

# Maintaining and Preserving Core Indian Values in a Host Culture

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# Background

- ❑ The United States of America is known as the land of immigrants
- ❑ Asian Indians are amongst the fastest growing population in the U.S.

(Raghavan et al.,  
2010)

- ❑ As per U.S. Census (2010)- there were nearly 1.9 million Asian Indian immigrants
- ❑ 3<sup>rd</sup> largest immigrant group in the U.S.
- ❑ State of New Jersey accounts for about 11% of Asian Indian residents

(Whatley &  
Batalova, 2013)

- ❑ There is need for culturally sensitive research to better understand the immigration experiences of this cultural group

*Continued...*

- ❑ Explore the experiences of Asian Indian mothers in maintaining the Indian cultural values in a host culture
- ❑ Also, understand the experiences of these mothers in promoting and retaining those cultural values in their children

**Purpose  
of the  
Study**

- ❑ Grounded-Theory
- ❑ Acculturation Theory

**Theoretical  
Lens**

How does immigration shape Asian Indian mothers' experiences in maintaining and promoting the Indian cultural values for themselves and their children?

**Research  
Question**

# Methodology

- Snowball and Theoretical Sampling
- Thirteen 1st-generation Asian Indian mothers; between 33 to 45 years of age
- Time spent in U.S. ranged from 3 to 22 years

Sample &  
Sampling  
Techniques

- Data was collected between May 2016 to November 2017
- In-depth semi-structured interviews
- Audio-recorded, transcribed, assigned pseudonyms

Data  
Collection

- Data was analyzed consistent with Strauss and Corbin (1990) coding phases: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding

Data  
Analysis

# Results & Discussion

## a) Inculcating the Value of Family:

- Understand the interdependence between family members living in the U.S and those living in the India
- Value grandparents and other significant elders in the family.

*“The kids should know we touch grandparents’ feet and seek blessings... we respect their age. We respect their experience”  
(Palo)*

- ❑ Asian Indian culture is highly collectivistic and group-oriented in nature.
- ❑ The members are highly interdependent. Even if families appear structurally ‘nuclear’, behaviorally and emotionally they continue to identify themselves with the larger family

**(Tuli, 2012;  
Singh, 2005)**

## b) Celebrating Festivals:

- Key medium for familiarizing their children to Indian traditions
- Celebrated the festivals as “authentically” as possible by recreating festive atmosphere similar to that in India

*“Every year its home made authentic Indian food, decoration of the house with lights Indian costumes and jewelry [...] Children see all this and learn informally”*  
(Ellis)

❑ Inability in doing so, led to feelings of loss among Asian Indian parents

(Lodhe, 2009)

## c) Preserving One’s Native Language:

It was imperative that their children learned and retained the native language, especially for easy communication with family in India

*“I would always like if my children talk to our parents in our language. Just out of respect”*  
(Shaina)

❑ Similar patterns have been observed in Eastern European immigrants

(Nesteruk, 2010)

- Contributes to the literature on ethnic communities
- Contributes to the fields of human services (counseling, family therapy)
- Beneficial for researchers and academicians
- Significant implications for school educators and counselors

### Implications

- Small sample size.
- Participants shared similar demographic characteristics: (educational qualifications, socio-economic status, religious beliefs)

### Limitations

- Replication with Asian Indian immigrants practicing religion other than Hinduism and Jainism
- In future, include the experiences of both: Asian Indian mothers as well as fathers

### Future Directions

## Discussion Questions

- How does the information from this study help in your area of work?
- How does this study contribute to the cross-cultural literature?