

# Negotiating opportunities for social integration & leisure: Second generation South Asian Canadians

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# The Study: Social integration and leisure

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- Second generation young Canadians
  - Longitudinal, qualitative study
- Parents from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh
  - Male & Female Youth born in Canada or arrived as children
  - All youth attended school in Canada, parents did not
- Data collection, 1996-97/ 2001/ 2007
- 15 participants in total, 4 completed all 3 phases
- Average age at start: 18 years
- Hindu, Sikh, Muslim and Christian
- Varying SES
  - eg. Parents were MD's, restaurateurs, factory workers, accountants, public housing, unemployed

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- Phase one
    - Started as stand alone study of leisure and second generation ethnic group
    - Used sensitizing concepts from previous study of immigrant mothers
    - Central themes: balancing & compromise (Tirone & Pedlar, 2000; Tirone, 2000)
    - Evidence of benefits for longitudinal study
  
  - Phase two
    - Social integration over time
    - Challenges, opportunities
    - Mobility, leisure places (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005)
  
  - Phase three
    - Final look at social integration, civic engagement, sense of belonging



# This presentation

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- Cross sectional look at Phase three data
- 4 participants
  - Over course of the study participated in total of 18 interviews
- Late 20's, all employed, university educated
- Major themes relevant to leisure:
  - Enduring centrality of cultural/ethnic Heritage
  - Engaging in community engagement and in the wellbeing of others
  - Evolving individuality and leadership

# Centrality of Cultural Heritage

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- [Traditional practices are] a way of feeling connected with people that I've known for years uh, but through them I meet other people in other communities. Umm, it's a way of maintaining what I know of certain Indian and certain religious traditions regardless of whether they're authentic or just traditions that we've just kind of created but it's, it's, these are familiar things and things that we share with people that we love and that makes it important for those reasons.
- Alright, so I wore red (for her wedding). Umm always growing up I thought the red was so ugly that I would wear a white dress but I don't know when it actually came down to it, umm I don't know I wanted to celebrate more of my culture I guess.
- I make a point every year especially during Diwali, to umm, educate my co-workers and my American friends on the traditions and the festival and what we do and how we celebrate. Everyone seems to enjoy it.

# Engaging in community and wellbeing of others ...

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- It's really only with certain organizations like Big Brothers and um a few other initiatives that I uh feel a sense of community...
- I'm slowly starting to give back to the community here in Michigan by teaching a GED prep course to umm mainly adults but I'm hopefully, haha, going to be able to use my math degree for good and teach these guys a little bit of what I learned in Canada.
- It is quite a [university] community, I found, I found a very good community of people, umm with whom I lived, like people who were community orientated, wanting to be involved, chose to get involved with some other aspects, umm one of them being a youth shelter in [city] that I'm *actually still involved with five years later.*

# Pursuing individual goals

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- ...There's this this emphasis in this part of the world on personal freedom right. Umm so I like the fact that I'm free, I mean I'm single now and I'm dictating what I do and that is good. I guess what I dislike is that a lot of my leisure is in isolation. Right, I write in isolation, I workout and jog in isolation, so it's probably more bent towards individual leisure as opposed to communal leisure and I think, I think that's probably the one shortcoming that exists
- It's sort of like a prom, without having to go the prom. And when we first came up with this idea some of the older people in the community who were thinking about it from a cultural point of view were like, oh you know that's inappropriate, the prom dresses, and I mean it's just females so you could wear whatever you want but people were hesitant about letting their daughters dress that way or partying or the music...so that was a struggle, so things like that do come up and uh becomes an issue so you have to talk to everyone and sometimes you let things go for awhile and sometimes you try to fight for your opinion.



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