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Improving particular communities responsiveness to family violence: combining research, programme development & evaluation

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Improving particular communities responsiveness to family violence: combining research, programme development & evaluation

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Samson Tse

Conflict of interest statement

All members of the research team involved in the present project and production of the Report are employed by The University of Auckland.

The project team declares no conflict of interests to this research project.

Disclaimer

This Report summarises key findings on the topic of family violence for particular communities. Members of the research team have taken all care to accurately capture and interpret the views of research participants while maintaining their privacy and confidentiality.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context

There has been limited research conducted on family violence in Asian communities within the cultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand. Little is known about the factors that trigger family violence in Asian communities in New Zealand, and the consequences of violent behaviours at home, particularly the impacts on women, men, children and family/friends. More importantly though, how can a strength-based approach be utilised to prevent the occurrence of family violence in Asian communities and reduce its impacts on families, relatives and friends in New Zealand?

Aims

The overall aim of this project is to utilise a capacity building approach to address issues surrounding family violence in the immigrant and refugee communities in New Zealand. The specific objectives of this project are to: 1) explore the contextual issues of social, cultural and economic factors related to family violence, 2) develop and improve understanding of the range of needs of those affected by family violence, 3) identify gaps between the needs and services available, 4) identify and articulate community (and family) cultural/belief systems and mechanisms for responding to the needs of those affected by family violence, 5) identify any underlying positive aspects such as creativity, leadership building, and how these aspects could contribute to preventing family violence, and 6) develop a process by which women, men and children can build their capacity and capabilities to increase community awareness and responsiveness to reduce/prevent family violence in Asian communities.

Methods

The study progressed through three stages:

- (1) Systematic review of relevant local and international literature on family violence among Asian immigrants;
- (2) Field work: i) individual interviews involving people of Asian ethnicities (migrants from China, South Asian and South East Asian region) who used family violence services, ii) key informant interviews with practitioners working in the family violence field, and iii) focus groups involving service users, practitioners and trainees;
- (3) Drawing on information and analysis from field work, develop a set of recommendations including a range of actions to improve community responsiveness and enhance prevention activities around family violence in New Zealand Asian communities.

Findings

Information from the interviews and focus groups was organised around five issues, namely - "what triggers family violence", "impacts of family violence", "barriers in tackling family violence in Asian communities", "strengths and capacities in preventing and reducing family violence" and "gaps and needs". Themes emerging from interviews and focus groups were generally consistent with the overseas findings of family violence studies among Asian immigrants.

This study identified a range of factors, causes and triggers for family violence within New Zealand Asian communities. The key important issues are related to difficulties in adjusting to living in a new country, in particular, finding suitable employment and financial hardship. Men's dominance in some Asian families remains a concern, especially when men see control or abuse over their wives as a last resort to protect their cultural values and traditions. The power men hold over their immigrant wife's residency status, coupled with the racism and discrimination some women experienced in this study when they attempted to find paid jobs or solve their financial dependency issues, put women at extreme risk of abuse and violence.

The effects of family violence on individuals are far reaching. In the case of the Asian immigrant communities, family violence impacts not only on immediate family members, relatives and parents in New Zealand, but also extended family members in their country of origin.

The barriers in preventing or dealing with family violence in Asian communities are related to the perception that family violence is a private matter among Asian peoples, the women's desire to keep the marriage/relationship intact, absence of witnesses, and limited responsiveness and capacity within the Asian communities. On the other hand, the strengths and capacities in preventing and reducing family violence are found within individual women, the immediate neighbourhood, existing organisations and family violence services as a collective.

The gaps and needs analysis focused on what is needed to prevent family violence, to provide effective crisis interventions and finally to help women or families return to communities. All these require concerted efforts across various government agencies and community organisations, for example, involving immigration services, police, legal services, social welfare services, employment agencies, education to improve immigrants' language skills, counselling and clinical services.

Conclusions

This project is believed to be one of the few studies on family violence in Asian communities in Aotearoa New Zealand. This study demonstrated the collaborative efforts between university-based researchers, community agencies and government ministries to work together with people from diverse backgrounds to examine issues related to Asian culture, beliefs and post-immigration adjustments. Aspects of the present study were exploratory and have methodological limitations that preclude generalisation of the findings to the wider Asian population. However, the convergence of certain findings from the literature review, individual interviews and focus groups, suggest that they provide a useful snapshot on family violence among Asian peoples in the New Zealand context. By referring to the *Te Rito: New Zealand family violence prevention strategy* (Ministry of Social Development, 2002) document, a set of specific recommendations was made in this report.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The World Health Organisation states that at least one in five of the world's female population has been physically or sexually abused by a man or men at some time in their life. Many women affected by family violence suffer from unstable conditions: nervousness, intense anger and some may also suffer severe personality difficulties and mental illness (Crites & Coker, 1988; Rosewater, 1993). Furthermore, international research indicates that children witnessing family violence carry a 50% risk of being either a victim or a perpetrator of family violence in their adult life (Hughes, Parkinson & Vargo, 1989; Ministry of Social Development, 2002).

Whilst there is some research on family violence in Pacific, Maori and Pakeha communities, there is limited research conducted on family violence in Asian communities within the cultural context of New Zealand. Little is known about the factors that trigger family violence in Asian communities in Aotearoa New Zealand, and the consequences of violent behaviours at home, particularly the impacts on women, men, children and family/friends. More importantly, how can a strength-based approach be utilised to prevent the occurrence of family violence in Asian communities and reduce its horrific impacts on families, relatives and friends in New Zealand?

1.2 Definitions of key terms: setting the scope of the study

1.2.1 Family violence

Family violence refers to:

“A broad range of controlling behaviours, commonly of a physical, sexual, and/or psychological nature, that typically involve fear, intimidation and emotional deprivation. It occurs within a variety of close interpersonal relationships, such as between partners, parents and children, siblings, and in other relationships where significant others are not part of the physical household but are part of the family and/or are fulfilling the function of family” (Ministry of Social Development, 2002, p. 8, cited from the Domestic Violence Act 1995).

Family violence is about power and control. It is: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, isolation, intimidation, using male privilege, threats - threatening, committing, reporting, using the children, and verbal abuse. (Excerpted from the Family Violence Prevention Coordinating Committee, 1987)

The “*New Zealand family violence prevention strategy*” document also includes a list of common forms of violence in families/whanau (see p. 8):

- Spouse/partner abuse

- Child abuse/neglect
- Elder abuse/neglect
- Parental abuse
- Sibling abuse

For the purpose of this report, the term “family violence” over other commonly used terms like “domestic violence” or “intimate partner violence”, is adopted for two important reasons. First, in the context of this study, the family is considered to be the basic unit of analysis, whereas the term “domestic violence” usually takes the stance that the abused woman is considered as the unit of analysis (Kurz, 1989). The “family” is a system of social relations with unique properties that make it a particularly fertile ground for violence (Gelles, 1993). It is asserted that the triggers for spouse abuse lies in the structure of the contemporary family structure (Kurz, 1989). Second, the notion of “family violence” has greater salience or “buy in” with Asian communities, given that Asian traditions in general regard the family as the fundamental unit of society and source of strength at the time of adversity, such as the experience of family violence. Among Asian peoples in general, a family member’s problems are often considered a threat to the balance or harmonised relationships of the family unit.

The primary focus of this study is “spouse/partner abuse” (violence among adult partners), which was useful in limiting the scope for the present study.

1.2.2 Targeted population: who are the “Asian peoples”?

Ethnicity in New Zealand is defined in relation to relationships that have evolved historically. Understanding of the past and the way concepts of race and ethnicity have evolved in New Zealand requires an understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, New Zealand’s founding constitutional document. Te Tiriti o Waitangi provides the structure and context of ethnic relationships and how ethnicity is now defined in New Zealand. Maori have been defined and redefined in New Zealand and the case now is that ethnicity is not defined by blood descent, but by self identification (University of Auckland, 2005).

The term “Asian” in its simplest sense refers to someone with origins in the Asian continent. However, Statistics New Zealand uses the term “Asian” to describe peoples with origins in the Asian continent, but excludes peoples originating in the Middle East and Central Asia. Peoples classified as “Asian” in New Zealand have diverse languages, cultures, religious and political backgrounds, and social and health needs. For the purpose of this report, the term “Asian peoples” is used to represent the diversity and plurality within the Asian communities.

More specifically, this project focuses on South Asians and Chinese. “South Asians” refers to people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Indian-Fijians. “Chinese” covers individuals from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the South-east Asian region such as Malaysia or Singapore. Within the Asian population, the immigrant communities are the focal point of the present investigation. The reason for choosing the South Asian peoples and Chinese immigrants as the scope for the present study is that they are the two largest

population groups under the umbrella term “Asian” in New Zealand. Furthermore, 70% of Chinese and 59% of Indians had been residents in New Zealand for less than 10 years. In other words, the majority of them are classified as recent immigrants (people born overseas who have arrived in New Zealand in the last ten years) to Aotearoa New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). Also, two-thirds of the Asian population live in the Auckland urban area (Statistics New Zealand, 2002).

1.3 Aims, Objectives and Comments

There is no specific research on the nature, causes and consequences of various forms of violence in the family and how it impacts on Asian women, men and children. The overall aim of this project is to utilise a capacity building approach to address issues surrounding family violence in the immigrant and refugee communities in New Zealand.

The specific objectives of this project are:

1. To explore the contextual issues of social, cultural and economic causes and consequences of family violence and to do a comparison with the wider social and legal understanding of family violence as relevant.

Comments: This objective was achieved by interviewing women, men and family members who were affected by family violence. See Section 4.1 & 4.2 in the results section.

2. To develop and improve understanding of the range of needs of those affected by family violence (including the immediate and long term needs). This will include those who are victims/survivors, those who perpetrate, and relatives/friends, with a differential analysis by age, gender and any other relevant factors. This project also involved service providers from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines.

Comments: This objective was also achieved. Please refer to Section 4.5 for details.

3. To identify gaps between the needs spectrum identified and services available by mapping the range of existing services (including both culturally specific and more generic services).

Comments: This objective was also achieved. Please refer to Section 4.5 for details.

4. To identify and articulate community (and family) cultural/belief systems and mechanisms for responding to the needs of those affected by family violence.

Comments: This objective was also achieved. Please refer to Section 4.2 and 4.3 for details.

5. To identify any underlying positive aspects such as creativity, leadership building, willingness to negotiate, understanding of others, spirituality, responsibility, autonomy, self-determination and confidence, and how these aspects could contribute to preventing family violence.

Comments: This objective was achieved. Please refer to Section 4.4 for details.

6. To develop a process by which women, men and children can build their capacity and capability to increase community awareness and responsiveness to reduce/prevent family violence in Asian communities.

Comments: This objective was achieved. Please refer to Section 4.4 and 5.3 for details.

1.4 Implementation process

Research was designed in three stages to take account of the existing knowledge of family violence in particular ethnic communities in New Zealand's socio economic and cultural context. This research design seeks to identify the socio-cultural background of family violence and behavioural dimensions, and also to analyse broader population-level factors such as income, socio-economic deprivation, employment, isolation and language barriers.

Stage 1: Contextual Analysis

Major tasks were:

- To review existing literature to understand how family violence creates obstacles for immigrant women to significant participation in New Zealand life. The review covered Te Rito, major databases and internet searches to identify research work on family violence. Researchers were contacted and consulted on major issues. Emerging research themes were developed through a critical literature review.
- To develop a framework/methodology to study family violence against Asian women.
- To prepare and pilot test guidelines for interviewing key informants and individuals affected by family violence, and for facilitating focus group discussion. One of the major tasks of this stage was to build rapport and trusting and confidential relationships with relevant community groups, service providers and prospective research participants. Research participants were selected from the Chinese and South Asian ethnic groups.

Stage 2: Data Collection

This stage concentrated on three aspects of data: 1) Women's perception and experiences of living in safe houses and challenges facing them to return to their communities; 2) Community and family perceptions of women's (re)integration; 3) Roles of safe houses and family violence support services in general, and how women and children could be better supported to return to their communities through an empowerment-oriented approach.

Stage 3: Move Forward

The study was designed to assess different factors that influence the incidences of family violence in New Zealand Asian communities. Research data were analysed considering different factors, inter-relationships and consequences. The recommendations include a range of actions to improve

community responsiveness and enhance prevention activities against family violence in Asian communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Reviews on triggers (or in some case, causes) of family violence and its impacts on individuals and families have been extensively studied and documented in literature nationally and internationally. Therefore, basic information on family violence is mentioned only briefly in this chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to provide coverage of pertinent issues specific to family violence in two groups, namely the Asian immigrant population - the South Asian and Chinese people who are the target group of the present study. This chapter does not cover materials on preventive measures and crisis intervention services, which will be part of the discussion and recommendations chapter at the end of the present report.

2.2 Brief background information on family violence

Materials covered in this section were adopted from a recent report titled "*Beyond zero tolerance: Key issues and future directions for family violence work in New Zealand*", facilitated by the Families Commission New Zealand, and prepared by the first advisor to this project (Fanslow, 2005).

2.2.1 Forms of Family Violence

Family violence may involve a combination of the following forms: physical abuse, psychological, sexual and financial/economic abuse (Flanagan, 2003, Table 1). Victims subject to any form of violence can find themselves in a life-threatening, vulnerable and helpless situation (Dutton, 1992).

Table 1: Four forms of family violence

Forms of family violence or abuse	
Physical abuse	Push, grab, shove, slap, kick, bite, hit with fist or an object, try to hit with an object, beat up, burn, choke, injure enough to need medical attention, injure enough to keep out of work/school, force sexual activities, shot or stab/cut, deprive of sleep
Psychological abuse	Intimidation, verbal abuse, humiliation, put-downs, ridiculing, control of victim's movement, stalking, threats, threatening to hurt victim's family and children, social isolation, ignoring needs or complaints
Sexual abuse	Rape, different forms of sexual assault, such as forced masturbation, fellatio, oral coitus, sexual humiliation, perpetrator refuses to use contraceptives, coerced abortions
Financial/ Economic abuse	Withholding of money, refusal to allow victim to open bank account, all property is in the perpetrator's name, victim is not allowed to work

2.2.2 Factors associated with men involved in family violence

The “*World Report on Violence and Health*” summarises the risk factors associated with male perpetrators in family violence (Table 2). There are three major limitations of the analysis - 1) The investigation is still at the early stage of development, thus certain important factors might still be missing. For instance, Muelleman and associates (2002) found that there was a statistically significant relationship between problem gambling and intimate partner violence among women presenting to emergency departments in the United States. 2) Some of these factors may be correlates rather than causes of violence against intimate partners. 3) It is unclear how these four levels of factors interact with each and their relative weighting in determining the occurrence of family violence.

Table 2: Summary of factors associated with a man’s risk for abusing his partner¹

Personal factors	Relationship factors	Community factors	Societal factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young age • Heavy drinking • Depression • Personality disorder • Low academic achievement • Low income • Witnessing or experiencing violence as a child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marital conflict • Marital instability • Male dominance in the family • Economic stress • Poor family functioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak community sanctions against violence • Poverty • Low social capital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional gender norms • Social norms supportive of violence

2.2.3 Health consequences of violence against an intimate partner

Table 3 shows the health consequences of intimate partner violence as summarised by the “*World Report on Violence and Health*”. Not listed in this summary include: 1) social consequences associated with family violence, including increased use of healthcare and social services; 2) effects on family, friends and relatives; 3) indirect costs to individuals affected by family violence, for example loss of productivity.

Table 3: Health consequences of intimate partner violence²

Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abdominal/thoracic injuries • Bruises & welts • Chronic pain syndromes • Chronic disease • Disability • Fibromyalgia • Fractures • Gastrointestinal disorders
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¹ World report on violence and health (Krug et al., 2002), cited in Fanslow, 2005, p. 42.

² World report on violence and health (Krug et al., 2002), cited in Fanslow, 2005, p. 40-41.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritable bowel syndrome • Lacerations & abrasions • Ocular damage • Reduced physical functioning
Sexual & reproductive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gynaecological disorders • Infertility • Pelvic inflammatory disease • Pregnancy complications/miscarriage • Sexual dysfunction • Sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDs • Unsafe abortion • Unwanted pregnancy
Psychological and behavioural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol and drug abuse • Depression and anxiety • Eating and sleep disorders • Feelings of shame and guilt • Phobias and panic disorders • Physical inactivity • Poor self-esteem • Post-traumatic stress disorder • Psychosomatic disorder • Smoking • Suicidal behaviour and self-harm
Other consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced ability to obtain and retain paid employment

2.2 Cultural perspective on family violence

Counts (1990) pointed out that if individuals want to understand the nature of family violence in other societies/cultures, the perception of the people we study must take precedence over definitions derived from Western experience. For example, in 1997 The Ministry of Education, New Zealand, sent a circular to the school boards of trustees advising that “the use of force towards a child or young person, by way of correction or punishment, is prohibited by any person employed by school boards or the management of early childhood centres. Any use of force is an assault under the Crimes Act 1961” (Minister of Education Circular, 1997/12). In many villages in Asian countries, school teachers still hold sticks in the school class room and use them on the hands of children for being absent in the class or not completing his/her assigned tasks. However, it has to be cautioned that one should not tolerate violence towards women and children in the name of preserving certain vaguely defined “cultural values and practices”.

Culture, race and ethnicity influence forms and beliefs about family violence. Women victims may share some commonalities in the battering events, but their perception of events may be interpreted in different ways, under the

influence of cultural value systems. Life experiences and the perception of various events among migrant women from Asian countries are likely to be different from Western women. Although gender and associated power issues impact on all women, other challenges such as language barriers, different cultural value systems and experiences of racism and discrimination faced by Asian immigrant women may make their interpretation of events somewhat different from Western women. For example, Yick and Agbayani (1999) found that Chinese American university students were less likely to define dating violence as a form of psychological or emotional abuse compared to their Western student counterparts (Gonzalez, 1996). Anecdotal reports from service providers in the United States showed that African American women are less likely to report abuse to police because they fear maltreatment of the perpetrator by the police (Yick & Agbayani, 1999). Another set of research showed that American Latinos are reluctant to seek assistance from social services because of cultural and institutional barriers (Torres, 1991). Traditional Asian cultural value systems may prevent women victims from disclosing abusive relationships because it would lead to the “loss of face” of the family and community concerned. Asian women tend to believe revealing abusive relationships at home will only “ruin the family”, which in turn hinders help-seeking behaviours. Many Asian American family violence victims are ashamed of the abuse and feel that the disclosure of the abuse would not only bring shame to themselves, but also to the entire family (Easteal, 1996).

In New Zealand, Synergy Applied Research (1988) conducted a study on attitudes to family violence across the Pakeha, Maori and Pacific Island communities.

Within the Pakeha stream, research respondents included physical, verbal, mental and emotional violence in their definition of family violence, as well as sexual aggression towards women and children. It was also mentioned that violence was about power, dominance or one person deliberately trying to harm another.

From the Maori perspective, family violence was focused on the area of physical abuse. Upon further probing from researchers, research participants revealed that family violence was thought of as a multi-faceted phenomenon manifested physically, spiritually, mentally and sexually. They also considered the multi-faceted manifestation was inter-related. For example, when a person is abused physically, his/her mental and spiritual health is affected as well.

The Pacific Island participants in the Synergy Applied Research believed family violence should include violation of rights or suppressed feelings and the “robbing” of someone's self esteem, as well as physical and aggressive behaviour.

To sum up, how family violence is defined and the associated help-seeking behaviour varies from culture to culture. However, one should not hide family violence behind a “cultural smoke screen” and tolerate any abusive relationships or violent behaviours in Asian migrant families.

2.3 Family violence and Asian communities in New Zealand

2.3.1 Background

The increasingly diverse immigration to New Zealand caught momentum following changes to legislation in 1987 and 1991 which removed a bias in favour of British and West Europeans who were considered “preferred sources” of migrant population in New Zealand. Population statistics have shown a twofold increase in the Asian population between 1991 and 2001. Based on the 2001 census results, the Asian ethnic group comprised 6.6% of the resident population at 30 June 2001, compared with 3% in 1991 (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). This rapid growth will have impacts on the host population, particularly the health delivery system, because of the suddenness of the phenomenon and possible language and cultural barriers between clients presenting to health services and health workers.

Within the New Zealand Asian population, Chinese make up the largest ethnic group (44%), followed by Indian (26%) and Korean (8%) (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). The incremental increase in the Asian population has been mainly due to large migration gains. It is significant that only 11.3% of the Asian population in New Zealand was born in New Zealand.

2.3.2 How serious is the problem?

Internationally, a comprehensive study on family violence among Asian immigrants in a host society has yet to be conducted. To date there are only small-scale studies, usually with major limitations such as non-randomised sampling methods, lack of standardised measures and use of loosely-defined terms. However the following studies may give a useful indication of what the scale of the problem might look like.

Of women killed in domestic violence-related homicides in California County between 1993 and 1997, 31% of them were Asian Pacific American women. In 2000, seven domestic violence-related homicides were reported in Hawaii. Five of the seven women killed were Filipino. This statistic is disproportionately high given that Filipinos only represent 12.3% of Hawaii's total population (National Asian Pacific American, undated). The “*National Violence Against Women Survey Asian/ Pacific Islanders Women in the United States*” revealed that 49.6% had experienced physical assault, and 6.5% had been victims of rape in their lifetimes. A local survey in Massachusetts showed 25-30% of all participants knew at least one Asian American woman who had been a victim of some form of abuse. In Los Angeles County, Korean families experience very high rates of domestic violence among all the diverse Asian groups. Korean women account for the majority of the domestic violence victims in the Asian American Battered Women's Shelter in Los Angeles. Furthermore data from informal focus groups in Seattle, Washington, estimates up to 30% of Chinese families have experienced some form of family violence.

Closer to New Zealand, Australian research suggests that overseas-born males are more likely to commit partner homicide than would be expected from their counterparts in the general community (Easteal, 1993). This may reflect a higher rate of domestic violence among overseas-born women. The following are additional observations.

Scale of the problem:

- The burden of sexual violence and intimate partner violence against Asian immigrant women may be comparable to, or higher than, the broader population of women and even greater than recorded data (e.g. see the above small-scale studies from the United States)
- Asian immigrant women are less likely than other ethnic groups to detect and perceive certain behaviours as abusive actions due to cultural norms
- Some young Asian women lack knowledge about sexual violence and rape between two people who are in a relationship

Under-reported cases and under-utilisation of services:

- A culture of silence and shame shared by many Asian ethnic groups contributes to the underreported rates of family violence. Asian women who have been victims of violent acts refrain from taking action or speaking out for fear of bringing shame to their families
- Utilisation of preventive care and treatment services, such as shelters and social service agencies, is late and very slow due in part to cultural and language barriers
- There is fear and stress related to dealing with the police and courts
- Potentially face cultural insensitivities from service providers that deter them from seeking assistance

(National Asian Pacific American, undated).

To sum up, like other New Zealand population groups, we know very little about the seriousness of family violence and effective intervention methods in New Zealand Asian communities.

2.3.3 Triggers for family violence in Asian immigrants

It is difficult to identify the underlying factors associated with family violence in immigrant families. Factors that may directly or indirectly aggravate family violence amongst immigrant women are included in the following discussion.

Social Structure

A patriarchal social structure reinforces men's power, control and authority over women and children through physical, economic and emotional control (Wolfe & Jaffe, 1999). Asian people tend to observe strict gender division of roles and expectations. The husband is generally considered to be the head of the household, the caretaker of the finances, the primary breadwinner and decision maker. The wife is generally expected to be devoted to her husband, children and her husband's extended family (Anderson, 1993). In some cases, inherited and excessive power of men over women leads to family violence directly or indirectly. Sometimes the inherited power might be reinforced by one's religious beliefs.

Perceived threats to one's traditional values

The use of religious ideology to support the continued oppression of women is largely a function of perceiving religion as the last bastion for the maintenance of traditional Asian values in the immigrant context. This is particularly the case in a Western society, where Asian men perceive there is an erosion of morality, rights, cultural customs and practices.

Unemployment or underemployment

Once in a new host society, the immigrant family may undergo further stresses as traditional roles shift. Severe economic deprivation, financial hardship and a high unemployment rate can aggravate family violence. This may encompass unemployment or downward shifts in employment status for men, and paid employment for women. Assimilation of the children into the mainstream culture may further threaten men's hierarchical power based on sex and age. Men might use violence as a means to protect their control and status.

Economic and emotional dependency

In general, men have better access to material and non-material resources that increase women's economic and social dependency on men. Migrant women may feel more vulnerable, particularly if they are not proficient in English. For instance, in the United States many women victim's immigration status is classified as the "dependent category" (on their husbands or partners), so these women may not be eligible in accessing social welfare benefits. Lack of access to social benefits or financial resources puts women in a very vulnerable position, subject to all sorts of abuse at home. The primary reason immigrant women tolerate abusive relationships is a lack of financial resources (Home Office Policing & Reducing Crime Unit, 2004).

In many cases, women allow the occurrence of family violence because they are emotionally dependant on their perpetrators. Many women feel that the abuser will change his behaviour and, hence, the relationship will improve. Many women victims therefore accept the abusive relationships (Felder & Victor, 1996).

Poor communication skills

Duituturaga in the Synergy Applied Research (1988) found poor communication and cross-cultural misunderstanding between family members were the main triggers for family violence. Some women are not able to communicate effectively, which leads to arguments and violence. Women of non-English speaking backgrounds are less likely to leave violent situations and therefore experience escalating violence.

Isolation and lack of support

Women that may be at particular risk include Asian women sponsored by non-Asian men, and Asian women brought to a new country for arranged marriages to Asian men already residing here. Such women have not only left their family and supports, but have joined partners whose established community networks may not recognise their needs. In some instances, their

partner's extended family may collude in the violence, overtly or indirectly, by not offering support.

2.3.4 Barriers to seeking help

Threat to withdraw sponsorship

In a survey conducted in San Francisco, 64% of undocumented women victims said that the fear of deportation was the primary reason why they did not seek help from social services. Abusers may use the wife's immigration status to control her (Heise, 1994). Another survey found that nearly 83% of battered immigrants in the United States did not contact the police for help despite lengthy histories of domestic violence. The victim usually has no resources and remains in the abusive marriage because she is economically dependent, and also relies on the abuser to remain in the United States.

Shame and Guilt

Many victims are ashamed to seek help from family members and friends because they may feel that they have done something wrong. This concept of shame and guilt, or "loss of face", implies disgrace and lost respect, not for the individual but also for the entire family and community (Home Office Policing & Reducing Crime Unit, 2004). Many Chinese women in the United States want to down-play the violence or keep it hidden because they fear that they will bring shame to their family and future generations if they disclose the violent behaviours, or worse, leave home. Women working with Indian communities across America have often complained that community leaders are not comfortable with discussing spouse abuse and ill-treatment of women in their communities.

Cultural reasons

A woman victim may be under pressure from her own community to remain in an abusive relationship for the sanctity of marriage. Victims that consider leaving may be advised by family members, community members and elders to try to work out the marriage. If women go against their cultural value system, which is often about keeping the family harmony, they may subject themselves to the criticism of being a "bad mother" (Home Office Policing & Reducing Crime Unit, 2004). The victims have to contend with the stigma that might be associated with them if they rebel against abusive spouses. The abusers may have a powerful standing within the community. Male abusers may seek solutions to "end" the violence that do not allow women to leave their abusive relationships. Women who speak out against their abusive relationships lose social respect and sometimes, they may be blamed for causing the violence.

Language barriers

One of the most immediate problems facing many migrant women is the language barriers that prevent them obtaining legal or social services. For example, if the police respond to a family violence incident, a migrant victim woman who does not speak English may not be able to communicate with the police. The police may then ask the abuser about the incident because he speaks English. The perpetrators may claim that the victim has initiated the violence. As a result, the abuser may avoid arrest.

Language barriers and the use of untrained interpreters may also create problems for police officers who are preparing and filing case reports. To compound the situation, there is a multitude of languages within Asian migrant communities. For example, languages of “Asian” ethnic groups include Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Filipino, Japanese, Sri Lankan, Khmer/Kampuchean, Thai/Tai/Siamese, Vietnamese, Malay/Malayan, Fijian Indian/Indo-Fijian and Lao/ Laotian. A migrant woman victim may become very frustrated and turn away when the local family violence shelters, crisis hotlines or social service agencies cannot effectively communicate with them.

Lack of familiarity with legal system

Many victims do not understand the complexity of the legal system, such as how to obtain a protection order and handle child custody issues. In this regard, immigrant women may feel unsure about leaving their abusive relationships to stay at a safe house.

Likewise, the courts might not be aware of the marriage customs among the various sections of the Asian community, such as, the lack of legal documentation of marriages in some parts of Asian countries, dowry and gift-giving traditions. As a consequence, women who are victims of family violence and attempt to obtain a divorce are at a disadvantage in some rulings, because lawyers and judges lack an understanding of the cultural dynamics. In addition, inadequate provisions are made for Asian language interpreters in English-speaking courts. Particularly problematic is the frequent use of Asian men whose own gender biases may influence their interpretation and seriously damage the case that an abused woman has against her perpetrator.

Lack of culturally and linguistically appropriate support services

Immigrant women affected by family violence may hesitate to seek help if health care, social services, the legal system and police do not provide culturally or linguistically appropriate interventions.

Asian immigrant women may encounter a doctor-patient relationship that clearly reflects asymmetrical power or a lack of sensitivity to the victim’s emotional needs. Communication problems can also result in incorrect diagnosis or the victim feeling a lack of understanding by the service providers. All of this makes them feel even lower than when they first came to the services.

Women victims from some ethnic minority groups may face negative reactions when they seek assistance from police and legal services to end family violence. Saunders and Size (1986) noted that police officers who had traditional perspectives on Asian women tended to take the least amount of action in family violence situations that needed intervention. Some Asian women fear the police’s attitude toward minority groups, fear the individual police officer’s apathy or insensitivity, and fear the inability to successfully communicate the nature of the abuse to the police officers.

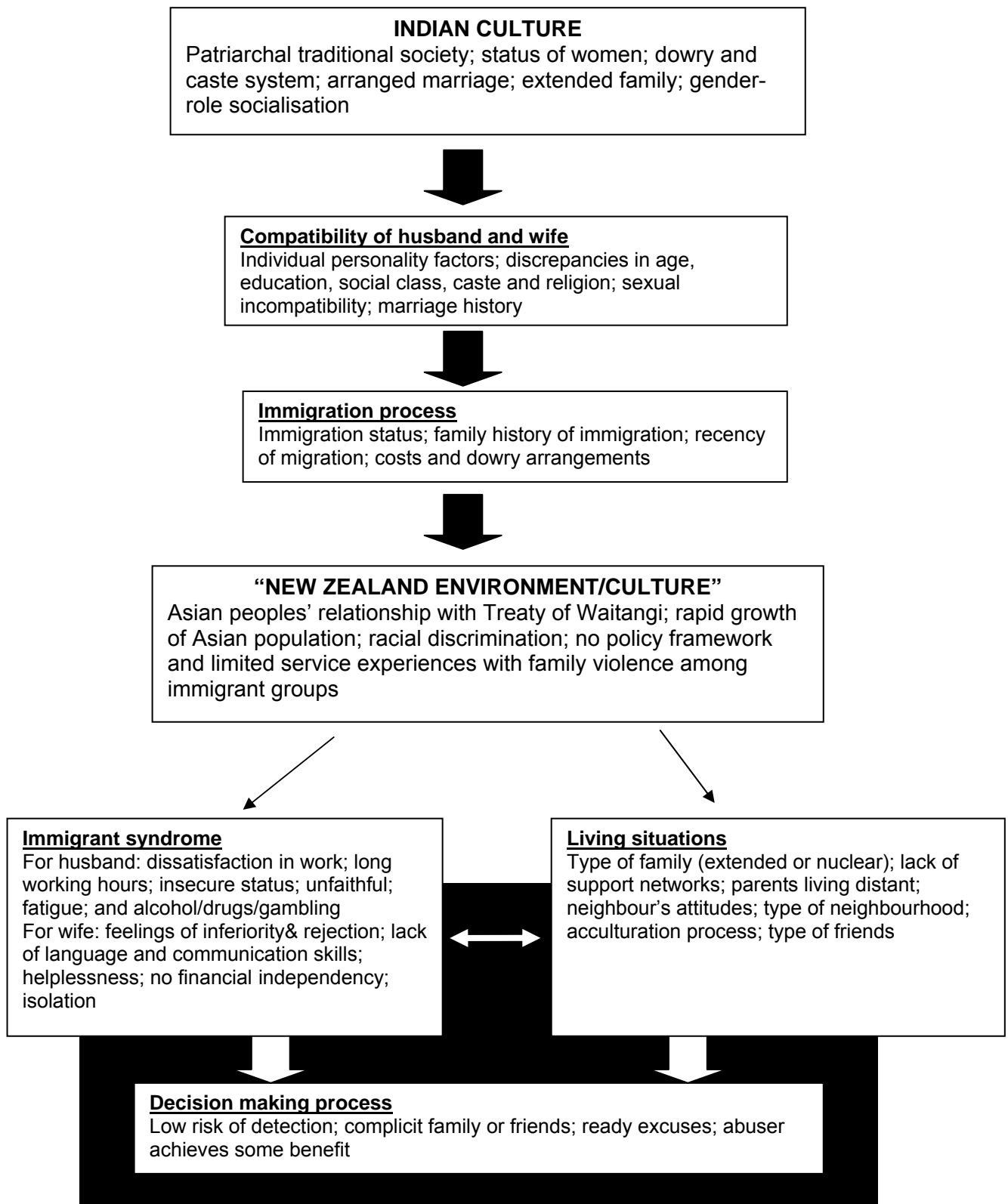
Negative reactions might come from anti-immigrant sentiment, which involves a widespread attitude that immigrant families should sort out their own problems in their own community. Immigrants should not put a strain on already limited resources for individuals affected by family violence. One may even ask “why bring the family problem to our country in the first place?”

2.3.5 Specific model on Asian family violence

Figure 1 illustrates one particular theoretical model (Natarajan, 2002) to explain how family violence occurs in the South Asian communities. This theoretical model resonates strongly with the materials that emerged from the above brief literature. To date there has not been a similar publication of a theoretical model on Chinese and family violence.

Furthermore, the materials on interventions for family violence are included in the discussion Chapter 5.3 Specific recommendations.

Figure 1: Theoretical Model of Factors Determining Wife Abuse among Immigrants from India (adapted from Natarajan, 2002, p. 306 to reflect New Zealand environment/ culture)



CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This research seeks to identify the triggers and consequences of family violence in Asian immigrant communities in New Zealand and to identify the gaps between existing services and the needs spectrum of women victims and children.

3.1 Ethical consent

The ethical approval for the present study was obtained from The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on 17 March 2005 for a period of three years, from 17 March 2005 (Reference number 2005/025).

Refer to Appendix A for information sheets (Appendix A1 - information sheet for women or men participants affected by family violence; A2 - information sheet for key informants) and Appendix B for consent forms (Appendix B1 - consent form for men and women participants affected by family violence; B2 - consent form for key informants).

3.2 Five groups of participants

There were FIVE cohorts of participants involved in the present project:

1. Are currently staying in a safe house during the time of study: women who left their abusive relationship and currently live in a safe house.
2. Have left a safe house: women who have left a safe house and thus they have or have not returned to their family. The aim is to investigate their experiences and how they re-integrated into the community (or did not in some cases).
3. Have used family violence services (e.g. counselling, support and mediation): women who have been dealing with family violence but have not left their abuser or used safe house facilities.
4. Male participants: particularly husbands/partners who abused wives/partners or were dealing with their own violent behaviours at home.
5. Key Informants: key informants were selected from women's refuge/safe house management, community leaders, social workers, counsellors, police, lawyers, child, youth and family services, researcher, policy analysts, policy advisors and any personnel from relevant organisations.

For the above first four groups of people the following criteria applied.

Inclusion criteria:

- South Asian immigrants (e.g. Bangladeshi, Indians and Pakistani, Indian Fijians) and Chinese from mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong;
- individuals who reside in the Auckland area;
- are aged 16 and above;
- have experience of family violence or have an in-depth understanding of issues surrounding family violence among immigrant communities in New Zealand;
- are able to articulate and reflect on their experiences or have developed opinions on the topic of family violence.

Exclusion criteria:

- individuals who were not able to give informed consent;
- individuals who were in immediate risk of harm to self or others;
- individuals who were not interested in participating in the research process;
- individuals who were not able to engage in 30 minute interviews due to severe mental stress or fear for their own safety.

Researchers adjusted the sampling frame accordingly to recruit suitable individuals to seek additional data on the issue under investigation. For example, if “under-employment” (i.e. people are employed at a lower level of job relative to their qualifications and experiences) of women/men appears to be a determining factor to explain underlying triggers for family violence, then participants with various income levels/status were interviewed.

3.3 Recruitment

Women who lived in a safe house or had left a safe house were contacted through the various safe houses management based in Auckland. Women who faced family violence but did not use safe house services were contacted by social workers or counsellors from relevant agencies. A similar process was followed for the perpetrator of family violence or they were identified through the Asian community network. Male perpetrators were approached through the case social worker or counsellors (e.g. peer support groups for men with addiction problems). Key informants were identified through community support people.

3.4 Data collection

In order to gain an in-depth understanding of causal factors and consequences of family violence and how people build their capacity to prevent family violence, in-depth interviews and focus group discussion were held.

- In-depth interviews were held with women victims, perpetrators, family members, legal service providers, safe house service providers and other relevant personnel. For details of the guidelines for data collection, see Appendix C (interview guidelines and questionnaire for women), Appendix

D (interview guidelines and questionnaire for men) and Appendix E (interview guidelines for key informants).

- A focus group was used, involving support workers, professional counsellors, social workers who work with women and children victims and family members/friends affected by family violence, to explore the experiences of family violence and to find out the means to address the issues. The focus group was co-facilitated by an experienced domestic violence researcher and the named investigator. Researchers observed each group discussion, took notes and ensured the discussion was recorded. Please see Appendix F for guidelines on the focus group discussion.

Researchers were competent in understanding the languages spoken by research participants- for example, Hindi, Punjabi, Telugu, Gujarati, Kannada, Bengali, Urdu, Tamil, Gujarati, Cantonese, Mandarin and English were utilised where appropriate.

3.5 Data analysis

Data collection and analysis were concurrent and reflexive. Analysis began following the first interview. The initial information was analysed as a case analysis and served as a basic framework to identify emerging topics.

Initial analyses and the summary of the information from the individual interviews were undertaken by each ethnic specific researcher or research assistant. Information was analysed using a general inductive approach to identify key themes relevant to the research objectives (Thomas, 2002). Emerging concepts were linked to themes and sub-themes. Themes and sub-themes were developed from examination of the recorded information. Special attention was given to the possible meanings of each emerging theme and sub-theme. New categories were created if existing themes did not encompass the newly identified theme material from the interviews or focus group discussion. Some of the areas of focus for the data analyses included: how did family violence happen in various Asian immigrant communities; impacts and consequences; and gaps and needs for prevention and minimisation of harms caused by family violence. All these findings were synthesised into a framework to suggest ways to prevent and reduce family violence in the South Asian and Chinese immigrant communities.

To maximise the credibility of the emerging findings, a small number of participants were consulted after the interviews or focus group to check the closeness of fit between their experiences and the emerging research analysis, as well as the ease of comprehension. This process involved taking analyses, interpretations and conclusions back to the participants so they could judge the accuracy of the account. This process is usually considered the most critical technique for establishing the credibility of qualitative data (Creswell, 1998).

3.6 Profile of women and men participants affected by family violence

To date, 56 interviews involving 50 immigrant women of Asian origin and 6 men (one Indian, one Bangladeshi and four Chinese) have been completed.

3.6.1 Country of origin

Table 4 shows the distribution by ethnic background: 23.2% of participants were Chinese, 21.4% were Indian, 19.6% were Bangladeshi and approximately 15% were Indian Fijian or Pakistani respectively.

Table 4: Participants' ethnic background (n=56)

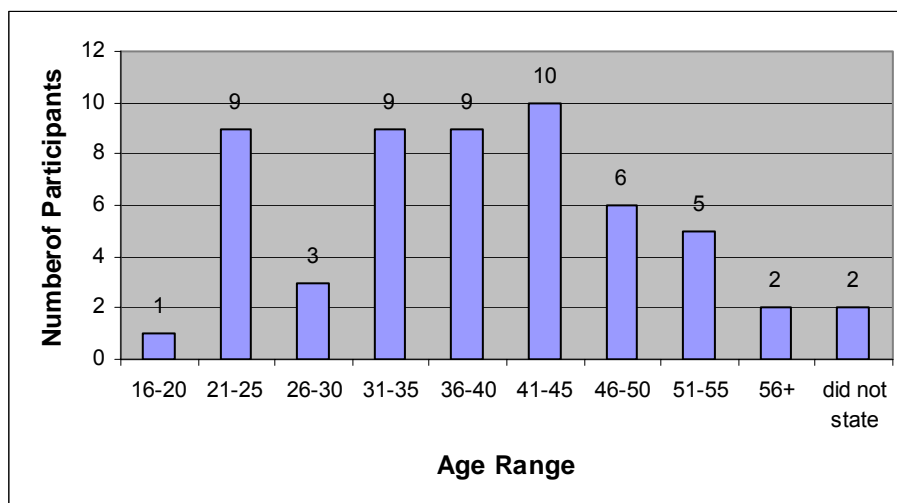
Ethnic Group	Number of participants	Percentage of the total sample (%)
Chinese	13	23.2
Indian	12	21.4
Bangladeshi	11	19.6
Indian Fijian	9	16.1
Pakistani	8	14.3
Sri Lanka	1	1.8
Others, e.g., South east Asians	2	3.6
Total	56	100

3.6.2 Age distribution

On the whole, participants fell into two age groups: 1) 21-25 years old (usual marriage age) and 2) Approximately 30-40 years who are relatively established in their home countries and have immigrated to New Zealand recently. Fifty percent of participants were between 31 and 45 years old.

Figure 2 shows the trend of participants' age distribution.

Figure 2: Participants' age distribution



3.6.3 Length of stay in the country

Duration of stay was recorded to understand the relationship between the occurrence of family violence and the number of years in New Zealand. It is hypothesised that most of the family violence within the Asian immigrant communities might occur at the early stage of post-immigration adjustment, given individuals or families are still new to the system and are making attempts to adjust to the host society culture. Table 5 shows that approximately 43% of participants (n= 24) have lived in New Zealand between two to three years.

Table 5: Participants' length of stay in New Zealand

Number of years in NZ	Number of participants
<1yr	3
2-3 yrs	24
4-5 yrs	3
6-8 yrs	9
9-11 yrs	9
>11 yrs	7
did not disclose	1
Total	56

3.6.4 Immigration status (arrival versus current status)

Participants' immigration status was recorded to explore any potential link between family violence and immigration status. Table 6 shows almost 30% of participants came to New Zealand in the family category (e.g. joining their parents, and some women, according to the interview data, entered into a pre-arranged marriage relationship). 80% of participants became long-term residents in New Zealand. The "Others" category in "Current immigration status or citizenship" include individuals whose applications for residency under the Domestic Violence Act or on humanitarian grounds were being processed.

Table 6: Participants' change of immigration status over time

Immigration status upon arrival	Number of participants	Current immigration status or citizenship	Number of participants
Family category	16	New Zealand citizen	25
Skills category	15	New Zealand permanent resident	20
Spouse as sponsor	9	Work permit	5
Visitor	9	Student visa	0
Refugee	3	Visitor	1
Humanitarian	1	Others	5
Student	1		
Investment	0		
Work permit	0		
Others	2		
Total	56	Total	56

3.6.5 Use of family violence services

This study involved people who had a range of experiences with regard to the use of family violence services. In this study, the men were not “clients” presenting to services, however they might be asked to be involved in the services (e.g. being asked to undergo training in anger management). Approximately 60% of participants in this study did not use the safe house facility to deal with violence at home. The qualitative interview data suggests some of the women stayed at relatives' or brothers/sisters place as a temporary shelter from violence inflicted by their husband or partner.

Table 7: Participants' use of family violence services

Sex	Use of family violence services	Number of participants
Men (n= 6)	Did not use the services	6
Women (n= 50)	Currently staying in a safe house during the time of study	7
	Have left safe house	10
	Have used family violence services (e.g., counselling, support and mediation)	33
Total		56

3.6.6 Participants' religious background

Forty-three percent of participants identified themselves with a Muslim background, 20% were Hindu and 18% were Christians (see Table 6). A number of individuals in this study described how, in some cases, religious beliefs were used to legitimise family violence; on the other hand, religious beliefs and the associated social network and activities helped some women cope with family violence and its impacts.

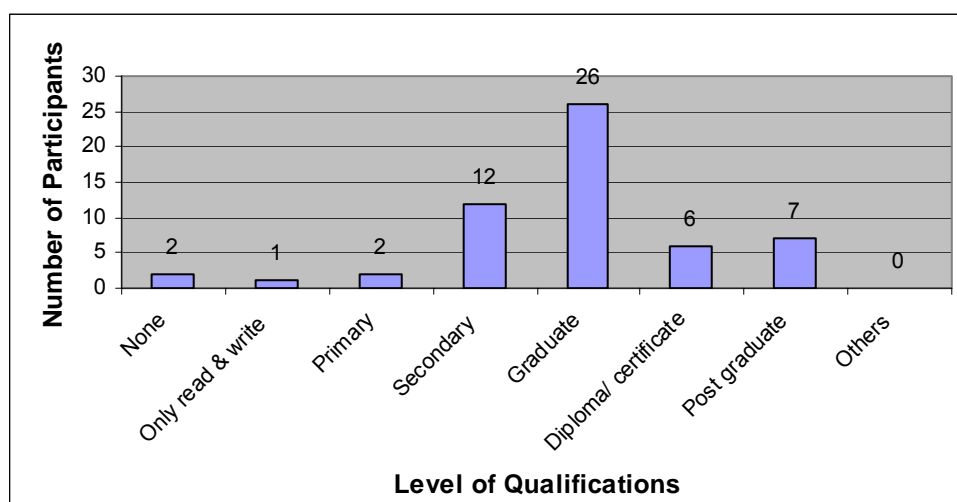
Table 8: Participants' religious background

Religion	Number of participants
Muslim	24
Hindu	11
Christian	10
Buddhist	4
Punjabi	1
Jewish	0
No religion	4
Other	2
Total	56

3.6.7 Participants' education

Approximately 60% of women and men participants (n=33) in this study have a graduate or a post graduate qualification, and 23.5% of women have a secondary qualification (see Figure 3). This reflects that about 25% of the participants entered the country under the skills category and have generally higher qualifications to qualify for the 'immigration points' system.

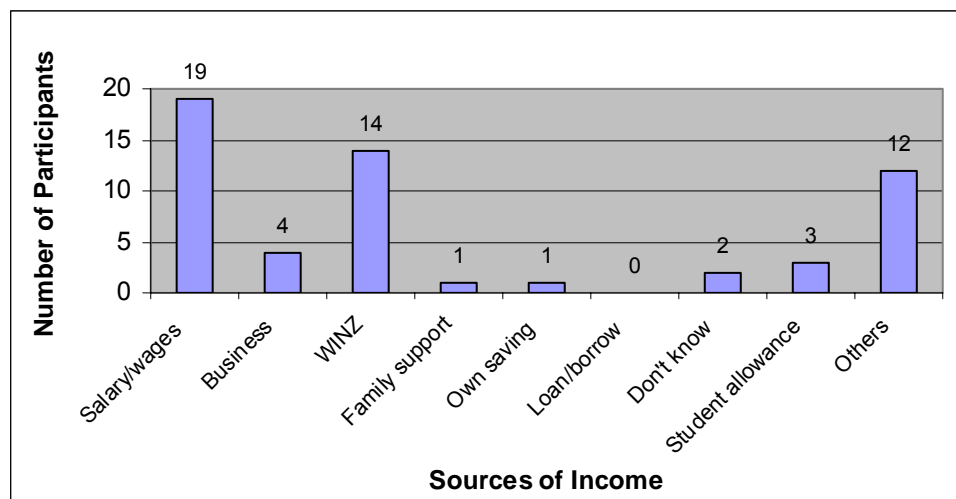
Figure 3: Participants' educational background



3.6.8 Participants' sources of income

Only 40% of participants in the current study were engaged in paid employment (n=19) or running their own business, including self-employed (e.g. home-tutoring, n=4). Closer examination of the occupations listed by participants suggest most of the work was administrative or in wholesale business. Generally speaking, the employment status was not consistent with the participants' academic qualifications.

Figure 4: Participants' sources of income



The employment situation might be partly explained by the participants' self-rated language proficiency. On average, participants in this study tended to give a self-rating for their English language skills by ticking option "2" which stands for "good" ("1" stands for "not so good" and "4" stands for "excellent", see Table 9).

Table 9: Participants' self-rated English proficiency

Self-rated level	Proficiency of English as additional language			
	Speaking	Writing	Reading	Listening
1: Not good	12	15	12	12
2: good	23	25	27	24
3: very good	13	10	11	12
4: excellent	8	6	6	8
Mean	2.304	2.125	2.129	2.286
Standard deviation	0.9708	0.9354	0.9029	0.967

See Appendix G for a summary of all the key demographic features of the 56 participants.

3.7 Profile of focus group participants

A focus group was held on Wednesday 5th October 2005 at the Asian Women's Centre in Auckland. Thirteen women attended the meeting, which was facilitated by Drs Janet Fanslow and Samson Tse (note-taker). The meeting lasted for about two hours. The process involved an introduction,

obtaining consent forms, the body of discussion and conclusion (see Appendix H for details). The backgrounds of participants were:

- Positions: service coordinator, support workers, clients and trainees from social work/social sciences departments at tertiary institutions.
- Country of origins: individuals from India, China, Fijian Indian, Bangladesh and others.
- Years in the country: ranged from 8 months to 12 years.
- Age: between 25 and 40 years old.

3.8 Profile of key informants

Three key informants were interviewed individually to gain their perspectives on family violence within the Asian immigrant communities in New Zealand. They were selected on the basis of: experiences in the field, ability to reflect and articulate on various issues pertinent to this topic, and they were interested in participating in this study. The three individuals came from the background of:

- 1) Community activist from the field of anti-violence against women
- 2) Legal practitioner specialising in family violence
- 3) Law enforcement officer

Each key informant was interviewed for about 1.5 hours and was provided with in-depth comprehensive material.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The questions and the overall guidelines used in both the individual interviews and the focus group provided a useful framework to document the research findings. When analysing the results, care was taken to identify and articulate community (and family) cultural/belief systems and mechanisms for responding to the needs of those affected by family violence.

The key headings used in this chapter are:

- Triggers for family violence within Asian (South Asian peoples and Chinese) immigrant communities
- Impacts of family violence
- Barriers in tackling family violence in Asian communities
- Strengths and capacities in preventing and reducing family violence
- Gaps and needs

This chapter is concluded by examining data that emerged from the focus group and key-informant interviews, with a view to highlighting the strengths of the communities in dealing with family violence.

4.1 What triggers family violence in Asian (South Asian peoples and Chinese) immigrant communities?

4.1.1 Factors related to cultural beliefs and customs

Cultural beliefs and values reinforce violence against women

Participants explained how some aspects of the traditional Asian culture tend to reinforce violent behaviours against women at home. Several Chinese women shared a similar sentiment:

“(Chinese traditions say)... a man (Chinese) should always control his wife...he should never accept different opinions from his wife.”

Another South Asian woman said:

“How you grow up, your background, what your grandpa teaches you, not answering back...it’s what you learn from your elders and learn from your family.”

Both men and women have internalised these cultural values and customs from their early childhood. A key informant explained:

“Men are brought up to be aggressive. They are brought up in a special manner. They are treated specially, have special rights. Women are brought up to service men, to be obedient, to be submissive.”

This kind of internalised cultural value can aggravate violence against women. A women victim said:

“My husband used to say to me, ‘You are a wife, act like a wife, don’t ask questions’. It means he can do whatever he wants – I can’t do anything.”

Another South Asian woman added:

“The country where I came from is where women are treated as second-class citizens. We have to listen to what men say. If a woman stands up for her own rights or protests against male domination, nobody from her family will stand up for her. That’s why all women have these problems.”

The “cultural value” that men have the right to abuse women would seem to have been passed down the generations. A Muslim woman’s comment was:

“Even my two sons, when they see an argument happen, they say, ‘don’t you know our father becomes angry quickly. Why do you talk when he is angry? You should keep quiet’. My two sons don’t like arguments with their father.”

Sadly, these women seem socialised to believe they are inferior to men and have to take all the blame when problems strike. Even educated women are unable to overcome this cultural value. One woman explained:

“I may be educated, but my husband’s perception is clearer than mine...that is why I always discuss things with him. There are proverbs in India as well as in Bangladesh - ‘Women make the family happy, women break the family’. The blame comes to her, even when her husband makes a mistake...”

Traditional values sanction and accept family violence

Women are generally seen as the men’s property; some Asian men believe they have authority to do whatever they want. One focus group participant said:

“Your body belongs to him until he dies...he can do anything he wants to do – there is no concept of marital rape.”

Other group members added:

“If I complained, my mother would turn around and ask, ‘What did you do? You must have done something wrong.’ They don’t want to know...no one wants to address the issue.”

“No one is pointing fingers.”

Misinterpretations of cultural and religious norms

One participant explained:

“When you are married you are in the service of your husband. He is like a God; he is most important. There is a proverb in India - ‘Pati Porumeshar’ which in English means ‘the husband is like God’. There can be no faults in him. If there are problems, you are the person who will be judged.”

Another person said:

“After God, man is another God.”

One participant quickly added that “(the above statement) is not said in the Book”.

Along the vein of religious beliefs and violence against women, a participant said: *“Women’s freedom is a Western concept, it is not a Muslim concept.”*

Then one participant disagreed and pointed out:

“The Muslim faith gives women more freedom than any other society.”

Obviously, the Book can be variously interpreted, like many religions texts.

Another common misinterpretation in Asian culture or tradition, is that parents have to be firm with their children in some cases:

“Parents will beat up their children...(parents) do that, otherwise they are seen as being westernised.”

Husbands marry for dowry or New Zealand residency

The dowry system is a cultural institution practiced in Asia, particularly the South Asian region, for a daughter’s marriage. The system of dowry demands a sizeable amount of money and goods, such as gold, land, house or other valuable goods be given by the bride’s family to the groom’s family. A current study found men who have permanent residence or citizenship went to the women’s home country for the wedding and received large dowry’s, including cash, jewellery, furniture, clothing and other items. A dowry is believed to be one of the reasons to marry a girl from overseas Asian countries. The following quotes provide some examples:

One South Asian women said:

“He did not want to marry me...I had ornaments and money and he took \$10,000 from me...because I gave him money, thinking we are nearly married. He took money to get sponsorship only...”

A Chinese woman had a similar experience:

“He just used me to get a residence permit so that he could settle down in New Zealand. He has never respected me and my family. He immediately changed his face as soon as we got married; he didn’t contact my family and disliked my family contacting me. When he was not happy with my family, he would curse them badly. Therefore my family didn’t like him either.”

4.1.2 Factors related to immigration

Women have no permanent residency

A number of women participants in this study revealed that they came to New Zealand on their husband’s sponsorship. Some women from Asian countries speak limited English, have little work skills and have no knowledge about New Zealand culture. Men could threaten and abuse these women. A woman participant recalled what her husband said to her:

“If you don’t do things my way I am going to send you back...this is what is going to happen to you and your family back home.”

Some men abused the women participants brutally and ejected them from the home. These men had obtained a wife, received the dowry money and rejected them after living together for one year or two years or, in some case, only for a couple of months. A counsellor who has worked with women victims for a long period summarised:

“Most of these women (in the safe houses) get sponsorship from their respective husbands. They legally are married and come here with a visitor’s visa. They have no work permit, permanent residence or anything. They have only got a visitor’s visa but after a few months it expires. They have no say in the household. They face domestic violence. They are tortured by their husband and by their mother-in-law, so they come to the safe house. Most of them are burned or cut. Some have been tribally tortured. They come with signs of abuse. These women have no protection whatsoever. Their family doesn’t want them either. They are told to go back to their mother-in-law and husband.”

Clashes between traditional values and values of the new host country

One focus group member put it succinctly:

“Back home, it’s OK. You don’t argue, you can’t prove your point...but when you come to a new country, problems arise because you start asking questions and challenging authority...”

The women’s awareness of their rights for love and care, free from abuse is raised when they come to New Zealand. Many tried to adopt a new set of values but this change was not welcomed by their men, seemingly because they are afraid they may no longer have the control over women. Women explained in the group discussion how conflicts increase in the family when recently arrived immigrant women want to assimilate into the host culture:

“As women come to New Zealand and see Kiwi, Maori or Pakeha women out working and earning as a part of a family, they want to do it themselves. They want to be part of New Zealand society, basically to integrate...Women want to be in New Zealand society themselves, but men want women to remain traditional.”

A woman recalled in detail:

“They started to abuse me verbally...the abuse became violent when I started to say no to some of the events in their family life.”

Along a similar line of comments, a community activist said:

“Women get more freedom in this country. The law is more protective for women here, so the men feel they are losing power and control over the women...Women are also becoming aware of the laws and their rights, so they have a voice. Men are not happy with that...Now he can see that his wife is also raising her voice...He wants power over her destiny and to know that he alone is the king.”

However when women want to continue making those changes, they are confronted by strong resistance. The focus group discussion suggested that

some ethnic communities or men become even more traditional, “*more oppressive*” (quoted from one group member) when living in a new country than they would when living in their home country. This was thought to be a result of clinging to traditional values in the face of uncertainty embedded in the new environment. Men started resorting to violence as a means to reinforce social customary practice when they were fearful of losing control and power over women.

Traditionally, Asian men are the decision makers. They want to maintain male-dominance and when that seems to be eroding, arguments and violence result in some cases. A Muslim woman’s voice shows how household conflicts arose when women try to share in the decision making process:

“Men made the decisions because we were living in a male dominated society... The conflict of course starts (in New Zealand) when I disagree with my husband’s decisions. That is the reason for the domestic violence; that I feel like this.”

“He started to show very abnormal behaviour. He always asked for sex. He followed me closely and restricted my contact with people. He threatened me and stopped me leaving, saying he would call immigration or the police. He hit me and my son in front of my friend...”

This is not a problem confined to marriage to Asian men only. Ethnic women who married a New Zealand Pakeha on a visitor’s visa found they were treated by the men as a second-class person with no rights. A woman victim clarified:

“Men have got more rights here... For me and my kids we don’t have anything, but he has everything... He was so arrogant, saying that he has his own way, like he has residence and he has his own house, so he wants it the way he likes.”

Unemployment, unsettled future and financial hardship

When recent migrant men don’t have jobs, money problems and anger can follow. A participant simply said:

“(A couple started to) hit each other... and the children were involved in the violence... A simple statement triggers an argument... Money pressures don’t help.”

A key informant estimated:

“I think most of the violence, approximately 90%, is caused by financial situations. If they don’t have enough money to look after their family and children, men may get depressed and take out their frustration on the family.”

“(Men) are motivated by friends or others who say New Zealand is like a paradise... You will get a job... But when he gets here he doesn’t have a job, so he gets frustrated living on benefit. It’s shameful for him. He has an inferiority complex. The only control he has is over women. If he loses his power, he may show an aggressive attitude that he didn’t

show in his own country, because he had job. Probably both of them had a job.”

A woman’s voice added:

“When educated men are unemployed they become as though they are uneducated. They start to behave like an uneducated man and become aggressive to their wives because of their inferiority.”

Another woman’s voice shows how unemployment impacted on his behaviour:

“...his unemployment is (the) reason. He becomes angry...most of the time my husband was unemployed while he was here. He said to his friends ‘I am unemployed, but my wife isn’t unemployed. She keeps the house clean, does the cooking. We have to give her thanks for that at least’.”

Clashes between younger and older generation family

Often parents or older generation family want to hold on to their culture and heritage links whereas children adopt a different set of values and world view in a new country. According to some focus group members, often this results in arguments and physical violence against children or young people.

4.1.3 Factors related to marital problems

Pre-immigration marital problems

Family violence among Asian peoples in New Zealand may be related to pre-immigration marriage difficulties that are exacerbated by adjustment problems after arriving in New Zealand. A Chinese man described:

“We had a three-year separation prior to coming to New Zealand. She was in XXX and studied, whereas I worked in XXX doing the dishes and cleaning clothes. We didn’t feel good for a long time. It was a very stressful and frustrating marriage...Our psychological and physical health deteriorated.”

Another man mentioned that:

“It wasn’t a good relationship already at home before we moved to New Zealand...I worked overseas and away from home a lot...We came from different backgrounds. We should have separated in China, but we didn’t proceed before we left for New Zealand.”

Husbands have girlfriends

A husband having a girlfriend was found to be one of the key triggers for violence among South Asian couples. A woman said bitterly:

“There were some good times between me and my husband when we stayed alone. I always thought he loved me, but later I actually realised that there was no love between us...The violence started again when another girl came into his life. She was working with him.”

Another woman remembered vividly:

“Actually he started to phone other women and had sex with them. His ex-girl friend arrived and he is living with her now.”

A South Asian woman's voice shows how a husband's girlfriend made her life miserable:

"The first 7 weeks of the marriage were all right. He was so nice and caring, because my mum was here...One day I saw my husband hugging and kissing a girl...When his girl friend comes he becomes very aggressive...it gets worse."

Arranged marriage

Among the participants, some marriages were arranged. One of many examples is:

"My husband is a New Zealand citizen. He came to my country to marry me. His parents and my parents organised the marriage through one of our neighbours...After a few months of marriage I faced violence when he became involved with his girlfriend...I wasn't his choice. It was an arranged marriage."

One focus member added:

"My marriage is arranged; I don't know anything about him...later on you suffer..."

A woman from a South-East Asian background who had been in New Zealand for over ten years gave another example:

"In order to stop me having any relationship with English people, my family were busy looking around for a Chinese man to marry me. Under their pressure, I met a guy who had just come over from China and was looking for a residence permit. We only met for two hours and then got married in two weeks with strong pressure from my family."

This is an extreme case in terms of arranged marriage:

"He kidnapped me and married me at gun point...My parents didn't accept me after it happened. Since then, I've been living with him with no where else to go."

4.1.4 Factors related to social fragmentation

Racism and discrimination

Racism, discrimination and oppression against ethnic women are indirect factors leading to family violence at home. Asian women feel they are discriminated against when a hiring decision is made and, in turn, it makes them become dependent on men. A woman with a graduate degree talked about her frustrations:

"I have made approximately 30-40 applications and they were all rejected...I didn't grow up here, but I can speak English, I can communicate and I can understand people. But where exactly is the problem and how come I can't get a job?"

One focus group member echoed:

"(In order) to address the issue of family violence, it is necessary to tackle the wider oppression of women in ethnic communities."

If woman have no paid job, they have no identity

Paid employment gives women identity, status, a life role and bargaining power in the household. It helps make their voice heard at home. Unfortunately ethnic woman find it very difficult to secure a paid job even if they have educational qualifications and experiences. A woman said:

"I had an identity when I was in my country because I could work there. I was a XXX (a highly professional job). But what is my identity here? I am just a housewife. It impacted on our relationship. My self-esteem and self-confidence were reduced. One thing is related to the other. If I have a job, I have an identity and I may enjoy my life. My husband will value me and my children will respect me."

A key informant elaborated:

"If women always stay at home, arguments can increase because of limited access to information on the outside world. Women's involvement in outside work can increase their problem-solving capacity through networking, discussion with work mates and others. They can develop new thoughts and ideas."

A woman participant showed how unemployment and subsequent financial hardship further burdened an already strained relationship:

"Employment issues and the effects on the children affect both men and women. If you don't have money and you don't have food, what will happen then? You can imagine that the relationship will die."

Another woman shared similar experiences:

"He became sad because he is a XXX (professional) and now he is driving a taxi...Over the last few weeks he has suffered from depression...I'm earning and I'm also receiving a student loan. He often gets angry when I ask a question."

Language barriers

Language barriers limit women's ability to communicate with members from wider society, access information and seek support when marriage problems or family violence emerge.

A woman said:

"The language problem is a big problem, because she isn't fluent in English. That's why she doesn't have the courage to go out and speak to people. She has a sense of inferiority."

Language barriers also put women in a very vulnerable position since men have so much power and control over them. As put by one of the key informants:

"Women who do not have an education, they are in the worst position."

Isolation

Being in a new country and having no extended family around means minor problems usually become big problems. Having little idea where to seek help

makes it even harder for everyone concerned. In some cases, men think they can do whatever they like because their women do not know anything about this new country. One woman said:

“It isn’t too bad for a woman in her own country as she can go to her mother and, once in a while, she can come back. Compared with here, she knew her own country, her own place. She had a few relatives around her, but here she doesn’t have any. Things are different here, people are different, and they don’t make friends easily here. Isolation, frustration and the reduction of a man’s status makes them control women more.”

Living in isolation makes women dependent on men. One simply put it this way:

“He is a man and he knows more about the outside world. In comparison to me, he spends more time outside. I need my husband’s support if I want to go anywhere. I need transport.”

4.1.5 Other factors

Living with in-laws

Women victims shared how in-laws were non-caring, abusive to them or allowed their sons to act violently against their wives. The in-laws’ abuse toward or control over women might be in a financial, emotional or physical way.

One woman from a South Asian country described:

“Actually, problems with my husband started just after our wedding. My husband’s family never actually wanted me. Just after my marriage, they were thinking about going to XXX, so they asked him to leave me.”

Another very tragic account was:

“(Mother-in-law) gave me a hard time... She knew that I was pregnant, but she made me carry heavy things, do all the housework work then go to work without having a break first. My miscarriage happened because of stress.”

One woman asked her husband:

“Why is your mum making decisions for me?” (her husband did not answer her question)

“I wanted to have a baby and then the problems started. My mother-in-law said ‘You can’t have a baby, you have to wait two years. You should first earn some money.’ They wanted me to be an income earner, not be a mum...When I got pregnant, my husband started beating and hitting me. He kicked me, so I lost my baby.”

In some cases, girls were used as slaves when they came here after marriage. A young girl said:

“I used to do all the housework, like cooking, cleaning and washing. Even my mother-in-law gave me all her dirty clothes during her menstruation period for washing...She had many men friends. When

they are around I have to prepare meals for them. Sometimes I believe that her son has learned these things from his mother.”

Addiction problems lead to family violence

In this study a number of men and women identified drug and alcohol addiction and problem gambling as being the primary reasons leading to family violence. Some gave accounts:

“We always had violence at home. After coming to NZ I found him doing drugs and addicted to alcohol, so violence was a daily event in my house...He stopped giving me money.”

A Chinese man admitted he began acting violently against his wife:

“It was because of loneliness, role reversal, looking after children at home. It’s boring. I was also accused of not doing useful things, but I didn’t want to come here anyway. We argued over trivial matters. I started gambling, which resulted in financial problems. I had limited English skills and had to rely on her for everything. I feel very angry.”

If women want to support their family

Conflict can occur when women want their family members to come here and live with them. One woman illustrated:

“If a woman has a family in an overseas country and she wants her mother to come and stay that normally causes conflict. His immediate family might live with her and her husband, and it might cause big conflicts. If a husband and in-laws live together, then it’s difficult for the woman to bring her family to New Zealand.”

In summary, contributing factors and triggers for violence vary but there are clear factor groupings as summarised below.

Box One: What triggers family violence in Asian (South Asian peoples and Chinese) immigrant communities?

What triggers family violence in Asian (South Asian peoples and Chinese) immigrant communities?				
Factors related to cultural beliefs and customs	Factors related to immigration	Factors related to marital problems	Factors related to social fragmentation	Other factors
Cultural beliefs and values reinforce violence against women	Women have no permanent residency	Pre-immigration marital problems	Racism and discrimination	Living with in-laws
Traditional values sanction and accept family violence	Clashes between the traditional values and values of the new host country	Husbands have girlfriends	If women have no paid job, they have no identity	Addiction problems lead to family violence
Misinterpretations of cultural and religious norms	Unemployment, unsettled future and financial hardship	Arranged marriage	Language barriers	If women want to support their family
Husbands marry for dowry or New Zealand residency	Clashes between younger and older generation		Isolation	

4.2 Effects of family violence

Given there are extensive studies on the devastating impacts of family violence on women, children, relatives and friends nationally and internationally, this section provides only a brief account highlighting impacts specific to the immigrant population. Additionally, it was neither the objective nor intention of the present study to require participants to “re-live” the trauma of family violence during the course of interview.

4.2.1 Effects on women

Family violence has fatal consequences:

“My husband became more aggressive than before. He said ‘Why did you come back to me? Have you no where to go?’ One of my friends was killed. She committed suicide...There was no option (underline added)...Another teenage girl came to the safe house and soon after went back to her abusive relationship. After a few days she committed suicide by XXX.”

The “no option” situation is best illustrated by this comment:

“(If women return to their parents) Parents then organise another marriage, which will traumatise them. They don’t want to go back. The

family just abandons them – they don't want their children back. Most of the girls' families are already poor."

A key informant described the impacts in a very graphic way:

"I have seen a case where I went to pick up a woman. She was sitting in the corner – you know like a trapped rat"

A woman with first hand experiences said:

"(The family doctor) is treating me with sleeping pills and stress relieving pills, which I take every day. She is really worried about my health condition because every time I have lost weight. I'm sick and it is really getting me down, as well as the boys. We don't know where we will go and stay, what will happen next. We don't know that at all. If anything serious happens to me or the boys we have no medical facilities here, nothing. My husband has withdrawn all this support. He has gone to immigration and withdrawn everything." (underline added)

Another woman highlighted specific impacts of family violence in relation to immigration:

"When I called the police, he revoked everything, like my work permit and my kids' student visas. He went to immigration and withdrew all the support...I don't understand this domestic violence category...they knew it was a police case, but they just didn't listen and declined everything for me and my XXX boys."

Some women have got a sexually transmitted disease from their husbands. A counsellor explained:

"Some of the women get sexually transmitted diseases from their husbands...They have to go to the doctor and get checked (as part of the routine immigration body check)...If they have any diseases like this they are returned (to their home country) immediately."

To sum up, family violence has the following impacts on women based on the data that has emerged from the present study:

- Suicides and homicides e.g. killing of children while parents commit suicide
- Poor physical health
 - Body disfigurement or marks/bruising
 - Losing weight
 - Reduced immunisation related to heightened stress levels
 - Pain or increased somatic discomfort
 - Residual disability
 - Miscarriage
- Poor psychosocial health and functioning
 - Depression
 - Post-traumatic stress disorder
 - Sleeplessness
 - Sense of hopelessness e.g. "They lost their goals, living in darkness, can't see the light."
 - Suicidal thoughts

- Shame, very low self-esteem
- Isolation and loneliness
- Mental confusion
- Deteriorated cognitive functioning e.g. decision making, planning & organisation
- Constant fear e.g. women's fear of losing child custody
- Anger
- Poor sexual health
- Revoked immigration status and uncertainties

4.2.2 Effects on children

A key informant remembered one of her cases involving children:

"The cases that come to us are horrifying. I have seen bruising and marks. I have seen little children. A small little boy in the house is affected. He tries to protect his mum and says to his dad, 'Don't do this.' You can imagine the fear in the children, they are terrified...because of the trauma in the household."

Another woman said bitterly:

"When I don't want sex with him, he sexually touches me in front of my boys. My son saw it. I feel embarrassed. I said to him they are teenage boys, not small boys. You shouldn't do things like that in front of them, but he ignored me."

Two voices were:

"These things really affect my children, especially my older son... My husband withdrew his support and Immigration declined his student permit. He is staying at home now. It is hard for him to pass his time at home because he has nothing to do. His health has been affected as well...Normally he is quiet but now he is involved with the wrong crowd, with bad company."

"My elder son is affected most by the violence. He is scared of everything. His self-esteem and confidence is so low. I think he needs professional help."

Additional information emerged from focus group discussion:

"Sometimes children get involved in bad company and later they end up in Court. And if they see parents fighting, arguing in front of them, they learn and want to do the same thing."

"It makes our children confused...Drug addiction follows for teenagers as they are confused about their future."

Men could see similar negative effects on their children, here was one of the accounts:

"They see parents fighting with each other...I am unhappy with my wife and she is unhappy with me. Our children were affected. We shouted at them when it wasn't their fault. It was an unhealthy situation. Children are always affected by problems between their parents."

Violence passes from generation to generation. Two scenarios were recorded here:

“For example, XXX’s (name of a person) daughter watched everyday as her father growled at her mother, kicked her, punched her, and threw rice plates with food towards her mother. Her daughter is now growing up and she does not show any respect towards her mother. Other children have started to neglect her... They treat her like a servant, like how their father treats her.”

“My husband used these things in front of my son. My son watched and he is now doing it to his sister.”

4.2.3 Effects on family

Sometimes the whole family dynamic, particularly the woman’s parents’ family, was affected. One woman said:

“My dad became very sick and my grandmother as well. I am really attached to my grandmother...My husband and his parents put a lot of pressure on my parents in my country. They went to my dad and then told him to ask me to withdraw the case...I told the police about this, that they were harassing my parents in my country.”

Family violence affects future generations within the family. It was explained in the focus group and individual interviews:

“If people hear about family violence in one’s family, the wider community will believe ‘there is nothing good about her (their daughter)...there is no one who will marry her.’”

“Family violence might stop her sister from getting married because people will say this is a broken family.”

4.2.4 Effects on men

The six men that participated in this study provided the research team with an opportunity to understand the effects of family violence on men in a family. When men were asked what they perceived as the effects of family violence on their life, the responses can be summarised as follows:

- Strained family relationships
 - Abused by wives e.g. *“she threw my things out”*
 - Arguments and quarrels at home
 - Children’s constant crying
 - Very tense marital relationships
 - Divorce
- Isolation
 - Can’t talk about real issues with friends, feel rejected, strained, become even more isolated
 - Did not want to meet people
 - Just want to have their own space, slept a lot and the wife did not understand
- Poor mental health
 - Emotionally very down

- Very anxious
- Constant worry e.g. if the woman goes back to her addiction problems
- Very tired
- Needed to see psychiatrist
- Deterioration in physical health.

Box Two: Effects of family violence

Effects of family violence			
Effects on women	Effects on children	Effects on family	Effects on men
Suicides and homicides	Mental health	Parents and grandparents, particularly from women's side	Strained family relationships
Poor physical health	Revoking of children's study permit	Future generations in the family	Isolation
Poor psychosocial health and functioning	Get involved in criminal activities	Life choices altered	Poor mental health
Poor sexual health	Learn from parents' violent behaviours		Poor physical health
Revoked immigration status and uncertainties faced by women	Life choices altered		

4.3 Barriers in tackling family violence within Asian communities

4.3.1 Family violence is a private matter

Women's voices below show how women hide family violence as a private matter, which then becomes a barrier in preventing or reducing family violence within Asian communities:

"Family violence is a private matter. When arguments happen with my husband, I think it's the saddest thing in my life. We are human beings – arguments occur when two people live together, but it's a private business."

“Women can’t make complaints against their husband...Women don’t talk like that.”

Other women elaborated:

“Sometimes, as Indian women, we don’t want to be open. Our private lives are kept to ourselves, we are brought up in this way...Most of the time we need to hide things, thinking what will happen if anybody knows”.

“...you see if I am going to stand up and talk about my husband, nobody will support me. That’s why normally we don’t talk about what we are going through.”

4.3.2 Keeping the marriage together, no matter what

Research participants of South Asian origin said the first priority in a woman’s life is to keep the marriage together, it does not matter how a husband treats his wife. As discussed above, girls are taught by their fathers or any other elderly person before marriage that they should not leave the husband’s house. Only the dead body could leave.

A young woman illustrated:

“My father told me during my wedding that when you get married, that is your home...It is only your dead body that leaves this house.”

One key informant reflected on the cost of doing that:

“Women want a secure life with their husband’s family in an Asian culture. But for this they suffer and make sacrifices. At each stage they put their marriage first and try to keep it going. Yes, in many cases it does work. (But in other cases)...we see it ending up with suicide or murder.”

Women are socialised to be submissive to men. It does not matter what he does to her. She has to make him happy. Divorce or separation is not only unacceptable in most of the cases but it is seen to bring shame and a bad name to the couple’s family. Women are supposed to keep the family together. Women are not to disturb the peace but must make sure that the men do not do anything that would bring shame to the family. Women’s rights are about upholding the family, upholding her husband.

4.3.3 Women have no witnesses

There were several accounts suggesting women had to make their case against their abusive husbands:

“All the police said, is that I don’t have support. I submitted a medical report. I didn’t have witnesses, so where do I go to get a witness? I don’t have anybody in New Zealand...My husband’s parents, sisters and some other relatives live here. He had many witnesses.”

This particular finding was somewhat contrary to a recent report stating that the police response to family violence offences has greatly improved over

years (Barwick, Gray & Macky, 2000). “However, while at a national level policies are good, and some police do an excellent job, the police response is still variable” (Barwick et al., 2000, p.3).

“I had some neighbours who helped me. One went back to his country and the other went to XXX (name of a place). I don’t know their full names...”

“I applied for a protection order and then I withdrew it because of the pressure from my husband...”

4.3.4 Unresponsive community

Participants in this study strongly felt that the Asian communities hide family violence. They feel shame to disclose it to outsiders as they consider family violence is a private matter.

A legal practitioner described how the community is unresponsive to family violence:

“Some communities cover it up. Like they don’t let it get out. It’s also accepted as well, that as you are a woman you can be treated as a second class citizen. I know for some of my clients, their culture accepts domestic violence. Women are treated like enemies. They are supposed to listen to their husbands and they’re supposed to be submissive.”

If women start to disclose it, it becomes a “community affair”. One focus group member said:

“Community leaders turn up in your home and talk about it...A very inhuman experience...It makes you feel more guilty...It makes women responsible.”

Women are not supposed to bring their family into disrepute in the community:

“Women represent the ambassadors of their country. Women feel that they have to take the violence rather than speaking up’.”

It damages the whole community reputation; brings shame to the country, children and parents. Members of the focus group discussion argued strongly:

“Community leaders have the whole temple behind them...They don’t want to know, they strongly believe in what they believe – “There is no family violence in our community’.”

“They themselves are in collective denial...They are comfortable with what they believe and they don’t want to change.”

Women who marry New Zealand men face a different kind of “unresponsiveness”. They can’t talk to their own family and can’t return to their home country when abuse happens. Families from Asian countries somehow believe:

“There is no violence in Western society...white men are all good.”

There is a myth in Asian culture that women married to men in a Western country are protected by law, respected by their husband and given all the freedom they want. It is commonly believed among Asian peoples that European men are not as abusive as their partners back home. Therefore parents back home have difficulty accepting violence against their married daughters:

“They won’t accept this is what is happening...They think you must have done something wrong for your husband to beat you up ...Women have no place to go.”

4.3.5 Limited capacity

Very few individuals from Asian communities have the capacity to prevent and reduce family violence. A participant affected by family violence said:

“It requires a lot of strength (to be open about one’s personal experiences as a family violence victim)...(it takes) 20 years to grow a leader...”

Box Three: Barriers in tackling family violence within Asian communities

Barriers in tackling family violence within Asian communities				
Family violence is a private matter	Keeping the marriage together no matter what	Women have no witnesses	Unresponsive community	Limited capacity
			Issues faced by women married to people of the same ethnicity	
			Issues faced by women married to Europeans	

4.4 Strengths and capacities in preventing and reducing family violence

4.4.1 Mapping of individual strengths

Towards the end of the focus group, one member cited:

*“If we are stronger we can...we have the power from our heart to stand up...
I learned, I grew...I was able to stop the violence.”*

The sources of strength may also come from family. One participant attributed her source of strength to her parents and her children:

“I have been in an abusive relationship for three years...It was not my husband who gave me a life, it was my parents, they gave me this life.”

Every woman needs to be happy. Unless they are happy, they cannot keep their children happy.”

Other participants agreed and added:

“My children are my strength. That’s why I’ve been in an abusive situation for 21 years. I want them to be cared for more, have proper food, sports, friends, recreation...”

“I am happy with my children. They are good kids. Even their father is hoping they never get angry. My elder daughter is a very bright student doing XXX course at university.”

During the focus group discussion, it was mentioned that women can enhance their strengths, if they could see someone affected by family violence as a role-model who could lead the way to fight against family violence.

Another two participants mentioned they can enhance their strengths from participating in regular activities or studying (or doing other things) that help:

“...distract you from the problems.”

“I continued to study, got recharged...I could disperse my focus from those bad things.”

“...do something that pleases you.”

A number of individuals said they learn to use their religious beliefs to fight against the violence at home:

“With continuous prayers, I could gain strength from God. I was nearly crushed by my husband and my family’s attitude...God is my only strength to overcome the hardship. If you are fully dependent on Him, He will give you more blessings.”

Meeting with people from a similar background is another source of strength:

“I joined the weekly solo mother support group. I think it is a very good group where women with similar experience in family relationships get together. We share, empathise and support each other without any shame, guilt and worry. Through this group, we gain strength to continue living.”

Lastly, a couple of participants found that working as a volunteer was also a helpful way to nurture one’s strengths:

“I act as volunteer and talk to people and feel good, rather than sitting at home and being lonely.”

For some individuals the above “self-care” strategies or ways to enhance one’s strengths were considered as useful ways to help leave a safe house and return to the community.

4.4.2 Mapping of collective strengths

Various sources of collective strength in existence were identified to prevent or reduce the harm caused by family violence:

- Media, especially the ethnic or language-specific radio programmes and newspapers; they are very useful in passing on information about relevant workshops/training, raising awareness and increasing understanding with regard to the family violence consuming New Zealand Asian communities
- Existing community groups or organisations
 - The National Ethnic Council could take a leadership role
 - Churches, temples or mosques
- Existing support services and safe houses where women can go
- Support and resources from government
- Translation of information sheets and pamphlets on family violence to Asian languages
- Services like Shakti advocates and provision of direct services to reduce or prevent family violence; they seek to:
 - Out-reach, provide ongoing education and raise awareness in communities
 - Send out clear and specific messages to the community: “say no to violence”, “speak up, there is no shame or guilt”
 - Meet with other relevant services
 - Advocate for women’s issues and problems
 - Work with post-natal, community and public health nurses
 - Follow-up child abuse cases
 - Work with and support victims
 - Provide crisis interventions
 - Provide links for women in need to other relevant services
 - Go out to meet/reach clients in the community

On the whole, research participants were not very enthusiastic about discussing the individual or collective strengths or capacities to combat family violence. However, participants were more comfortable in elaborating what they have found helpful when confronted by family violence.

4.4.3 What has been helpful in dealing with family violence

The material covered here concentrates on what has been helpful in dealing with a crisis and the subsequent reintegration associated with family violence among Asian communities, according to participants’ firsthand experiences.

Help from family

Several participants described in detail how they were cared for by their family:

“My family overseas sent me clothes, they cried for me.”

“...My brother and his family offered us accommodation, so we moved to his place and stayed for two months until legal orders ensured we could go home.”

“(My husband’s sister in-law) lives in New Zealand and she introduced me to a lawyer, so I am applying for a protection order, custody and divorce (separation) with this lawyer’s help.”

There was only one participant that mentioned that the ethnic community can help:

“My family, the XXX community, and auntie and uncle can help.”

Evidently it is rather uncommon to receive support from family, parents and friends in the case of family violence. Most help comes from neighbours, the wider community and professionals.

Help from neighbourhood and community organisations

According to several participants, neighbours play an important role in terms of providing practical assistance to the family. In two extreme cases, they went over to rescue the battered women and children.

“My nice neighbour helped me a lot. They empathised with my situation and offered great help. They scared my husband away.”

“It’s a good neighbourhood...I’ve been saved by them.”

A few participants talked about their “good, kind landlord” and “good people from the European community”, “helpful, kind workmates”.

“I accepted support from the European community and maintain contact.”

“I know a few more friends.”

Obtaining help from church and “language school teachers and classmates” were also mentioned by several participants.

Regardless of where the help came from, participants recalled friends and neighbours alike were crucial in providing practical assistance, such as transport and urgent childcare.

Making contact with organisations like the Citizen Advice Bureau, child care centres or the City Mission was helpful:

“The CAB helped my grandson with school and supervision.”

“I’m getting food support from the City Mission.”

Participants considered group support helpful in their ordeal:

“Over the last two years, we organised an activity group for Chinese elderly people and we have weekly activities. Through this participation, we share and care for each other and I feel much better.”

“A Chinese counsellor started a solo mother support group a few weeks ago. I was encouraged to join in and found it’s quite supportive. Eight to ten women with similar backgrounds gather together to share, to cry, to laugh.”

Three participants commented that employment courses, job training and evening classes were helpful in equipping them with work skills, and in turn improve their employability.

Help from professional services

Perhaps due to the fact that most of the participants were recruited from domestic/family violence services, a number of people found their services very helpful:

“Staff in the women’s refuge helped me apply for a protection order (not approved) and legal aid.”

“The safe house helped me apply for public housing, to read English letters and filter calls by my husband.”

“They arranged for me to attend English classes and my son to go to school.”

“The women’s refuge provided me with a place to stay, they have good staff.”

“(Family violence services) applied for a lawyer, social welfare support, a supplement for transport, for myself and my baby.”

“I stayed in the safe house for a few days. They picked my daughter and me up from our home.”

“They gave me food, children’s medicine, lawyers.”

“XXX (name of family violence services) gave all sorts of help like talking to lawyers, providing transport, childcare, healthcare, counselling services.”

“They were most helpful - XXX (name of family violence services) office people, and the lawyer – she is trying hard to get a custody order.”

“XXX (name of family violence services) help: they provide legal services, shelter, food, childcare, Plunket, counselling and social work.”

“XXX (name of family violence services) gave me a support letter for the IRD and helped me with banking matters.”

In terms of the multitude of services required, one participant summed it up:

“Emergency food benefit, friends, talking to people, safe-shelter, pregnancy help, health care, social network, telephone facilities, counselling, transport, social work.”

No one single organisation can provide all these services. According to participants’ personal accounts of family violence, they said the following

professionals or offices have to co-operate in order to provide optimal outcomes for individuals and families affected by family violence:

- Social workers
- Social welfare support
- Budgeting services
- Help from plunket nurses for child care and support e.g. frequent home visits, toys etc
- Support from police officers responsible for family violence
- A good lawyer, one participant elaborated:
“...a lawyer worked for me with his whole heart. He applied for the removal order, protection order and custody order for me. He also successfully applied for property subdivision so I could gain half of the marriage property back, which was really helpful for our family. He tried his best to obtain the most for us.”
- Women’s refuge
- Safe houses
- Non-PR (permanent residency) safe houses
- Education and training, e.g. learning English
- General Practitioners
- Psychiatrists who provide services and advice
- Counsellor, one participant added:
“I go to see my counsellor on a regular basis’ she gives me lots of emotional support and helped me calm myself down. With her support (I always questioned the meaning of life), I can walk out of the shadows. She should be credited with 70% of my well-being.”
- Parenting courses
- Relationship counselling
- Home visits
- Support from various agencies to deal with the root problems; in some cases the problems are related to problem gambling or alcohol dependency
- ‘Stop Violence Programme for men’. One of the men participating in this study explained why the course he attended was particularly useful for him:
“The course is about knowing myself. It deals with conflicts and arguments. It has a good open atmosphere and good facilitation. The trainer doesn’t pass judgment and the course is based on facts. It establishes a good trust level and sharing among attendees.”

In the midst of the discussion, one participant made specific comments about what has been helpful for her to “*stand on my own feet*” and manage living safely again in the community after leaving the safe house. The important help included, but is not limited to:

- Other people’s support and acceptance without judgement or criticism
- Financial support is critical and other social agencies support
- Protection orders, custody orders from the family court
- Mobile phone
- A new place to live
- Family living close by

- Becoming a Christian
- Making good and reliable friends

Help from legislation and the legal framework

- Protection Order: The majority of women found a Protection Order very helpful to secure some level of security. However some women commented that a Protection Order was also a 'double-edged' sword. Once women get a Protection Order it means they are taking legal action against the man. Police could arrest the man and he could go to jail. All of these issues could affect a man's employment, as well as the future of the family. So it closes the door for any further negotiation with their husband or family. The husband then becomes angrier towards the woman and thinks that if she can get a protection order against him they might as well have a divorce.
- The Domestic Violence Act and Permanent Residency (PR): All women participants regard the approval of PR as the ultimate solution to their problems, be it for employment or accessing public health services like healthcare and income support benefits. Without PR, they live in constant fear and uncertainty.

Box Four: Strengths and capacities in preventing and reducing family violence

Strengths and capacities in preventing and reducing family violence		
Mapping of individual strengths	Mapping of collective strengths	What has been helpful in dealing with family violence
Family	Ethnic specific media	Help from family
Role models	Existing organisations/groups	Help from neighbourhood and community groups
Religious beliefs	Existing family violence services	Help from professional services
Peer support groups	Translated printed material on family violence	Help from legislation and the legal framework
Working as a volunteer		

4.5 Gaps and needs analysis

4.5.1 Services gaps

Women have no where to live

Women have nowhere to live when they are abused. In many cases they go out and find it is hard to locate a safe place. The relatives, friends and workmates then abuse them again.

“After five months of marriage, I left my husband and went to the refuge. I had to come back again because there was no other option. Again, I left my husband’s house and went to my relative’s house. My relative’s husband also abused me. He used to take advantage of me...So I decided to go back to my husband.”

“I haven’t got any safe place to go. The culture where I came from is that once a daughter is married she can’t go back to her parents. It’s very shameful.”

“I cannot stay here because immigration has declined my application. I don’t know where I should go.”

Safe houses require more funding and resources

When women leave home and come to the safe house they take a very big step for themselves as well as for their children. They need to deal with a lawyer, the police, the court, immigration, a doctor, transport, social workers, counsellors and children’s education, not to mention the future for themselves and their young children.

“I lived in XXX refuge. I couldn’t put my children there. They don’t allow children my age. I was there alone and my children were with my family

and friends. The refuge wasn't very supportive. My expectations were quite different from what I received. We came from a stressful environment and we wanted to live in peace and, further more, we needed lots of encouragement, but I didn't get this from them. I needed transport to go to the doctor/lawyer/immigration. I had to start doing things by myself, like finding a lawyer and immigration services."

"They provided me with a place for sleeping and sometimes food, but often there's no food. I had to do work, like cleaning, washing. I needed to attend their domestic violence training."

Women have limited mobility and cannot communicate much outside the safe house where they live: *"A client who is a NZ resident lived in the safe house alone. She was a young girl. She was abused by her husband. She lost all of her self-confidence and was crying all the time. She was scared to talk with other people. There weren't any other clients in the safe house where she lived. She was the only client. At night she was so scared, she started crying."*

The women are not allowed to make contact with their husbands. They are not allowed to talk with their family, particularly before a protection order is issued. *"They didn't tell me before coming here that I can't go out... They will not allow me to talk with my family, friends and others..."*

Another problem mentioned by participants was food scarcity in safe houses. One participant gave details:

"Food is provided to women victims but most of the time there is a food shortage. If there is food in the safe house it's sometimes not edible."

"The women victims received shelter and food, but most of the time there was a scarcity of food."

"For three weeks I lived in the refuge. There was no elsewhere to go. They helped me, providing shelter and sometimes food."

The above comments from participants highlight the fact that most of the safe houses are facing funding or resources problems. The houses rely heavily on good will and hard work provided by volunteers. If an organisation or safe house is not a full member of the National Collective of Independent Womens Refuges, it receives less than half of the funding. Even it does receive full funding, there is still a funding deficit.

Access to emergency benefit

When a women's immigration application has been declined and their husband withdraws support, or the police has not provided a support letter to immigration, they then need to access an emergency benefit. Some participants in this project said that emergency benefits could not be accessed unless they are permanent residents, even if they have a baby born here after getting married to a New Zealand citizen/residence:

"I went to Work and Income they said they cannot actually help me unless I've got permanent residence. Even though my child is born here they cannot provide me with any emergency benefit... They said they have to follow their policies and procedures..."

"I am not eligible to receive any emergency benefit or medical treatment because my husband withdrew his support. It seems to me that all the government agencies support him..."

"As I was saying, ethnic women and children are suffering. They are not eligible to access any benefit. Yes, they are a refuge here for months and months. Once immigration declines their application, they are again asked to appeal and then it happens all over again."

In this instance, participants' experiences are contrary to what the New Zealand legislative framework and welfare system would normally cover. There is provision for New Zealand born children's mothers to get support.

High unemployment among Asian ethnic women

Women's unemployment status is a key factor associated with family violence. Financial dependency on men has left women with little option but staying in an abusive relationship or returning to it: *"I am stressed because I have no job. I pay my rent and I think where am I going to stay, how am I going to survive with my baby? At the moment I need a job so I can pay my rent, pay for my daily living and day-care costs for my children."*

Other service gaps mentioned briefly by participants:

- Very limited early intervention (or pre-crisis) services available
- Lack of transport facilities
- Lack of childcare facilities

4.5.2 Policy gaps

Current immigration system is very strict for women

A key informant commented:

"I supported this case in a way. If they've been living in a genuine relationship, which is easy to establish, and leave the relationship because of domestic violence, then I think the current criteria of immigration is very strict on ethnic women. Men get more power and control over women through the current immigration process...Men take advantage of women and use them – it's because of that."

“My husband withdrew his support, so immigration declined our work permit and residency applications...I don’t know what is going to happen this time. I just don’t know why they declined it, they haven’t written any specific reason.”

“When I called the police, he revoked everything, like my work permit and my kid’s student visa. He went to immigration and withdrew all support. Immigration listened to him, but they don’t listen to me, even though I went to immigration with the letter from the police that came to my post box.”

“You marry a New Zealand citizen/permanent resident and your PR application is under consideration. Your relationship does not work out. Then your application is declined and you know that without permanent residence here, you have no status...When there is domestic violence in the relationship, most often the women cannot cope with the violence and they know if they report anything about their husband the husband will withdraw support for their application. So it’s like holding all the power.”

“...need to get more people involved in it and a lot more consultation with immigration.”

“Men have the power to revoke women’s immigration status. Usually women do not get a work permit or permanent residency if they leave their husband. Immigration decline their work permit and permanent residency, so they cannot stay in New Zealand even though the women legally married a New Zealand citizen/resident. They live together and, after a while, the husband can apply for her residency. These men get the woman, get the dowry, and they use the woman sexually for one or two years and then kick them out.”

High immigration fees

“Three times I had to pay immigration fees and medical fees. Each time I have to pay in total \$990. Each time my application has been declined, but they haven’t returned my money. You see I don’t have an income source. I borrowed money from my friend. I told my friends that once I get a work permit, I would work and pay back the money. I also need to pay for lawyer’s fees, which is quite a high amount.”

Difficult to get police support

Legal service providers, particularly lawyers who deal with Immigration Services, are facing difficulties in getting police support to deal with women’s immigration matters:

“It is very difficult to get a report from police. For example, a client we requested a report for, her husband is a drug addict. He takes “P”. The whole family takes “P”. He comes from a dysfunctional family. This girl is XX years old. She got married to him. She is from an XX country. Now she has a five-month old baby. Her husband never applied for her work permit or permanent residency or anything like that. She is living and working without a permit.”

“The police couldn’t write a letter of support because she only had one incident of assault in the car and there was no other violence.”

“What’s happening often is very frustrating... Because I cannot really do anything (re: client’s immigration status) because I cannot get these police reports.”

“I work for some girls. When they left their homes they didn’t realise that they needed to make a police complaint at that time. So they went to the women’s refuge. We got them a protection order and then looked at their immigration status. Because the violence happened some time ago the police would not accept the complaint. Even if they do accept the complaint, it gets turned down. For example, I had a case where they said ‘Oh there is no bruise on her body any more’. You see, it happened months ago, but she didn’t file it. However, she got a protection order that proved that domestic violence did happen.”

“(Police need someone who) has more awareness about ethnic women and can get a really in-depth understanding of where they come from and what are the real facts.”

The police support letter should not be required:

“In regards to the immigration status of women...domestic violence can be ascertained by court hearings and evidence. The police support letter should not be needed in cases of immigration status of women. I am not saying it would make anything easier for them. But what I am saying is that there has to be a balance... We don’t support people who abuse the system, but the policy we have at the moment is very strict on women... Immigration should not ask the police for a support letter in the case of domestic violence.”

Other policy gaps mentioned briefly by participants included:

- Lack of protocol to guide the application of a protection order
- Children cannot access education when their fathers withdraw sponsorship

4.5.3 What is needed to prevent family violence?

Government leads the action against family violence in Asian communities

One member in the focus group said:

“Our community is left alone by the New Zealand government (or by the British government in the UK). They feel we can do whatever we want because it’s not culturally appropriate to intervene in our community...they can’t tell us what to do.”

Then the focus group member went on to say a government could be reluctant to intervene because it might result in some extreme behaviours displayed by certain sectors of the population (e.g. extreme fundamentalists), such as suicide bombing or a violence campaign against the host society.

The focus group concluded the discussion by making specific suggestions as follows:

- Orientation: migrant or ethnic communities have to be informed immediately about the “rules, values and operational procedures”
- There have to be checks and balances in what community groups are doing (e.g. becoming part of the funding criteria, identifying what sort of community projects and community development work are taking place). One participant added *“community organisations should be accountable for family violence”*
- Respecting both the cultural values/practices of individual ethnic communities and the collective values (e.g. care and love for children, respect and equal rights for women) adopted by the host community
- The community should nominate its own leaders and run language classes
- Family violence is illegal, it should not be allowed in the name of “culture or tradition”. This is critical in terms of preventing family violence rather than constantly dealing with crises.

Higher formal education for women

Higher formal education for women increases their self-confidence, awareness of their rights, self respect and respect for others:

“Women need education. Today I have education and that is why my husband values me. He can trust me and can depend on me. Education also gives me awareness, which is why I don’t make big mistakes. He can be confident in me that I am able to guide my children in the right way. If I didn’t have education, he might underestimate me. My husband never hit me or beat me. It’s out of the question. If he hit me I might hit him. If you ask my husband he’d say ‘if I beat her, she will beat me’.

We also need to develop the school curriculum focusing on how boys and girls should respect each other: *“There should be family values and bonding. We need good education on how boys should respect their sisters, their wives and other women. We need to give them this education through an institutionalised process of education. We have to teach them the beautiful side of life and to respect each other...They will respect their aunties and other girls, and then these people will also respect them.”*

Overcome isolation

To reduce and prevent family violence, women need to increase their mobility to overcome isolation. Taking up away-from-home employment and obtaining a driving licence could help overcome isolation:

“If I can engage in outside activities, like a job, then I think I could get my driving license. So if I don’t feel good, I can always go out and then feel better.”

Other suggestions to increase mobility are:

- *“To go out to any group anywhere”*

- *“Attend English language courses”*
- *“She must do things for herself, go out, do her own shopping”*
- *“Find out where things are because knowledge is power, nobody can isolate you”*
- *“Make contacts with good neighbours and learn from them”*
- *“Develop your own strategy for survival”*

Counselling for men

Counselling programmes (e.g. including problem solving skills and conflict resolution) for ethnic men to prevent and reduce family violence does not seem to be easily available:

“Men should go for counselling. To rescue our broken relationship, I attended relationship counselling, but he never did because I think he wasn’t interested in building up good relationships.”

The family counselling would assist in reducing violence. Counselling for women and men separately could be helpful; if they agree, then joint counselling could be arranged later.

Counselling and awareness programmes for men and women should be focused on partner relationships that are complementary to each other. We may play a different role and have a different responsibility, but they both should be valued in a family:

“They have to work in partnership, but the roles may be different within the partnership and complementary of each other. That might lead to the next generation being in a better place.”

Both men and women need to understand each other. Neither men nor women should try to control each other:

“We need to give freedom to everyone. I give freedom to my husband about many things. For example, he might like to go and visit different places. Sometimes he buys things although there’s no need for them at home. I don’t agree. Many women in our community might argue about why he bought these items when they’re not needed. Sometimes they don’t accept their husband’s decision.”

Change community mind set

We need to develop an awareness programme for the Asian community. The community must be aware of the effects of family violence on women, men and children. The main issue is a man is not only attacking a woman, he is attacking the children too. When the woman becomes totally dysfunctional, she cannot take care of her children properly. So hurting the woman means hurting the children.

Examine interpretation of cultural values and practices

Family violence is not the fault of traditional cultures per se. Problems begin when individuals have reinterpreted cultural customs and practices to suit their own interest. Men also have been impacted negatively:

“I must not say give up your culture, you must have good things in your culture too.”

Offer English language courses

Different agencies and community organisations should be sufficiently resourced to provide English language courses for migrants and refugees. Women should be involved in English language courses. A participant points this out:

“To reduce violence in an ethnic community, first a woman should go out and learn English.”

Ministries and government agencies work alongside community organisations to prevent and reduce family violence in the Asian community

The focus group made specific suggestions as follows:

- Disseminate literature and findings
- Create meetings and workshops
- Work with perpetrators (e.g. 95% are males, in a few cases it also involves the mother-in-law who is part of the cycle of anger or abuse over generations) to prevent and reduce family violence in the Asian community
- Offer parenting programmes to stop the generational cycle of family violence: look into the structure and upbringing environment that shapes a child in terms of what he can do, and what is acceptable and where he gets those messages
- Acknowledge and accept that there is family violence in Asian families
- Establish more ethnic centres/services for individuals/families affected by family violence

4.5.4 What is needed to provide effective crisis intervention?

Police and immigration officers have to be educated in family violence

Police and immigration officers should be trained in family violence in ethnic communities. The following is one of many examples:

“...when I went to the police station, the police didn’t understand how my husband abused me. They wanted to see the burn spots on my legs. I showed them the burn spots on my legs. It was shameful for me to pull my skirt up. They just didn’t understand...When I called for a taxi and asked the taxi driver if he could take me home, he asked me what I would give him in return. So the police have to understand what a woman is going through, what the problems are before they take any action.”

Better links between the Police and Immigration Services

“When domestic violence victims are picked up by the police, the person should be handed over to someone who is trained in that particular area of domestic violence. So the information that is required for immigration can be given by the police in a report stating whether there was domestic violence or not. Although you cannot take what the victims say (as the truth), you can also talk to the abuser, but there must be a platform where information can be verified.”

Review the immigration policy

The focus group made specific suggestions as follows:

- If a woman on a work permit is involved in family violence, their work permit is taken away *“that means they suffer and this is the worst part”*. This should not happen.
- Immigration Services should stop men who have committed family violence, or have had a protection order taken out against them, from sponsoring somebody else coming to the country. Or men with a protection order against them should not be allowed to apply for New Zealand citizenship
- Provide a migrant education settlement programme (e.g. 3-5 days) to aid people’s integration into New Zealand society
- To make it compulsory that all migrant men have to learn about the harm caused by family violence, that violent acts against women are illegal in this country, and for prevention strategies to be part of the orientation programme.

Change policy through extensive consultation

“I would love to say that a change in police policy would help women. But I think more consultation is required with the police, immigration, researchers and especially lawyers who are working in the domestic violence areas, this will help women victims.”

It is worth mentioning that not only policy has to be reviewed and changed. How the policy is being enforced and implemented in different parts of the country is also very important to review.

Access to emergency benefit

“The Government should really do something for those women who have no visa. They should provide an emergency benefit so they can live. When a woman marries a New Zealand permanent resident or citizen, she should get residence, without her husband’s support. It is important that immigration should understand the situation and that immigration should investigate matters properly. They should not keep women dependent on men.”

A woman participant suggests that a trust account can help in emergency situations for woman and children when confronted by family violence:

“As I am a sufferer of domestic violence, my feeling is that if any man goes to marry outside New Zealand, he should put some money into a trust account to give some money to the woman. If the marriage breaks down, the woman should not be thrown on the street with the children. If the man is found guilty, residency should be given directly to the woman and children.”

Counselling on pre-protection orders

Family counselling or clear information about what protection orders entail and their consequences is essential to gain for Asian migrant women, men and children, before issuing any orders.

Workforce development in Asian family violence

Participants felt that family violence is a very sensitive issue, which demands a great deal of in-depth knowledge and training in relevant disciplines, such as cross-cultural communication, Asian culture, tradition and beliefs, gender issues, empowerment, and social and political sciences.

Adopt a community development approach to address the issue of family violence and/or wider oppression against women from ethnic communities

Questions remain: what would the community development programme contain and how to make it work, given the programme has to be seen as useful by the community concerned. The focus group made specific suggestions as follows:

- A cross-sector and partnership approach involving NGOs, mainstream services, ethnic community leaders/groups, New Zealand Immigration Services, local police, legal/justice systems, citizen advice bureau, schools, CYPS, GPs and the Office of Ethnic Affairs, etc. One suggestion was mentioned: police could raise issues with community leaders (e.g. presidents, secretaries) since they have all the records of incidents and front-line experience in dealing with family violence involving members of an ethnic community. One participant added, *“because we believe in structure, if the message comes from the government and police it will be well-received...there is a need for a very structural approach”*
- Leadership from the government with “institutional back-up” being put in place e.g. in a child abuse case, adults should be told to attend a parenting programme even after the child is returned to the family and police involvement is over
- Engage mainstream and ethnic-specific media to discuss these issues - the good and not so good
- Strong links between government and NGOs
- Combine/integrate policies with services

4.5.5 What is needed to help women/families return to the community?

Work permit/permanent residency will increase women’s self-confidence

“Still, I have a work permit that expires next year in August. I actually want to do something useful in this period like maybe get a job in my field, which is XXX (name of the business), so that I can get more points to apply for permanent residence here in New Zealand...I have tried before, especially with my baby.”

“At the moment, I am focusing on getting a job and also getting PR so that I can build up my future and bring up my baby here, because there is no point in going back to my country. My parents are not in a good condition. They are struggling themselves, so I don’t want to be a burden for them. They paid my marriage dowry for me. My husband has withdrawn his immigration support.”

Women's employment

Women's employment gives opportunities to access information and exchange thoughts and ideas that could increase women's problem solving skills:

“Employment gives a woman autonomy, financial autonomy; otherwise she is totally dependent on men... She will know what's what, where things are and which agencies provide what. She can go out, increase her learning skills and increase her self-esteem.”

The income women earn from employment give them an identity in the household, as well as in the community:

“Women have to have their own income sources. For example, I had a job before I came here, that's why he valued me more. We lived our life in discipline and in a beautiful way. Employment gives women their own identity. We need to identify causes of women's unemployment, and then support them in accordance with this, which will assist in improving gender relations.”

Box Five: Gaps and needs analysis

Gaps and needs analysis				
Service gaps	Policy gaps	What is needed to prevent family violence³	What is needed to provide effective crisis intervention⁴	What is needed to help women/families return to the community
Women have nowhere to live	Current immigration system is very strict for women	Government needs to lead the action against family violence in Asian communities	Police and immigration officers have to be educated on family violence	Work permit/permanent residency increases women's self-confidence
Safe houses require more funding and resources	High immigration fees	Higher formal education for women	Better link between police and Immigration Services	Women's employment
Access to emergency benefit	Difficult to get police support	Overcome Isolation	Review the immigration policy	
High unemployment among Asian ethnic women	Other policy gaps mentioned briefly by participants	Counselling for men	Change policy through extensive consultation	
Other service gaps mentioned briefly by participants		Change community mind set	Access to emergency benefit	
		Examine interpretation of cultural values and practices	Counselling on pre protection order	
		Offer English language courses	Workforce development in Asian family violence	
		Ministries and government agencies work alongside community organisations	Adopt a community development approach	

³ Some of the needs are equally applicable for the last column - "return to community"

⁴ As above.

4.6 Summary of results

This study identified a range of factors, causes and triggers for family violence within New Zealand Asian communities. The key important issues are related to difficulties in adjusting to living in a new country, in relation to finding suitable employment and financial hardship. Men’s dominance in some Asian families remains a concern, in particular when men see controlling or abuse over their wives as the last resort to protect their cultural values and traditions. The power men hold over their immigrant wife’s residency status, coupled with the racism and discrimination some women experienced in this study when they attempted to find paid jobs or solve their financial dependency issues, put women at extreme risk of abuse and violence.

The effects of family violence on individuals are far reaching. In the case of the Asian immigrant communities, family violence impacts not only on immediate family members, relatives and parents in New Zealand, but also extended family members in their country of origin. Some impacts are more immediate than others, for example, the negative effects on women’s physical, mental and sexual health. Some impacts pass from one generation to the other, for instance, participants worried that their sisters or even daughters may not get married if the family has a “record” of family violence or is a broken family.

The barriers to prevent and reduce family violence within Asian communities are best summarised in the following table.

Table 10: Summary of barriers⁵

Barriers	Institutional barriers:	Cultural barriers:	Individual barriers:
Types of barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mono-lingual workers • Racism/discrimination • Lack of service options • Culturally insensitive systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values • Isolation • Shame • Community • Religion • No support from the community • No support from family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values around shame and fear • Self esteem/self confidence • Language

Women in this study indicated that the main sources for their strength and resilience were peers, religious practices, neighbours and professional services for support and care at the time of adversity. Gaps in services and at policy level were identified across various government and non-government sectors. In terms of what is needed to prevent and reduce family violence and assist women return to the community safely, the key challenge is that government agencies should not be distracted by the so-called “cultural-

⁵ Modified from Warriar, Marin, Masaki, undated, p. 10.

smoke screen” (i.e. I respect your culture; ethnic communities are left alone to continue their practices, in some cases it includes oppression and violence against women). Conversely, government departments need to work closely with community groups and support them to confront family violence in their own communities.

See Appendix I for a summary of the results in the boxes.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Firstly, this chapter highlights the specific aspects of the findings that are seen as unique to people from the Indian sub-continent and Chinese in the Aotearoa New Zealand context. Secondly, the strengths and limitations of the present study are highlighted. Thirdly, a series of specific recommendations are made by referring to the “visions”, “principles” and the “framework for action” outlined in the seminal document “*Te Rito: New Zealand family violence prevention strategy*” released in February 2002 by the Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand.

5.1 Issues among the South Asian peoples and Chinese: commonalities and differences

When comparing the findings across the two ethnic groups, it reveals that there are many more similarities than differences.

Participants from both groups showed a strong sense of shamefulness associated with family violence. There is also bitterness about the fact that Asian communities and, in some cases, families, are not responsive to incidents of family violence. The majority of participants, both men and women, referred to their adjustment periods after arriving in New Zealand, the difficulties in finding suitable paid employment and indicated their urgent need to improve their English language skills. The effects of violence are very similar across the two population groups. The need for culturally appropriate services provided by safe houses, financial aids, food and child care, are the same between the South Asian peoples and Chinese. Another common theme that transcends the two different cultural groups is men’s tendency to be dominant and controlling over women, which creates a lot of friction at home and leads to violent outbursts over trivial matters.

The only two apparent differences between Chinese and individuals from the South Asian region are the customary practice of dowry and the misuse of religious beliefs to suit men’s desire to over-power women among people from the Indian sub-continent.

The discussion here is indicative of what the similarities and differences might look like. One has to be mindful that within the population of South Asia (e.g. from India versus Pakistan) or Chinese peoples (e.g. Chinese from China versus Thailand) there is enormous diversity in religion, culture, languages spoken, political environment, history, education and socio-economic experiences, not to mention the idiosyncratic differences. It is therefore unjustified to generalise the comparison within or across two groups as a whole. In this study, individuals came from a rural environment, as opposed to an urban environment. Different age groups and religious backgrounds displayed high levels of sophistication in their cultural beliefs and values, their concept of family and gender, and attitudes towards women.

5.2 Strengths and limitations of the present project

The strengths of this study lie in the setting and design. This study was a population-based study involving women and men from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, Indian-Fijians and Chinese. In addition, collecting data from people with a variety of backgrounds, such as women at different stages of using family violence support services (e.g. participants who were still staying in a safe house, women who used community-based services as opposed to residential safe house facilities, individuals who were new to the country and long-term settlers), key informants from legal or law enforcement backgrounds and helping agencies, reduced the possible bias of people's experiences and views on family violence in Asian communities.

The combination of using individual interviews and a focus group achieved two specific purposes in this study. Firstly, the in-depth individual interviews provided a wealth of information about what contributed to their family violence, participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the difficulties in preventing and reducing family violence in ethnic communities, and the specific context of individual experiences. This information highlighted the needs and gaps in family violence services leading to a series of recommendations. Secondly, the key informant interviews and the focus group, involving practitioners, volunteers and trainees, enabled the researchers to assess and validate some of the data collected from individual interviews. More importantly, the practitioners' views on individual and collective strengths in combating family violence helped to provide additional information and insights into the means to prevent and reduce family violence in Asian communities.

Furthermore, this project is believed to be the first externally funded study on family violence in Asian communities in Aotearoa New Zealand. This study demonstrated the collaborative efforts between university-based researchers, community agencies and government ministries to work together with people from diverse backgrounds, and discuss issues relating to Asian culture, beliefs, values and customs and post-immigration settlement. Members of the research team have been encouraged to undertake and to proceed with designing processes that are appropriate to their respective cultural backgrounds, be it Chinese, Indian-Fijian or Bangladesh. The data collection was carried out in the language preferred by participants, and then the notes were translated into English and used for further analysis. When the data were interpreted and analysed, appropriate cultural expertise, input and validation was sought. Each component has been respected as having its own individual strength/value and is believed to have added to the final result of the study. The research team sincerely hopes that this project will assist those family violence service providers, programme planners and policy makers who are trying to prevent and minimise harm caused by family violence in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Like most research studies, the present project is subject to several limitations and qualifications. It is important to note that the literature review included in this report is limited to articles published in the English language. This

language restriction may create a bias in this review with respect to the contextualisation of the findings in these studies. However, the direction of this bias cannot be determined.

Another potential limitation of the study is the fact that very few representatives of some population groups (e.g. only one person from Sri Lanka and only six men were involved within the sample group) were interviewed. However, the participants that were interviewed provided a wealth of information about family violence, including causes/triggers, gaps, needs and directions for a plan of action to further improve family violence support services. Although the number of participants who completed this qualitative study was reasonably large (56 individuals participated in individual interviews, there were three key-informant interviews and 13 women attended the focus group), it is not possible to transfer the research findings across the rest of the Asian population – or even South Asian peoples and Chinese residing outside the Auckland region. It is felt that there are significant variations in the level of services provided and understanding of issues concerning the Asian population across the country. A much larger, cross-five-cities⁶ study would be needed to detect differences in family violence in ethnic communities, for example, the strengths and services needs/gaps among major Asian ethnic groups (e.g. inclusion of Korean people) by age, years of stay in New Zealand, language skills and religions. For example, a Cambodian woman who does not speak any English at all in Auckland might have different difficulties in accessing services than a Muslim woman with a five-month-old girl in Dunedin whose visitor's visa has just been revoked by her husband.

The information and data provided retrospectively by the participants in both individual interviews and the focus group were probably subject to the problems of response bias and faulty recall. For example, some of the participants might have been unaware of the impacts of the trauma of family violence and circumstances on their inherent capacities and confidence in dealing with violence at home. Research participants who have been free from family violence for over five years for instance might have a tendency to minimise the effect of family violence on their behaviours and general wellbeing. Nevertheless, in general, data from participants coming from a variety of backgrounds help create a balanced view.

Finally, it has been complex for Asian peoples to be involved in this study (as with all research studies) where they do not have appropriate ethnic models on wellbeing or, specifically, on family violence to guide the pathway, and, there are multiple ethnic, language and religious groups under the umbrella term "Asian". On the other hand, this research has effectively sought to provide a snapshot for Asian peoples at this point in time. Members of Asian communities consider some of the findings are insightful and some are very useful because they highlight the need for increased education, awareness and intervention services, in some cases preferably provided by Asian peoples for Asian peoples.

⁶ Statistics New Zealand data show that most Asian people (up to 87%) reside in five main urban areas - Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

5.3 Specific recommendations

This section is written in a tabular form in order to present a clear set of recommendations. The “vision”, “principles” and “framework for action” from the strategy document (Ministry of Social Development, 2002) are included in the left column of the table. The right column highlights the recommendations or commentaries obtained from findings in the present study and/or relevant literature.

5.3.1 Vision and Principles to prevent and reduce family violence in Aotearoa New Zealand

Te Rito: New Zealand family violence prevention strategy (Ministry of Social Development, 2002)	
Vision: Families/Whanau living free from violence (p.12)	
Nine Principles⁷ (p.12-13)	Commentaries or recommendations specific to the South Asian and Chinese immigrant communities
1. All people have a fundamental right to be safe and to live free from violence.	Family violence should not be tolerated in any New Zealand Asian communities. Asian women whose immigration status is questionable or whose papers haven't yet cleared should have the same right as any New Zealander to live free from violence.
2. The unique customary and contemporary structures and practices of whanau, hapu and iwi must be recognised, provided for and fully engaged.	Cultural value can be used as the source of strength to empower victims to reduce/prevent family violence (Home Office Policing & Reducing Crime Unit, 2004). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example, Indians and Chinese have strong family ties and individuals may have immediate and extended family and social support to help them through the crisis. • Family violence or its devastating impacts can be reduced, by dealing with the situation with the perpetrator through existing family ties. • Certain cultural and religious practices such as prayer can build strong spiritual relationships. Some South Asian peoples have strong cultural beliefs that emphasis faith and prayer. <p>The Asian community should stop “scapegoating” a sub-group of people (e.g. the lower socio-economic</p>

⁷ The nine principles are set to guide the development of the strategy’s vision and also intended to guide the implementation process and any future approaches to family violence prevention. See the Strategy document, p. 5.

	<p>classes, the recent arrivals, individuals with less education) for the community's problems, be it family violence or poverty, for fear of eroding a community image that is perceived as good and desirable (Abraham, 2000).</p>
<p>3. Family violence prevention is to be viewed and approached in a broad and holistic manner.</p>	<p>Consider family violence in Asian communities as the product of multiple levels of influence on behaviours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That is, at the level of the individual, family/relationships (e.g. strained by role reversal for men and women at home), institutional (e.g. traditional values & images about Asian women), community (the ethnic and host community) and the societal level (e.g. racism, employment difficulties among recent Asian immigrants) (Krug et al., 2002 cited in Fanslow, 2005). <p>Violence towards Asian immigrant women and children has to be viewed in the context of post-immigration adjustment (Astbury et al., 2003).</p> <p>The fundamental principle is one of resource development and community-grounded action that links the macro and micro levels in addressing issues of central importance to Asian immigrant women and families (Abraham, 2000).</p>
<p>4. Perpetrators of violence in families/whanau must be held accountable for their violent behaviour.</p>	<p>Various cultural and religious sanctions for family violence among Asian peoples should be considered or challenged.</p> <p>Traditional Asian cultural customs and practices have to be observed, but the perpetrators of violence still have to be held accountable.</p>
<p>5. There must be a strong emphasis on prevention and early intervention with a specific focus on the needs of children and young people.</p>	<p>Send a clear message to the Asian communities: "The man is not only attacking the women he is attacking the children and young people too."</p>
<p>6. Approaches to family violence prevention must be integrated, coordinated and collaborative.</p>	<p>Collaborative efforts should cover social services, health, justice, education, faith/religion, media, immigration, employment and government sectors, cutting across the individual, family/relationship, institutional, community and societal levels (modified from the "Figures 7.3" and "7.4" in Fanslow, 2005, pp 74-85).</p>
<p>7. The community has a right and responsibility to be involved in preventing violence in families/whanau.</p>	<p>Mobilise effort within migrant communities themselves to fight against family violence.</p> <p>Provide Asian women with information about their basic human rights, legal rights and access to support services so that they can develop the necessary skills to take preventive care or to escape violent situations (National Asian Pacific American [APA] Women's Forum, undated).</p> <p>Launch of national violence prevention website</p>

	(National APA Women's Forum, undated).
8. The diverse needs of specific populations must be recognised and provided for when developing and implementing family violence prevention initiatives.	Asian peoples with different backgrounds, including country of origin, age, class, sexuality, ethnicity, education, socio-economic situation, personal history, duration of residency and citizenship/immigration status, have a fundamental right to be safe and free from violence (Abraham, 2000).
9. Family violence prevention initiatives should be continually enhanced as information and better ways of working are defined.	<p>Research is needed to bolster evidence of the extent of violence against Asian women. This research should be inclusive of all groups that comprise Asian peoples and highlight the differences as well as the commonalities of the groups.</p> <p>Funding for prevention initiatives should be consistent and available in the five Main Urban Areas (i.e. Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin) where there are relatively high proportions of recent immigrants. This should include funding for community outreach and education.</p> <p>Funding should fit the needs of the women in the community rather than the community fitting the needs of the funding agency (Warrier et al., undated).</p> <p>Address and transform cultural norms that accept violence against women as a means of discipline or control. This includes creating programmes for both Asian men and women ((Warrier et al., undated).</p>

5.3.2 Framework for action

18 specific, inter-related areas of action (Ministry of Social Development, 2002, p. 16-17)	Recommendations or commentaries specific to the South Asian and Chinese immigrant communities
1. Mechanism to promote cross-sector commitment and consistency and to monitor progress ⁸ .	<p>Collaborate between (multiple) government agencies, community organisations and immigrant women's groups.</p> <p>Address and monitor progress of issues affecting women's rights with a focus on immigrant women's rights. It is about bringing legislative reform and cultural sensitisation to social services, health, justice, education, faith/religion, media, immigration, employment and government systems.</p> <p>Be aware of the needs and issues among different immigrant groups, especially those with strong value-orientated ideology e.g. those who might hold an "oppressed view" on women (Abraham, 2000).</p>

⁸ In the 2002 strategy document, the framework for action 1 to 13 was put under the heading - "Planned areas for action".

	<p>To counteract the gender imbalance, men could become the voices for Asian women who are victims of family violence. Toward achieving this goal, it is important to build a coalition and develop a pool of information and resources for Asian women (Abraham, 2000).</p> <p>Funding should allow for finding creative programmes and activities among the Asian family violence programmes (Warrier et al., undated).</p> <p>Investigate suspicious deaths (Natarajan, 2002).</p>
2. Prioritise Maori-based approaches, early intervention and prevention, and evaluation.	There are many lessons that Asian peoples can learn from the Maori-based approaches to early intervention and prevention programmes.
3. Processes to monitor and enforce legal sanctions.	<p>High-quality legislation (e.g. concerning women and children when their immigration status becomes problematic because the husband revokes the application), the legal framework, enforcement and legal assistance are an essential requirement for Asian victims of family violence because they provide protection and safety for women.</p> <p>A woman's legal dependency often places the husband in a position of dominance and control and becomes an obstacle for many dependent wives in their efforts to attain economic independence from their abusers (Abraham, 2000).</p>
4. Consistency in relevant law, policy and service delivery.	<p>Provide courts with expert witnesses who can explain the cultural aspects of cases that require such information.</p> <p>Consistent and available interpreter services in all Asian languages should be available in all systems. The gender match between interpreters and clients who use the service is important in this context.</p> <p>Interpreters should be trained in the issue of family violence and be held accountable when there is evidence of collusion with the perpetrator.</p>
5. Plan of action for preventing violence in Maori communities.	<p>Maori and Asian peoples are very different in their cultural origin yet the two groups share many commonalities; both are diverse in religion, culture, language/dialects, education and socio-economic experiences. They also share some broad similarities of their world-view and family violence issues in New Zealand.</p> <p>The following analysis is not intended as definitive but does demonstrate similarities and potential for learning from one another:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic and naturalistic orientation. Both Maori and traditional Asian concepts of health and wellbeing advocate a holistic and naturalistic

	<p>approach. This involves an integration of mind and body, individual and family, as well as the wider tribal affiliations, society and the universe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective orientation. Within Maori and traditional Asian concepts of health and wellbeing, the sense of self-worth, social functioning and satisfaction are defined by others. Generally speaking, both groupings place high importance on the union of the individual with the hierarchical order and social norms such as the respect for elders/Kaumatua in the community and wider society. • The role of the family/Whanau. Maori and Asian traditions in general regard the family as the fundamental unit of society and source of strength at the time of adversity, such as experience of family violence.
6. Strategy for preventing and/or reducing violence in Pacific communities.	There are a great deal of lessons that Asian peoples can learn from the Pacific Island peoples' approaches to prevent and reduce family violence.
7. Policy for self-referred and non-mandated clients.	<p>This aspect was rarely mentioned by research participants in the present study.</p> <p>Immigrants have to be informed clearly that family violence is not legal in New Zealand.</p> <p>Asian women without protection orders and perpetrators who are not mandated by the court should be encouraged to attend appropriate family violence intervention programmes.</p>
8. Research and evaluation programme.	<p>Obtain systematic data about immigrant community/ neighbourhood, learn more about family structure, religious/customary practices, level of social integration and experiences of racism/discrimination.</p> <p>Empirical research, both qualitative and quantitative, to advance greater knowledge of modifiable risk factors, increase understanding of consequences associated with violence and advance the development and evaluation of new prevention strategies (National APA Women's Forum, undated).</p> <p>Funding should allow for investigation and dialogue on current concerns and theories on family violence specific to the immigrant and refugee communities, e.g. annual symposia to discuss the current state of knowledge, new initiatives and changes in the legislative environment.</p>
9. Service capacity.	<p>Channel resources to support leadership development and advocacy training of Asian women to increase their participation in programmes and policy development (National APA Women's Forum, undated).</p> <p>Funding has to be consistent and a wide range of essential services must be provided otherwise women</p>

	<p>victims might be forced to return to the perpetrator, especially for lack of accommodation reasons, because they have no access to emergency funding/support.</p> <p>Funding to support services that help women after they have left a safe house, such as transitional and affordable housing, job skills training, job placement assistance, child care, primary healthcare services, English as additional language classes, driving lessons, continued case-work, counselling and peer support (Warrier et al., undated).</p>
<p>10. Enhance screening and risk assessment.</p>	<p>Focus needs to be given to primary prevention and interventions in the specific Asian ethnic community (Warrier et al., undated).</p> <p>Screening and risk detection has to be supported by a heightened level of awareness of family violence in New Zealand Asian communities.</p> <p>Engage a number of people or leaders, men and women within the community, to perceive the problem as real and its resolution as critical.</p> <p>Leadership to organise and mobilise others to participate as well as to systematically formulate screening and risk assessment strategies.</p> <p>Increase visibility of family violence services in the Asian communities – it helps prevent family violence, detects early warning signs, makes the topic less stigmatised and it also reaches out to women/families who may have been unaware of the existence of such organisations.</p>
<p>11. Standards/competencies, best practice guidelines and mechanisms to maintain competence.</p>	<p>Racism or cultural insensitivity seriously limits access to law enforcement, immigration and social services, but on occasion, they all have provided quality services to New Zealand Asian women victims.</p> <p>Development and delivery of a culturally competent educational curriculum to address barriers and stigmas that have been preventing Asian women from speaking out and seeking help.</p> <p>Health care practitioners, social workers, income support staff, immigration and police officers should undergo cultural sensitivity training to better assist Asian women. All of the services should work together to alleviate women having to repeat their traumatic experiences to the different providers.</p> <p>The training should address the various forms of oppression against women, issues relating to gender and culture and effective cross-cultural communication.</p> <p>Utilise trained interpreters in health care, social services and judicial systems, specialised in dealing</p>

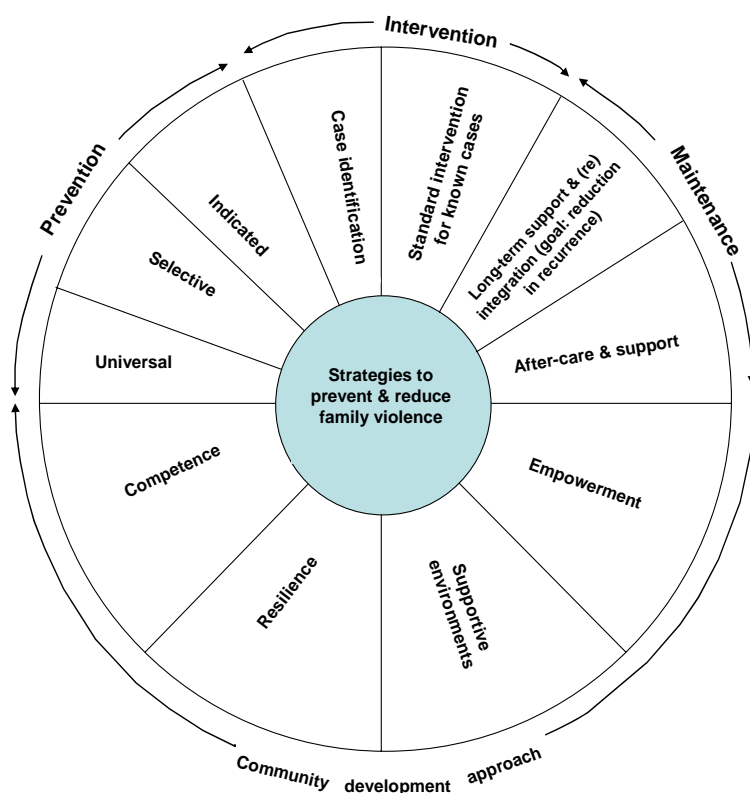
	<p>with family violence and abuses.</p> <p>It is equally important to inform victims of the existence of services and Asian organisations committed to addressing the problem of family violence.</p>
<p>12. Improve access to a range of services.</p>	<p>Address racism and xenophobia in the mainstream system and develop specific policies to build effective services (Warrier et al., undated).</p> <p>All women should be provided with accurate information on their rights, the availability of civil and criminal protection and various legal procedures. When a woman could not afford the legal costs, emergency arrangements should be in place.</p> <p>Specialised immigration services for Asian women should be made available and easily accessible.</p> <p>Raise awareness about the help available from police and social/family services. It can be achieved through posters and flyers (in neighbourhood grocery and supermarkets, flyers could be posted in different languages, explaining how and where women can seek help), local newspapers, television and radio programmes can be used to advertise police initiatives to combat family violence in immigrant neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Safe houses, emergency shelters and food should be provided in the five main urban areas (i.e. Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin) where there are relatively high proportions of recent immigrants.</p> <p>Increase language access to all services needed by women victims through the hiring of competent interpreters and bilingual staff.</p> <p>National hotline to provide crisis intervention in major Asian languages.</p>
<p>13. Public education/awareness.</p>	<p>Public awareness and education is critical in bridging the language barriers, cultural stigma, lack of knowledge about violence and confusion about legal rights (Fairfield Immigrant and Refugee Women's Network, 1996).</p> <p>Religious institutions play an important role in community identity and moral legitimacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an organisational strategy that targets the inclusion of these institutions in bringing about social change. • Meet with the community and religious leaders, discuss the problem of family violence, sensitise the audience about gender issues, hold informative classes and initiate programmes that increase the Asian communities' awareness of family violence. • Conduct workshops and distribute leaflets at

	<p>mosques, Islamic centres, Hindu and Buddha temples and religious centres for outreach programmes (Abraham, 2000).</p> <p>Make use of and participate in cultural events/functions.</p> <p>Present topics at schools and universities.</p> <p>Write articles about family violence and abuse and publish them in ethnic newspapers, bringing attention to the problem.</p> <p>Distribute educational materials translated into Asian languages to Asian communities. Disseminated information also needs to communicate to Asian populations who are most at risk and often isolated, in a culturally appropriate and effective manner.</p>
14. Improve inter-agency coordination, collaboration and communication ⁹ .	Integrate services for Asian immigrant women and collaborate with community-based programmes, general and/or ethnic specific services (see Figure 5)
15. Enhance capacity of Maori, pacific and other ethnic service providers.	<p>Build both the services capacity (see framework for actions 9, 11 and 12) and individual capacity.</p> <p>Examples of ways to build individual capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing women's contacts with job training centres • Checking their accessibility to Asian immigrant women • Initiating language training classes • Connecting women affected by family violence with already existing programmes • Providing assistance in writing resumes • Locating jobs • Attaining work permits • Organising career counselling and job search workshops (Abraham, 2000).
16. Enhance parent education and support services.	<p>Workers should demonstrate a non-judgemental attitude and provide effective and professional educational inputs on parenting in general and, more specifically, on family violence.</p> <p>Home visits are an integral part of support services.</p> <p>Work with the couple together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies to deal with the root problems (e.g. alcohol addiction and gambling) to stop violence • Don't hide it or avoid it; open it up for discussion and actions.
17. Promote and increase child advocacy services.	This has not been mentioned at all by any participants in the present study.

⁹ In the 2002 strategy document, the framework for actions 14 to 18 was put under "Areas of action that are currently underway".

<p>18. Expand and improve home, community, pre-school and school-based services and programmes.</p>	<p>Develop the sector of volunteers. Volunteers can provide the women with pertinent information, suggest alternative options available to them, listen to them, counsel and help in practical ways such as providing transportation assistance (Abraham, 2000).</p> <p>Resource peer support groups where women can meet, discuss their problems, support one another, provide solidarity and help one another in the process of ending the violence perpetrated against them.</p> <p>Fund ethnic specific safe houses, a much-needed physical space and a concrete marker of an alternative to a violent home for Asian women. A place that permits religious practice (e.g. Islamic prayers), cooking of cultural food and an environment where women learn about New Zealand culture and find a way to return to the community. A place where practical needs are met: financial assistance, food, clothing and blankets.</p> <p>Undertake school initiatives: talk to the children of immigrants in schools about violence that may happen at home and encourage them to report this to teachers or the police (Natarajan, 2002).</p>
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Figure 5: Integrated strategies to prevent and reduce family violence within Asian communities



Notes:

Prevention

Universal - target everyone in the community

Selective - target those who might be at risk to family violence

Indicated - target those known to be at risk

Intervention

Case identification – assess and screen those known to family violence services

Standard intervention - provide family violence intervention services

Maintenance

Long-term support & care - assist clients to return to their community and live safely

After-care & support - assist clients (re)gain employment and establish social support etc

Community development approach

Empowerment - provide clients and their family with options and information, and equip them with useful skills

Supportive environment - free from violence with good social contacts

Resilience - build up a capacity to bounce back and cope with adversity

Competence - build up skills and knowledge

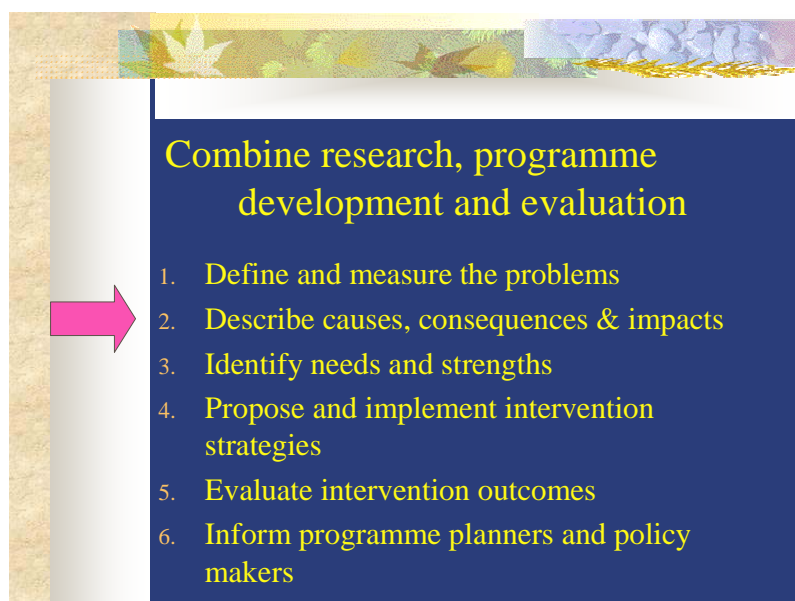
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Directions for future research

After reviewing relevant literature, the data that emerged from this study and the body of knowledge on family violence in Asian communities, three suggestions are made for future research:

First, Figure 6 shows the concept of a six-stage development from research to policy development and evaluation. The arrow indicates roughly where this project might be targeted, that is, to describe the causes/ triggers, consequences and impacts, and the identification of needs and strengths. Apparently, one missing piece of information is about defining and measuring the scale of the problems. Family violence is a very sensitive topic within Asian culture, not to mention trying to address the issues in immigrant communities. Therefore, for any research, it does not matter if it is a population-based community survey or surveillance of cases presented to the courts, it is paramount to engage and inform the communities, then participants can understand the need for collecting the information and how the data will be used in addressing a serious community issue.

Figure 6: Combine research, programme development and evaluation



Second, the best defence for family violence is a strong and functioning community. Therefore it is important to investigate how an immigrant community can be assisted or empowered to achieve exactly that. A location-specific community action project seems to be the best option to implement this kind of study.

At an individual level, it is about finding out what is involved to support immigrants, children and parents to settle in New Zealand, which they call

home. It may cover employment, education and understanding of the host society culture. At a community level, it involves identifying where the collective strengths and resources are, and the community's knowledge and awareness of issues related to family violence. It is also critical to evaluate the community's readiness to take actions to address family violence in their own communities. Using semi-structured interviews with key informants in each community, the Community Readiness Model can be used to map a community according to the nine stages of readiness:

1. Community tolerance – the behaviour is accepted and considered normative
2. Denial – belief that the problem does not exist or that change is impossible
3. Vague awareness – the problem is somewhat recognised, but no motivation for action
4. Preplanning – the problem is recognised and there is agreement that something needs to be done
5. Preparation – involvement in active planning
6. Initiation – implementation of the programme
7. Institutionalisation – one or two programmes are operating and are stable
8. Confirmation/expansion – recognise the limitations and make attempts to improve existing programmes
9. Professionalisation – marked by sophistication, training and comprehensive evaluation.

(For details see Myers, McGrady, Marrow & Mueller, 1997, cited in Fanslow, 2005.)

Third, future research should focus on planning, implementation and evaluation of cultural competence training for a range of professionals and individuals working in the sector of family violence across the legal, immigration, police, social and health care services.

6.2 Final conclusion

Family violence occurs across all ages and most cultures. In this report, we draw attention to those immigrant women from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Indian-Fijians and Chinese.

Women are at a disproportionately high risk of physical, sexual and psychological violence from an intimate person, such as a husband, partner or ex-partner. Family violence against Asian immigrant women in New Zealand should not be tolerated and kept private for the sake of family and community harmony. Family violence often creates a feeling of shame. There is tremendous pressure for a woman to maintain a marriage, a family and a good name for her parents, and she may fear being deported. She may also feel the burden of providing financial support for her family in their country of origin. The subsequent erosion of self-esteem is further deteriorated if the

woman is isolated by limited English skills and a lack of family and friends in New Zealand.

An understanding of family violence in New Zealand would be incomplete without an account of the experiences of those who are often deemed “invisible others” because of their gender, ethnicity, class and legal status. This report sought to effectively capture the subtleties of culture, the varying situational contexts, the relative unfamiliarity of the New Zealand social, legal, economic and other institutional systems, and the in-depth insights from individuals affected by family violence and key informants who are working in the sector.

The complexity and consequences (short and long-term) of violence-related negative health and social outcomes, increase if abuse remains undetected. It will also span generations. The drain on resources increases as victims present repeatedly to healthcare, social welfare, legal and justice services. Failure to recognise family violence in immigrant communities and a lack of research in this area restricts policy-planning and service provision and only addresses the symptoms rather than the causes.

The remaining challenges are to improve inter-agency coordination, collaboration and communication and to establish how to access the “difficult to reach” group of immigrant women. By the nature of family violence, women tend to be very isolated and have little or restricted contact with the outside, such as community or cultural activities. Therefore, it is important to employ multiple strategies to reach those women. This project has to be seen as a first step to assist government ministries, policy advisors and service providers to prevent and reduce the harm caused by family violence among people from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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Appendix A1: information sheet for women or men participants affected by family violence

Information sheet



SCHOOL OF POPULATION
HEALTH
Social & Community Health
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland
New Zealand,

Bldg 730 Level 3, Room 348, North
Entrance, Tamaki Campus
Morrin Road, Glenn Innes

INFORMATION SHEET

Title: Improving Particular Communities Responsiveness to Family Violence: Combining Research Programme Development and Evaluation

To: Women Participants

Why this research is happening

You are invited to take part in this study in which we are looking at the causes and consequences of family violence in the Asian community in Auckland. The research purpose is to study how women, men and children can build their capacity to prevent/reduce family violence. The study will help service providers to gain an in-depth understanding of family violence within Asian migrant communities. This could lead to improved interventions and support for victims. This project is funded by the Social Policy Evaluation and Research Committee (SPEaR), Ministry of Social Development.

You are in charge

Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary (your choice). If you choose not to take part in this study, you will receive the usual community support or care from the safe houses. If you would like to take part in this study the researcher will have further discussion with you about the time and where to meet.

During the meeting, you will be given discussion topics. The guideline includes topics about the causes of family violence, how you and your children are affected, what services are available to prevent family violence, and your need to live in a violence free family and community. You do not have to answer all the questions, and you may stop the discussion of any topic at any time. You may withdraw the information you have provided for this study before 14 October 2005. The researcher will take notes while talking. With your permission the meeting will be audio-taped to ensure we have an accurate record of our discussion.

We will meet at a place and time that is safe and convenient to you and the researcher. The researcher may provide taxi coupons for participants or pay for car mileage if participants use their own vehicles. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes.

Keeping what you share safe and confidential

The information that you give me will be treated in strictest confidence. No information which could personally identify you will be used in any reports on this study. All the information collected from this study will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office. Towards the end of the study, we will make a two-page summary of the key findings available. It is standard University procedure to destroy data after 6 years.

You and your needs

You may find it useful to talk through some of the things you have learnt about family violence. If you want extra support then the researcher will be able to arrange that or you may wish to bring someone you trust with you to the interview.

Interested or have questions?

If you are interested in taking part or would like more information, you may contact the researcher directly or let your safe house/community support worker know. Even if you agree to take part you are free to withdraw from the study at any time and any information you have contributed up to 14 October 2005 without having to give a reason. This will in no way affect your continuing care from the support services you are receiving.

Thank you very much for your support. If you have any queries or wish to know more please contact the researchers below:

Principal investigator: Dr Samson Tse, Director of the Centre for Asian Health Research and Evaluation, School of Population Health, and Associate Dean (International), Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, University of Auckland

Phone number: 09 3737599 extn 86097

Email: s.tse@auckland.ac.nz

Contact details of the Head of Department are:

Dr Peter Adams, Social and Community Health

School of Population Health, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, Tamaki Campus, The University of Auckland, Auckland.

Phone number: 09 3737599 ext 86538

Email: p.adams@auckland.ac.nz

If you have any concerns of an ethical nature you can contact:

The Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office - Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland. Tel. 373-7999 extn 87830.

“APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 16 March 2005 for THREE years from 16 March 2005 to 16 March 2008 Reference Number 2005/025

Appendix A2: information sheet for key informants



SCHOOL OF POPULATION HEALTH
Social & Community Health
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland
New Zealand,

Bldg 730 Level 3, Room 348, North
Entrance, Tamaki Campus
Morrin Road, Glenn Innes

INFORMATION SHEET

Title: Improving Particular Communities Responsiveness to Family Violence: Combining Research Programme Development and Evaluation

To: invite key informants (e.g., counsellors, support workers, community leaders, policy analyst) to participate in either individual interviews or focus groups

Why this research is happening

Our names are Samson Tse and Janet Fanslow. We both are researchers from University of Auckland working on this research project.

You are invited to take part in this study in which we are looking at the causes and consequences of family violence in the Asian community in Auckland. The research purpose is to study how women, men and children can build their capacity to prevent/reduce family violence. The study will help service providers to gain an in-depth understanding of family violence within Asian migrant communities. This could lead to improved interventions and support for victims. This project is funded by the Social Policy Evaluation and Research Committee (SPEaR), Ministry of Social Development.

You are in charge

Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary (your choice). If you would like to take part in this study, the researcher will have further discussion with you about the time and where to meet.

During the meeting, you will be given discussion topics. The guideline includes topics about the causes of family violence, how adults and children are affected, what services are available to prevent family violence, your clients' needs to live in violence free family and community. You do not have to answer all the questions, and you may stop the discussion of any topic at any time. You may withdraw the information you have provided for this study before 14 October 2005. The researcher will take notes while we are talking. With your permission the meeting may be audio-taped to ensure we have an accurate record of our discussion.

We will meet at a place and time that is convenient to you and the researcher. The interview will take up to approximately 75 minutes. The focus group may take up to two hours.

Keeping what you share safe and confidential

The information that you provide in individual interviews will be treated in strictest confidence. However confidentiality and anonymity cannot be guaranteed due to the nature of focus groups. During the discussion you shouldn't mention any specific details that may identify your clients. No information which could personally identify you will be used in any reports on this study. All the information collected from this study will be kept in locked file cabinet in a locked office. Towards the end of the study, we will make a two-page summary

of the key findings available. It is the standard University procedure the data without your name will be destroyed after 6 years in March 2011.

You and your needs

You may find it useful to talk through some of the things you have learnt about family violence. If you want extra support then the researcher will be able to arrange that or you may wish to bring someone you trust with you to the interview.

Interested or have questions?

If you are interested in taking part or would like more information, you can contact the researcher directly. Even if you agree to take part you are free to withdraw from the study at any time and any information you have contributed up to 14 October 2005 without having to give a reason. This will in no way affect your employment or anything of that nature.

Thank you very much for your support. If you have any queries or wish to know more please contact the researchers below:

Researcher: Dr Janet Fanslow, Senior Research Fellow, Section of Social and Community Health, School of population Health, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, Tamaki Campus, The University of Auckland, Auckland,
Phone number: 09-3737599 extn: 86907
E-mail: j.fanslow@auckland.ac.nz

Principal investigator: Dr Samson Tse, Director of the Centre for Asian Health Research and Evaluation, School of Population Health, and Associate Dean (International), Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, University of Auckland
Phone number: 09 3737599 extn 86097
Email: s.tse@auckland.ac.nz

Contact details of the Head of Department are:
Dr Peter Adams, Social and Community Health
School of Population Health, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, Tamaki Campus, The University of Auckland, Auckland.
Phone number: 09 3737599 ext 86538
Email: p.adams@auckland.ac.nz

If you have any concerns of an ethical nature you can contact:
The Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office - Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland. Tel. 373-7999 extn 87830.

“APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 16 March 2005 for THREE years from 16 March 2005 to 16 March 2008 Reference Number 2005/025

Appendix B1: consent form for men and women participants affected by family violence



SCHOOL OF POPULATION HEALTH
Social & Community Health
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland
New Zealand,

Bldg 730 Level 3, Room 348, North
Entrance, Tamaki Campus
Morrin Road, Glenn Innes

CONSENT FORM

**Title: Improving Particular Communities Responsiveness to Family Violence:
Combining Research Programme Development and Evaluation**

- I have read the information sheet about the study.
- I have had my questions answered and am satisfied with the answers.
- I understand that taking part in this study is my choice and that I may withdraw my consent at any time. This will not affect my ability to access support services. I can withdraw data I have provided for this study before 14 October 2005.
- I understand that my taking part in this study will be confidential and that no material which could identify me will be used in any reports on this study.
- I understand that the notes taken will be marked with a number and personal names will not be used at all, and that they will be kept strictly confidential and securely stored.
- I agree that the interview tapes and data are going to be securely stored for six years. The information will only be accessible to the researchers within the stated period and will subsequently be destroyed.
- I have had time to consider whether to take part in this study and I know who to contact if I have any further questions about the study, or change my mind about being part of the study.
- I (full name of participant) hereby consent to take part in this study.

Date:

Signature:

Please give us a safe postal address if you wish to receive a two-page summary of the findings in about a year's time. Instead you may wish to ring the researchers or your worker closer to the report back time (round November 2005):

Full name of principal researcher: Dr Samson Tse

Project explained by: _____
Project role: interview participants and collect data

Participant keeps a copy of the consent form.

**“APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS
ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 16 March 2005 for THREE years from 16 March 2005 to
16 March 2008 Reference Number 2005/025**

Appendix B2: consent form for key informants



SCHOOL OF POPULATION HEALTH
Social & Community Health
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland
New Zealand,

Bldg 730 Level 3, Room 348, North
Entrance, Tamaki Campus
Moririn Road, Glenn Innes

CONSENT FORM

Title: Improving Particular Communities Responsiveness to Family Violence: Combining Research Programme Development and Evaluation

- I have read the information sheet about the study.
- I have had my questions answered and am satisfied with the answers.
- I understand that taking part in this study is my choice and that I may withdraw my consent at any time. This will not affect my ability to access support services. I can withdraw data I have provided for this study before 14 October 2005.
- I understand that my taking part in this study will be confidential and that no material which could identify me will be used in any reports on this study.
- I understand that the notes taken will be marked with a number and personal names will not be used at all, and that they will be kept strictly confidential and securely stored.
 - I agree that the interview tapes and data are going to be securely stored for six years. The information will only be accessible to the researchers within the stated period and will subsequently be destroyed.
- I have had time to consider whether to take part in this study and I know who to contact if I have any further questions about the study, or change my mind about being part of the study.
- I (full name of participant) hereby consent to take part in this study.

Date:

Signature:

Please give us a safe postal address if you wish to receive a two-page summary of the findings in about a year's time. Instead you may wish to ring the researchers or your worker closer to the report back time (round November 2005):

Full name of principal researcher: Dr Samson Tse

Project explained by: _____
Project role: interview participants and collect data

Participant keeps a copy of the consent form.

**“APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS
ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 16 March 2005 for THREE years from 16 March 2005 to
16 March 2008 Reference Number 2005/025**

Appendix C: Interview guidelines and questionnaire for women

Preamble

“Thank you for taking part in this study. We seek to find out the causes and consequences of family violence among our communities in NZ and to develop a strength base process to prevent/reduce family violence by your participation in the research process. This is important in improving and well being of Asian women, men and children in New Zealand.”

“Members of the research team have reviewed previous research on this topic. In addition to considering findings from published research, we believe it is important to incorporate the experience and wisdom of women who face family violence.”

Introductions

Ground rules – confidentiality, notes taking, recording and use of data

“You are invited to make comments to the questions asked, but please don’t tell us anything you don’t wish to disclose.”

Interview guidelines

The following questions are developed as a general guide to facilitate the discussion.

General questions

1. Please tell me briefly about your immigration history to New Zealand. For example, when did you come to New Zealand? How was the family like around that time? Who was the principal applicant for the immigration?
2. Would you please tell me very briefly about your experience of family violence?
3. Please tell me how did you or your family (including the extended family) deal with the situations. For example, where did you seek help? What services did you receive (e.g., legal, safe shelter, transport, child support, health care, counselling, social work, social networking, housing, food, education etc)? What were the most helpful things or who were the most helpful people?
4. What do you need in New Zealand to build your own strengths (your talent, skills, creativity, and determination) that can reduce/prevent family violence?
5. Gaps and recommendations
6. How can your local community help reduce/prevent family violence among Asian migrants?
7. What do you see as the gaps in services provided for women and family affected by family violence?
8. What do you see as the gaps in services to reduce/prevent family violence among Asian migrants?
9. What would you recommend to the government and non-government agencies to reduce/prevent family violence in Asian community? Please elaborate.

Specific questions for women who have left Safe House (either returned or did not return to home)

1. I understand now you have left Safe House. Who do you live with at the moment (e.g., return to your family or not)?
2. What have been the most effective ways for you to (re) integrate into the family and community?
3. What are your needs if you want to stand up on your feet?
4. Would you please tell me how you manage living safely in the community now?

Questionnaire for demographic information

What is your sex? (Tick one) Male Female

What is your age? _____ years

Which group do you primarily identify with? (Tick one)

- Bangladeshi-----1
- Chinese-----2
- Indian-----3
- Pakistani-----4
- Other (specify)----- 5

What is your current immigration status?

- NZ Citizen-----1
- NZ permanent resident----- 2
- Work permit-----3
- Student permit-----4
- Other (specify)-----5

What was the category of immigration when you came to New Zealand?

- Skill Category (A principle application)-----1
- Work Permit-----2
- Investment-----3
- Family Category-----4
- Refugee-----5
- Humanitarian-----6
- Other-----7

What is the current main income source? (tick as appropriate)

- Salary/wages-----1
- Trading-----2
- Work and Income-----3
- Family support-----4
- Own saving-----5
- Loan/borrow -----6
- Don't know/don't remember-----98
- Refused / no answer-----99

What is your current occupation (if applicable)? (Please name) _____

How would rate your proficiency in English?

	No good	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Speaking	1	2	3	4
Writing	1	2	3	4
Reading	1	2	3	4
Listening	1	2	3	4

What is your educational background?

- None-----1
- Only can read and write-----2
- Primary-----3 (please specify years)
- Secondary-----4 (please specify years)
- University Completed-----5 (please specify years and degree)
- Don't know/don't remember-----98
- Refused/no answer-----99

What is your religious belief?

- Muslim-----1
- Christian-----2
- Jewish-----3
- Hindu-----4
- Buddhist-----5
- No religion-----6
- Other-----7
- Don't Know-----98
- Refused / no answer-----99

Appendix D: interview guidelines and questionnaire for men

Preamble

“Thank you for taking part in this study. We seek to find out the causes and consequences of family violence among our communities in NZ and to develop a strength base process to prevent/reduce family violence by your participation in the research process. This is important in improving and well being of Asian women, men and children in New Zealand.”

“Members of the research team have reviewed previous research on this topic. In addition to considering findings from published research, we believe it is important to incorporate the experience and wisdom of women who face family violence.”

Introductions

Ground rules – confidentiality, notes taking, recording and use of data

“You are invited to make comments to the questions asked, but please don’t tell us anything you don’t wish to disclose.”

Interview guidelines

The following questions are developed as a general guide to facilitate the discussion.

1. Please tell me briefly about your immigration history to New Zealand. For example, when did you come to New Zealand? How was the family like around that time? Who was the principal applicant for the immigration?
2. How did the family violence start at home? What has been the nature of the abuse (briefly only)?
3. Given what had happened, what do you believe as the contributing factors? (Prompts as necessary: issues related to gender, power control at home, income sources and level, employment arrangements, culture and religious beliefs, anger problem, addiction etc)
4. What have been the impacts of family violence on you and your family (including children, your partner/ wife, extended family)? How did it impact on your physical and mental health?
5. Please tell me how did you or your family (including the extended family) deal with the situations. For example, where did you seek help? What were the most helpful things or who were the most helpful people?
6. How would you build your own capacity (your talent, skills, creativity, and determination) that can reduce/prevent family violence? What do you need in New Zealand to build your own inherited strengths that can reduce/prevent family violence?
7. What are the resources in your local community that can reduce/prevent family violence among?
8. What do you see as the gaps and needs in services provided for women and family affected by family violence?
9. What would you recommend to the government and non-government agencies to reduce/prevent family violence in Asian community? Please elaborate.

Questionnaire for demographic information

What is your sex? (Tick one) Male Female|

What is your age? _____ years

Which group do you primarily identify with? (Tick one)

- Bangladeshi-----1
- Chinese-----2
- Indian-----3
- Pakistani-----4

Other (specify)----- 5

What is your current immigration status?

NZ Citizen-----1
NZ permanent resident----- 2
Work permit-----3
Student permit-----4
Other (specify)-----5

What was the category of immigration when you came to New Zealand?

Skill Category (A principle application)-----1
Work Permit-----2
Investment-----3
Family Category-----4
Refugee-----5
Humanitarian-----6
Other-----7

What is the current main income source? (tick as appropriate)

Salary/wages-----1
Trading-----2
Work and Income-----3
Family support-----4
Own saving-----5
Loan/borrow -----6
Don't know/don't remember-----98
Refused / no answer-----99

What is your current occupation (if applicable)? (Please name) _____

How would rate your proficiency in English?

	No good	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Speaking	1	2	3	4
Writing	1	2	3	4
Reading	1	2	3	4
Listening	1	2	3	4

What is your educational background?

None-----1
Only can read and write-----2
Primary-----3 (please specify years)
Secondary-----4 (please specify years)
University Completed-----5 (please specify years and degree)
Don't know/don't remember-----98
Refused/no answer-----99

What is your religious belief?

Muslim-----1
Christian-----2
Jewish-----3
Hindu-----4
Buddhist-----5
No religion-----6
Other-----7
Don't Know-----98
Refused / no answer-----99

Appendix E: Interview guidelines for key informants

Preamble

“Thank you for taking part in this study. We seek to increase understanding of the causes and consequences of family violence and develop a strength base process to build women, men and children capacity to reduce/prevent family violence

“Members of the research team have reviewed several research on this topic. In addition to considering findings from published research, we believe it is important to incorporate the experience and wisdom of researcher and practitioners who are working on this area.”

Introductions

Ground rules – confidentiality, notes taking and use of data

“You are invited to make comments to the questions asked, but please don’t feel you are under any pressure to tell us anything you don’t wish to disclose in the group.”

Discussion

The following questions are developed as a general guide to facilitate the discussion.

1. What kind of interventions have you provided in reducing/preventing family violence?
2. What do service providers need to increase their responsiveness to Asian people affected by family violence? What are the gaps in knowledge and skills?
3. What do you see as the gaps in social and welfare services in supporting Asian families affected by family violence?
4. What do you see as the strengths and resources within the community that Asian people can mobilise to cope with family violence?
5. How can women, men and children build their capacity to reduce/prevent family violence? How can your organisation/ service support the Asian community to build their capacities?

Appendix F: Focus group guidelines

Preamble

“Thank you for taking part in this study. We seek to increase understanding of the causes and consequences of family violence and develop a strength base process to build women, men and children capacity to reduce/prevent family violence

“Members of the research team have reviewed several research on this topic. In addition to considering findings from published research, we believe it is important to incorporate the experience and wisdom of researcher and practitioners who are working on this area.”

Introductions

Ground rules – confidentiality, notes taking and use of data

“You are invited to make comments to the questions asked, but please don’t feel you are under any pressure to tell us anything you don’t wish to disclose in the group.”

Discussion

The following questions are developed as a general guide to facilitate the discussion.

1. What are the main causes of family violence in Asian community?
2. How are women, men and children affected by family violence?
3. What kind of interventions have you provided in reducing/preventing family violence?
4. What do service providers need to increase their responsiveness to Asian people affected by family violence? What are the gaps in knowledge and skills?
5. What do you see as the gaps in social and welfare services in supporting Asian families affected by family violence?
6. What do you see as the strengths and resources within the community that Asian people can mobilise to cope with family violence?
7. How can women, men and children build their capacity to reduce/prevent family violence? How can your organisation/ service support the Asian community to build their capacities?

Appendix G: Summary of profiles of interview participants affected by family violence

code	sex	age category	ethnic group	current immigration status	immigration status (arrival)	income sources	current occupation
	1-male	1 16-20	1 Bangladeshi	1 NZ Citizen	1 Skill Category	1 Salary/wages	
	2-female	2 21-25	2 Chinese	2 NZ permanent resident	2 Work Permit	2 Business/ trading	
		3 26-30	3 Indian	3 Work permit	3 Investment	3 Work and Income	
		4 31-35	4 Pakistani	4 Student permit	4 Family category/ reunion	4 Family support	
		5 36-40	5 Indian Fijian	5 Visitor	5 Refugee	5 Own saving	
		6 41-45	6 Sri Lanka	6 Other, e.g., "over-stayer"	6 Humanitarian	6 Loan/borrow	
		7 46-50	7 Other,		7 Husband/ wife as sponsor	7 Don't know	
		8 51-55	e.g., South-E A		8 Visitor	8 Student allowance	
		9 56-60+			9 Student	9 Other	
		10 not stated			10 Other		

FV01	1	8	2	2	1	9	
FV02	1	5	2	1	1	8	full time
FV03	1	6	2	2	1	2	not specified
FV04	1	9	2	2	4	3	
FV05	2	5	2	2	4	3	
FV06	2	4	2	1	8	1	administrative
FV07	2	9	2	2	4	3	
FV08	2	5	2	2	1	1	wholesale business
FV09	2	8	2	1	5	1	trade
FV10	2	6	2	1	8	1	wholesale business
FV11	2	3	2	2	4	1	trade
FV12	2	4	2	2	4	5	
FV13	2	2	1	3	8	9	
FV14	2	10	6	2	1	3	
FV15	2	2	3	2	9	3	
FV16	2	2	3	6	10	9	refused to comment
FV17	2	4	5	5	5	2	not specified
FV18	2	4	2	1	1	2	household worker
FV19	2	7	3	2	1	3	
FV20	2	4	3	2	4	3	
FV21	2	6	5	1	4	7	
FV22	2	2	4	2	4	3	
FV23	2	8	5	1	1	1	not specified
FV24	2	6	5	1	1	1	professional

FV25	2	2	5	6	8	9	said no income at all
FV26	2	2	5	3	4	1	trade
FV27	2	6	5	1	4	1	health care
FV28	2	5	5	1	8	3	
FV29	2	1	3	3	8	9	no income at all
FV30	2	5	3	1	4	1	not specified
FV31	2	5	3	1	4	1	not specified
FV32	2	2	3	6	8	9	said no income at all
FV33	2	4	7	6	8	9	said no income at all
FV34	2	6	1	1	1	9	
FV35	2	7	1	1	4	9	
FV36	2	6	4	1	4	9	
FV37	2	4	3	2	8	1	not specified
FV38	1	7	1	1	1	2	not specified
FV39	1	6	3	1	4	1	not specified
FV40	2	6	4	1	7	1	not specified
FV41	2	5	1	2	1	4	
FV42	2	3	5	3	7	1	not specified
FV43	2	3	1	3	7	9	
FV44	2	8	4	1	7	3	
FV45	2	7	1	2	1	3	
FV46	2	8	1	2	1	1	professional
FV47	2	6	4	1	7	9	
FV48	2	4	1	1	7	8	full time
FV49	2	5	1	1	10	8	full time
FV50	2	4	4	1	4	9	
FV51	2	2	4	2	7	1	not specified
FV52	2	7	4	1	7	3	
FV53	2	5	7	1	6	3	
FV54	2	7	3	2	1	1	health care
FV55	2	10	1	2	5	3	
FV56	2	2	3	6	7	7	

English proficiency				education background	religion	years in NZ	use of FV services
speaking	writing	reading	listening	1 None	1 Muslim	1 less than or 1 year	1 did not use FV services
1 not good	1 not good	1 not good	1 not good	2 Only can read & write	2 Christian	2 2-3 years	2 currently staying at safe house
2 good	2 good	2 good	2 good	3 Primary	3 Jewish	3 4-5 years	3 left safe house
3 very good	3 very good	3 very good	3 very good	4 Secondary	4 Hindu	4 6-8 years	4 used FV services but not safe house
4 excellent	4 excellent	4 excellent	4 excellent	5 Graduate	5 Buddhist	5 9-11 years	
				6 Diploma/ certificate	6 No religion	6 more than 11 years	
				7 Post graduate	7 Punjabi	7 did not disclose	
				8 Other	8 Other		

FV01	1	1	1	1	4	2	5	1
FV02	2	2	2	2	5	8	4	1
FV03	1	1	1	1	5	6	4	1
FV04	1	1	1	1	5	2	4	1
FV05	1	1	1	1	4	6	7	3
FV06	3	3	3	3	5	2	5	3
FV07	1	1	1	1	5	6	5	4
FV08	2	2	2	2	7	6	4	3
FV09	3	3	3	3	6	2	6	3
FV10	2	2	2	2	6	2	4	3
FV11	1	1	1	1	4	2	2	4
FV12	1	1	1	1	6	5	1	4
FV13	2	1	2	2	1	7	3	2
FV14	2	2	2	2	5	5	2	2
FV15	4	4	4	4	5	4	3	2
FV16	4	4	4	4	3	4	2	2
FV17	2	1	1	2	4	1	1	4
FV18	1	2	1	1	3	5	2	2
FV19	3	3	3	3	5	4	2	4
FV20	2	2	2	2	5	4	2	4
FV21	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	4
FV22	2	1	2	2	5	1	2	3

FV23	4	3	3	4	5	8	6	4
FV24	4	4	4	4	5	1	6	4
FV25	3	3	3	3	6	2	2	3
FV26	3	3	3	3	4	4	2	4
FV27	4	2	2	4	4	1	6	4
FV28	3	3	3	3	4	2	2	4
FV29	1	2	2	1	4	4	2	4
FV30	2	2	2	1	5	4	4	4
FV31	3	3	3	3	5	4	4	4
FV32	1	1	1	1	1	4	2	4
FV33	2	2	2	2	5	5	2	2
FV34	2	2	2	2	5	1	5	4
FV35	2	1	2	1	4	1	6	4
FV36	2	2	2	3	5	1	4	4
FV37	2	2	2	2	5	4	2	4
FV38	3	3	3	3	7	1	2	1
FV39	3	2	2	3	5	1	5	1
FV40	1	2	2	2	5	1	2	4
FV41	1	2	2	2	5	1	2	4
FV42	3	2	2	2	6	4	2	3
FV43	2	1	1	2	7	1	1	4
FV44	3	3	3	3	7	1	6	4
FV45	2	2	2	2	5	1	2	4
FV46	3	2	2	2	7	1	3	4
FV47	2	2	2	2	5	1	6	4
FV48	2	2	2	2	7	1	2	4
FV49	4	4	4	4	7	1	5	4
FV50	3	2	3	2	5	1	5	4
FV51	4	4	4	4	6	1	2	4
FV52	2	1	2	2	4	1	5	4
FV53	2	2	2	2	4	1	4	3
FV54	4	4	4	4	5	2	2	4
FV55	2	2	2	3	5	1	5	3
FV56	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	2

Appendix H: Record of focus group discussion

Focus group held at a Women's Centre

Date: Wednesday 5^t October 2005

Time: 2-4pm

Participants: attended by 13 women

- Country of origins: individuals from India, China, Fijian Indian and Bangladesh
- Years in the country: ranged from 8 months to 12 years
- Age: ranged between 25 and 40 years old
- Background: services coordinator, support workers, clients and trainees from social work/social sciences department at tertiary institutions

Facilitated: by Janet Fanslow, notes taken by Samson Tse

Record of events:

- Background and introduction
 - Round of brief introductions of people at the meeting
 - Introduction of the research project
 - Highlighted relevant information from the information sheet and consent form
 - Answered further questions
 - Requested participants sign the consent forms
- Focus group
- Conclusion and thanked participants

Major themes/discussions:

- What are the main causes of family violence in the Asian community?
- How are women, men and children affected by family violence?
- What kind of interventions have you provided in reducing/preventing family violence?
- What are the barriers in tackling family violence in ethnic communities?
- What would help service providers to do their work better?
- What are the strengths of current service providers and the community that we can build on to combat family violence in ethnic communities?

Appendix I: Summary of results

In each box, the first row denotes the questions or topics within the research framework used to guide the data collection and data analysis. The second row is comprised of the themes that emerged from the qualitative data, followed by the sub-themes in the rest of each table.

What triggers family violence in Asian (South Asian peoples and Chinese) immigrant communities?				
Factors related to cultural beliefs and customs	Factors related to immigration	Factors related to marital problems	Factors related to social fragmentation	Other factors
Cultural beliefs and values reinforce violence against women	Women have no permanent residency	Pre-immigration marital problems	Racism and discrimination	Living with in-laws
Traditional values sanction and accept family violence	Clashes between the traditional values and values of the new host country	Husbands have girlfriends	If women have no paid job, they have no identity	Addiction problems lead to family violence
Misinterpretations of cultural and religious norms	Unemployment, unsettled future and financial hardship	Arranged marriage	Language barriers	If women want to support their family
Husbands marry for dowry or New Zealand residency	Clashes between younger and older generation		Isolation	

Effects of family violence			
Effects on women	Effects on children	Effects on family	Effects on men
Suicides and homicides	Mental health	Parents and grandparents, particularly from women's side	Strained family relationships
Poor physical health	Revoking of children's study permit	Future generations in the family	Isolation
Poor psychosocial health and functioning	Get involved in criminal activities	Life choices altered	Poor mental health
Poor sexual health	Learn from parents' violent behaviours		Poor physical health
Revoked immigration status and uncertainties faced by women	Life choices altered		

Barriers in tackling family violence within Asian communities				
Family violence is a private matter	Keeping the marriage together no matter what	Women have no witnesses	Unresponsive community	Limited capacity
			Issues faced by women married to people of the same ethnicity	
			Issues faced by women married to Europeans	

Strengths and capacities in preventing and reducing family violence		
Mapping of individual strengths	Mapping of collective strengths	What has been helpful in dealing with family violence
Family	Ethnic specific media	Help from family
Role models	Existing organisations/groups	Help from neighbourhood and community groups
Religious beliefs	Existing family violence services	Help from professional services
Peer support groups	Translated printed material on family violence	Help from legislation and the legal framework
Working as a volunteer		

Gaps and needs analysis				
Service gaps	Policy gaps	What is needed to prevent family violence¹⁰	What is needed to provide effective crisis intervention¹¹	What is needed to help women/families return to the community
Women have nowhere to live	Current immigration system is very strict for women	Government needs to lead the action against family violence in Asian communities	Police and immigration officers have to be educated on family violence	Work permit/permanent residency increases women's self-confidence
Safe houses require more funding and resources	High immigration fees	Higher formal education for women	Better link between police and Immigration Services	Women's employment
Access to emergency benefit	Difficult to get police support	Overcome Isolation	Review the immigration policy	
High unemployment among Asian ethnic women	Other policy gaps mentioned briefly by participants	Counselling for men	Change policy through extensive consultation	
Other service gaps mentioned briefly by participants		Change community mind set	Access to emergency benefit	
		Examine interpretation of cultural values and practices	Counselling on pre protection order	
		Offer English language courses	Workforce development in Asian family violence	
		Ministries and government agencies work alongside community organisations	Adopt a community development approach	

¹⁰ Some of the needs are equally applicable for the last column - "return to community"

¹¹ As above.