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DEVELOPING INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE INTERVENTION SERVICES FOR YOUTH FROM MIGRANT COMMUNITIES OF COLOUR

A Technical Report for Shakti Community Council, Inc. Based on Interviews with Youth from Asian and Middle Eastern Communities in Auckland, New Zealand

by

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February 2015
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the following individuals affiliated with Shakti Community Council, Inc., without whom this study would not have been possible: Farida Sultana, Sara Daneshvar, Rita Sharma, Suman Ramavat, Sara Chin, Mengzhu Fu, Shasha Ali, Shila Nair, and Malalai Sadat, as well as University of Auckland student Research Assistants Nikki Anstis and Robyn Lesatele who helped facilitate some of this study’s focus groups, and professional staff-person Dipika Bailur who connected us with Shakti. A thanks also goes out to the high school in Auckland and its staff who allowed us to interview their students. Finally, our deep appreciation goes out to the 27 participants who took their time to educate us on the issues that impact their daily lives.
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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a widely recognized global concern that impacts women, irrespective of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and class. Considerable research on IPV has been conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand, with one study revealing, “One in three women experience psychological or physical abuse from their partners in their lifetime” (Women’s Refuge, 2014). Despite significant growth of migrant families from Asia, the Middle East and Africa in New Zealand, research on IPV with these communities is thin. Additionally, over the last two years, media has reported the deaths of at least three migrant women of colour, killed allegedly by their domestic partners. These tragedies and other forms of IPV transpiring behind closed doors call for action-based research with New Zealand’s migrant communities of colour.

This report stems from a community-driven, mixed methods research project conducted with 27 young women and adolescent girls from Auckland, New Zealand who provided their perspectives on the ways that IPV is experienced and understood in migrant Asian and Middle Eastern communities. The report first overviews quantitative survey data, highlighting participants’ attitudes toward IPV and victimisation rates. Subsequently, the report turns to qualitative interviews with participants, outlining how young people from these ethnic communities define and learn intimate partner and family violence, develop identities facilitating IPV, and cope with cultural codes tied to honour and shame. The report closes with recommendations for youth programmes that aim to aid and educate migrant youth on intimate partner and family violence.

1.1 Quantitative Study Results

Survey data show that most study participants held attitudes indicating that IPV was not justifiable. However, a significant number of participants reported living in households where patriarchal tendencies were strong and justifications for violence against women were used regularly. For instance, 42.3% of all study participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statements, “Girls and women in my family are blamed for family problems” and “It is acceptable for men in my family to yell at female family members.” Another key finding was that a significant proportion of women and girls from migrant communities are unaware of services addressing IPV. Survey data also revealed that Asian and Middle Eastern youth who enter intimate relationships are frequent victims of IPV, often times victimized through controlling, stalking and/or sexual violence. However, these data must be taken with caution given the study’s small sample size.
1.2 Qualitative Study Results

This study’s qualitative component yielded rich feedback from participants that has been divided into four related themes. First, participants described what intimate partner and family violence meant to them, provoking multiple discussions on how youth defined IPV differently. Controlling relationships and their prevalence were raised repeatedly, with social media and mobile phones serving as contemporary mediums through which monitoring and isolation of intimate partners took place. Discussions around intentionality of violence also emerged within various cultural contexts, shedding light on the patriarchal normalisation of violence and general mistreatment towards women.

A second major theme emergent from this study was how youth learned to accept and normalize intimate partner and family violence within their respective cultures. Participants frequently raised women’s subordinate status in their households as a significant topic, lamenting the ways in which they were expected to accept domestic roles, something not thrust upon their brothers and fathers. Participants noticed that when women challenged or did not fulfill expected gender roles, their vulnerability to be an IPV victim increased accordingly. Finally, participants were highly critical of ethnic and mainstream media, which they felt taught youth degrading views of women and in some cases glorified women’s abuse.

Considering how often participants described being tracked into traditional gender roles, it is not terribly surprising that participants were also concerned with personal identity development, frequently taught to value themselves only in relation to men. Hence, the third major theme present in this study is focused on women’s and girls’ identities. In particular, participants were urged to cultivate themselves primarily so that they could “achieve” marriage, and subsequently to establish a sacrificial and selfless identity, always putting their husbands’, families’, and even their husbands’ family needs before their own. Participants explained how internalizing an identity like this facilitated women’s victimization, especially when would-be support systems (namely families) rejected women’s requests for help.

The study’s final theme addresses cultural notions of honour, shame, and honour-based violence, concepts that are central to understanding intimate partner and family violence in many Asian and Middle Eastern cultures. As told by numerous participants, girls are taught from young ages that engaging in sexual acts prior to marriage will result in shaming the family; specifically, such actions would cause the father to lose his honour. Consequently, if girls are even suspected of violating culturally defined sexual
taboos, they often face severe punishment. Furthermore, community gossip functions as a form of cultural surveillance, keeping girls and young women in line with expected gender norms. These strict conditions influence girls from these cultural groups to hide romantic relationships from their families, meaning if they are being victimized, their isolation and vulnerability deepens quite profoundly.

1.3 Study Recommendations
Research findings suggest that mainstream organisations are not currently equipped to address intimate partner and family violence with youth from Asian and Middle Eastern ethnic backgrounds. Organisations aspiring to serve youth from these ethnic groups should design programmes, incorporating the following thematic components:

- Define and identify different forms of intimate partner and family violence (verbal, controlling, physical and sexual) within specific cultural contexts;
- Explain the range of consequences stemming from intimate partner and family violence;
- Critique of mainstream and ethnic media
- Critique of cultural, patriarchal tendencies that justify gender-based violence, including honour-based violence, while also addressing intentionality and IPV; and
- Nurture youthful perspectives (for males and females) that connect high female aspirations and gender equity to cultural pride.

Systemically, it was suggested programming be implemented in schools since this is where the greatest number of youth can be reached, a perspective that aligns with prior research on youth-based IPV prevention programmes (Mulford & Blachman-Demner, 2013). If possible, such programming could be integrated as part of a larger health curricula, as has been accomplished in school settings where IPV programming was offered (Avery-Leaf et al., 1997). While participants held varied views on whether or not boys and girls should be taught curricula in co-educational or separate settings, it is recommended that all youth receive the curricula together, given the range of sexualities that may be present in a school setting. Additionally, it is important that males receive this curricula since IPV is not solely a “women’s issue.” Finally, it is important that curricula is presented by personnel who are Asian and Middle Eastern, who can better connect with youth from these ethnic groups and serve as role models for them.
II. INTRODUCTION

In November 2013, two migrant women of colour living in Wellington – one from Mongolia and the other Fiji-Indian from Fiji – were killed in their homes, reportedly by their domestic partners. Both men suspected in the killings had breached protection orders (Peach, 2013; Shadwell, 2013). Just six months later in May 2014, a Pakistani woman and her daughter were killed in their Auckland home, allegedly by their husband and father (Tapaleao, Tait, & Dougan, 2014). Finally, in August 2014, a woman of half-Filipino descent from New Zealand in her mid-20s met a young man in Australia for the first time who she had met through an online dating application (Tinder). She fell fourteen stories to her death reportedly in an attempt to escape from the male’s apartment (Boyer, 2014; Strongman, 2014; The New Zealand Herald, 2014a; 2014b). While it does not appear cultural factors tied to ethnicity played a major role in this last example, the tragedy illustrates how youthful online culture can be connected to extreme gender-based violence.

Collectively these examples underscore the severity of family and intimate partner violence (IPV) \(^1\) in New Zealand’s migrant communities of colour, demonstrate how IPV can materialize in diverse ways, and remind us that if these extreme forms of violence are being reported in mainstream media, additional types of intimate partner and family violence are likely occurring as well, behind closed doors. These cases also prompt us to reconsider how intervention and prevention measures are devised in innovative ways that are culturally informed and effective.

This report draws from an exploratory, community-driven research project conducted during the first half of 2014 with 27 young women and adolescent girls from migrant communities in Auckland, New Zealand who offered their input on intimate partner and family violence in their ethnic communities. Shakti Community Council, Inc. \(^2\) initiated discussion around conducting the study in hopes of expanding violence prevention/intervention services for youth of diverse Asian, Middle Eastern and African ethnic backgrounds between the ages of 16 and 26, though research procedures were carried out

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1. Though IPV is a recognized subset of family violence, IPV will be named alongside family violence throughout this report in order to highlight IPV’s centrality in this research project.

2. Shakti Community Council, Inc. is a non-governmental organisation in New Zealand aiming to support women of Asian, Middle Eastern and African ethnic backgrounds in abusive partnerships. The organisation is described further in this report’s “Methodology” section.
entirely by the research team. All persons involved in the study (research participants, community consultants, and researchers) were people of colour of diverse Asian and Middle Eastern ethnic backgrounds. Using surveys and small group interviews, interviewees were asked to provide their perspectives on the ways that family and IPV emanate in their ethnic communities and how social service agencies can best address these concerns in culturally appropriate and gender sensitive ways.

Research participants identified a number of factors that were influential to intimate partner and family violence, frequently relating these types of violence to one another. Many of the interviewees discussed the power that familial honour and shame hold in their daily lives, explaining how women and girls must take great care in entering and monitoring romantic relationships. Gendered isolation, differing interpretations of violence, mainstream media, systemic male privilege, a lack of culturally informed services, and legal factors tied to immigration were also raised as serious and common concerns. The ensuing sections of this report will (A) review the academic literature on IPV in New Zealand and internationally, (B) describe this study’s methodology, (C) present information from both the quantitative and qualitative portions of this study, and (D) close with recommendations for practice such that our research can translate to tangible community change.
III. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 IPV in New Zealand

With respect to men’s violence against women, IPV transpires when any current or ex-partner who is male that a woman had been married to, been in a romantic relationship with and/or dated perpetrates violence on the female partner. Behaviours that exemplify IPV can be grouped into at least four different categories:

- Physical violence (e.g., been slapped; shoved; hit with a fist; kicked; threatened with a weapon);
- Sexual violence (e.g., been physically forced to have sexual intercourse, had sexual intercourse out of fear of what a partner may do; been forced to do something sexually degrading);
- Psychological/emotional violence (e.g., insulted; humiliated in front of others; intimidated or scared on purpose);
- Controlling violence (e.g., isolated from friends or family; surveilled; had money controlled) (Fanslow & Robinson, 2011, 745-746)

Women’s Refuge (2014) reports that in New Zealand, “One in three women experience psychological or physical abuse from their partners in their lifetime” and that in terms of financial costs, New Zealand expends between $1.2 and $5.3 billion annually on domestic violence (Snivley, 1994). In more recent research that draws on a sample of 2,674 women from Auckland and North Waikato, Fanslow and Robinson (2011) report that 55% of those surveyed “had experienced at least one type of IPV in their lifetime, and 32.7% (n = 870) had experienced more than one type of IPV” (p. 747). Research on IPV prevalence rates with ethnic minority populations in New Zealand has also been conducted with Pacific (Schluter, Paterson, & Feehan, 2007) and Māori (Morris et al., 2003) populations.

New Zealand’s ethnic dynamics, however, are changing rapidly. Figures from the 2013 census show that roughly 24% of the country’s population was born outside New Zealand. Seven percent of all New Zealand residents were born in Asia and 2% in the Middle East or Africa. New Zealand’s Asian populations represent 11% of the entire country, nearly doubling in size since 2001 (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). New Zealand’s most populated city, Auckland, currently includes residents representing over 200 ethnic backgrounds (Tapaleao, 2014). Given these figures, it is imperative that more research addressing intimate partner and family violence is conducted with migrant communities of colour not acknowl-
edged in prior scholarship. To date, the academic literature addressing domestic violence amongst Asian communities in New Zealand is quite limited. Tse (2007) and Pillai (2001) both offer a general overview of issues that migrant Asian women face (cultural shame, isolation, language barriers) in violent relationships within the New Zealand context, with Tse’s work providing voices from interviewees themselves. Amongst her interviews with New Zealand practitioners in the IPV prevention field, Haldane (2009) spoke with four participants of Asian ancestry who stressed how Asian constructs of family and collectivism did not align with western “empowerment” notions of feminism, making it difficult for Asian women in New Zealand to use mainstream services and risk breakup of their families. Finally, the Ministry of Women’s Affairs commissioned a major study on Women’s Experiences of Protection Orders, which included rich profiles of women across a range of ethnic groups, including cases of women representing “Other Ethnic Minority Women’s Stories” in New Zealand (Robertson et al., 2007, 176-243). Profiles of the women from Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Iranian, Taiwanese, Thai and other ethnic backgrounds illustrate how poor interactions with police, poverty, stable work, immigration status, cultural understandings of family and an array of other issues complicate the support women from these background can and cannot access.

3.2 Factors Impacting IPV among Migrant Communities in Western Contexts

Although the academic literature on intimate partner and family violence among migrant communities of colour in New Zealand is thin, research shows that migrant women of colour living in western locales suffer disproportionately from IPV (Raj & Silverman, 2003). Fortunately, a healthy literature exists detailing the numerous issues migrant women face in western contexts. These issues include legal vulnerabilities, language incompatibility with mainstream services, familial and community-based isolation, and a propensity to think services in the host country are unavailable due to past experiences in one’s home country (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). With respect to migration concerns, cases exist where migrant women hold permanent residency in a host country and sponsor males from their country of origin to migrate as marital partners. However, the reciprocal is significantly more common, with men in host countries sponsoring migrant women as marital partners. In these latter cases, an important power imbalance is perpetuated that privileges male partners and isolates migrant women in two ways. First, migrant women lose familial and friendship networks from their home country, and second, upon arrival to live in a new country, migrant women’s residency status is often insecure, frequently dependent on a male partner (Kang, 2006).
Migrant women of Asian and Latina backgrounds in the United States, for example, have stated that once settled in their new environment, economic and social dependence on husbands was especially problematic because newly established social networks in the host country were limited to their husbands’ families and friends (Bauer et al., 2000). Likewise, migrant Vietnamese women in Seattle, Washington (USA) have reported that in Vietnam, “they could at least talk to their neighbors and friends if they were being abused, whereas in the United States they have no one with whom to confide because of their isolation” (Shiu-Thornton, Senturia, & Sullivan, 2005, p. 967). Along with losing networks of friends and family, social isolation among migrant women is often furthered in host countries by language barriers and cultural beliefs that stress not expressing problems beyond the family (Ghafournia, 2011).

Thus, even if migrant women arrive in a new country and live in ethnic enclaves with densely established communication networks, they may still be socially isolated since airing family problems can subject women to stigmatization through rumours and gossip. In short, migrant women’s lack of anonymity in tightly connected ethnic communities can make it more difficult for them to seek help due to the combination of (1) not having close friends and family within the community and (2) not wanting to bear a denouncing spotlight that blames them for disrupting family harmony (Lee, 2013; Reina, Lohman, & Maldonado, 2013).

Finally, legal issues around immigration add an additional layer of complexity to migrant women’s lives. To begin with many women who migrate to western countries are unfamiliar with western laws, in particular those surrounding immigration policies – an unfamiliarity which may be extended if migrant women are still learning the host country’s dominant language. This is an especially heavy concern for female migrants who are undocumented. An undocumented Latina interviewee in Bauer et al.’s (2000) study stated, for instance, “you believe that the moment you are going to ask for help, they’re going to return you to your country, and that’s something that perhaps we, as Latinas, see ourselves obligated to tolerate this type of violence due to the fear of being deported” (p. 37). But even female migrants who enter host countries through proper legal channels are subject to threats of deportation due to probationary immigration conditions, a circumstance that reifies male privilege. As Burman and Chantler (2005) argue, immigration laws that make women’s residency status contingent upon partnership with a male resident provide “a powerful weapon to the perpetrator’s arsenal of tactics of abuse” (p. 65).
Empirical scholarship bears out these assertions, showing further that manipulation of legal status is significantly more damaging for migrant women from ethnic minority backgrounds. Ammar and colleagues’ (2013) research with migrant women in abusive partnerships found Muslim women were significantly more likely than non-Muslim women to report “that pending immigration papers controlled by the spouse were a reason why they stayed in the abusive relationship” (p. 1458). Clearly, migrant women of colour face a wide constellation of factors that collectively make exiting an abusive relationship an extremely challenging process. These factors include financial vulnerability, various forms of social isolation and legal risks connected to migration, all of which enable abusive males to maintain control over their partners (Amanor-Boadu et al., 2012).

It is important to recall that this research project’s focus is directed towards youth, and in New Zealand’s migrant communities, many youth were either born in New Zealand or moved here relatively early in their lives. Although it happens, in most cases, adolescent girls are not moving to New Zealand through marriage arrangements. Hence, it may seem initially that migration is not a major issue for Asian, Middle Eastern and African youth. However, the gendered patterns of migration and family reputation have a significant impact on families’ cultural dynamics and in turn on all family members, irrespective of an individual’s personal migration history. Therefore, migratory influences are still highly significant for youth from migrant communities, even if they were born in New Zealand or another host country. This literature review will now turn to the ways that family honour and shame can shape women’s and girls’ lives in Asian and Middle Eastern communities.

3.3 Honour and Shame: The Personal, Familial and Cultural

Patriarchy describes the way in which social systems are used to oppress and subordinate women while granting power to men. Though patriarchy is a universal story of domination, it functions differently across cultures. Of particular importance for women from the ethnic groups covered in this study, “patriarchy is a form of rule through kin relations in which family and society closely overlap, and in which family is stratified according to gender and age” (Korteweg & Yurdakul, 2013, p. 222), with the concepts of honour and shame especially important in shaping the ways IPV is experienced. In feminist scholarship, violent intimate relationships are frequently examined and understood within patriarchal contexts, and as Bell & Naugle (2008) argue, it is critical that interventions account for the precursors and consequences of IPV that characterize individuals’ broader communities.
It is also widely accepted in feminist studies that IPV intensifies when women disrupt patriarchal boundaries of femininity. In many Asian, Middle Eastern and African migrant communities, rules of shame and honour are used to construct gender boundaries and inflexible feminine roles. “Honour based violence (HBV) can be defined as comprising any form of violence perpetrated against women that is associated with patriarchal family, community or other social structures in which the main justification for the violence is the protection of a social construction of honour” (Gill et al., 2012, p. 75). In cases of HBV, cultural norms and traditions formalize violent responses to women who have “violated the honor of her family by crossing a boundary of sexual propriety” (Yurdakul & Korteweg, 2005, p. 205). Honour, then, can be used as justification for physical violence as well as a way to control female behaviour and “preserve or restore the ‘honor’ of families, communities, or individuals” (Hague, Gill, & Begikhani, 2012, p. 1). It is essential to note that HBV is never “honourable”; honour is simply used as part of the term, HBV, to explain how family and community prestige play into this particular type of violence (Meetoo & Mirza, 2007; Hague, Gill, & Begikhani, 2012).

To this end, different forms of patriarchal violence operate across all cultural groups. The ways that honour and shame influence intimate partner and family violence in certain ethnic communities then, exist as cultural subsets within a universal system of patriarchy. Examinations of HBV should not be used to further disparage migrant communities of colour where women and girls are cast as victims of unusually “backwards,” “uncivilized” or violent cultures (Kapur, 2006). This study’s inspection of HBV is undertaken to better understand the specific ways that honour and shame can operate as mechanisms of violence within New Zealand’s Asian, Middle Eastern and African communities, keeping in mind that men’s violence against women is a serious social concern in all cultural groups.

Traditional honour can be characterized along three planes (Baker et al., 1999):

1. Male control of female behavior
2. Male shame when control is lost
3. Level of participation by the larger community in controlling the shame

The third dimension is particularly relevant to migrant cultures as the control of women’s sexuality in Western cultures is exercised predominantly by the husband or partner, as opposed to the wider community.
In some ways, the control of female behaviour is accelerated in the migration context due to the wider community’s shifting involvement. Women in migrant contexts live in “immigrant enclaves” where the roles attributed to women are as carriers and bearers of not only the family, but also of the community’s ethnic identity (Akpinar, 2003). Therefore, the ethnic community’s reputation is considered vulnerable when women challenge the boundaries of acceptable conduct, ostensibly demonstrating a loss of culture and movement towards assimilation. This demonstrates that migrant women are perceived as defenders of the migrant community’s ethnic culture. Much more so than males, women carry the burden of this social responsibility to uphold culture, and any transgression on their part can bring shame and dishonour to members of an entire family, lineage or even the wider community (Kandiyoti, 1987).

A wide range of behaviours can bring shame and dishonour to a family but none more so than those that are seen to compromise infidelity of married women, or virginity of unmarried daughters (Kulczycki & Windle, 2011). A female’s chastity is synonymous to the purity of breed within a family and is representative of a family’s capital and prestige (Faqir, 2001). Prior to marriage women are policed with respect to their virginity. The focus changes to infidelity once a woman is married; both are seen as an index for masculine reputation, or honour. A family’s honour is inextricably tied to masculine control over women and girls, and any misbehaviour that women or girls exhibit is perceived as an essential component to men’s loss of self-esteem within the wider ethnic community (Akpinar, 2003). Consequently, men feel a need to “protect” women, or more so their masculine honour by controlling women’s sexuality.

To this end, men are associated with maintenance of honour and women with the potential of creating familial shame. Women and girls are ascribed, or directed with fulfilling feminine expectations, which are then used by men as symbolic capital to attain idealised notions of masculinity (Kandiyoti, 1987). While chastity is central to the identity of an honourable woman, an honourable man is someone whose wife, daughters, sisters, nieces and so forth preserve their virginity until they are married and remain faithful to their husbands thereafter (Meetoo & Mirza, 2007). Patriarchy and by extension gendered violence, is most apparent in these societies where women are objectified investments to be protected, and men’s honour is achieved through control over “their” women (Meetoo & Mirza, 2007).

Protection and control are achieved in many ways in these patriarchal contexts, ensuring that the status quo goes unthreatened. One of the ways this is achieved is through gender segregation and the
control of women and girls in public spaces (Akpinar, 2003). For instance, “In Arab societies, women are frequently told to remain ‘mastura’ (hiding, low-profile), a term which implies physical and psychological confinement in the private and public space” (Faqir, 2001, 69). Women are often restricted to being at home and from having a social life of their own; this is enforced by the idea that women should embody selflessness and passivity and must do their utmost to assure that the husband’s and family’s needs are met. When a woman is in the public eye, she can only do so when accompanied by a male relative. This is particularly conflicting for migrant youth, as their ethnic community’s subjugation and control becomes part of their struggle while integrating into the host society (Akpinar, 2003).

Patriarchal control of women to protect family honour operates not only through direct male control, but also through gossip and rumours in the wider community. Rumours and gossip serve as a form of control and punishment. A study of Turkish women living in Sweden noted the ways that neighbours began avoiding a family whose women had done something to cause shame (Akpinar, 2003). In tight-knit migrant communities, social exclusion may present a legitimate threat to the family (Payton, 2014), including threats to a family’s economic status (Meetoo & Miza, 2007). Acts causing shame can range from engaging in premarital sex, to talking with men who are not relatives, and in extreme cases to accidentally showing one’s bare legs in public (Akpinar, 2003). If the wider community has seen a woman deviate from socially defined feminine behaviours and begins gossipping about it, the family has essentially “lost face” in the community and is shamed. And while the specific behaviours that stimulate family shame may differ across cultures, patriarchal systems attaching feminine identity to potential family shame are common in multiple cultural contexts.

Perhaps ironically, women often adopt and perpetuate codes of honour and shame. This serves as a mechanism of internal control, as women must cope with the ways that their gender and ethnic identities are manipulated (Akpinar, 2003). Women are encouraged to restrict their own boundaries and sexuality in order to protect their husbands, fathers and extended family from being dishonoured; this makes departure from an abusive relationship all the more difficult for young women in migrant communities. In a study of Indian, Pakistani and Korean women in refuge centres in Chicago, battered women confessed to feeling extreme shame for leaving their husbands (Supriya, 1996).

In fact, feelings of shame make it difficult for women and girls to report any form of sexual victimisation. In Lee and Law’s (2001) study with 186 Asian American participants, “feeling shameful” was
identified as the most important factor impeding respondents from seeking professional help if they were the victim of a sexual assault.

In communities where women’s independence is associated with shame, older women can even become enforcers of HBV that is directed towards younger women and girls since a daughter that deviates from the culture’s gendered norms also reflects on the mother’s “inability” to properly raise her child. Importance is placed on the mother to teach her children to abide by respectable feminine roles and place well in the marriage market. Women may also go so far as to make sure other women in the community do not pursue divorce as they are afraid this will set a bad example for their daughters (Akpinar, 2003). Finally, older women in the household have earned their place of respectability; they have earned a position of relative power and control over their daughters-in-law and therefore uphold patriarchy in order to maintain their individual power (Kandiyyoti, 1987). This is further internalised and reproduced by young women as they tolerate negative treatment by in-laws when they first marry, expecting they will secure that same power when they assume the mother-in-law role (Chaudhuri et al., 2014).

Young girls and boys are socialised from young ages to adhere to these shame and honour codes. Young women are socialised to be unaware of their rights, while men are socialised to believe they have the right to dominate women (Gill, Begikhani, & Hague, 2012), thereby reproducing gendered hierarchies and inequality in migrant communities. For migrant communities from Asia, Africa and the Middle East whose societies are structured around honour codes, there is a strong focus on policing female youth because their said misbehaviour not only reflects on the immediate family but also on personal ethnic identities and the broader community. The woman, as the carrier and bearer of her ethnic group is taught to take on this obligation, to not stray from and disrupt the group’s identity by mixing with others (Meetoo & Mirza, 2007). These expectations conflict with youthful desires to integrate into the host country and give rise to multiple complications in this migration context regarding dating and general friendship networks.
IV. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Background and Theoretical Approach
Shakti Community Council, Inc. is a non-governmental organisation in New Zealand that aims to “ensure the good health and overall well-being of New Zealand’s migrant and refugee communities through culturally competent services within a culturally appropriate environment” (Shakti website). Specifically, Shakti provides intervention and prevention services for women and girls of diverse Asian, Middle Eastern, and African ethnic backgrounds who have become ensnared in violent partnerships. A robust organisation founded in 1995, Shakti maintains offices across Auckland, the central part of New Zealand’s North Island and the South Island, and the organisation is currently developing in Australia. A key feature of the Shakti organisation is its staffing composition, comprised in part by former clients who understand and can empathize with current clients’ challenges and cultural backgrounds. All Shakti staff are women of colour of Asian, Middle Eastern or African descent.

With hopes of expanding services, Shakti leadership met with the first and second authors in October 2013 to plan research that would inform the development of a continuum of youth services. To this end, this project was informed heavily by community-based participatory research (CBPR) principles, emphasizing inclusion of those represented in the population under study through every research phase. Through CBPR, power imbalances between researchers and community members are minimized and research findings are used in tangible ways with community input to promote social change, rather than simply benefit researchers’ careers (Wallerstein & Duran, 2003).

Following Schulz and colleagues’ (2003) work with African American female health workers in Detroit (USA) as a model, the research team collaborated with Shakti to develop research instruments and procedures, participate in community development events, apply for grant applications that could build organisational capacity, and present preliminary research results. In this regard, the research team recognizes that while it carries certain types of expertise, Shakti staff hold different, though equally important forms of expertise having worked extensively in the field. Likewise, CBPR acknowledges that research participants are experts in their own right, offering insight into topics that researchers lack. With these principles in mind, although the research team was solely responsibility for data collection, Shakti staff and the research team carry equal responsibility for all research project features, including data ownership.
Data collection began in February 2014 and concluded in August of the same year. The first and second author interviewed 16 young adult women (ages 18-28) and 11 adolescent girls (ages 16-17) from migrant communities of colour across the greater Auckland area. Recruitment of young adults entailed working with Shakti staff to identify women who (A) were of Asian, Middle Eastern or African ethnic ancestry, and (B) had familiarity with the Shakti organisation. On one end of the spectrum, “familiarity” with Shakti could simply mean having attended a Shakti workshop in the past, or knowing of Shakti through personal or professional networks. At the other end of the spectrum, “familiarity” could mean being a current or past Shakti client. Prior research with migrant women of colour has taken a similar research approach, interviewing domestic violence victims/survivors and community activists in the field (Bui, 2003). Using organisational contact lists, Shakti staff and the second author invited women via e-mail and over the phone to participate in research concerning intimate partner and family violence within their ethnic communities. As individuals expressed interest in participating, they were scheduled to complete a brief questionnaire and partake in a 1-time small group discussion.

Even with assistance from Shakti staff, recruitment of participants was slow, which is not terribly surprising considering the sensitive topics covered in the study and potential participants’ status as minority group members in terms of age, ethnicity, gender, class and in some cases sexuality. Additionally, a number of participants were intimate partner and family violence victims/survivors. Still, over time, the research team was able to survey and interview a sufficient number of young adult women, as indicated by reaching a point of saturation in the small group interviews where no new information was emerging in discussions.

In addition to the young adult sample, 11 adolescents attending a local public high school were surveyed and interviewed. Per school administration request, recruitment procedures for the adolescent sample involved recruiting students who fit the study’s ethnic demographics (Asian, Middle Eastern or African) through the institution’s peer mentors programme. High school participants completed the same survey and were asked the same discussion questions as young adult participants. For both the young adult and adolescent samples, the research team attempted to recruit male participants. Unfortunately, only three young adult males responded to study requests; considering the poor response rate by males, male input is not included in analyses. Having adolescent and young adult research participants does spread the study sample’s age range over a considerable number of years. However, this methodological approach ultimately served as a strength since the research team was able to identify cultural patterns expressed across multiple youthful age groups.
Likewise, the study’s ethnic demographics are very broad. Extensive ethnic diversity exists within each of the “umbrella” ethnic groups that Shakti serves – Asian, Middle Eastern, and African. Obviously “Asians” are different from “Middle Easterners,” who are different from “Africans,” and within each of those broad categories are a wide variety of more specific ethnic groups. Still, Shakti is the only gender-based violence intervention and prevention organisation in New Zealand that specializes in working with these cultural groups and is therefore forced to aid women and girls across multiple ethnic backgrounds. This translates to services offered on pan-ethnic levels for women and girls of colour from very diverse migrant communities. Although these women and girls hold unique cultural characteristics that impact how intimate partner and family violence functions, they also cope with similar forms of gendered discrimination, coming from both within and beyond their ethnic communities. These connections that cut across ethnicities for women and girls from migrant communities make collectively-based interventions useful (Espiritu, 1992). It is with this pan-ethnic perspective that the present research project functions.

4.2 Survey Development and Administration

Between February and August 2014, the research team held nine information gathering sessions with research participants. Sessions consisted of both researchers and 2-4 research participants, though in a few sessions the lead author was absent while the second author was supported by a second female research assistant. Prior to survey administration, the research team and interviewees introduced themselves and thanked participants for their time. The lead author then explained the study’s purpose and all research protocols on confidentiality relevant to the survey and small group discussion (the lead author did this for every session, even if he was absent during the discussion). For interviews that included young adult women who had been in violent relationships, a trained staff person from Shakti was on call in case counseling was required due to the study’s sensitive topics, though intervention by a counselor was never required. Surveying and small group discussions for young adults took place at Shakti offices or The University of Auckland; for youth participants, all research procedures took place in a private location at their high school.

The project’s questionnaire captured participant demographic information, attitudes towards intimate partner and family violence, and prevalence rates of IPV victimisation. Attitudes toward intimate partner and family violence were measured through 15 survey items using a 4-point likert scale with options ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Seven survey items included statements
that captured participants’ perspectives on violence in intimate relationships, such as, “Someone angry enough to hit their partner must love that partner very much” and “Violence between dating partners is a personal matter and other people should not interfere,” drawn from prior IPV studies (Foshee et al., 1998; Foshee et al., 1996). The research team and Shakti collaborated to design eight additional survey items that tapped into some of the culturally specific issues that impact women and girls from migrant communities. Some of these survey items included, “It is okay when men over age 35 marry girls who are under age 18” and “When a man and woman are married, if a wife does not do the housework, it is okay for the husband to hit her” (see Table 2).

Victimisation in intimate relationships was measured through two scales, the first of which included 20 survey items on emotional and controlling forms of dating violence using a 4-point likert scale with options ranging from “very often” to “never.” If participants had ever gone out on a date with someone, they were subsequently asked how often a dating partner had perpetrated various forms of emotional and controlling dating violence. Some survey items from this section included, how often any dating or intimate partner had “said things to hurt your feelings on purpose” and “put down your family.” Survey items in this section were also drawn from the prior studies on dating violence (Foshee et al., 1998; Foshee et al., 1996; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2000; Sullivan & Bybee, 1999; Sullivan, Parisian, & Davidson, 1991).

Twenty additional survey items captured potential stalking, physical and sexual victimization in intimate relationships. Participants were asked the number of times they had experienced these different forms of victimization (e.g., how many times a partner has “hit me,” “showed up in places when he or she thought you might be,” or “forced or pressured you to have sex when you didn’t want to”); survey items in this section were drawn from Foshee et al. (1998; 1996) and Koss & Oros (1982), with one additional survey item created by the research team that measured stalking behaviour through online social media (see Table 3). The survey’s final section assessed participants’ mood using a 5-item scale developed by Orpinas (1993), with an additional survey item on suicide ideation developed by the research team (see Table 4). A slightly different survey, which investigated more serious forms of victimization, was administered to two adult participants (both Fiji-Indian, ages 18 and 23) who were taking refuge in a Shakti safe house at the time. These two participants’ survey results have been integrated with the other 25 participants’ when possible for overlapping survey items.
4.3 Small Group Discussions

After participants completed the quantitative surveys, they partook in small group discussions, consisting of the first and second author and two to four participants. The only exceptions to this included a discussion with the two young adult women who were taking refuge in a Shakti safe house during the time of interview. For this discussion, the first author was on site to explain the study and answer potential questions, but was not involved in the discussion because he is male; Shakti staff and the research team felt the participants would be more comfortable in discussions strictly with a female interviewer given their personal histories as intimate partner and family violence victims and survivors. In two other discussions, different student research assistants helped the second author in facilitating interviews due to logistical issues, though the primary author was on site to explain research protocols to participants. All student research assistants underwent training from the lead author and Shakti in facilitating group discussions on intimate partner and family violence.

While the survey portion of this study provides a snapshot into interviewees’ attitudes and victimisation rates, qualitative discussions with participants offer deeper insight into the broader social factors that contribute to gender-based violence in migrant communities of colour. Group interviews have been found as useful methodological approaches in studies on IPV with female domestic violence survivors from Asian and Latina immigrant backgrounds in the United States (Shiu-Thornton, Senturia, & Sullivan, 2005; Murdaugh et al., 2004; Bauer et al., 2000) and African women from refugee backgrounds in Australia (Zannetino, 2012).

Small group conversations with participants covered a wide range of issues, including how participants defined IPV (Tang et al., 2000), how intimate partner and family violence was justified in families and ethnic communities (Yick & Agbayani-Siewert, 1997), where young people – males and females – learned to accept and enact IPV (Foshee, Bauman, & Fletcher, 1999), and how communities and social service agencies could most effectively intervene to stop intimate partner and family violence in migrant communities of colour. Discussion questions were also framed in a way to capture how intimate partner and family violence might emerge across different ecological levels that begin with (A) individual characteristics, moving increasingly away from the individual to (B) relational, interpersonal levels, next (C) to a community/neighbourhood levels, and last (D) to broad state and cultural levels (Go et al., 2003).
A variety of research methods were employed to diminish power imbalances between researchers and interviewees and create a safe environment where interviewees could contribute their thoughts safely and freely. Food and drinks were provided, interviewees were encouraged to ask researchers questions and told they may partake in future activities that drew from the research findings with Shakti and the research team. It is also noteworthy that both authors are of Asian ancestry and that the second author is female within the age range of interviewees, originally from India, but who has lived in Auckland the past thirteen years; in this vein, the second author simultaneously held researcher and peer status with research participants. Discussions were generally free flowing with participants expressing observations that they had made of others within their ethnic communities, and in many cases that they had experienced personally.

With participants’ permission, group discussions were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim predominantly by the second author. The second author also cleaned transcriptions by re-listening to each discussion while reading the corresponding transcription and making corrections. From there, the first and second author took a grounded theory approach to data analysis, identifying key emergent themes within the established topical areas (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Huberman & Miles, 2002; Berg, 1998). These themes have been identified as:

1) Defining and identifying intimate partner and family violence;
2) Learning intimate partner and family violence;
3) Gendered identities – female self-sacrifice and isolation; and
4) Family honour and shame

Prior to reporting on these themes, this report will present quantitative results from the survey portion of the study.

3. The University of Auckland Research Ethics Committee approved all research procedures.
V. RESULTS

5.1 Survey Findings

Participant background characteristics are presented in Table 1, below:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji-Indian</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese/Indian</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghani</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17 (high school students)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-23</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-26</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-28</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexuality</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgender</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current/Former Shakti Employee/Volunteer</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current/Former Shakti Client</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Permanent Resident/Citizen of New Zealand</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2, below, presents a comparison of participants who “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” with attitudinal measures on intimate partner violence, versus those who “Disagreed” or “Strongly Disagreed.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Attitudinal Measures on Intimate Partner Violence</th>
<th>Agree or Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Disagree or Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Someone angry enough to hit their partner must love that partner very much.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence between couples who are dating can improve the relationship.</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls sometimes deserve to be hit by boys they date.</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys sometimes deserve to be hit by girls they date.</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is acceptable for partners of the same sex to hit each other.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes violence is the only way to express your feelings.</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some couples must use violence to solve their problems.</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence between dating partners is a personal matter and other people should not interfere.</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you were being harmed in a romantic relationship, you would know where to get help.</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is okay when men over age 35 marry girls who are under age 18.</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>96.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls and women in my family are blamed for family problems.</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is acceptable for men in my family to yell at female family members.</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is acceptable for men in my family to physically harm female family members.</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a man and woman are married, if a wife does not do the housework, it is okay for the husband to hit her.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a man and woman are in a relationship, the man should be able to have sex with her whenever he wants.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that the majority of study participants held attitudes that frown upon beliefs used to justify IPV. For example, 100% of those participants responding to the statement, “Someone angry enough to hit their partner must love that partner very much,” disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. Despite participants generally holding progressive attitudes toward justifications of IPV, 42.3% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed with the following two statements: “Girls and women in my family are blamed for family problems,” and “It is acceptable for men in my family to yell at female family members.” As these two latter survey items do not measure attitudes towards IPV,
the findings show that a significant portion of women and girls who hold progressive attitudes on IPV still cope with strong patriarchal tendencies within their families. Likewise, 32% of those responding to the survey item, “If you were being harmed in a romantic relationship, you would know where to get help,” disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, suggesting a significant proportion of women and girls from migrant communities lack an awareness of intervention services addressing IPV.

Amongst the 27 study participants, 17 had prior dating experience and in turn could fill out the survey’s section on IPV victimisation (Table 3, following page). One participant with a dating history chose not to complete this section all together, while a few other participants skipped selected questions within the section. Thus survey items in Table 3, reflect prevalence rates amongst 14 to 16 participants (out of the total of 27), as indicated in the Table’s final column labeled “Ratio.” IPV victimisation survey items have been divided into clusters on Controlling Victimisation, Physical/Sexual Victimisation, and Stalking and Electronic Victimisation.
For 10 out of the 20 survey items tapping into controlling types of IPV, at least one-third of the participants indicated a history of victimisation at some point in their lifetime. Reports of physical and sexual victimisation were expectedly lower, with only one survey item yielding a lifetime prevalence rate of
50% (a partner having pushed, grabbed or shoved the victim). Notably, however, twenty-five percent of the participants eligible to complete this section reported having been “forced or pressured to have sex when [they] did not want to,” a very high proportion given the sample’s young age. Stalking victimisation from an intimate partner, in both traditional and cyber forms, was also quite high. For four out of the nine survey items in this construct, at least one-third of participants expressed a history of victimisation.

The final set of survey items attempted to capture study participants’ mood, specifically feelings that may signify levels of depression, with the final survey item in this section asking directly about suicide ideation. Participant responses have been segmented into columns showing what percentage of participants answered “never,” “seldom”/“sometimes”, or “often”/“always” for each survey item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Mood</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Seldom/ Sometimes</th>
<th>Often/ Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the past 6 months, how often...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>were you very sad?</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2</td>
<td>n=18</td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>were you grouchy or irritable, or in a bad mood?</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=0</td>
<td>n=20</td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did you feel hopeless about the future?</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>59.3%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=5</td>
<td>n=16</td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did you sleep a lot more or a lot less than usual?</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=4</td>
<td>n=15</td>
<td>n=8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did you have difficulty concentrating on your school work or job?</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=3</td>
<td>n=20</td>
<td>n=4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had you thought about committing suicide?</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=18</td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>n=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All 27 participants in the study completed this section of the survey. Table 4 offers sobering results on measures of depression and suicide ideation. Over 90% of the study sample reported feeling sad in the past 6 months, with over one-fourth of the sample (25.9%) indicating feeling sad “Often” or “Always” during this timeframe. Additionally, a very high proportion of the sample reported feeling hopeless about their future at relatively high levels. Ramifications of these feelings were also evident in the percentage of participants whose sleep patterns and ability to concentrate appeared to be adversely impacted. Finally, one-third of the sample (22.2% “Seldom/Sometimes” and 11.1% “Often/Always”) reported they had thought about committing suicide in the last six months. Again, considering the sample’s young age range, these study results raise cause for concern.
Because the study sample is relatively small, broad generalizations must be taken with caution. This limitation notwithstanding, the study results are useful in illustrating trends amongst the research participants. Moreover, study results suggest significant portions of young women and adolescent girls from these ethnic groups cope with very serious issues tied to IPV, depression, and forms of patriarchy within their respective cultural groups. This report will now turn to the qualitative, small group interview portion of this study.

5.2 Qualitative Group Discussions

5.2.1 Defining and Identifying IPV

...if you can convince the person that they are useless without you, then they are dependent on you. If they are dependent on you, you can do whatever the hell you want, and they are not going to be able to resist. – Indian, high school participant

There is always some element of control, and a lot of violence reaches the point where the victim doesn’t give into the control and fights against the control. – Chinese/Indian, young adult participant

Understanding which actions constitute IPV and which do not varies among individuals from different backgrounds (Tang et al., 2000); research has shown, for instance, that children, teenagers, and adults tend to conceptualize perceptions and levels of violence differently from one another (Larsson & Hill, 2013). Thus, a central topic within this study’s group discussions included defining IPV. When asked to describe what violence in intimate relationships meant to them, participants expressed a variety of answers. Participants still in high school viewed IPV in multiple ways, focusing initially on its physical nature before recognizing that IPV also emanates through verbal and controlling behaviours. After being asked to describe violence in romantic relationships, an Indian high school participant stated, “For me it is like physically hurting someone...hurting someone verbally or physically,” with another Indian high school student in the same discussion adding, “Mostly in Indian communities, I have noticed in my friends and families that usually it is shown through hitting a lot, by using stuff to hit them, like say a shoe...” However, some high school participants expanded their thoughts, noting how intentionality often matters in conceptualizing IPV. In a different discussion an Indian high school participant stated:

If you put in terms of violence, I would say it’s more of a physical thing than anything, actually physically hurting a person. But if you are just talking about in general...it’s like when people are purposely hurtful about anything they say in general. And even if they didn’t do it on purpose, if they are trying to justify themselves, so basically anything that hurts the other person.
As this participant suggests, physical conflicts between intimate partners stand out as the most obvious types of IPV. Like a prior interviewee, this participant states that verbal conflicts can be considered violent, but adds that actions can be violent even if the perpetrator did not intend to harm the victim, and closes out by stating that violence exists whenever an individual is harmed.

In group discussions with young adult participants, the topic of intentionality was raised as an important factor with greater depth. Young adult participants frequently pointed out that young people, in particular males, believe they are entitled to act in ways that harm women, though males may not view their actions as harmful or violent. Rather, women’s maltreatment can become so standardized that it is viewed uncritically as normal. In discussing these IPV dynamics, a young adult, Fiji-Indian participant stated males might not “realise the impact of their own behaviour on others. In that sense they might not know, or [might not] intentionally be hurting somebody cause they might not have an analysis of their own behavior.” As will be detailed in the ensuing section on “Learning Intimate Partner and Family Violence,” gendered power inequality can become so embedded within the culture, that boys and girls are sometimes raised to accept gender disparity as an ordinary part of everyday life. In turn, when children grow into their teens and young adulthood, male privilege becomes a standard part of too many intimate relationships, shaping IPV dynamics accordingly. The following exchange between a young adult Pakistani participant and the first author offers a specific example of how male entitlement turns into a form of IPV for women, but is not viewed as violence by males.

**Research participant:** I think if you feel that someone is hurting you, that’s violence, so maybe the other person thinks they are not hurting you, and you feel that you are not safe in the relationship, then there is violence between the couple.

**Researcher:** So does there have to be intent behind actions for it to be violent?

**Research participant:** No, that’s why I said, the other person doesn’t even think they are doing anything [wrong]…. Even asking for sexual favours which you would think is not right because you think it’s violence, and in the middle of the night. Maybe that is not intentional for them. They think that it is their right as your partner and that you are probably ready as well. When I have spoken to them, and even when my sister has spoken to her partners, they don’t think that it was intentional. They just don’t think that it was violence at all; they wouldn’t classify that as violence. For them it has to be physical. They don’t even think that hurting someone emotionally is a type of violence at all.

This participant offers two important points, first, that male sexual entitlement, even sexual violence, can become normalized and go completely unquestioned. Such behaviour may be defined by males as
an obligation of female partners, when in reality such actions exemplify sexual violence. The second key point this participant makes is that behaviours between intimate partners are sometimes defined as violence in the wider community only if they are physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, choking), but not if they are characterized through sexual, verbal or emotional actions. Yet research participants were generally quick to point out that IPV was far more complex, even if some of their peers did not view IPV as such.

In the following exchange, after being asked when disagreements between intimate partners become of serious concern, two high school participants (one Indian and one Chinese) discuss the varied ways that violence can proceed in intimate relationships:

**Indian participant:** *When someone in the relationship first takes a fist, like you know ready to push that person or something. Say, maybe it’s a guy in the relationship and he pushes the girl, then you can understand that it is more than just a verbal fight that is happening.*

**Researcher:** *So it has to have some physical aspect to it?*

**Indian participant:** *Yeah, otherwise it is kind of hard to know.*

**Chinese participant:** *I think it is also when they start throwing insults at each other, because it is just to hurt the other person, not because they want to help them. It’s just they are feeling spiteful.*

A degree of ambiguity existed among participants when pinpointing at what point disagreements in intimate relationships become violent, with the Indian participant stating initially that violence is strictly physical, “otherwise it is kind of hard to know,” though the Chinese participants states that verbal insults can also be violent. After being asked further if different forms of controlling violence (e.g., a partner controls his/her partner’s attire, finances, friendship networks) occurred amongst their peers, this same pair of research participants made the following statements:

**Chinese participant:** *I knew someone who was dating this guy, and that guy wouldn’t let her see her other friends even when she was around other people…. He would get really angry if he did see her with them.*

**Indian participant:** *Oh yeah, and some guys don’t want their girlfriend…they don’t let them see their friends or be with them as much. They like to take them away from their friendship group, like you have to be with the guy all the time.*
Upon further reflection and discussion, high school participants consistently raised observations, which suggest controlling forms of IPV do occur within their peer groups that socially isolate adolescent girls. A Korean young adult participant made similar statements, suggesting that IPV also included, “…not letting the girlfriends go out to town or something with their friends and things like that, or even not letting them hang out with guy friends.” Participants were aware of how these controlling actions could harm girls in intimate relationships. Two high school interviewees, both of Chinese descent, stated that when boys take measures to isolate their partners, they do so:

**Chinese participant A:** ...to make him feel like he is everything to you, like you can’t survive without him.

**Chinese participant B:** I think it is so they can cut you off from your friends, so when you have a problem, he is the only person you can turn to and that just makes you more reliant on him.

Thus most participants did view manipulation to control an intimate partner as highly problematic and a form of IPV. However, as some participants suggested, young people in general may not see such actions as violence. The two young adult Fiji-Indian participants who were taking refuge in a Shakti safe house at the time of interview provided vivid insight into how different types of family violence (controlling, emotional, physical) operated simultaneously:

*We are both victims of violence. I haven’t been physically abused but I have been mentally tortured, and emotionally hurt for a long time... it was pretty hard for me because it was my step mum abusing me every time. She would never approach me, not give me food, make me starve at times. The biggest thing would be accusing me of sleeping with my own [step] father. That was really hurtful, cause that would make me get into depression.*

This participant described further how her in-laws dissuaded her from advancing her education, took what money she had and would not allow her to work – abuse that has been identified by women’s in-laws in prior research with South Asian communities (Raj et al., 2006). Notably, this participant’s husband did nothing to lessen these forms of family violence and actively perpetrated IPV against this participant himself. Eventually, these controlling, isolating dynamics influenced this participant to consider committing suicide prior to seeking help from Shakti. These qualitative research findings correlate with this study’s quantitative survey data, and despite occurring at varying levels of severity, suggest high levels of controlling victimisation among the study sample.
Participants also discussed how controlling forms of IPV have evolved with the advent of information technology. Social media and mobile phones were raised repeatedly by participants as mediums through which partners were now monitoring one another. An Indian high school participant stated, “I know one case where someone, this guy, he asked for his girlfriend’s password to monitor her [e-mail] messages, and going through her phone and stuff.” E-mail accounts, social media pages, and mobile phones were all said to be channels of partner surveillance. A Fiji-Indian young adult participant made the following comments, also speaking to the ways that mobile phones can be used to keep tabs on intimate partners under more extreme circumstances:

…I remember one of my friends back in high school, she was dating an older guy. And the guy at night used to make her call him and have the phone on till the morning just to see, to be sure that she wasn’t talking to another guy, the whole night.

These different forms of information technology were said by participants to intensify surveillance and increase the likelihood of conflicts amongst partners who try to keep track of one another’s electronic communications. An Iranian young adult participant also described a couple in her peer group in which the male individual would coerce his female partner to stay in the relationship by saying if she broke up with him, he would show digital pictures of the couple to her parents. These threats were effective explicitly because the young woman was hiding the relationship from her parents, who believed that any romantic interactions before marriage would shame the family (see section 5.2.4 on “Family Honour and Shame”). This same Iranian participant went on to summarize concerns around contemporary media, stating that this male individual, “Doesn’t let her talk to her friends, delete[s friends], blocks [friends], gets her Facebook password, gets her phone,” with other participants in the group adding, “That goes both ways though in that relationship,” and “Girls do that as well.”

These findings suggest that youth programmes must teach young people how they can go about understanding and identifying various form of IPV, including whether or not they feel intentionality plays a significant role in violent interactions. Programmes should also address how culture may impact dimensions of gendered entitlement that lead to violent interchanges, not only violent interchanges that are intentional, but also those that are enacted unintentionally but go unrecognized as violence because they are so deeply embedded in patriarchal cultural norms. Finally, it would benefit youth if they learned how to identify violence across an array of levels – physical, sexual, controlling, and verbal/ emotional – and subsequently how to safely cope with these different types of violence. Programmes should cover these topics from both prevention and intervention perspectives while accounting for
evolving forms of technology. This section of the report will now cover the methods by which youth learn violent attitudes and behaviours.

5.2.2 Learning Intimate Partner and Family Violence

...there is the entire established culture of you know, how your husband is God and all that. And this sort of already established culture of hierarchy within a family and it is generally always the guy who is in the top, which is changing now, which is a good thing, but it is still quite common. – Indian, high school participant

There is an expectation in the household that women do all the chores and stuff which is what I am battling with my dad at the moment. But I see that as an example of controlling behaviour that we all sort of accept, you know women do all the housework and men sit around being lazy. – Sri Lankan, young adult participant

Although research should not be used to perpetuate stereotypical, monolithic understandings of culture, it is important not to ignore concerns that hold cultural elements. In a number of cases, participants spoke of the ways that culture intertwined with patterns of IPV, as told by a young adult Fiji-Indian participant who was staying in a Shakti refuge:

If you interview a group of women who have come from other countries or migrated here, and you get them in a room and ask them, “Is your husband hitting you, is it a normal thing, is it acceptable?” A lot of women would say, “Yeah, this is just part of being married, suck it up. It is part of being a woman.” A lot of older women think that’s just what it is. It’s just in our culture.

High school students discussed similarly how cultural beliefs within some families extended patriarchal practices and prolonged violence between intimate partners, stating further that in some families, culture and women’s oppression merged as a seemingly inevitable combination. After being asked why female IPV victims sometimes return to abusive partners, four high school participants engaged in the following discussion:

Indian participant A: They just have to. It’s part of their culture probably. I don’t know how to say this, they are forced to go back. Parents say, “You are married to your husband, you are supposed to stay with them forever.” It’s basically that, so after you get married to a man, you are with him.

Indian participant B: Yeah my parents are like, “If you get married to a man, you have to listen to him. You can’t disagree with him.” It happens a lot in this time.
Indian participant A: But it has changed a lot from the olden days. A lot of women are standing up for themselves and saying, “Don’t do this to me.” Yeah I see that.

Indian participant C: Parents still force their daughters to listen to their husbands. It is changing a bit, a bit, but yeah, majority daughters are forced by their parents to listen to their husbands and stuff...

Indian participant D: We have been following rules for generations that our mum has always been listening to dad. So someone goes out there and breaks a rule, or saying something out loud like, “No violence is bad,” then it’s not good. Like women are forced not to go out there and actually say, “I am being hit by my husband.” You take that as a daily routine.

As a participant in the above discussion indicates, changes are happening. Women from migrant backgrounds are standing up for themselves. Furthermore, not all men from ethnic minority and migrant backgrounds follow cultural traditions grounded in a violent patriarchy; in fact, most probably do not. Still, as participants in this study verified, a significant number of men and boys do. Therefore, it is crucial to uncover how young people – both boys and girls – learn to accept gendered patterns of violence.

Learning intimate partner and family violence was said by participants to be a lifelong process that began in the family, extending to peer groups and media as youth aged. This process also involved learning how gender and age hierarchies within the culture shaped patriarchal power inequalities – a learning process that began with strict expectations around housework. Participants noted that while growing up, they observed how “girls are supposed to do the household chores, the guys are supposed to go out and work” (Indian young adult participant). By being assigned with expectations to cook, clean and engage in other household duties that supported men, women and girls were said to be designated secondary familial status. Participants made connections between women’s ascribed status as homemakers and potential victimisation. Labelled with this subordinate familial status, it became easier for male household members to enact violence upon women if they did not fulfill their assigned domestic obligations. One Indian high school participant said, “…women have to look after everything, so if they do something wrong, the husband just hits her… If she cooks the curry and it doesn’t taste right, that’s what happens. I have seen it.” Participants added that women’s assigned lower status was not limited to domestic responsibilities. Some men also considered wives as objects of possession, extending a male sense of entitlement to mistreat wives and keep others from intervening, as told by a Pakistani young adult participant:
...men just say, “She’s my wife, I do whatever I want with her. Why the hell are you butting in my business? Mind your own business.” And that is specifically Muslim guys, they say that, “Mind your own business.” They do whatever they want.

Witnessing intimate partner and family violence transpire in these manners was said to be the foundation upon which boys and girls learned to accept gender-based violence in general. In varying degrees, children would watch older family members argue; when verbal disagreements escalated into physical altercations or verbal clashes that were noticeably harmful, children learned to accept such interactions as normal, along with attendant gendered patterns. Two Pakistani young adult participants and a Fiji-Indian participant staying in a safe house, from three different group discussions commented on this issue, describing what they had noticed in their communities – how young people are taught that girls and young women should accept a subordinate status, and that men’s violence against women is a learned practice:

Pakistani participant A: I think it is generational as well. Men learn it from their fathers, that it is okay to do whatever they want. In our culture, a female has been taught her whole life that, “This is what you are supposed to do. You are supposed to grow up and get ready for marriage, and after that you are supposed to do everything to make your husband happy” ...men are never satisfied, especially in our culture, because they want more power, they want more control.

Pakistani participant B: I have seen young boys imitate the behaviours of other men in the family. A man verbally abuses, and he (the male child) is going to grow up and be like that. And then he takes it out on his sister as well.

Fiji-Indian participant: Like my brother and my father, my father used to abuse my mother from when we were quite young for a long time. Guys learn how to be violent, and girls learn to be like their mums.

In short, children learn from early ages to assign girls and women with secondary status tied to domesticity and subservience. Although these types of patriarchal beliefs exist in all cultures, they are often times stronger in migrant communities that are looking for ways to retain their culture of origin within a dominant culture that compels them to shed their traditional cultural values. Within this minority-majority context, women’s and girls’ oppression can become a marker of resistance to cultural assimilation (Akipinar, 2003), or put differently, upholding patriarchal behaviours becomes a method by which some migrant community members differentiate themselves from the mainstream host culture. As the above participants explain, when girls and young women do not fulfill gendered expectations within the culture, these socially defined transgressions come to justify verbal and/or physical repercussions, and the culture becomes tied that much more tightly to patriarchal tendencies. An Indian
high school participant expanded on the cyclical nature of IPV: “It has always been like that, even hundred[s of] years back, it has always been like that…. I guess they watch their fathers abusing their mother, like dominating their mother, and they just learn it that way. Yeah.”

Though family was a starting point where young people learned to accept and justify IPV, such values were also said to be absorbed through peers. An Iranian young adult participant said, “...based on my friends’ relationships, I can pick out, I start learning what’s right, what’s acceptable and what’s not.” However, media was said to be a far more powerful force in teaching young people appropriate and inappropriate practices around intimate relationships. Participants from multiple group discussions expressed great dissatisfaction with women’s objectification in music, music videos, advertising, television and film, which taught males to value women and girls primarily through unrealistic and derogatory sexualised standards, and compelled girls to conform to such standards. An Indian young adult participant said, “...with the youth, there’s video clips that are really popular like songs that say ho’s and bitches, and the way they treat women...can be an influence on younger people.” Women’s sexualisation and objectification in the media was said to be a more obvious concern, but participants went on to state that media also swayed youth to equate some forms of violence in intimate relationships with love.

After an Indian high school participant explained how girls get “blinded” by mainstream romantic movies that glorify unrealistic “fairy tale ending[s],” a Chinese high school participant added that in contemporary ethnic media, deceptive narratives exist which persuade girls to view abusive interactions between romantic partners as signs of caring and love:

_I know that in lots of Korean dramas, it’s always like the girl, and this really rebellious guy, and she always makes him better, and they have this happy ending. But it is so prominent in almost every Korean drama that I think girls are deceived into thinking that it is true when it is actually just abuse._

In a different discussion, a Korean young adult participant offered a similar critique on media tendencies, asserting that in music videos, IPV becomes associated with romance: “…guys being abusive or something, like being abusive against their women, it’s kind of portrayed as romantic, or just being protective... like violence between two people is a romantic expression to each other.” Returning to the topic of ethnic media, participants also asserted that popular Bollywood films reaffirm cultural no-
tions that normalize women’s abuse, including sexual violence, as told by a Pakistani young adult participant:

Even our own Bollywood movies, there [are] a lot of scenes where rape is okay, and that’s why in Pakistan and India rape is quite high. I think one of the main things about the sexual violence is that, it’s not considered [violence]. People don’t, the women [themselves] don’t see it as rape... They just see it as, “When we’re married, we said yes, and we said yes to everything. Whether it’s good or bad, we have to do it.”

As discussed in the previous section, it is frequently difficult for individuals to understand what actions constitute IPV and subsequently to identify IPV in different social contexts. This report section sheds further light as to why identifying IPV is so difficult for youth. To begin with, women’s and girls’ subordination becomes so common and legitimized in some families that youth learn to accept men’s violence against women as an ordinary practice of everyday life. Added to this, in some cases youth learn to view women’s inferior status and their attendant victimisation as part of their culture, when in fact, culture should never be used as an excuse or justification for violence. Finally, mainstream media encourages youth to view women in at least two destructive ways. First, women are presented as sexualized objects across an array of media outlets, making it easier for males to treat women and girls in demeaning ways. Secondly, romantic narratives frequently present IPV as a passionate form of romantic love.

Given how the large structural forces of family, culture and media shape youth’s lives, it would benefit programmes to teach youth alternative perspectives around the ways their respective cultures operate. A Pakistani young adult participant suggested youth be made aware to the negative consequences of gender-based violence since too many youth – males in particular – only see self-interested positive ramifications:

...if you see a father hitting your mum, you see the consequences. Kids learn what consequences there are. If they find that the consequences are positive – “So my dad gets whatever he wanted in the first place because my mum was crying” – then he thinks, “Okay maybe I can do that and get away with it.” So he tries it the first time, and he sees that he is actually getting reinforcement for it. He will repeat the behaviour again and again. So I think it all comes down to what are the consequences that are there in our society for males hitting...the females? What are the consequences? I don’t think our society has anything... And that’s how males keep abusing. That’s how gender violence keeps on happening.
Youth must be made aware of the negative ramifications of patriarchal violence that impact individuals across all genders. Youth must also be illuminated how intimate partner and family violence negatively impacts their broader ethnic communities. The above quote clearly illustrates how learned violence passes from one generation to the next because males in power define violence solely through a male-centered instrumental lens. Men’s violence against women must be presented to youth in ways that show its detriments to girls, women, boys, men and the broader culture. Furthermore, youth would benefit from programmes that emphasize gender equity and teach participants to value women and girls as equal community and societal members. Lastly, youth programmes should incorporate media literacy interventions that assist youth to consume media products with a stringent critical eye. Just as culture should never be used as a justification for violence, likewise violence should never be presented or understood as a measure of romantic love.

### 5.2.3 Gendered Identities – Female Self-Sacrifice and Isolation

In my culture women are raised thinking that their brothers, their husbands, their dads are the world, and if anything happens to them, you are stuffed. And anything that they say goes. They can do whatever they want. – Afghani, young adult participant

It’s really hard for a woman to step up I guess. According to me, every Indian woman will always think of other people instead of themselves. – Fiji-Indian, young adult participant

As the above quotes and previous sections elucidate, too many youth from migrant communities grow up learning to accept female inferiority, and on the opposite end of the spectrum, that masculinity is associated with privilege. Children learn that men are expected to control women, that women should defer to masculine authority, and that women will adopt a life-long sacrificial identity grounded in pleasing the family’s male members. For many women from migrant communities of colour, a sacrificial and selfless identity also leads to significant periods of isolation that in many cases perpetuates their victimisation. This section of the report will delve deeper into the ways girls and women are urged to establish this selfless identity in a society where gender inequality pervades.

Across this study’s group discussions, participants belaboured the extent to which they were pressured to get married across three levels: first, to develop themselves as suitable marriage partners, second to get married, and third, to please their future husbands and husbands’ families after getting married. In essence, participants were highly tuned in with the ways that family members and their
broader ethnic communities pressured them to develop personal identities that existed predominantly in relation to men, but rarely focused on themselves.

Even in cases where young women were encouraged to advance their personal achievements, marriage still stood as the ultimate motivation. An Iranian young adult participant made an interesting contribution to a group discussion by saying that her mother wanted to her attain her university degree, because without one, it would be more difficult for her to find a suitable husband, and therefore, “now it’s (marriage) becoming more about what everyone studies.” Thus, higher education is not valued for what it brings to this young woman’s individual life. Instead, a university qualification adds capital to this participant’s life predominantly with respect to improving her marriage prospects. Upon hearing this, the research team asked other participants if they had heard of or experienced similar things from their families. A young adult Chinese/Indian participant from a different group discussion responded with the following comments:

*It (higher education) does add bragging rights. If your female child is educated, like, “I sent my kids to university and she is well educated and has so much earning potential; she would be such a sought after bride.” It adds value... “Not only can she cook and clean. She is educated, she can earn. It’s a perfect compliment to my child who I have raised to be the most suitable bride.”*

In short, the drive behind women’s educational and occupational advancement is increasingly guided by marriage probability, rather than women’s personal fulfillment. However, this same participant made sure to add that if women did not secure an advanced university degree, it was not a great familial concern: “But if they don’t get educated, it’s not, ‘Oh my goodness! Why did she not go to university?’” As long as women secured marital status, their familial obligations appeared to be completed. Participants of South Asian (Fiji-Indian, Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan) and Middle Eastern (Afghani, Iranian) ethnic backgrounds expressed these sentiments concerning pressure to marry most strongly.

Most participants stated that arranged marriages were still fairly prevalent in their ethnic communities, where parents would suggest a potential male marriage partner for their daughter (or son), hoping the possible couple would “test the waters” and potentially move into marriage. Participants also said love marriages were becoming more common, with only a few participants saying forced arranged marriages existed to a significant degree within their ethnic communities. Still, participants

| 4. | Forced arranged marriages occur when families force two individuals to marry one another without the individuals’ consent. |
of South Asian and Middle Eastern ethnicities were quite uniform in stating that they felt pressured to get married and uphold family expectations, or if they were already married, that family pressure had played a major role in accelerating their marriage.

To this end, participants’ identities as women were molded by select family members (or were attempted to be molded) in ways that dissuaded them from putting their own interests before male interests. Shiu-Thornton, Senturia, & Sullivan (2005) refer to this cultural expectation as a “silent endurance” where women must tolerate engaging in an ongoing deference to male authority. A Pakistani young adult participant contended that it was difficult for some girls and young women to resist patriarchal practices (including forced arranged marriages) “because their whole life, all they have been taught to do is make sure you are getting ready to get married and have kids. You have no life. Your life is with your husband.”

A number of additional cultural beliefs were said to complicate things further for women who entered abusive marriages. In some cases, marriage itself was used as justification for abuse. Although she did not agree with the following statement, an Indian high school participant lamented that a significant portion of her community feels, “Once you are married, a man can do anything with his wife and no one has the right to question it.” Furthermore, strong community pressure to stay married still exists, irrespective of women’s maltreatment, as told by a young adult Sri Lankan participant: “…the stigma against divorce is still there. If you get divorced, it’s a huge deal and the world is going to crash down… It’s just that stigma against a divorced woman still plays.” No matter how difficult a marriage is, even if it involves abuse, women are still expected to put aside their mistreatment and bear through the suffering. In fact, participants stated further that when women in their communities challenged their abuse, they often times found themselves in more precarious positions, especially if they were recent migrants to New Zealand.

Recent immigrants who moved to New Zealand through martial processes were at highest risk of being trapped in an abusive partnership. Not only might their families expect them to serve their new husbands and in-laws without question, but they were also less likely to have the social connections that would otherwise help them exit an abusive relationship. Women who have migrated to New Zealand through marriage arrangements have left their social networks (e.g., friends, family, co-workers) to enter a new life in a foreign country where they are not attuned to laws and services that could otherwise
assist them. A young adult Fiji-Indian participant with experience in the domestic violence intervention field explained:

If for example someone from Fiji, if they were in a relationship and they wanted to get out of it... there aren’t that many organisations to help us out so people would turn to family and friends. If you have migrated [from] overseas, you are in a much smaller community, and you don’t have as many family and friends around. And the ones that you do have around, say if your husband is from here and you’re from Fiji, it’s your husband’s family, so you can’t exactly tell them, “I’m in a bit of a problem and I need help.” You are meant to say, “I am happy and everything is good.” You don’t really have people to turn to.

The first half of this participant’s statement is telling in that it illustrates how migrant women in abusive partnerships are isolated by way of losing past connections. Their new connections in the host country are limited to those of their husbands. Furthermore, they are living in a Eurocentric environment that lacks ethnic-specific services. Compounding this concern, a husband’s family members may not be sympathetic to the woman’s plight and could even dismiss her concerns because she has entered the family through marriage; she is not blood related. In the second half of this participant’s statement, one more anxiety is stressed – that women are expected to present themselves as content even if they are enduring abuse. Collectively, these conditions make life extremely isolating and dangerous for migrant women.

The two Fiji-Indian young adult interviewees taking refuge in a Shakti safe house truly exemplified these circumstances. One participant in her early 20s stated, “It is also common in Fiji where the husband would not like the wife communicating with her parents, her family or friends,” later adding that, “my husband (in New Zealand) was beating me five or six days a week and they didn’t want me to contact my parents or anything.” To make matters worse, this participant’s in-laws perpetuated her abuse by disregarding their son’s violent behaviour:

…every time I was beaten, I used to show my father-in-law and mother-in-law. My mouth used to bleed. They used to see it and just say, “Wash with cold water and go to bed”... my husband was one hundred percent supported by his parents even though he used to assault me physically, verbally... They were there to back him up every time.

Within her new familial context, this participant received no assistance from her husband’s family and was completely detached from any past connections in Fiji. In fact, later during the discussion, this same participant explained that her parents in Fiji also refused to help her, stating, “my dad doesn’t
want me back,” because if she left her husband and returned home, it would reflect poorly on her family of origin. Her parents would be shamed by the community for not raising their daughter properly. Thus, this individual was isolated on both ends, unsupported from her new family in New Zealand, as well as by her biological family in Fiji.

This isolating dynamic in which the abused woman’s family of origin abandons her during a time of need was not said to be a unique experience. The other young adult Fiji-Indian woman in this discussion (also taking refuge in a safe house) told the story of a friend in Fiji who was being abused by her father-in-law. Upon informing her parents of her abuse, her parents told her, “We don’t want you back. You have to suffer. We’ve made you married. We spent so much money on you.” This participant, who was in her late teens, also noted that much of the broader community would be unsympathetic to women’s victimisation and expect abused women to put aside their hardships:

*If people knew you were going through violence, they would just ignore it. They will not take it seriously. They will say that, “She can get over it. She is a grown up girl”... Normally they will just tell the girl to suffer.*

The testimonials presented above offer vivid and perhaps more extreme cases, especially considering that the two participants were seeking formal protection from their partners at the time of interview. Still, other participants in the study corroborated these participants’ contributions, stating that when migrant women are isolated, some “husbands make sure that is how it is supposed to be” (Pakistani young adult participant).

This section of the report has attempted to show how women from migrant communities of colour struggle to establish personal interests within cultural settings that emphasize self-sacrifice. Because all of the ethnic groups represented in this study adhere to collectivist cultural traditions, it is not surprising that decreases in individuality and independence are present within the communities’ respective norms. Cultures within the Asian, Middle Eastern and African umbrella groups typically discourage group members from standing out as individuals and pursuing goals disconnected from the family and community. However, according to the interviewees in this study, the degree to which women and girls are expected to relinquish their personal well-being for the sake of male privilege appears to go well beyond acceptable levels of interdependence in any cultural setting. As the participants in this study affirmed, girls and young women are taught to suffer physically and emotionally over their life course, to accept this as their fate for the sake of the family and ultimately to support males.
From a programmatic standpoint, prevention and intervention measures must work with girls and young women to foster identities that balance positive connections to their cultures and families with personal goals that allow for individual creativity and growth. Girls and young women must be inspired by persons of authority within and outside their community to pursue individual ambitions, whether they adhere to traditional notions of culture or not, and subsequently to figure out innovative ways of linking personal pursuits to their culture in healthy ways. Although the burden should never fall solely on girls and women, it would be beneficial for girls to learn how to fully value themselves independent of an intimate relationship and safely assert their rights when necessary. Unfortunately, it will be difficult for such prevention and intervention measures to be safely implemented and effective if there is not support from families, broader ethnic communities, and the wider New Zealand community. Thus, the more ambitious and difficult objective for youth programmers is to execute such programmes within mainstream institutions (e.g., schools) with support from institutional leadership, while also securing support from ethnic community leaders and girls’ families.

This report’s Results section will now close with a final piece on familial honour and shame – cultural factors said to play a role for participants from all ethnic groups covered in this study. Moreover, honour and shame were reported as highly significant contributors to girls’ and women’s feelings of isolation, especially once ensnared in a violent intimate relationship.

**5.2.4 Family Honour and Shame**

*In my culture, people don’t actually talk about it (IPV), but it’s actually happening. So it is like a public secret, not like in every family, but it does happen. Even if people know, they just don’t talk about it.* – Chinese, young adult participant

*I am talking about young Muslim people that go out behind their parents’ back. So if there is violence, there is a chance that it won’t come out. If it does come out, the parents will know, and it’s even more trouble for young people.* – Pakistani, young adult participant

Honour and shame are concepts describing some of the cultural undercurrents that are relevant when examining intimate partner and family violence and social understandings of gender in many Asian, Middle Eastern and African cultures. This report also uses the term honour based violence (HBV) when discussing the ways that honour and shame impact young people in these ethnic and migrant communities where age and gender hierarchies permeate virtually every aspect of social life. However, as mentioned earlier in this report’s literature review, there is absolutely no honour in any form of violence (Meeto & Mirza, 2007; Hague, Gill, & Begikhani, 2012).
Though not a topic initially designated of high significance in group discussions, study participants quickly raised the issue of HBV independently, making two key points. First, participants stated that for many families in their respective cultures, any topics related to sexuality (including dating) were off limits to discussion. In most cases, neither parents nor other older family members spoke with children about romance or sex, aside from saying such behaviours were unacceptable for girls and women prior to marriage. Boys were not said to receive much guidance around these issues either, but girls were under much stricter regulations and surveillance, especially with respect to sex. Boys, on the other hand, were said to have far more sexual and dating freedom. The second topic participants raised was that if girls or young women did engage in a romantic liaison(s), or were suspected of doing so, they would be shaming the family. For some cultural groups, shaming the family was associated more specifically with harming the father’s reputation and could result in severe consequences. Ultimately then, participants said it was easiest not to date at all, or if one wanted to explore a romantic relationship, to do so secretly.

Fears that parents might discover their daughter had entered a dating partnership could lead to a range problems, if for instance, the daughter was being victimised by a romantic partner. Upon being asked if girls in a harmful relationship would be apprehensive about getting support, two high school students made the following comments:

**Chinese participant:** Yeah I guess it’s hard to get support from your parents. If they don’t let you, I guess they will feel like it is kind of your fault, like, “I told you not to date any more.”

**Indian participant:** Yeah I know someone who did that, and went behind their parents’ back and it led to a lot of serious problems at home. It actually went quite serious as to the fact that she was scared to even talk to her parents about it.

However, it was not only with parents where communication about sex, dating and dating violence broke down. Participants feared that if they took more formal approaches to discuss dating concerns (e.g., through school or community-based organisations), private information would still be passed on to parents: “I think people are embarrassed to go to such organizations... I think they are scared that people may find out about it” (Indian young adult participant). In light of these constraints, participants said that migrant youth of colour frequently found themselves confused about these issues because so few organisations were available to guide them effectively. Both high school and young adult participants said repeatedly that youth did not learn about intimate partner and family violence in
health courses, let alone how to cope with these types of violence. And participants were well aware that among the few school or community services available that dealt with intimate partner and family violence, virtually none catered to members from their cultural backgrounds. One young adult participant of Chinese and Indian ethnicity summed up these concerns in an attempt to explain why so few migrant teens of colour seek help even if they are being mistreated by an intimate partner:

...there’s a lot more confusion when you’ve got community and cultural ideas of what a relationship should be like, alongside sex ed which is [unhelpful], or just societal expectations outside your culture, from movies and whatever. You’ve got this kind of confusing idea in the end, especially because a lot of migrant youth end up in mixed race relationships, because they’re trying to assimilate, so you’ve got this real lack of communication... You can’t talk to your parents... you can’t tell anybody, and you can’t go to family planning because in migrant communities, they don’t talk about it. There’s a lack of communication and a lack of awareness that things exist.

Dating, sexual intimacy and sexual violence are confusing topics for youth, and even adults, from all ethnic groups. But as the above participants states, these topics are much more complex for ethnic minority youth living in migrant communities.

Migrant youth are stuck between their parents’ culture of origin, where the topics of dating and sexuality are typically more taboo, and a mainstream western culture where these issues are discussed more openly. Furthermore, as discussed in the section on Learning Intimate Partner and Family Violence, hyper-sexuality and sexual violence are often glorified in mainstream media outlets. But it is rare that youth from these ethnic backgrounds receive constructive education on dating and sexuality in general, let alone as applied to their cultural upbringings.

Part of these youths’ upbringings also included cultural messages on familial honour and shame – concepts more applicable to South Asian and Middle Eastern youth in this study, though general shame around sex was pertinent to youth from East Asian (Chinese, Korean) ethnicities as well. In other words, youth from all ethnic backgrounds in this study found it especially difficult, or shameful, to discuss dating and sex with adults due to cultural traditions. For youth from Middle Eastern and South Asian backgrounds, girls and women were subjected with a strong obligation to maintain family honour, or put differently, not to bring shame to the family by engaging in inappropriate sexual liaisons. If a girl or woman was unmarried, any hints of sexual impropriety (e.g., socialising with an unknown
male, dating a male without family permission, have sexual intercourse) could lead to severe consequences because such actions were said to shame familial reputation. An Afghani young adult participant in her early 20s stated that she chose not to date at all because doing so would cause too many problems in her life and went on to say:

Shame and dishonour to family is the biggest thing in my culture, which is why unmarried girls have to be so careful. And married women have to be so careful too, not only for the husband’s name, but the husband’s family.

It is crucial to highlight that the young woman’s statement, above, associates honour with masculinity and shame with female impropriety. To begin with, one can see patriarchal tendencies in that the husband owns the family name and family itself (“...not only for the husband’s name, but the husband’s family”). Additionally the “husband’s name” and “husband’s family” start out associated with honour, but are deemed shameful only after a daughter (or wife) engages in a sexual taboo, thereby associating femininity with potential family shame.

Again, the behaviours girls or young women could partake in that shamed the family were quite broad, and participants were very mindful of how cautious they must be when socialising with males. Two young adult participants of Iranian and Indian heritage in their late teens made the following statements in a discussion group:

Iranian participant: If I want to go to town or something with my friends, my mum is like, “Please don’t do anything that will ruin your dad’s name” or something... But I think the biggest thing is if you get pregnant, or if anyone finds out that you are having sex before marriage. That is like the absolute disgrace to your family. It’s real sad, they would much rather have a son...that was going through drug issues than to know that the [daughter] is having sex before marriage.

Indian participant: That’s the same as our culture as well... I mean if you are walking around with a boy, your parents are just like, “You can’t be seen with a boy. Indian aunties will go tell everyone,” you know.

Iranian participant: And then it will ruin your chance of marriage.

Here, the Iranian participant demonstrates how honour is associated with the family patriarch by noting her mother’s concern about the participant ruining the father’s name. Furthermore, it is girls’ and young women’s alleged improper behaviours – having premarital sex or becoming pregnant – that
are said to bring shame to the family, actions considered even more shameful than a male’s drug problems. Participants still in high school and from the young adult pool said with strong consistency, however, that a double standard existed where young males did not have to cope with the same regulations or surveillance.

As communicated by the Indian participant, above, surveillance is established through family and community gossip. If a girl or young woman breaks social taboos, family members often spread this information, thereby stigmatising the individual girl or woman and by extension, her father’s familial honour. Notably, female family members (e.g., “aunties”) were said to be agents of gossip as much as, and often times more so than male family members. Thus gossip operates as form of patriarchal social control within this context, frequently internalized and exercised by women and girls. Two young adults of Chinese/Indian and Pakistani backgrounds provided the following exchange, which exemplifies how young women come to assume shameful identities, sometimes simply changing the terminology. The Chinese/Indian participant began the conversation, stating that a woman may use shame as a barometer for her own behaviour, selflessly conscious of how her actions affect others’ reputations, namely her family’s reputation. In a seemingly subtle fashion, a woman over time is socialised to use shame:

**Chinese/Indian participant**: ...on herself as a check and balance of her behaviour. It’s not pushed on her, explicitly. She kind of takes it on herself. You know, “If I do this, it will harm this person. It will bring shame on them. It will look bad on my family. It will look bad on somebody else’s family.” Word will get around; people will say things... So it’s sometimes direct, sometimes indirect.

**Pakistani participant**: ...dignity is a huge part as well. As we grew up, shame was never brought up as a thing in our household. Shame wasn’t the thing. It was dignity... it is embedded in you since you were a child and it becomes an important part of life, like breathing. That’s what dignity is to us as children, especially as females back in our household.

Although males justify shame’s implementation as a means of protecting women from transgressing into dangerous sexual territory, shame does not function in any way to benefit women or girls. Instead feelings of shame and guilt are thrust upon women and girls, keeping them under male control and confined to domestic spaces. In actuality, shame functions in a way to assuage men’s pride and maintain masculine privilege, with men ultimately concerned of women’s and girls’ infidelity and promiscuity. Furthermore, it is easier for men to control women and girls when women and girls believe in and enforce this patriarchal system. Thus, as the Pakistani participant explains, above, girls are raised from
early on to view their family as dignified (or honoured), and to view themselves as potential hazards to the family’s positive standing. With the socialisation process beginning so early, conformed beliefs around honour, shame, sexual modesty and male privilege become ubiquitous, “like breathing,” and are more easily accepted by women and girls from these ethnic groups.

Participants in this study went on to say the possibility of shaming the family was an added threat that prevented girls and young women from discussing IPV. After being asked why some women who are in abusive relationships do not report their abuse to friends, other family members or the authorities, one of the Fiji-Indian young adult participants staying in a Shakti refuge responded:

*I think one of the reasons they don’t do it is because they feel like they might bring shame to the family or they might not keep the family honour. It’s always the women will be blamed if they lose respect or honour. It’s all about respect when it comes to Indian cultures.*

Respect, however, is limited in this context to family reputation. More specifically, respect and honour are limited to male reputation, which is restored to shamed men when they enact violence against women who have shamed the family. At a broader level, the more an unmarried girl or young woman deviates from expected sexual modesty, the more likely she is to be disgraced by her family; the more a married woman deviates from her married status, the more likely she is to feel shamed by her community, regardless of whether or not she is being victimized:

*I think it’s just in our culture. Reputation and how your family is perceived and how you are perceived and how daughters and women are seen in our culture is a big thing so that’s why everything is hush hush. So in that case, the parents won’t even go get outside help, get any sort of help, they would just tell the daughter “Oh that’s totally normal, just sort it out and it will just go away”. Just so that the marriage is still there, so the marriage doesn’t break up or anything. And they don’t get a bad reputation because if they do get outside help or something, families talk and people are just afraid of that. (Fiji-Indian young adult participant).*

These social norms come to justify HBV and women’s/girls’ confinement. In reality then, respect is not applied at all to girls and women within the honour/shame framework, and even less so when HBV is performed.
This section of the report has demonstrated how honour and shame operate for some families from Asian and Middle Eastern communities living in New Zealand. Certainly, not all Asian and Middle Eastern families adhere to this honour/shame framework to the same degree. Moreover, not all Asian and Middle Eastern families define family honour uniformly. However, as the participants in this study declared, patriarchal notions of honour and shame still impact a significant number of girls and young women from Asian, Middle Eastern, and likely African ethnic backgrounds. HBV does exist in these migrant communities of colour and must be addressed by local ethnic communities with support from mainstream state agencies.

A starting point may be for ethnic communities to re-define what family and community honour means in their respective ethnic groups so that there is not an unintended push for various ethnic groups to shed their cultural traditions. Discussing possibilities for future movement, a young adult Fiji-Indian participant first asked, “...how do we keep the family honour?”, and then went on to say:

...talking about family honour, meaning the positive things. But these harmful things where people are hurting each other, that doesn’t belong in family honour. And if that is happening, let’s really define what family means to us and definitely these abusive things don’t fit in [with] what family means to us. Family is something pretty precious and amazing for us. We are not individualistic. Maybe just together defining what family means to us and taking all that negative abusive out of our definition as well.

It is with these thoughts that this report moves into its “Discussion and Recommendations” section.
VI. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the range of concerns that study participants expressed, this section of the report is divided into two sub-sections, the first of which covers systemic suggestions for youth programmers and schools. Secondly, this section will offer recommendations on curricula content that should be integrated into programmes aiming to address intimate partner and family violence with migrant youth of colour.

6.1 Systemic Interventions

With respect to organisational changes, schools were said by participants to be the best site for interventions for a number of reasons. To begin with, participants felt it would be too difficult to change older family members’ attitudes and behaviours towards dating, sexuality, and related forms of violence, not only because older community members would more often be accustomed to established norms. Additionally, participants believed conventional age and gender hierarchies would impede too many older family members from accepting significant changes in their traditional values. Participants did not feel it would be a complete waste of time or resources to present older family members with alternative viewpoints on intimate partner and family violence. However, they felt resources would be allocated more effectively if they were directed towards youth, in hopes that education on intimate partner and family violence within migrant cultural contexts could provoke change for future generations. After being asked about where programming should be focused, two Indian high school participants stated:

Participant A: Teaching children would probably have a greater effect than actually informing parents... Because I don’t think parents would listen. They will probably disagree.

Participant B: Yeah, cause you can’t really change the parents’ minds. That’s what I think. In Indian communities, like you keep on telling them one thing, they won’t agree, but if you teach the next generation, they will understand better than what our parents would.

In general, young adult participants expressed similar sentiments around resource allocation, as mentioned by the following two participants of Chinese and Pakistani backgrounds, respectively, in separate group discussions:
I think for the older generation it is really hard to change because they have been that way their whole lives.

...obviously it (solutions) would start with the young generation and empowering both the males and the females in terms of knowledge. I don’t think anything could be done with the older generation. I really don’t think there is anything that you would be able to do that would change their mind[s] in terms of either arranged marriages, forced marriages, violence toward gender.

With regard to where services could be offered most effectively, participants across all age groups agreed that it was extremely rare for health and health-related courses in high school to cover intimate partner and family violence. On occasion, participants recalled that their respective high schools held intermittent workshops on various social issues, but for the most part, “There were only those contraception lessons” (Chinese high school participant), which were provided in sexual health classes. Intimate partner and family violence was typically not a topic integrated into high school or intermediate school curricula, and certainly not over an extensive period that aimed to reach large segments of student bodies. Participants felt education on intimate partner and family violence would be most effective if offered in schools since schools would be able to reach the largest number of youth, a perspective that aligns with prior research (Mulford & Blachman-Demner, 2013; Avery-Leaf et al., 1997). Participants also felt that these topics should be covered in the early stages of high school since this is when most youth begin thinking about dating and sexuality more seriously. A number of dating violence prevention programmes have shown positive results with ethnic minority youth. Jaycox et al.’s (2006) review of a programme in Southern California (USA) found that post programme implementation, Latina/o youth “showed improved knowledge about legal rights in regard to intimate partner violence, less acceptance of female-against-male violence, greater perception that others would help them, and higher likelihood that they would seek help” (p. 703). Alexander and colleagues’ (2014) study with Caribbean middle school students in St. Lucia found attitudinal improvements among participants with respect to control, conflict management and physical affection in relationships, although improved attitudes were notably stronger in schools located in wealthier districts. As participants suggest, schools in New Zealand can successfully employ intimate partner and family violence interventions with ethnically diverse students.

An area where participants showed inconsistency in opinion was whether or not lessons on intimate partner and family violence should be offered in co-educational settings, or segregated by sex. A high school participant of Korean ethnicity stated that lessons should involve males and females separately.
because, “I think it is a lot more comfortable if you just talk to girls about it rather than together.” In a different group, an Indian high school student stated, “There is less comfort to open up. Woman-woman can open up to each other, but women and guys, there isn’t that much in the comfort zone.” Numerous participants from other discussions agreed that girls in particular would feel anxious if they had to discuss gender-based violence alongside male peers, and that a male presence may silence girls (and visa versa). However, this perspective was not expressed uniformly across the study, as indicated by a different Indian high school participant:

I think it should be together cause then you can discuss and you can talk about what is good and what’s not good for each individual person, cause I found out that if you find out about it separately, you don’t understand the other person well enough.

A fair number of high school and young adult participants from the study agreed with this outlook, contending that females and males must learn about these issues collectively and hear one another’s perspectives if they will truly come to empathize with each other. In a few cases, participants suggested that programming be offered both separately and together: “First separately. It’ll just be uncomfortable... Girls will get really uncomfortable and guys will too. Guys will get really defensive” (Afghani young adult participant). In this case, it was suggested, after youth have gone through enough lessons segregated by sex and reached a level of mature familiarity with the topics, they can be brought together in a phase that allows more interchange between boys and girls. Very little scholarship has been conducted on this matter. However, in one of the few studies examining whether or not gender composition impacts youth dating violence prevention programmes, Black, Weisz and Jayasundara’s (2012) evaluation of a programme with African American middle-school students found that girls learned more effectively in settings with boys present, though boys tended to learn more when only with other boys.

Social definitions of sex, gender and sexuality however, are highly complex. One participant pointed out that, “Queer people exist...trans[gender] people exist. You cannot do any sort of gender division scenario, especially in schools, without being extremely, extremely transphobic.” This perspective draws attention to the fact that LGBTI students are present in schools, and that these students frequently face unusually high levels of discrimination (Clark et al., 2014; Poteat & Rivers, 2010; Pascoe, 2007). Systemic interventions not recognizing LGBTI students perpetuate structural discrimination by continuing to render these students invisible. At the same time, interventions that acknowledge LGBTI students and the unique issues they face, must be offered with great sensitivity, connecting discrimi-
nation that LGBTI students face with other forms of social oppression (Marchman, 2002). Although this topic goes beyond this study’s scope, creating and implementing curricula on intimate partner and family violence applicable to LGBTI youth from Asian, Middle Eastern and African backgrounds adds even greater complexity to the issue at hand.

Still, given that LGBTI students will hold a presence, this study suggests programming be offered that does not segregate curricula by way of sex, gender or sexuality, but stresses to students the need for tolerance, inclusion, respect and maintaining an open mind, as should be communicated to all students collectively when presenting and explaining information. As the curricula moves forward, portions of daily lesson plans can be implemented that allow students with commonalities by way of sex, gender, sexuality and ethnicity to bond with and support one another in group work, sharing experiences that enable them to relate to each other. Furthermore, students should be allowed to complete small group projects over time, which offer them the option to break off self-selectively by way of sex, gender, sexuality and/or ethnicity, giving students added opportunities to reflect on curricula with peers of similar backgrounds in an environment that may be more comfortable. Individual projects can be allowed for students who are apprehensive to work with students from different backgrounds, though an atmosphere of inclusion should constantly be stressed.

Participants mentioned repeatedly that it would be beneficial if programmes brought in guest speakers who could discuss aspects of gender-based violence. For example, an Afghani young adult participant stated it would be helpful to “have speakers that come to your (school) assembly for like one hour. Why can’t there be things about gender equality or how women are important?” Other participants emphasized that it would be crucial for speakers to represent their minority backgrounds. An Indian high school student said, “...if someone shared their experience with a group of students, that would be much better... I would prefer if they were Indians cause I guess it would be easier to relate our problems to them.” And in a young adult group, two participants of Indian and Iranian backgrounds made similar comments, with the Iranian participant saying how effective it was when Māori and Pacific speakers came to her high school for students from those ethnic groups to discuss the dangers of substance use:

**Indian participant:** *I think they could have different ethnicities, people from different ethnicities can relate, rather than just having Pākehā.*
Iranian participant: ...maybe getting different kinds of people to speak. The two that I said, one was Māori, one was Islander, so maybe getting other people to share their stories.

Researcher: Would it specifically help if the speaker was Iranian?

Iranian participant: Yeah definitely because I can relate to them. I can see that someone else stood up for themselves while being from the same country as me. Then maybe I could do it too kind of thing. Because going back to the whole shame thing, I think it would be very motivating to see that someone has still, despite knowing of the whole shame thing, they have done it.

Participants also said it would be advantageous if more employed school counselors came from ethnic backgrounds reflecting schools’ increasingly diverse student bodies.

Finally, turning to the topic of male responsibility, a number of participants underscored the need for programming to address male attitudes and behaviours. After being asked how girls might best be taught healthy and unhealthy dating practices, a Chinese high school participant responded:

I’m not even sure, why does it have to be the women who learn this stuff? Shouldn’t the guys learn that they shouldn’t be doing this stuff? You have to target the issue at the root, and it’s not the woman’s job to always get out of a relationship.

In a different high school discussion, an Indian student discussed parenting practices, also advocating the need to nurture sons with values that reflect gender equity: “Parents should tell [sons] not to be dominant over girls around their teenage years, and parents themselves should stop abusing each other. But mainly, parents should tell their sons to behave themselves.” Whether or not programming branches out to include parents and older community members, it is clear that programming designed for migrant youth must address heterosexual males since they hold privileged status within their ethnic communities, relative to girls, women, and gender non-conforming youth. In fact, programmes demonstrating moderate success (Katz, Heisterkamp, & Fleming, 2011) have been offered for high school boys and girls in the mid-western region of the United States that address misogyny, bullying, other forms of violence and bystander intervention.
6.2 Content for Youth Programming

It is clear from this study’s group discussions, as well as the quantitative survey results, that curricula for ethnic minority migrant youth must address a number of key themes. Youth from the ethnic backgrounds represented in this study who do engage in intimate partnerships clearly experience IPV. As this study’s survey results verify, significant proportions of youth with dating experience underwent different forms of controlling victimisation at the hands of an intimate partner. And although the study’s sample size is small, participants reported victimisation rates of physical and sexual violence that cannot be dismissed. Given these quantitative findings and youths’ qualitative input regarding how difficult it is to discuss sexual health in their cultures, it is imperative that migrant youth of colour are taught healthy and unhealthy dating practices. A first step then, could include designing exercises that teach youth to define and identify IPV. As covered in the “Results” section, youth more clearly identify physical violence as something that characterizes IPV. However, youth are less inclined to view verbal and emotional trauma, controlling behaviours, and in some cases, even sexual assault as forms of IPV.

With regard to verbal and emotional abuse, which often overlaps with controlling violence, youth should be guided to learn and define for themselves what types of actions would be acceptable and unacceptable within a dating relationship, and provide explanations outlining why insults or controlling actions may be particularly unacceptable in certain contexts. For instance from a cultural standpoint, a female individual might be especially bothered by a male partner who uses his sexual freedom to flirt with other girls in order to make his partner jealous. In this case, the female partner could be highly constrained by cultural standards restricting her from simply speaking with other males, making the double standard that much more frustrating for her. Another example may cover a scenario where a male partner attempts to control his partner’s communication with friends and family by saying she should not discuss their relationship with others at all, since doing so would shame her family’s reputation, or a scenario in which a female partner is shamed because of her clothing choices. Participants could then identify ways that these scenarios perpetuate male privilege/control, isolate the female partner, and increase her vulnerability within a particular cultural context, while also brainstorming safe ways to problem solve in the presented scenarios. In other words, youth programming should account for ways that cultural conventions might be manipulated to enact controlling and verbal forms of IPV, and subsequently how verbal and controlling violence set the stage for increased vulnerability, and possibly future physical and sexual violence. Finally, migrant youth of colour must be taught that coercion into sexual behaviour at any level and in any context is inappropriate, even in established inti-
mating relationships, including marriage. Effective lesson plans that address the above issues must stress healthy communication. This includes teaching youth how intimate partners can discuss matters respectfully with each other when differences emerge. Youth must be taught safe ways to approach partners, and useful phrases to initiate healthy conversations on topics that will be particularly uncomfortable considering the cultural context. In the case that victimised youth require additional support, youth should be informed of culturally sensitive personnel/services they can approach for further guidance.

It is also critical that youth learn the range of consequences that follow IPV, some of which are not always immediately perceivable. If, for example, a couple’s relationship is abusive, there are some obvious negative consequences for the victim (e.g., physical harm). There are other possible consequences that may not be so obvious – extended separation from friends and family, mental health concerns, restrictions on educational and occupational advancement, limits on financial autonomy. In the case that a male is abusing his partner, there are also negative consequences for him, such as learning to problem solve through violence, engaging in poor role modeling for children, being arrested and convicted; in fact, these consequences can apply to both individuals in a relationship where the violence is co-occurring. Finally, youth should develop a broader awareness of consequences, accounting for the ways their ethnic groups are already characterized in the broader society, realizing that when individuals engage in IPV, they are perpetuating racist and gendered stereotypes. Violent men of colour unknowingly support those in the mainstream society who hold racist views by providing further evidence to disparage Asian, Middle Eastern and African cultures. In order to combat racism, youth should be taught that cultural tradition should never be used to justify violence, nor should violence (or any form of women’s oppression) ever be used as a means to differentiate themselves from the mainstream culture. Such practices merely feed societal racism.

Turning to a more subtle programme suggestion, a young adult Pakistani participant advised that as youth learn to understand and identify healthy relationship practices, programmers should not frame dating in an entirely negative light. Unhealthy, improper dating practices should not be marked strictly as “warning signals.” Instead, youth should be encouraged to figure out what they would value in an intimate relationship, and subsequently, to learn if they are getting what they value out of the relationship, including if they are being harmed:
I wouldn’t call them (various dating violence behaviours) warning signals. Cause if you put it that way...the world would be a very scary place... I think the best thing would be to give them scenarios and mix them together... You could say to them, “Look, you are an individual. Things should be important to you. If someone hurts you, how do you know if [that person] is hurting you?”... And call it skills or life skills.

Lastly with regard to defining IPV, youth programming must incorporate lessons on intentionality, guiding youth to understand why unintended actions can still be considered violent. And again, these lessons must be developed and implemented considering various cultural contexts, which for migrant youth of colour would cover the ways that culturally justified male privileges facilitate men’s violence against women. For instance, male intimate partners may pressure female partners to assume a completely selfless and deferent identity (the “silent endurance”) and enforce this identity with physical force. Males may not view such pressure (whether physical force is enacted or not) as violent due to historical traditions; they may view their actions as normal and lacking intent to be violent. Without culture bashing, lessons should be designed so youth can reflect critically about their cultural traditions. With regard to the “silent endurance” and girls’ identity, programming should also inspire girls to pursue educational and occupational goals for themselves, as opposed to viewing marriage as their only or primary life objective. Thus, if programmers bring in guest speakers, it would also behoove girls and boys to hear highly accomplished migrant women of colour recount their life pathways.

Another way programming can be designed to help youth reflect critically about some of their cultural traditions is to identify the ways they have been taught by older family members to accept gender-based violence, or to identify how this has happened to others in their ethnic communities. As participants in this study articulated, within the household, gender-based violence stems initially from strict sex-role segregation, where girls and boys are taught from very early in their lives that girls and women work subserviently to support male interests. Youth should partake in lessons that help them see how women’s domestic confinement correlates with a subordinate status, and in turn, how subordinate status enables victimisation. Because “Gossip is at the center of a family’s code of honor” (Awwad, 2001, p. 45), youth should also engage in sessions which teach them how to navigate family and community gossip and rethink cultural constructs of honour. As youth begin to think critically about cultural traditions and their connections to IPV, some will inevitably reconsider romantic relationships and question their family/community practices. It is imperative, then, that programmers inform youth of safe coping mechanisms, and how to access support services in a safe manner.
Interviews with participants also suggest lessons be created that teach youth to read media critically, including how to question the abundant images in society that sexually objectify women and girls, as well as narratives that equate IPV with passion and love. For migrant youth of colour, lesson plans should address ethnic media; participants in this study raised concerns with patriarchal storylines in Korean dramas and Bollywood films. However, mainstream western media should also be critiqued. An Indian high school participant, made an insightful evaluation of the Twilight book and film series, pointing out that the protagonists’ romantic relationship glorifies controlling violence and adversely manipulates youthful perspective:

*I also feel like there is not enough education on what a controlling relationship looks like, or what an abusive relationship looks like. People look at books like Twilight, and I don’t hate it because of the story. I hate it because it is an abusive relationship, and I didn’t realise that until I did a bit of research on it. I just thought it was badly written, but it is actually an abusive relationship, because he is controlling what she is doing, controlling who she meets, what she does... Yeah, and that is a really bad message to put out. So just education on what a controlling relationship is, is important as well, because if nobody know what it is, nobody is going to be able to act on it or get help.*

Along with dissecting media, programmes may encourage youth to design their own media products, for example in the form of posters, or for more technologically advanced and resourced students, public service announcements. One young adult participant of Chinese/Indian heritage proposed that posters advertising culturally grounded services provide a safe way to get information to youth because:

*...you don’t have to interact with them again. They’re safe, no one’s gonna see you signing up. Plus you can remember the website for later. And especially these days where everyone has smart phones, they can take a picture of the poster when no one’s looking and just keep it, and that’s a really important thing.*

By allowing youth to use their imagination and create their own advocacy-oriented media pieces, youth would have the opportunity to integrate messages tied to their respective cultures and furnish products from which they could take great pride. These types of project-based activities would also permit youth to redefine aspects of their cultures (e.g., family honour) in ways that are healthier for their ethnic communities.

Finally, returning to youthful identity development, youth can be taught what it means to be “strong” in different contexts, moving beyond a framework that views strength only in physical terms. Youth programming should explain why IPV victims are also called survivors. Two young adult participants of Paki-
stani and Chinese/Indian ethnic backgrounds, respectively, offered the following discussion, which speaks to this perspective:

**Pakistani participant:** ...even when a female is being abused in a relationship, a lot of people tell her, “You are weak, you are supposed to get out. Why are you in the relationship?” I think even if we change that word “weak” and make it “strong,” she would be more empowered. So if you say, “Yes you are strong. You are in a relationship where he is abusing you, where he is giving you pennies for money, where you have peanuts for food. You are strong. All you have to do is change it somehow, and you will be stronger.”

**Chinese/Indian participant:** ...exposure to other ways of thinking for communities where the norms of violence are so embedded, exposure to the idea that maybe to be strong is to not put up with it. To be strong means to help other people out of it.

Girls and boys alike should be taught to foster strong personal identities grounded in opposition to intimate partner and family violence, to foster honourable identities grounded in helping others.
VII. STUDY STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

This study was not without its limitations. Perhaps the study’s most glaring shortcoming was its small sample size \( (n = 27) \), with an unintended oversampling of Indian participants, who represented over one-third of all participants. Given the study’s relatively small sample size, it is easy to assume inferences cannot be made across the range of ethnic and age groups represented in the study. On the other hand, it is crucial to recognize that participants in this study represent an unusually difficult to reach population. In fact, this study is among the first of its kind internationally that includes youth of diverse Asian and Middle Eastern backgrounds within a western context, discussing topics on intimate partner and family violence. Also significant is that across age and ethnic groups, participants offered highly uniform responses to study questions, suggesting that the findings emergent from this study do carry meaningful validity. Considering that this study was intended to be small and exploratory, the findings warrant support for further research with a larger number of participants, including greater numbers of youth from diverse Middle Eastern ethnicities and youth from migrant African ancestries. It would also be beneficial if future research included male participants from these age and ethnic groups.
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