasad, 2000). It is possible that, in this study, the nature of exclusion and inclusion of Indian histories in the school curriculum reinforced non-Indian students' and teachers' perceptions of the participants and other Indian American youth as perpetual foreigners and perpetuated the view that Indian Americans have no history in the U.S. and have made no contributions of value to

American society. It is also possible that the exclusion of these histories contributed to the feelings of invisibility participants experienced in school.

Discussion

Findings in this chapter regarding teacher practice and school policy provide insights into the inclusion and exclusion of Indian American histories and cultures in learning and how they were related to perceptions of Indian American youth in school and to the study participants' schooling experiences. In viewing these findings through the lens of the study's conceptual framework, two important issues emerge: 1) the role of the official curricula and teachers' practices in disseminating views of Indian Americans as culturally other, perpetual foreigners and high academic achievers who are singularly focused on educational and career success, and 2) the role of school-based practices and policies in cultural implacement and displacement

Racial and Cultural Framings of Indian Americans

Several scholars have noted that the exclusion or "silence" regarding Asian American histories is common in U.S. curricula (Brown & Takaki, 2012; Leonardo, 2004), and it is concerning because it mutes the voices of Asian Americans and obscures the ways they have shaped the U.S. Also concerning is the perpetual foreigner stereotype that this exclusion perpetuates because it can reinforce the view of Indians as unassimilable and be used to justify the belief that they should not be considered for full inclusion in American society.

Perhaps more unsettling were the ways Indian histories and cultures were represented in the BCPSS English and history district standards and curricula. Some of these representations reflected colonialist and imperialist views of India that portray

Indian people as uncivilized, fetishized people whose cultures and histories are inferior to European cultures and histories. Importantly, my review of the curriculum standards and participants' accounts showed no evidence of critical perspectives of colonialism, key Indian historical moments, or Indian cultures (e.g. partition) that disrupt colonialist viewpoints and presentations of Indian histories and cultures. Study data suggest that the school curricula largely reinforced White supremacist views that normalize the historical subjugation of Indian people whose culture and traditions must be changed for the better.

BCPSS standards and curricula which ignore and misrepresent the experiences of Indian Americans also furthered the White, European, colonialist project which, as Willinsky (1998) notes, has focused on stripping Indian students of their cultural norms, knowledge, and values in order to teach them how to "think like Englishmen" (p. 91) or in this context, "Americans." They inadvertently strip Indian and Indian American students of their cultures and histories and reinforce colonialist views. While participants had varying views of how these curricular inclusions and exclusions impacted their educational experiences, most valued learning about their own cultures and histories and those of other minoritized groups in school. This finding supports research that shows the importance of incorporating Students' of Color knowledges, histories, and experiences in learning and in railing against deficit oriented perspectives of them (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lee, 2006; Paris, 2012; Said, 1991; Yosso, 2005).

Research on the role of academic standards and curricula on perceptions of and the schooling experiences of Indian American and South Asian American youth is extremely limited. Only one previous study provides insights into this topic. Asher (2008) describes how Indian American students in her study petition their school to include an

Asian studies course and their when an Asian studies course that is offered focuses on only Japanese and Chinese cultures. However, this study does not analyze how curricula inform perceptions of Indian American youth. As a result, this study builds on Asher's research to show how curricula can shape perceptions of Indian American youth **and** influence their schooling experiences.

Cultural Implacement and Displacement

Participants revealed how some teachers held deficit-oriented perceptions of them and how these perceptions may have prompted unfair actions towards them. Participants seemed to experience cultural displacement as a result of these teachers' perceptions and actions as evidenced by how they described feeling "uncomfortable," "bad," and invisible when teachers dismissed or disregarded them. On the other hand, participants appeared to experience cultural implacement among teachers who had positive perceptions of them and interacted with them in respectful and culturally sustaining ways. They seemed to experience cultural implacement because the teachers gave participants power to define themselves, share their feelings in class, and forged personal relationships with them. As noted in the previous chapter, most of the participants felt pressure to succeed academically or struggled with feeling invisible in the social context of school, and positive relationships with teachers may have helped them to cope with school-based difficulties and alienation. Research establishes how care (Noddings, 1984; Noddings 2012) and empathy for Students of Color (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Milner, 2007), as demonstrated by teachers who treated all students fairly, can positively impact students' schooling experiences.

Findings from the present study contribute to existing literature which show that teachers sometimes subject Indian American youth to discriminatory perceptions and actions (Shankar, 2008; Shankar, 2011; Saran, 2007; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Ruekert, 2016). This is an important finding because Indian American youth are often ignored in discussions of discrimination and are often implicitly left out of the category, Youth of Color. Teachers' positive perceptions of and actions towards Indian American students are less developed in the current literature. Presently, Asher (2002) is the only researcher to capture positive teacher-student interactions among Indian American students, which were based on participants' statements that their teachers were open to their curricular interests. Asher's study, however, did not discuss teachers' perceptions of Indian American youth or student-teacher relationships. The present study builds on Asher's work to provide insights into the importance of teachers perceiving Indian American students in non-discriminatory ways and treating them in culturally sustaining ways that promote positive schooling experiences for these youth.

This chapter also revealed the role of curricula in culturally implacing and displacing participants. Participants likely experienced cultural displacement when the curricula did not include their histories or cultures because the exclusion implies that their histories and cultures are inferior to "American" or "European" cultures. Without seeing themselves represented in the curricula, participants could have experienced a "loss of self" or identity crisis regarding what it means to be Indian in American society. They also likely experienced cultural displacement when exposed to fantastical and fetishized views of Indians in their English books because these misrepresentations posit that their bodies are meant for subjugation, taming, and civility that is not present in their

cultures. Conversely, participants experienced cultural implacement when they learned about India especially because Arabella and Meredith did not expect to learn about Indian culture in American schools. However, I note this implacement with caution because the specific things they learned still reflect colonialist views of their histories and cultures. In fact, they did not even learn about key Indian moments defined by Indian people for Indian people (e.g. partition, Indian democracy). Rather, what participants' experiences show is that they are willing to even learn about their culture in a deficit oriented way because they deeply desire to see themselves represented in their learning experiences.

CHAPTER NINE: DISCUSSION

This chapter is organized into three sections. The first section describes three key conclusions from the study that can be used to understand the schooling experiences of Indian American and South Asian American youth. The second section provides my reflections on the affordances and challenges of the conceptual framework to disrupt inaccurate and monolithic descriptions of Indian Americans and South Asian Americans in order to uncover the conditions in which they did or did not experience, racism, xenophobia, and cultural "othering" depending on the spaces they occupied. The final section provides implications for future work for researchers to research Indian American and South Asian American youth's non-academic social experiences in school, and for practitioners and policymakers to create culturally sustaining practices and policies that disrupt deficit oriented views of Indian American and South Asian American youth.

Key Conclusions

The following section describes three key conclusions from the study: 1) the role of perceptions on participants' schooling experiences; 2) participants' assigned importance to social aspects of school as much as and at times more than academic aspects; and 3) the role of racial/ethnic bias on participants' schooling experiences.

Participants' understandings of others' perceptions of them influenced how they interpreted the various spaces they occupied in their everyday lives, as either stressful and alienating or welcoming and nurturing. Their descriptions of school revealed their stress and alienation in the space due to peers' and teachers' stereotypical perceptions. Participants identified peers' and teachers' perceptions of them as terrorists, perpetual foreigners, nerds, and academic high achievers. These perceptions contributed to some

participants feeling intense pressures to academically succeed, almost all participants feeling invisible in the larger school space, and some even feeling physically threatened and unsafe in school. Participants' accounts of peers' and teachers' perceptions and their influence on their schooling experiences suggest they mostly experienced cultural displacement in school because the perceptions reduced their complex and dynamic identities to simplistic stereotypes. Interestingly, however, when participants exercised their human agency and resisted these perceptions to develop youth-created spaces shared with close friends, they experienced cultural implacement because these spaces allowed them to freely express their dynamic identities. These spaces included the South Asian Club.

Participants' accounts of home mostly captured how it was a warm and nurturing space. Almost all of the participants photographed shared family spaces and discussed the importance of family in their lives. Their descriptions suggest that they experienced cultural implacement at home because they felt a sense of "at homeness" amongst their family. Notably, participants had differing descriptions of their parents' expectations for them. Some participants described how their parents emotionally supported them with regard to the academic and social aspects of school. They described their parents' expectations as getting good grades, obtaining a "good education," not drinking, and not smoking. Four participants explained that they did not feel burdened by their parents' expectations but rather went to their parents for affirmation and support when coping with school stresses (Phelan, Davidson, & Yu, 1998). Their parents' support may have also helped them express resistance to the academically high-achieving stereotype in school. This is a novel finding especially because the current literature captures Indian

American youth's descriptions of their stress regarding parents' strict academic expectations (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Kao, 1995; Saran, 2007; Shankar, 2011; Tummala-Narra, Sathasivam-Ruekert, 2016). The other three participants in this study described their parents' expectations as getting all A's and pursuing high paying, high status jobs. This finding was consistent with current literature as noted above. While these three participants understood how difficult immigration experiences contributed to their parents' expectations, they still reported that the expectations contributed to their stress, anxiety, and inability to rely on their parents for emotional support regarding school. These participants did not seem to experience cultural displacement at home as a result of their parents' strict academic expectations perhaps because they thought it was the norm for most Indian parents to hold high academic expectations for their children.

Finally, participants' explanations of community captured how their neighborhoods and churches allowed them to express their identities in complex and dynamic ways. They described these spaces as age-diverse, gender-diverse, and at times racially-diverse spaces. In their neighborhoods, they described feeling safe and secure amongst their friends and at church they described "unbreakable bonds" formed with their same-ethnic peers. These spaces served as sites of cultural implacement because participants attached positive feelings to these spaces (e.g. secure, comforted, safe) that helped them feel free to express their Indian, Christian, and adolescent identities.

While youth from various Asian and Asian American subgroups are often depicted as hyper-focused on achieving high-level, academic success and future occupational success, this is not an accurate framing of the participants in the present study. Participants' valued the social aspects of school as much, if not more, than the

academic, especially because they almost exclusively photographed non-academic spaces as significant. These spaces included the football field, the school bus, the class mural, which symbolized one participant's membership in Class Board, a club meeting, and the cafeteria. One participant even noted that he valued going to school because that was where he could see his friends. Likewise, participants described their frustration and, at times, anger that peers and teachers only recognized Indian American students for their academic achievements and how this perception rendered them invisible in social activities in school. Participants' discussions of their social activities in school are new to the current research on South Asian American youth, which mostly focuses on their academic experiences. Some of these participants' experiences showed that their parents and families actually valued their children engaging in social activities, and all of the participants' stories showed that their families did not value academics above their family life or religious beliefs. These findings are important because they are usually lost in mainstream discourses that portray Asian youth as singularly focused on school; of Asian parents as "tiger parents"; and of Asian cultures as valuing hard work and education above all else (Chua, 2011; Guo, 2013; Sue & Okazaki, 1990).

Finally, discussions about systemic racism in K-12 education rarely include the experiences of South Asian or Indian American students, fostering the perception that these youth do not experience racial/ethnic bias in school or if they do, they are not negatively affected by it. However, most of the participants in this study reported experiencing racial/ethnic bias in ways that had adverse social and emotional effects. Examples of racial/ethnic bias include teachers telling one of the participants that he did not know her name for an entire school year, a teacher fetishizing Asian American girls

in the class, and a teacher favoring White students in her class. Likewise, a review of curricula showed that participants were exposed to fetishized, essentialized, and colonial views of Indians that frame them as culturally inferior, uncivilized, and uncouth compared to White, Anglo-Saxon Europeans. The review also revealed complete silence regarding Indian American histories, which further perpetuated perceptions of Indian American youth as perpetual foreigners. Participants' exposure to these fantastical perceptions of Indians and the silence around Indian American histories culturally displaced them because they were implicitly taught to believe their histories and cultures are inferior and thus unworthy of inclusion in their learning materials. These findings are important to the literature on racial/ethnic bias especially because the extant literature focuses on academic outcomes and the student groups that are negatively affected as a result of racial/ethnic bias (Howard, 2003; Martin, 2009; Milner, 2003). The focus on academic outcomes may explain why Indian American youth, and South Asian American youth, more generally are typically excluded in these conversations. Findings from this study show that racial/ethnic bias affects youth socioemotionally and warrants a broadening of the racial/ethnic bias literature to include socioemotional experiences.

Speaking Back to the Conceptual Framework

When I began my literature review for this study, I was always struck by the lack of discussion about racism in the experiences of Indian American youth. As a result, I developed a conceptual framework drawing on intersectionality, race theory, and spatiality to uncover and explicitly analyze how structures, cultures, and human agency contributed to racializations and racial stereotypes of Indian American youth that informed their schooling experiences. In what follows, I discuss what I see as the

advantages and challenges of using this conceptual framework to disrupt inaccurate and monolithic descriptions of Indian Americans and South Asian Americans in order to uncover the conditions in which they did or did not experience, racism, xenophobia, and cultural "othering" depending on the spaces they occupied.

Advantages

Mainstream American media and public discourse suggest that Indian Americans and South Asians Americans, more generally, do not experience racism or at least not in ways that negatively impact their lives. This conceptual framework for this study provided the ontological and epistemic resources to identify racial stereotypes of Indian Americans (e.g. academic high achievers) and connect them to larger systems of power related to nationality, language, and class. In doing so, I was able to better understand how interlocking oppression, such as that experienced by those who are both ethnic "minorities" and immigrants, impacted participants' everyday lives.

The framework is also advantageous in studying Indian American and South Asian youth because it disrupts monolithic understandings of Indian Americans and South Asian Americans. As participants noted, stereotypical perceptions of Indians suggest that we are all Hindu, academically high-achieving, perpetual foreigners who are culturally different. But the framework helped me peel back these stereotypes in order to show the nuance and diversity of these participants. For example, it helped me discuss the relevance of their Christian faith practice in their lives and how their faith resulted in different schooling experiences for them compared to Indian American, Hindu or Indian American, Muslim youth. Likewise, the intersectional aspect of the framework was very helpful in showing how some participants' racial designation of "Indian" was interwoven

and inseparable from their nationality as "American" or their religion as "Christian." This aspect of the framework helped me show how youth negotiated their Indian, American, and Christian cultures but also importantly helped me critically challenge how society policed the boundaries of how youth could participate in these various cultures especially since American and Christian are considered "Western" cultures.

The framework also focused my analyses on human agency and how **participants** understood their lived experiences. Critical race scholars have noted the importance of counter-narratives in dispelling prominent narratives or portrayals of people that are inaccurate and damaging to People of Color (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). The focus on participants' narratives allowed me to present participants not as disembodied data points but as full-bodied humans with aspirations, hopes, and dreams who simultaneously carried pain, sadness, and confusion over inaccurate portrayals of what it meant to be Indian in American society. It also helped me disrupt inaccurate portrayals of Indian Americans captured in media, public discourse, and even research that make assumptions about Indian American and South Asian American youth without including their voices, views, and opinions.

Including spatiality and the concepts of implacement and displacement gave me a whole new language to describe Indian American and South Asian American youths' experiences. The current literature focused largely on academic experiences because **researchers** made assumptions that Indian American and South Asian American youth only cared about the academic aspects of school seemingly because they only observed youth in their classrooms or at school or their findings focused heavily on academics and very little on social non-academic aspects of school (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Kao,

1995; Saran, 2007; Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Ruekert, 2016). It is possible that the social aspects of school were outside of these studies' scopes especially because some were foundational in even showing that Indian American youth struggled in school (Asher, 2002; Asher, 2008; Kao, 1995; Saran, 2007). I included spatiality though to test these assumptions and center the **youth** as experts in order to see if they truly valued academics as indicated by the literature. The use of spatiality revealed that youth actually cherished the non-academic, social aspects of school and it also provided tools to see the significant micro-spaces that they inhabited in home, school, and community. These micro-spaces ended up disrupting the monolithic home-school-community framework used in many education studies that rely on researchers' understandings of these spaces rather than on young peoples' understandings. It showed the value youth placed on youth-created spaces, especially in school, to experience cultural implacement in the setting.

Finally, the use of cultural implacement and displacement was necessary in talking about the schooling experiences of Indian American and South Asian American youth. The strong focus on academics regarding this population dehumanizes them to suggest that they are like machines that will go to extreme lengths to achieve success. As a result, the focus masks the reality that Indian American youth are adolescents who deeply desire to feel included, welcomed, and wanted in a space. The use of cultural implacement and displacement helped me humanize these youth while also putting the responsibility of discrimination on school personnel, structures, and policies rather than on youth. It also allowed me to show their human agency in how they code-switched between spaces (e.g. home and school) and how they created youth-spaces when they felt

displaced (South Asian Club). The popular portrayal of Asian youth is that they are so academically focused that they lack "soft skills" or emotional intelligence. The use of cultural implacement and displacement showed that each of these youth had a tremendous amount of emotional intelligence to navigate various spaces that at times had diverging expectations and perceptions of them.

Challenges

I cannot stress how difficult it is to argue that Indian Americans and South Asian Americans are racialized and experience interpersonal and systemic racism in the U.S., particularly because discussions of race in this society are very much organized around a Black-White binary. Some Asian American scholars have used the term of "other" to discuss how Asian Americans are racialized compared to White Americans or compared to Black Americans. While that designation seems beneficial when discussing East Asian American experiences, I could not apply this designation of "other" to Indian Americans in my study because the racialization of Indians does not originate in the U.S. but on the subcontinent with our colonial and imperial history. As a result, I struggled to apply some of the race components of the framework to participants' accounts because they did not always seem like the right fit. I especially struggled when race and culture seemed to overlap and intertwine themselves because the theories I drew on separated these factors and treated them differently. As a result, future work should consider adding an explicit culture component because it captures the nuance of Indian histories and cultures that complicate simplistic notions of Indian Americans are "honorary Whites" in the U.S. An explicit cultural component can also help uncover and substantiate subtle and covert racism directed towards Indian Americans based on their culture.

In future interactions of the work, I would also use the framework to uncover the influence of social identifiers such as class and gender when understanding Indian American and South Asian American youth's experiences. I did not focus on these two identifiers in this study because the extant literature focuses heavily on gender differences and also because participants naturally discussed their nationality and their religion indicating to me that these were salient social identifiers to them. Also, given the current anti-foreigner, anti-immigrant sociopolitical climate of the U.S., I thought it was important to focus on these identifiers. However, a focus on gender and class could add to a more robust analysis especially because not all Indian Americans experience the stereotypical "patriarchial domination" associated with the sub-continent; gender oppression is much more nuanced. Also, a class analysis would be hugely beneficial for this population because many Indian Americans are not highly educated and wealthy as aggregate statistics and popular American discourse suggest. An added class analysis might reveal similarities between low-income Indian Americans and other racial minorities.

Finally, future work should apply the framework to different sub-groups in the South Asian racial/ethnic group to further disrupt monolithic notions of this population. As noted earlier, my Indian American, Christian participants had different experiences than those who are Indian, American, and Hindu and Indian, American, and Muslim. While I focused on Indian Americans, it is important to note that most of the research on South Asian Americans focuses heavily on Indian American experiences. There is a need to understand other South Asian American groups specifically Nepali American, Bhutanese American, and Sri Lankan American youths' experiences. These groups are

very under-researched in South Asian American literature. Applying the framework to different subgroups will also help uncover prominent racializations of South Asian Americans and show areas of similarities and differences amongst sub-groups. Understanding these similarities and differences can help uncover how racism and other interlocking oppressions impact groups and more specifically youths' schooling experiences differently.

Implications & Future Work

For Researchers

This study showed how participants valued the sociocultural aspects of school as much, if not more than the academic aspects. It also captured how the ways in which Indian Americans are racialized and stereotyped in U.S. society can influence Indian American youth's social interactions and non-academic activities in school. This topic is sorely underdeveloped in the current literature and more research is needed on Indian American youth's non-academic and social activities as related to their friendships, interactions with other Students of Color, and extracurricular activities. Uncovering these aspects of their lives can help provide a more holistic picture of Indian American youth's everyday lives and schooling experiences while challenging perceptions that these youth only focus on and care about academic achievement in the school context.

Likewise, this study unearthed how students' and teachers' perceptions of Indian American youth, beyond the model minority stereotype, influence these young people's schooling experiences. Specifically, it captured anti-foreigner and culturally "othering," views of participants. While some emerging research examines the shifts in the racialization of Indian Americans and South Asian Americans, more generally, more

research is needed to uncover how the relationship between race and culture informs deficit oriented and oppressive views of Indian Americans and South Asian Americans.

For Practitioners

This study showed the impact of how teachers who treated students fairly and with care, regardless of their racial/ethnic and cultural backgrounds, interacted with students in culturally sustaining ways. These teachers significantly contributed to participants' feelings of cultural implacement in school and, in several cases, helped them to better relate to the course content. Importantly, these teachers did not treat students based on **their** assumptions about Indian culture or how participants identified with Indian culture. Rather, they afforded participants opportunities to define their own experiences, feelings, and identities and developed caring and respectful personal relationships with them. Study findings highlight the importance of teachers taking the time to get to know them before ascribing characteristics to them. This is an important distinction because as Paris (2012) explains, "it is important that we do not essentialize and are not over-deterministic in our linkages of language and other cultural practices to certain racial and ethnic groups" (p. 95). As the student population in the nation's K-12 schools become more racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse, it would be beneficial for school administrators and teachers to adopt culturally sustaining pedagogies and practices in order to create inclusive and thriving school environments for all students regardless of their social identifiers.

Similarly, findings in this study revealed how **recent** Indian immigrant youth can have difficulties navigating American schools. All of the first or 1.5 generation immigrants in this study said they were never enrolled in ESOL programs or classes

because they already spoke English fluently. As a result, they had to adjust to new schooling norms, cultures, and practices without structural supports in school to help them. My study findings suggest that Indian American immigrant students could greatly benefit from cultural supports beyond ESOL to help them integrate into the school environment. These might include support groups in school to connect immigrant students with one another and intentional opportunities for administrators, teachers, and immigrant and U.S.-born students to discuss school climate and cultural issues pertaining to the inclusion of immigrant youth in classroom and social environments. Providing these kinds of supports is essential to helping Indian American immigrant youth experience cultural implacement in schools.

For Policymakers

This study showed how district policies implicitly upheld racially and culturally oppressive perceptions of Indian Americans, South Asian Americans, and Asian Americans more broadly. More specifically, findings revealed how official standards and curricula portrayed Indian American people as perpetual foreigners by altogether excluding their histories from U.S. History and English classes. They also framed Indian people as culturally "Other" by singularly focusing on colonialist Indian history and Indian books written by authors of European descent. Policymakers must eliminate deficit oriented portrayals of Indian and Indian American people from learning materials which suggest that their histories and cultures are inferior to those of White, Western groups. In a recollection of his British education, Palestinian scholar Edward Said (1991) explained, "Our culture was felt to be of a lower grade, perhaps even congenitally inferior and something of which to be ashamed" (p. 9). If unchanged, school district standards

and curricula that devalue Indian culture run the risk of similarly provoking feelings of shame and inferiority among Indian and Indian American students. Policymakers may want to consider creating decision-making committees composed of community members, teachers, administrators, students, and members of other relevant interest groups who can provide feedback from different perspectives to ensure respectful and accurate portrayals of Indians and Indian Americans in school curricula learning standards.

Conclusion

Participants' stories and accounts of others' perceptions of them revealed varying perceptions across the spaces they occupied. At home and in the community, findings unearthed culturally inclusive and nurturing perceptions of Indian American youth that helped them feel culturally implaced in these settings. Conversely in school, findings revealed racist and stereotypical perceptions of Indian American youth that not only culturally displaced them but discriminated against and culturally "Othered" them. Findings also revealed the role of district and school policies and practices in perpetuating racial/ethnic bias and stereotypical perceptions of Indian American and South Asian American students, more generally.

Participants' accounts of others' perceptions in home, school, and community importantly complicate notions of Indian Americans and South Asian Americans as "model minorities" to reveal that this population experiences discrimination. Their accounts also shed light on the current state of race relations and White supremacy in our communities and our broader society. As noted at the beginning, there has been a rise of visible racist, anti-immigrant, and anti-foreigner sentiments supported by the Trump

administration and these views are permeating communities and school boundaries to influence interpersonal interactions. This study showed how these racist, anti-immigrant, and anti-foreigner views and permeate school boundaries and contribute to oppressive views of Indian American youths as terrorists, perpetual foreigners, and of the "Orient."

Perhaps the major contribution of the study framework was its combination of race and post-colonial theories, spatiality, power, and intersectionality to reveal **how, why, where, and under what conditions** Indian American youth experienced these oppressive perceptions. Knowing such nuances of oppression is important in creating holistic policies and practices that advocate for culturally inclusive schools and communities. Without knowing these nuances and the power dynamics that contribute to system of privilege and subordination that undergirds oppression, we cannot change our schools and communities in ways that benefit all people.

While this study unearthed the difficult experiences that Indian American youth can experience in their schools and at times at home, I would be remiss if I did not point out the tremendous hope these youth had to change the world around them to make it an accepting place for **all** people. As one of my participants, Ashley, noted,

> There will be people that will look down upon you because you don't look like them. That's something that makes me upset but [it] makes me feel like I hope the world can change enough to stop something like that

Appendices

Appendix A: Literature Review-- U.S. Based Studies

Author/Year/Title	Type of Study (Qualitative or Quantitative)	Purpose of Study	Sample Composition
Asher, 2002, CLASS ACTS Indian American High School Students Negotiate Professional and Ethnic Identities	Qualitative; Interview based	Examines how class, race, ethnicity, and identity interact at the macro and micro levels to reify the model minority stereotype of Asian American students	10 Indian American high school students. Sample was drawn from two contrasting schools—a competitive public high school and a private school
Asher, 2008 (b), Listening to Hyphenated Americans: Hybrid Identities of Youth From Immigrant Families	Qualitative; Interviews, Observations based	Discusses how these students negotiate a range of identities as hyphenated Americans who encounter differences and contradictions at the dynamic intersections of race, culture, class, and gender at both home and school.	10 Indian American high school students. Sample was drawn from two contrasting schools—a competitive public high school and a private school
Bhattacharya, (2000), School Adjustment of South Asian Immigrant Children in the US	Qualitative; Interview Based	Examine school adjustment process of South Asian children who immigrated to US who had below average grades	75 immigrant children (specifically India, Bangladesh, Pakistan) ages 6-17 who were referred for failing grades. Lived in U.S. ranging from 6 mos. To 5 years
Durham (2004) Constructing the "new ethnicities": Media, sexuality, and diaspora identity in the lives of South Asian immigrant girls	Qualitative; Focus Group, Interview, Email Correspondence Based	Seeks an understanding of the role of media culture in the dual processes of coming of age and ethnocultural identification among first-generation South Asian immigrant teenage girls in the U.S.	Five immigrant, 2nd generation South Asian high and middle school girls. All were from All were from upper middle class homes, with parents in white-collar professions.
Farver, Narang, Bhadha, 2002(b), East Meets West: Ethnic Identity, Acculturation, and Conflict in Asian Indian Families	Quantitative; Survey based	Examines the influence of the family on adolescents' acculturation, ethnic identity achievement, and psychological functioning.	180 Asian Indian adolescents (99 girls, 81 boys) and their immigrant parents who lived in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. The adolescents were U.S.-born and ranged from 14 to 19 years of age (M 16.0, SD 1.8)
Fisher, Wallace, Fenton (2000)	Quantitative; Survey based	Examines youth of color responses to	177 participants in a competitive urban high

Discrimination During Adolescence		perceived discrimination	school; 13-19 years old, 8% was South Asian
Kao (1995) Asian Americans as model minorities? A look at their academic performance	Mixed Methods; Test Scores and Focus Group based	Compares Asian and white eighth graders on reading and math test scores to see if model minority image holds	Use the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) and three focus groups (one Asian, one Black, one Hispanic) with university college students.
Maira (2004) Youth culture, citizenship and globalization: South Asian Muslim youth in the United States after September 11th	Qualitative; Interview-based	Examines how US immigration and homeland security policies targeting Muslim immigrants affect South Asian Muslim youth's views of race, nationalism and citizenship	Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi immigrant students in Cambridge
Saran (2007) Model Minority Imaging in NY: Situation with 2nd generation Asian American Learners in Middle/Secondary Schools,	Qualitative; Ethnography	Examines complexities of model minority on South Asian students in school settings	Second generation Asian Indian students from two elite urban high schools, and one high performing middle school; first generation asian-indian parents, and school personnel.
Shankar (2008) Speaking like a Model Minority: "FOB" Styles, Gender, and Racial Meanings among Desi Teens in Silicon Valley	Qualitative; Ethnography	Discusses what it means to be a "model minority" linguistically by examining how language ideologies, class, and gender shape language use for Desi (South Asian American) teenagers in a Silicon Valley high school	1.5 and 2nd generation teens that included girls and boys of Punjabi, Gujarati, and Bangladeshi backgrounds who were born and raised in San Jose.
Shankar (2011) Style and Language Use among Youth of the New Immigration: Formations of Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Class in Everyday Practice	Qualitative; Ethnography	Examines how identities performed through language use gives insights into racial and ethnic formation, generational cohorts, acculturation, assimilation, and gender.	1.5 and 2nd generation teens that included girls and boys of Punjabi, Gujarati, and Bangladeshi backgrounds who were born and raised in San Jose.
Subramanian (2013) Gossip, drama, and technology: how South Asian American young	Qualitative; Case Study	Explore how young women use drama as a specific type of gossip	One participant of Muslim, Bangladeshi-American. 18-year-old woman growing up in an ethnic enclave in an urban center

Tummala-Narra, Deshpande, Kaur (2016) South Asian Adolescents' Experiences of Acculturative Stress and Coping	Qualitative; Interview based	Examines 1.5- and 2nd-generation South Asian adolescents' experiences of acculturative stress across different contexts (e.g., home, school), and approaches to coping with this stress.	16 participants (9 girls, 7 boys; ages 14–18 years) from different South Asian backgrounds, attending an urban public high school in the Northeastern part of the United States
Tummala-Narra & Sathasivam-Rueckert (2016) The Experience of Ethnic and Racial Group Membership Among Immigrant-Origin Adolescents	Qualitative; Interview and Focus Group based	Examines how racial minority immigrant-origin adolescents in an urban setting construct and negotiate experiences of their ethnic and racial group membership, acculturative stress, and approaches to coping with acculturative stress	64 adolescents (35 girls and 29 boys) at an urban public high school located in the Northeastern part of the United States. Participants were either immigrants or children of immigrants from Afro-Caribbean (e.g., Haitian), Asian, Latino/a, and South Asian backgrounds

Appendix B: Literature Review--Canadian Based Studies

Author/Year/Title	Type of Study (Qualitative or Quantitative)	Purpose of Study	Sample Composition
Bakshaei & Henderson (2016) Gender at the intersection with race and class in the schooling and wellbeing of immigrant-origin students	Mixed Methods; In-depth interviews, and parental questionnaire. In-depth interviews and anonymous parental questionnaire	Examines overall well-being and schooling experiences of South Asian girls in Quebec, French-language schools	17 teachers and non-teaching personnel (n = 17, see Table 1), as well as 9 female and 10 male students of South Asian origin (n = 19) composed in-school participants. An additional anonymous questionnaire aggregated parent perspectives (n=36)
Frost (2010) "Being Brown" in a Canadian suburb	Qualitative; Interview-based	Considers the construction of a "brown" identity among Punjabi young men living in Surrey, British Columbia	Interviews with 15 female and male students; along with school personnel belonging to a high school in Surrey.
Rajiva (2006) Brown Girls, White Worlds: Adolescence and the Making of Racialized Selves	Qualitative, Interview-based	Analyzes second-generation South Asian girls stories of difference making during adolscence examining the work done by peer culture, friends and even familyicommunity to remind girls of their racial and cultural difference.	10 second generation South Asian girls and women in Ontario (only focused on the adolscent girls views); all Indian and Pakistani and religious diversity (Hindu, Musilm, Sikh, Jain, and Christian
Ruck & Wortley (2002) Racial and Ethnic Minority High School Students' Perceptions of School Disciplinary Practices: A Look at Some Canadian Findings	Quantitative; Survey-based	Examines perceptions of differential treatment relating to school disciplinary practices in a racially and ethnically diverse sample of high school students.	1870 students from Grade 10 from 11 randomly selected high schools from a racially and ethnically diverse school district in the Metropolitan Toronto area of Ontario, Canada. The sample was 49% White or European descent, 18% Asian descent,14% Black or African descent, and 8% South Asian descent.
Talbani and Hasalani (2000) Adolescent females between tradition and	Qualitative; Interview-based	Examines the social and cultural experiences of adolescent female belonging to various	22 2nd generation, adolescent girls of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin in

modernity: gender role socialization in South Asian immigrant culture		South Asian immigrant groups in Canada	Montreal. Most participants born in Canada. 80% in high school; 20% had just graduated high school the year before
Tirone (1999) Racism, indifference, and the leisure experiences of South Asian Canadian teens	Qualitative; Focus group, Interview-Based.	Explores leisure in the lives of South Asian teens and young adults in Canada and the incidents of racism and indifference when they pursued leisure.	Adult children of immigrants from the South Asian countries of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. 2nd generation youth (age ranging from 15-22) of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and Christian religious backgrounds.
Tirone & Pedlar (2000) Understanding the Leisure Experiences of a Minority Ethnic Group: South Asian Teens and Young Adults in Canada	Qualitative; Focus-group, Interview-based	Explores leisure in South Asian youth's daily lives, their identities, and how they balance host and native cultures.	Fifteen people, 5 male and I 0 female, ranging in age from 15 to 22 years, with parents who immigrated to Canada, participated.

Appendix C: Literature Review--U.K. Based Studies

Author/Year/Title	Type of Study (Qualitative or Quantitative)	Purpose of Study	Sample Composition
Abbas (2003) The Impact of Religio-cultural Norms and Values on the Education of Young South Asian Women	Mixed Methods; Interviews and Survey based	Discusses educational attitudes, perspectives and experiences of young South Asian women in schools and colleges in the city of Birmingham, UK.	Takes place in Birmingham; six schools of the 52 young women of Muslim, Hindu, Sikh backgrounds.28 were Pakistani, 17 were Indian and seven were Bangladeshi; low, middle, high
Basit (2013) Educational capital as a catalyst for upward social mobility amongst British Asians: a three-generational analysis	Qualitative; Focus Group and Interview based	Examines intergenerational dynamics amongst British South Asians regarding education and family life.	The final sample of 36 comprised young people with ethnic origins in India and Pakistan, who were Muslim, Hindu or Sikh, their parents and grandparents. One young man was of dual Muslim/Hindu heritage
Crozier & Davies (2008) 'The trouble is they don't mix': self-segregation or enforced exclusion?	Qualitative; Interview based	Focuses on an aspect of the young people's school experience and reports that teachers constructed of the students' behaviour in terms of 'Asian gang culture'.	A total of 157 families and 69 teachers from 13 schools (38 teachers from five secondary and 31 teachers from eight primary) participated in the research.
Franceschelli & O'Brien (2015) 'Being modern and modest': South Asian young British Muslims negotiating multiple influences on their identity	Qualitative; Interview based	Examines how South Asian young Muslims living in England negotiate between the Muslim and British aspects of their identity.	South Asian, 2nd generation young British Muslim boys and girls aged 14–19 years attending secondary schools in London and one collge in Oldham.
Goodey (2001) The Criminalization of British Asian Youth: Research from Bradford and Sheffield	Qualitative; Interview based	Addresses the question of Asian criminality with reference to an 'incident of public disorder' and a 'riot', involving young British Pakistani males, in the British cities of Sheffeld and Bradford during the mid 1990s	Young Pakistani males in the Darnall district of Sheffeld
Islam (2008) Negotiating identities: the lives of Pakistani	Qualitative; Interview and Artifact based	Examines how multiple aspects of identity, such as ethnicity, disability	Six Pakistani and Bangladeshi disabled young people.

and **Bangladeshi young disabled people**		and gender, affect this population's identity and self image and how this makes their experiences different from white disabled young people and other minority groups' experience	
Malson, Marshall, and Woolettt et al (2002) Talking of Taste: A Discourse Analytic Exploration of Young Women's Gendered and Racialized Subjectivities in British Urban, Multicultural Contexts	Qualitative; Interview Based	How young women constitute their own and others' differently gendered, sexualized, and racialized identities and subjectivities.	15 young people, both men and women between 15 and 19 in urban UK.
Robinson (2009) Cultural Identity and Acculturation Preferences Among South Asian Adolescents in Britain: An Exploratory Study	Quantitative; Survey based	The study explores the extent to which South Asian adolescents identify with their ethnic culture and also with the larger society. It also examines their perceptions of the discrimination they face in British society	The ethnic composition of the sample consisted of 120 Indians and 120 Pakistanis
Stride (2016) Centralising space: the physical education and physical activity experiences of South Asian, Muslim girls	Qualitative; Artifact, observation, and Interview based	explores the physical education (PE) and physical activity experiences of a group of South Asian, Muslim girls, a group typically marginalised in PE and physical activity research.	Phase one involved observations of all 120 girls during PE over a 10-month period. Phase two, 23 girls worked in four focus groups, each group meeting once a week for a month during Personal, Social, Citizenship and Health Education lessons. Phase three consisted of in-depth interviews with 13 girls
Warikoo (2007) Racial authenticity among second generation youth in multiethnic New York and London	Mixed Methods; Ethnography and Survey based	Analyzes racial authenticity in the multiethnic context, by showing how second generation teenagers in New York and London evaluate and express racial authenticity among diverse peers.	20 (10 boys and 10 girls) second generation indians and 20 indo-carribeans attending a high school in New York. 20 (10 boys and 10 girls) second generation Indians attending a high school in London

Appendix D: Interview #1 Protocol

<u>**Photograph Debrief**</u>

For this interview we are going to go over each of your photographs. Please pick three photos from home, school, community that you would like to discuss. (For researcher: For each photo start with following questions:)

1) Can you describe what is in this photo and what we see in it (material)?

2) How would you describe this space (social and affective)?

3) Who do you share these spaces with? Can you describe how you interact with these people in this space?

   a. How do they influence how you feel about this space?

4) How do you think people in these spaces would describe you?

5) What are you like in this space?

   a. What about this photo describes you and your personality?

6) Why did you choose to photograph this space—why is it significant to you?

7) What would you change about the space and why?

   a. What would you keep about the space and why?

8) Are there other spaces that you did not photograph that are important to you? Can you tell me about why they are significant to you?

Is there anything else you would like to share with me about important spaces that I did not ask but would help me understand spaces you occupy better?

Appendix E: Interview #2 Protocol

<u>**Interview about Home, Space, and Community**</u>

In this interview we are going to talk more in-depth about your home, school, and community spaces.

Let's start with home

Home Space (some of these questions may be answered from photo debrief)

1. How do you describe your home to other people?

2. When you get home from school what do you typically do until you go to bed?

3. Who lives at home with you?

    Probe: material and social aspects of space

    a. How would these people describe you?

        i. Probe: identity categories: race, ethnicity, gender, etc

    b. How do they influence how you feel about home?

4. How would you describe yourself?

    a. How does your description of yourself differ from how family members describe you? And why?

    b. Does your home space make it easy or hard for you to express yourself? Why or why not?

        Probe: affective, material, and social aspects of space

        Probe: whether they contribute or create the space?

5. Do you and your parents talk about what it means to be Indian American? If so, what do you guys talk about in those conversations?

   a. Is it easy to have conversations about being Indian American with your

      family members? Why or why not?

6. Is being Indian American at home different than it is at school and within your

   community? Can you explain why or why not?

7. Is there anything or any other stories about home that you want to tell me about?

   It can be related to being Indian American or just in general that would be helpful

   for my understanding?

   Let's move on to school:

   School Space (make sure to hit these questions)

1. How do you describe your school to other people?

2. What's a typical day at school?

3. What's your favorite thing about school and why?

   Probe: material and social aspects of space, favorite class, favorite

teacher

4. Who are do you interact with at school?

   a. How do they influence how you feel about school?

   b. How would these people describe you? Do you think their descriptions

      have anything to do with you being Indian American?

   Probe: identifiers

5. What's your least favorite thing about school and why?

   Probe: material and social aspects of space

6. Who are some of your least favorite people at school and why?

   Probe: least favorite class, teacher

a. How do they influence how you feel about school?

b. How would they describe you? Do you think their descriptions have anything to do with you being Indian American?

Probe: identity categories

7. Do you think they would describe other people the same? Why or why not?

Probe: discrimination

8. How would you describe yourself at school?

a. What does being Indian American at school mean to you?

9. How does your description of yourself differ from how school peers describe you? And why?

a. Is being Indian American at school different than it is at home or in your community? Why or why not?

10. Does your school space make it easy for you to be yourself? In other words, do you feel like you fit in at school? Why or why not? Can you share about a specific time?

Probe: affective, material, and social aspects of space

Probe: whether they contribute or create the space?

11. Do you think there are things about home that influence what happens in school? Why or why not?

12. Do you think there are things about your community that influences what happens in school? Why or why not?

a. **Probe: for non-ethnic and ethnic**

13. Is there anything or any other stories about school that you want to tell me about? It can be related to being Indian American or just in general that you think would be helpful for my understanding?

Let's finish up with community space

Community Space

1. **How do you describe your community to other people?**

    Probe: for ethnic and non-ethnic

2. **What's a typical day like in this community?**

3. Who do you hang out with in this community?

    Probe: material and social aspects of space, Indian friends

    a. How do they influence how you feel about community?

    b. How would these people describe you? Is it related to you being Indian American

    Probe: identity categories

4. Are there other members of the community that you don't hang out with?

    Probe: material and social aspects of space

    a. How do they influence how you feel about your community?

    b. How would they describe you? Is it at all related to you being Indian American

    Probe: identity categories

5. How would you describe yourself within your community? What does being Indian American within your community mean?

    a. Are you part of an Indian community? Can you tell me what that's like?

    b. Is that different from the community where you live? Like your neighborhood?

6. Do you think your description is different from how community members describe you? Why or why not? Do you think it's related to you being Indian American?

7. Does your community space make it easy or hard for you to be yourself? Why or why not?

    Probe: affective, material, and social aspects of space

    Probe: whether they contribute or create the space?

    a. Is being Indian American within your community different than it is at home and within your school? Can you explain why or why not?

    b. If so, can you share about a specific time that you felt like you fit in? If not, can you share about a specific time where you felt out of place?

    Probe: who they interacted with, who was in the space, why they felt uncomfortable

8. Do you think there are things about school that influence what happens in your community?

9. Do you think there are things about your home that influences what happens in your community?

Is there anything or any other stories about community that you want to tell me about? It can be related to being Indian American or just in general that you think would be helpful for my understanding.

Appendix F: Initial Code lists

Descriptive Cycle of Coding Chart (First Cycle):

Home	School	Community
Parent	Teacher	Ethnic Community Member
Sibling	Peer	Residential Community Member
Other family members	Friends	Other Community Member
	Coach	
	Other School Members	

Analytic Cycle of Coding Chart (Second Cycle):

Intersectionality	Systemic Racism	Spatiality
Structural Intersectionality	Race	Power
Epistemic Oppression	Racism	Cultural Implacement
Social Identifiers	Interest Convergence	Cultural Displacement

Appendix G: Student Assent Form (Under 18)

STUDENT ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Project Title	*Investigating Social Perceptions of South Asian Youth in Home, School, and Community Spaces*
Purpose of the Study	*This research is being conducted by **Caroline Titan, a Ph.D. student under the supervision and advising of Dr. Tara Brown** at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because your insights as an Indian-American student in K-12 schools is valuable to shaping knowledge about South Asian American students schooling experiences. The purpose of this research project is understand how various home, school, and community spaces influence teacher, peer, parental, and non-ethnic, and ethic perceptions of South Asian American youth and how these perceptions influence youths' schooling experiences.*
Procedures	*The data for this project is collected from interviews with South Asian youth who can speak about the perceptions they face in home, school, and community environments, photos that South Asian youth take of the spaces (e.g. school, home, community) that they occupy, as well as publically accessible district documents, newspaper articles, and community blogs associated with perceptions of South Asian youth and general race, equity, and inclusion efforts within the school district.* *Procedures for photographs are as follows:* *I will provide you with a disposable camera and will ask you to take photos of places are significant to you. You will then turn in the disposable camera to me and I will develop the photos. These photos will not be seen by anyone else except my advisor and me. I will then in an interview, discuss the photos you took. In the interview, you will be expected to explain: 1) why they took these photos; 2) what they wanted to portray about themselves through these photos; and 3) what they would keep or change about these spaces.* *Procedures for interviews are as follows:* *As a participant you will be asked to participate in two interviews each about 1 to 1.5 hour. These interviews will be conducted in-person with me and I will audiotape them using a recording device on my computer. These interviews will only be audiotaped so that I can transcribe them later. The first interview itself will be two parts: the first part will consist of structured questions I developed to discuss the photographs you took and the second will be free response in which you are encouraged to share your own personal schooling experiences. An example of a question would be: "How does your description of yourself differ from how your schooling*

	peers describe you? And why?" The second interview will be to ask any questions we did not get to in the first interview and to ask follow-up questions to clarify any answers you provided in the first interview. The structured questions for both interviews will be provided to you at least three days in advance of the interview. You are encouraged to review them and ask me if you have any questions as they come to mind. Once the interview is complete and transcribed, you will have the opportunity to review the transcript for any discrepancies in the information. *To maintain confidentiality, all identifiers and names for interviews and photographs will be replaced with pseudonyms so that comments and quotes cannot be traced back to the participant. Likewise, photographs will not be included in study findings and subsequent paper. Only students' descriptions of photographs will be included in the data analysis section.*
Potential Risks and Discomforts	*There may be some risks from participating in this research study. You, depending on the schooling experiences they share, may experience sadness, anger, resentment conjured up from reliving schooling experiences. However, direct risks associated with participant statements and comments will be accounted for by removal of personal identifiers (i.e. personal name, school name, district name, church name) in study findings and subsequent dissertation. Likewise, your photographs will not be included in the dissertation but descriptions of your photographs will be described in the data analysis section. Identifiers (specifically names) of people or the specific space (e.g. Burns Park) featured in the photos will be left out. The intention of doing so is to protect you from having their comments traced back to you.* *Please note at any time, if you experience discomfort during the photo collection assignment or interviews you may stop participating, ask me to stop recording so that I do not audiotape your comments, ask to skip questions, or ask to not take photos. You are encouraged to tell me when you feel discomfort at any point of participating in this study.*
Potential Benefits	*There are no direct benefits from participating in this research. However, possible benefits may include improving schooling practice between South Asian youth and teachers since the dynamics of teacher-student relationships will be explored in this study. Likewise, benefits may include better understanding of schooling, home, and community resources that could support South Asian youth in their schooling. We hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of South Asian youth's schooling experiences and the need for schooling policies to promote positive schooling experiences for South Asian youth.*

Confidentiality	*Any potential loss of confidentiality will be minimized by the removal of all names and identifiers. For example, your name, your friends' names, school names, church names, and localities will be replaced with pseudonyms. Changing all names and identifiers is meant to protect you from having your comments, views, and opinions traced back to you.*
	Data collected from interviews (includes audiotapes, transcriptions, field notes, notes on interviews) will be stored in a folder on a password protected laptop. Photographs will also be scanned and stored in a folder on my password protected laptop. All identifiers within transcripts and data will be changed to pseudonyms. My advisor, Tara Brown, will see portions of the interview transcriptions to help make me sense of findings. But she will see transcriptions with pseudonyms. Likewise, if photographs do not have people in it she will see them in order to help me make sense of what I am seeing as it relates to my research questions. Only I, as the principal investigator, will have access to the original interviews. All data collected within this study will be destroyed six years after the study concludes.
	If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law. Possible exceptions to confidentiality include cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. If there is reason to believe that a child has been abused or neglected, we are required by law to report this suspicion to the proper authorities.
Right to Withdraw and Questions	**Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you cannot participate in this study or if stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which they otherwise qualify.**
	If your decide to stop taking part in the study, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report an injury related to the research, please contact the investigator:
	Caroline Titan ***3119 Benjamin Building*** ***College Park, MD 20742*** *ctitan@umd.edu* ***443-472-3865*** ***Dr. Tara Brown (advisor)*** ***3119 Benjamin Building***

	College Park, MD 20742 ***tmbrown@umd.edu*** ***301-405-3324***
Participant Rights	*If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact:* University of Maryland College Park Institutional Review Board Office 1204 Marie Mount Hall College Park, Maryland, 20742 E-mail: irb@umd.edu Telephone: 301-405-0678 *This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.*
Statement of Assent	*Your signature indicates that you are under 18 years of age; you have read this assent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.* ***Providing your signed assent means that you agree to participate in this study so long as you parent(s) sign a consent form for participation. Since you are under 18 you must have a parent or legal guardian sign a consent form in order to participate in this study. You will receive a copy of this signed assent form.*** *If you agree to participate, please sign your name below.*
Signature and Date	**NAME OF PARTICIPANT** **[Please Print]**	
	SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT	
	CHECK BOX IF OKAY TO AUDIO-RECORD INTERVIEW	
	DATE	

Appendix H: Parental Consent Form (Student Under 18)

PARENTAL CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Project Title	*Investigating Social Perceptions of South Asian Youth in Home, School, and Community Spaces*
Purpose of the Study	*This research is being conducted by **Caroline Titan, a Ph.D. student under the supervision and advising of Dr. Tara Brown** at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting your child to participate in this research project because their insights as an Indian-American student in K-12 schools is valuable to shaping knowledge about South Asian American students schooling experiences. The purpose of this research project is understand how various home, school, and community spaces influence teacher, peer, parental, and non-ethnic, and ethic perceptions of South Asian American youth and how these perceptions influence youths' schooling experiences.*
Procedures	*The data for this project is collected from photos that South Asian youth take of the spaces (e.g. school, home, community) that they occupy, interviews with South Asian youth who can speak about the perceptions they face in home, school, and community environments, as well as publically accessible school and district documents, newspaper articles, and community blogs associated with perceptions of South Asian youth and general race, equity, and inclusion efforts within the school district.* *Procedures for photographs are as follows:* *I will provide your child with a disposable camera and will ask them to take photos of places significant to them. Your child will then turn in the disposable camera to me and I will develop the photos. These photos will not be seen by anyone else except my advisor and me. I will then in an interview, discuss the photos your child took. In the interview, your child will be expected to explain: 1) why they took these photos; 2) what they wanted to portray about themselves through these photos; and 3) what they would keep or change about these spaces.* *Procedures for interviews are as follows:* *As a participant your child will be asked to participate in two interviews each about 1 to 1.5 hour. These interviews will be conducted in-person with me and I will audiotape them using a recording device on my computer. These interviews will only be audiotaped so that I can transcribe them later. The first interview itself will be two parts: the first part will consist of structured questions I developed to discuss the photographs your child took and the second will be free response in which they are encouraged to share their own personal schooling experiences. An example of a question I will ask your child would be: "How does your description*

	of yourself differ from how your schooling peers describe you? And why?". The second interview will be to follow up on any questions we did not get to in the first interview and to ask follow-up questions to clarify any answers your child provided in the first interview. The structured questions for both interviews will be provided to your child at least three days in advance of the interview. I will encourage your child to review them and ask me any questions as they come to mind. Once the interviews are complete and transcribed, I will invite your child the opportunity to review the transcript for any discrepancies in the information. *To maintain confidentiality, all identifiers and names for interviews and photographs will be replaced with pseudonyms so that comments and quotes cannot be traced back to the participant. Likewise, photographs will not be included in study findings and subsequent paper. Only students' descriptions of photographs will be included in the data analysis section.*
Potential Risks and Discomforts	*There may be some risks from participating in this research study. Your child, depending on the schooling experiences they share, may experience sadness, anger, and resentment conjured up from reliving schooling experiences. However, direct risks associated with participant statements and comments will be accounted for by removal of personal identifiers (i.e. personal name, school name, district name, church name) in study findings and subsequent dissertation. Likewise, your child's photographs will not be included in the dissertation but descriptions of their photographs will be described in the data analysis section. Identifiers (specifically names) of people or the specific space (e.g. Burns Park) featured in the photos will be left out. The intention of doing so is to protect your child from having their comments traced back to them.* *Please note at any time, if your child experiences discomfort during the photo collection assignment or interviews, they may stop participating, ask me to stop recording so that I do not audiotape their comments, ask to skip questions, or ask to not take photos. Your child is encouraged to tell me when they feel discomfort at any point of participating in this study.*
Potential Benefits	*There are no direct benefits from participating in this research. However, possible benefits may include improving schooling practice between South Asian youth and teachers since the dynamics of teacher-student relationships will be explored in this study. Likewise, benefits may include better understanding of schooling, home, and community resources that could support South Asian youth in their schooling. We hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of South Asian youth's schooling experiences and the need for schooling policies to promote positive schooling experiences for South Asian youth.*

Confidentiality	*Any potential loss of confidentiality will be minimized by the removal of all names and identifiers. For example, your child's name, their friends' names, school names, church names, and localities will be replaced with pseudonyms. Likewise, your name will also be changed to pseudonyms. Changing all names and identifiers is meant to protect youth from having their comments, views, and opinions traced back to them.* *Data collected from interviews (includes audiotapes, transcriptions, field notes, notes on interviews) will be stored in a folder on a password protected laptop. Photographs will also be scanned and stored in a folder on my password protected laptop. All identifiers within transcripts and data will be changed to pseudonyms. My advisor, Tara Brown, will see portions of the interview transcriptions to help make me sense of findings. But she will see transcriptions with pseudonyms. Likewise, if photographs do not have people in it she will see them in order to help me make sense of what I am seeing as it relates to my research questions. Only I, as the principal investigator, will have access to the original interviews. All data collected within this study will be destroyed six years after the study concludes.* *If we write a report or article about this research project, your child's identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your child's information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law. Possible exceptions to confidentiality include cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. If there is reason to believe that a child has been abused or neglected, we are required by law to report this suspicion to the proper authorities.*
Right to Withdraw and Questions	***Your child's participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose for your child to not take part at all. If you decide to provide consent for your child to participate in this research, you and your child may choose to stop participating at any time. If you decide to not provide consent for your child to participate in this study or if you or your child choose to stop participating at any time, you and your child will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.*** *If you or your child decide to stop taking part in the study, if you or your child have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you or your child need to report an injury related to the research, please contact the investigator:* ***Caroline Titan*** ***3119 Benjamin Building*** ***College Park, MD 20742***

<table>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ctitan@umd.edu
443-472-3865

Dr. Tara Brown (advisor)
3119 Benjamin Building
College Park, MD 20742
tmbrown@umd.edu
301-405-3324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Rights</td>
<td>If you or your child have questions about your child's rights as a research participant or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact:

University of Maryland College Park
Institutional Review Board Office
1204 Marie Mount Hall
College Park, Maryland, 20742
E-mail: irb@umd.edu
Telephone: 301-405-0678

This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Consent</td>
<td>Your signature indicates that you are providing consent for your child who is under 18 years of age; you have read this consent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you voluntarily agree for your child to participate in this research study. You will receive a copy of this signed consent form.

If you agree for your child to participate, please sign your name below.</td>
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