THE CANADIAN HINDU WOMAN

A CANADIAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE HINDU WOMAN:

A STUDY IN IDENTITY TRANSFORMATION

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates a particular aspect of identity; namely the
self-concept of a married cross-generational group of Canadian East-Indian
women. It utilizes the "Twenty Statements Test", participant observation,
and other interview data. The findings showed that while the Hindu woman
generally feels a strong identification of the self with the family, a
major role change such as marriage had differential effects on the two
groups of women, and is dependent largely upon the extent to which the
individual has interiorized her familial role and status. Thus, it was
found that although traditional Hindu values such as devotion of the self
to the family are perceived as salient by both the young and older respondents,
contemporary attitudes concerned with the development of the self such as
personal ambitions are also perceived as important by the younger generation
of Canadian East-Indian women. Integrated in terms of the symbolic-interaction-
ist perspective, the exploratory empirical evidence is found to support
the assumption that role specialization is an important factor contributing
to an individual's perceptions of self.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

INTRODUCTION

The composition of the Asian* population in Canada has undergone

profound changes in the last fifteen years. Where there were perhaps 5,000

Asians in Canada in 1959, there were in 1975 more than 150,000 Asians in

Canada, 90,000 of whom arrived between the years of 1968 and 1975 (Buchignani,

1977: 94). The new influx resulted in a wide dispersal of the Asian

populations in Canada. While British Columbia was once the dominant locale,

today no more than one-quarter of all Asian-Canadians reside in the Western

province (Buchignani, 1977: 94). Large numbers of the immigrants have

increasingly been attracted by the occupational possibilities available in

Ontario.

Although people of East-Indian origin constitute a substantial

segment of Canada's new immigrants, the academic literature on Canadian

Asians has up-to-date been sparse, essentially limited to scattered studies

concerned with analyses of the history and settlement patterns of the early

Sikhs in British Columbia (Buchignani, 1977). The literature on East-

Indians in Ontario is primarily comprised of official statements offered

by the Department of Manopwer and Immigration covering the rate of entry

and demographic location of East-Indians in Canada. The manner in which

Asian men and women have adjusted to Canadian society in terms of various

*For purposes of this study, the term "Asian" comprises those
people of East-Indian origin, including immigrants from India, Pakistan,
Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania; and is used simultaneously with the term
"East-Indian".

1

aspects of community and social organization is an issue which at the present time has not received due consideration. As noted by Naidoo (1978: 8), studies on Asian women who have emigrated from India to other parts of the universe are "few and far between, meagre in content and lacking in empirical date." In a review of pertinent literature, she shows that "the extensive bibliography of some 300 titles on East-Indians in Canada compiled by Buchignani does not contain a single title focussing on Sout (East) Asian women," (Naidoo, 1978: 2). In addition, Naidoo (1978: 2) reports that while the status of empirical knowledge about Asian immigrants in Canada is generally poor, in various government documents, "scant attention is given to the particular experiences and problems of Asian women." It was the absence of research about East-Indian women in Canada that motivated the direction of this study.

In an attempt to fill the empirical vacuum in the current research on Asian women in Canada, this study explores the self-concept of a cross-generational group of East-Indian women in an Ontario city. The "Twenty Statements Test" (Kuhn, 1954), is utilized as the main indicator of the self-concept and participant observation, together with other interview data, serve to reveal the Canadian East-Indian women's role perceptions, achievement aspirations, religous and ideological aspirations.

The theoretical focus of the study is two-fold. First, it examines the Hindu woman's concept of self in relation to its formation and development. Arising from the symbolic-interactionist perspective that the basic personality structure is formed by culture, it was assumed that the Hindu woman would primarily conceive of herself in terms of well-defined roles and statuses. The rationale behind this assumption was formed on

the grounds that East-Indian society is sharply sex-segregated. In a
patriarchal system of family and social organization, it is generally
the men who participate in various spheres of public affairs. The women's
main contribution is to her family; her primary responsibilities consist-
ing of home-making and child-rearing.

The second theoretical concern of this study is to explore the
assumption that a relationship exists between a major role change and
the self-concept, (Schmitt, 1966). Given the basic Hindu belief that
self-fulfillment for women can blossom only within the bonds of marriage,
(Meyer, 1953), it was felt that married women would generally conceive
of themselves in terms of family roles and statuses, and that as they
internalized their new statuses, the higher the probability that their
self-definitions would revolve around the roles of wife/mother.

The data reveal that a traditional sex-defined mode of sociali-
zation influences the self-concept; the majority of the women conceived
of themselves largely in terms of their membership in the family group.
The data also suggest that a relationship prevails between a role-change
and the self-concept. It was found that the older group of respondents
conceived of themselves relatively more frequently by reference to
familial roles than the younger generation. Hence, while the older
generation emerges as clearly traditional on values pertaining to the
family, home, religion, and education, the data show that the younger
women, although deeply committed to their family, also reveal the potential
for contemporary achievement aspiration. Although it was shown that at
the present time a strong kin-based community acts as an effective agent
of social control regulating the behavious of its members, it was proposed

that a duality might be emerging in the self-image of the young and
future generations of Canadian East-Indian women.

As with most cross-cultural studies, however, the present research
does suffer from certain limitations. Asian women in Canada are as diverse
in life-styles and attitudes as the multi-ethnic Canadain population.
There are, however, certain justifications for treating Asian women as
a specific group. Firstly, the majority of Asian women do manifest signifi-
cant similarities in their life-style and values in comparison with the
white indigenous population of Canada. Scondly, Asian women, like Canadian
women are subject to different conditions and different problems compared
to their male counterparts. And thirdly, Asian women are a relevant
category because they are perceived as such by the dominant Canadaian
population, (Khan, 1975).

Although it is restricted to the general and exploratory level,
this thesis has attempted to explain some of the specific and fundamental
factors relating to the position of Asian women in Canada. While only
suggestive in nature, the evidence does lend support to the assumption that
a relationship exists between self-change and role-change. In this respect
the study provides empirical justification for the interactionist theory
upon which lie its major assumptions.

Working from the perspective that present patterns cannot be
adequately explained without consideration of the processes that generate
them, Chapter One of the thesis outlines the theoretical framework under-
lying the present research. The central assumptions of the symbolic-
interactionist perspective as they relate to G. H. Mead's self-theory
are presented as a basis for interpreting the empirical data. Chapter

Two provides the methodological design of the study, and a summary of the findings is presented in Chapter Three. Chapter Four ties together the relationship between early socialization, role internalization, and formation of the self-concept.

CHAPTER ONE

THE SELF-CONCEPT: A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

This study seeks to explore a particular ascept of identity;

namely the self-concept of a group of Canadian East-Indian women. The

purpose of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the theoretical

bases underlying the empirical investigation. The basic concepts of

symbolic interactionism, with specific reference to the manner in which

socialization processes influence development of the self-concept in

women are considered to be of primary significance in the process of

acquiring a self and hence, constitute the central concerns of the

discussion.

The precise manner in which an individual's consciousness of

self, others, and the society as a whole is shaped is best reflected in

the symbolic-interactionist theory of G. H. Mead.[1] Mead, writing in the

period from 1894 until the early thrities, began with the assumption that

humans are self-conscious beings; they have selves and minds which although

absent at birth, are emergent characteristics resulting from the individual's

participation in an on-going social world. Mead (1934) asserts the import-

ance of an existing social process which is prior to the individual. An

individual can develop a mind and a self only in interaction with others

in a patterned social environment. This interaction takes place in the

6

form of an "act". In Mead's words, a social act is one that involves
" ... the cooperation of more than one individual, and whose object as
defined by the act ... is a social object" (1934: 7). Social acts depend
upon social interaction and interpretation. In order for people to engage
in social interaction, they must be able to somehow incorporate the acts
and attitudes of others into onself. Consciousness of meaning is the
essence of mind and is developed through symbolic communication. The
ability of human beings to utilize symbols as a source of communication
is central to an understanding of the nature of mind, for as Mead states:

> The essence of self is cognitive...The
> thinking or intellectual process -- the inter-
> nalization and inner dranatization, by the
> individual, of the enternal conversation of
> significant gestures which constitutes his
> chief mode of interaction with other indivi-
> duals belonging to the same society -- is the
> earliest experiential phase in the genesis
> and development of the self.
> (1934: 173)

Although the mind and the self are co-emergents in the social
process, the development of mind is the first phase in the development
of the self, for human beings respond to one another on the basis of the
meanings attributed to the gestures. This, as stated by Meltzer (1972: 7)
" ... renders the gesture symbolic, i.e., the gesture becomes a symbol
to be interpreted; it becomes something which, in the imaginations of the
participants, stand for the entire act." In order to engage in such
behaviour, it follows that each individual who is acting, or towards whom
an act is directed be able to attach the same meaning to a given gesture.[2]

The interpretation of gestures in a similar manner by inter-
acting individuals is rendered through language which designates "objects".

According to Mead:

> The critical importance of language in the
> development of human experience lies in the
> fact that the stimulus is one that can react
> upon the speaking individual as it reacts
> upon the other.
> (1934: 69)

People, as Blumer (1972) stresses, act towards objects on the basis of

their meanings, and in doing so help to preserve a common set of symbols.

The self that can be an object to itself arises in social experience and

is largely dependent on the social patterns into which one is born:

> It is the social process itself that it
> responsible for the appearance of the
> self; it is not there as a self apart
> from this type of experience.
> (Mead, 1934: 140)

By being able to reflect back upon actions from the point of view

of others, the individual becomes involved in a process which Mead refers

to as "taking the role of the other" (1934: 150). Knowing one's self

as an object is only possible by internalizing the responses of others.

The distinctive nature of the self hence is found in the ability of the

individual to look at oneself through the eyes of others, and to judge

one's behaviour according to the presumed judgements of others:

> The individual experiences himself as such not
> directly, but only indirectly, from the particular
> standpoints of other individual members of the
> same social group, or from the generalized stand-
> point of the social group as a whole to which he
> belongs. For he enters his own experience as a
> self or individual, not directly or immediately,
> not by becoming a subject to himself but only in so
> far as he first becomes an object to himself just as
> other individuals are objects to him or his experience;
> and he becomes an object toward himself only by taking
> the attitude of other individuals towards himself with-
> in a social environment or context of experience and
> behavious in which oth he and they are involved.
> (Mead, 1934: 138)

Clearly, the self emerges concomitantly with the ability to take roles. An individual can become a self only by acting socially towards herself; by taking the attitudes of others towards oneself. Although the development of the self runs parallel with the delvlopment of the ability to take roles, it remains to be emphasized that Mead does not describe the mind and the self as characterisitics emerging once as a whole, but rather, he maintains that these qualitites grow and alter through constant interaction with others. The acquisition of the self early in the process of socialization plays a central role in Mead's role theory. Specifically, he breaks the development of the self into two basic stages; the "play" stage, and the "game" stage (1934: 150-164).

The development of the self through the process of assuming the attitudes of others initially begins in childhood in the play stage. At this rudimentary level, meanings are organized into specific others, object, or roles. At this stage, the child can "play" at being something or somebody. For example, "A child plays at being a mother, at being a teacher, at being a policeman; that is, it is taking different roles, as we say" (Mead, 1934: 150). It is during the play stage that the child learns to take the roles and attitudes of others. In this activity, playing at roles important others perform is not merely learning a variety of acts associated with given roles. For instance, the little girl who observes mother and father in their daily activities is coming to have a sence of herself as an object in the world with specific capacities and values (Hewitt, 1976). Playing at roles, as Mead wrote is "the simplest form of being another to one's self" (1934: 151).

The play at "being another to oneself," hence, is not simply imitative behaviour, but a process that shapes the child's view of herself.

The ability to play at roles of course depends on the particular others

whose activities are imitated by the child. In the case, for example,

involving little boys and girls raised in family settings where the

father works, and the mother stays home, the children learn more about

their mother's activities then those of their fathers'. The implications

of this association are significant in the development of the self at

a later stage in life. The precise manner in which early socialization

influences the individual 's sense of self will be considered in further

detail in a following section. At this point, it is important to point

out that whereas in the play stage the child is just beginning to form

a self, it is at the second phase, or the "game" stage that the person

acquires the ability to respond to the self from the standpoint of the

generalized other.

' The game stage refers basically to futher internalization of

attitudes, although this time the organization of the internalized attitudes

is based along broader situational lines. In the game stage, the child

must "take the attitude of everyone else involved in the game," and "these

different roles must have a definite relationship to one another (Mead,

1934: 151). During the course of socialization, the person learns to

simultaneously take the role of various others from which she views her

behaviour. This process calls attention to the fact that ongoing conduct

is oriented to the general expectations as a whole of the group to which

the individual belongs. Referring to this generalized role or standpoint

as that of the "generalized other" Mead suggests that:

> ... only in so far as he takes the attitudes
> of the organized social group to which he
> belongs toward the organized, cooperative
> social activity or set of activities in which

> the group as such is engaged does he develop
> a complete self or possesses the sort of
> complete self he has developed.
>> (1934: 155)

It would be erroneous to assume from the preceding discussion
of Mead's analysis of the self however, that the individual is determined
entirely by society.[3] Although the role of the socialization process is
crucial in the acquisition of the self, Mead does not, it must be emphasized,
suggest that there is any end point to this process. The mind and the
self are products of social interaction, but what one is, what one thinks,
and how one acts can constantly change and vary depending on one's social
situation. In other words, once the mind and the self have risen in the
child, the individual is able to reconstruct her self through social inter-
action by taking the role of the other:

> Human society, we have insisted, does not
> merely stamp the pattern of its organized social
> behaviour upon any one of its individual members,
> so that this pattern becomes likewise the patterns
> of the individual's self; it also, at the same
> time, gives him a mind, as the means or ability
> of consciously conversing with himself in terms
> of the social attitudes which constitute the
> structure of his self and which embody the
> pattern of human society's organized behaviour
> as reflected in that structure. And this mind
> enables him, in turn to stamp the patterns of his
> further developing self (further developing
> through mental activity) upon the structure or
> organization of human society and this in a
> degree to reconstruct and modify in terms of
> his self the general pattern of social or group
> behaviour in terms of which his self was
> originally constituted.
>> (Mead, 1934: 263)

Society for Mead, hence, is conceptualized as an on-going social
system in which the mind and the self emerge and change, maintaining
their tie to the responses of other in different situations. Although
Mead clearly outlines that the survival of the individual depends on her

interaction with other human beings in some form of a social context, Mead insists that the self " ... does not consist simply in the bare organization of social attitudes" (1934: 173). At this point, conceiving the self as a process, Mead distinguishes bewteen two aspects directly responsible for its behavious, the "I" and the "Me".[4]

The way in which individuals respond to an action at the level of impulse constitutes the "I" aspect of the self; whereas the "Me" element of the self reflects the internalized attitudes of others:

> The "I" is the response of the organism to
> the attitudes of the others; the "me" is the
> organized set of attitudes of others which
> one himself assumes. The attitudes of the
> others constitute the organized "me", and
> then one reacts toward that as an "I".
>
> (Mead, 1934: 175)

The self, in this perspective is described as a process constantly moving in and out of two phases. The phase of the self referred to as the "Me" by Mead is strongly presented as a reflection of the existing social process; it respresents the individual's ability to orient his/her act toward the standpoint of both the particular and generalized others.

The "I" is the subjective aspect of life; it is the unpredictable response of the individual to the attitudes of others. And most important-ly, it is not shaped by social experience. Althought the "I" accounts for the individual's creative nature, the self cannot appear in conscious-ness as an "I"; it can appear only as a "Me", for as Mead states:

> Such an "I" is a presupposition, but never
> a presentation of conscious experience, for the
> moment it is presented it has passed into the
> objective case, presuming, if you like, an "I"
> that observes -- but an "I" that can disclose
> itself only be ceasing to be the subject for
> whom the object "Me" exists.
>
> (1934: 42)

Accepting that the "I" exists only after it has become part of the "Me", the significance of the "Me" element in the development of the self becomes apparent. The argument runs as follows: The human being has a dual nature, the social and the creative. Although the individual is not born a social creature, Mead argues that we learn to think and give meanings to our behaviour in terms of internalized attitudes or the "Me" aspect of the self. The fact that the "Me" is cemented in the socialization process itself, which is the very basis for the development of the self further justifies the interactionist perspective. The "I" in this context, by continually forcing the individual to check her behaviour from the viewpoint of others serves merely to reinforce the prior social process.[5]

The focus of attention thus far has centered on the way in which the individual acquires a sense of who she is. It was pointed out that the self and the mind do not remain static; their very nature allows the individual to choose between alternative responses through a process of reflection or thought.[6] Of main interest at this point in the discussion concerns the origin and nature of the self-concept. A general analysis of the manner in which the individual develops her self-concept will allow a further extension of Mead's self theory.

The self-concept has been defined by J. W. Kinch as:

> "... that organization of qualitites that the
> individual attributes to himself. It should
> be understood that the word 'qualities' is
> used in a broad sense to include both
> attributes that the individual might express
> in terms of adjectives (ambitious, intelligent),
> and also the roles he sees himself in (father,
> doctor ...)
>   (1972: 246, emphasis added)

Following Kinch's definition, the self-concept, as used in this study, refers to the manner in which an individual reflectively ascribes a number of statements to herself.[7]

In his study of the self, J. P. Hewitt (1976) proposes that two societal factors play a major role in shaping self-conceptions. First, "the identities people can assume in specific situations are only partly a matter of choice", and second, "the others with whom the individual may interact in any given situation are subject to limited choice" (Hewitt, 1976: 93).

The roles assumed by people are also dependent on two forces. On the one hand certain roles are ascribed, that is individuals are assigned a role by others on the basis of purely biological considerations such as age, sex, or ethnic membership. On the other hand, some roles are achieved, that is to imply that the role one wishes to play is not dependent upon innate characteristics, but rather, is based upon the wider societal qualifications regarding legitimate entry to a specific status (Hewitt, 1976).

The contrast between achieved and ascribed roles is an important one for it emphasizes the fact that an individual's choice of identity is not entirely a matter of her own choice. Sex, for example, is an ascribed characteristic used as a basis for establishing identity; that is, role-taking is influenced by the ideas a given society has concerning proper, approved conduct for males and females. Individuals react to men and women in accordance with the more general and generally accepted role prescriptions regardless of individual variations.[8]

A person is situated when others place her as a social object by assigning her an identity based on either the ascribed or achieved status.

When an individual acquires a self-concept, she does so by objectifying

herself, or by employing symbols when designating one's behaviour (Hewitt,

1976).

One of the contoversies facing the self-concept as considered above

relates to the problems of how and in how extensive a field should such a

concept be applied. The set of attitudes an individual acquires or feels

towards herself depends to a considerable extent on the person's location

in the social structure. The social structure, that is, a given milieu

composed of a set of positions^9 and practices that precede the individual

is a factor that directly influences a person's self-concept. Approaching

the problem from a sociological analysis of social structure, it may be

argued that individual behaviour should be analysed only in those situations

where the individual acts as an occupant of a position which is associated

with a pattern of cultural prescriptions (Rommetviet, 1968). Accordingly,

the individual's attitudes are oriented to a set of generalized expecta-

tions of the others with whom the person interacts on a regular basis.

The "others", in this context are those poeple with whom one feels some

psychological identification, as opposed to those with whom the individual

interacts on merely a social basis (Kuhn, 1964). It is in the interaction

within her network of roles that the individual derives her sense of

location, or identity.

The process of acquiring a self-concept is completed by the

ability of the individual to apply to herself a label or frame of reference

based upon a common set of expectations. Whether these expectations are

culturally patterned or not, they are felt by the individual who plays

the role as expectations towards her from other people. The characteristics

a person attributes to herself are clearly located in the social structure;

and specifically influenced by the social process in which she is direct-

ly involved. The social nature of the self-concept is emphasized by

Farris and Brymer:

> Essentially, the self-concept is the way
> in which a person sees himself; the set of
> characteristics, etc. that he attributes to
> himself. We would note that these attitudes
> are inherently social in the sense that they
> name social objects, and that by adopting
> these 'labels', the person comes to view
> himself in a social manner. In addition,
> these labels also stand for particular ways
> of behaving, so that by labeling himself in
> a particular manner the person is also
> controlling, or at least structuring, his
> own behaviour.
>   (1976: 146)

Hewitt (1976), in addition to pointing out that the labels an

individual assigns to herself are social constructions, stresses that:

"conceptions of the self are linked to ideal conceptions of what the

person ought to be, and these vary by ethnic, religious, regional, class,

and other kinds of social differentiations. It is noteworthy that many

of these definitions of the ideal person are not only linked to group

membership, but depend to some extent upon 'we'-'they' contrasts between

groups" (1976: 99).

Given that one's sense of self is significantly influenced by

her group membership, and that during a lifetime one moves constantly

from one situated social position to another (from being a daughter to

being a wife, for example) it follows that a relationship should prevail

between role change and the self-concept. At the same time, however, it

also follows that those roles undergoing no form of radical transformation

should indicate a relatively uniform self-concept. Such a view is

presented by Hickman and Kuhn:

>   ... it is probably that stability
>   and persistence is lent to personali-
>   ties by roles that do not change.
>   (1956: 38)

As noted above, it is generally the social structure which determines which roles are most central for an individual's self-image then others. Throughout histroy, and in nearly all known societies, the most important roles for women have been those of wife and mother. The implications of the wife and mother role as it relates to the development of the self-concept in women generally, and East-Indian women particularly is an issue to which the discussion now turns.

THE SELF-CONCEPT: IT'S FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN WOMEN

As point of departure, it was suggested that the social structure of which an individual is a part determines to a considerable extent which roles are central for her self image. Resting on the assumption that in almost all cultures of the world the most important roles for women as dictated by society are those of wife and mother, the discussion now turns to explore the manner in which the location of women generally, and East-Indian women in particular in the world of objects serves as a frame of reference for the self-concept.

For Mead, the self essentially develops in relation to the individual's position (status) in the social structure. The social structure of any given society is based on beliefs and assumptions about human nature, social

relationships, and the forces which maintain these relationships. Sociolo-

gists and anthropologists interested primarily in the study of cultures

regard socialization as the process by which cultures are trasmitted to

each new generation. Illustrating this point of view, Johnson (1963: 110)

proposes that socialization entails a gradual "growing into" culture,

becoming the kind of person encouraged by it, "taking in" the culture

as a part of the self:

> At the time of birth, the human infant is
> unable to take part in any human society. It
> has no conception of a 'self' of its own. It
> is unable to distinguish between its own inner
> life and the 'reality' of objects independently
> existing. It has no idea that such a distinc-
> tion is possible. Gradually human infants develop
> into an adequate member of human societies. This
> gradual development is largely a process of learn-
> ing. Socialization is, therefore, learning, that
> enables the learner to perform social roles, Thus,
> not all learning is irrelevant to the motiva-
> tion and ability, necessary for participation
> in social systems. Culture is what is learned
> in socialization.
>   (1963: 110)

Briefly, socialization may be defined as the process by which

the individual comes to conform to the norms of the group into which she

is born and of which she becomes an active participant. Thus, the kind

of being one becomes is the inevitable expression of the kind of world

in which the individual lives (Raz, 1976).

Socialization, being a form of learning that contributes to

one's ability to perform social roles strongly stems from Mead's concep-

tion that almost all behaviour of the individual is socially derived

or socially patterned. Growing up in a group means learning to be a

member of a group. This process includes ways of thinking and feeling,

as well as ways of behaving. It furthermore covers attitudes towards one's

self as well as attitudes and behaviour towards other people. It follows

then that behaviour associated with masculinity and femininity is a

function of the learning that accompanies group membership. Of particular

interest is the manner in which the differential positions of men and

women in society are legitimized.

Many students of sex differences consider early socialization to

sex roles to be the cheif vehicle by which sex-linked patterns of behaviour

are maintained. Starting with Parsons (1955), sex-role differentiation is

seen by a number of sociologists as a device for the protection of a

stable social system. The distribution of social roles from a functionalist

perspective whereby the male is accorded the instumental role and the

female is granted the expressive, or socio-emotional role is considered

to be an integral aspect of the development of the total society. Parsons

suggests that the roles take these particular forms because:

> the bearing and early nursing of children
> establish a strong presumptive primacy of
> the relation of mother to small child and
> this in turn establishes a presumption that
> the man who is exempted from these biological
> functions should specialize in the alterna-
> tive instrumental direction.
>   (1942: 237)

This type of functional differentiation is based on the assumption

that the roles assigned to individuals are socially determined and primarily

dependent on the basis of sex membership. Although considerable variation

exists in what a given culture considers desirable characteristics for

women, J. Kagen (1964) has summarized what women are supposed to be like

in Western culture. Women are to inhibit aggression and any form of open

sexual urge; they are to be passive, friendly, and oriented to others. The

masculine role, on the other hand, requires suppression of strong emotions,

sexual aggression, and a display of independence in all situations.

A stress on performances in social roles forms the theoretical

basis of symbolic-interactionism as well. The emphasis of symbolic-

interactionism rests with a role theory perspective in which group

identifications for the individual, and the function of such identifications

play and integral part in the interaction process between the individual and

society. For Mead, taking over the institutions and practices of one's

community into her own conduct forms the basis of personality. Referring

to the interactive relationship between socialization and the develop-

ment of personality, Mead describes the self reaching full development

by:

> ... becoming an individual reflection of
> the general systematic patterns of social
> or group behaviour in which it and the
> others are all involved.
> (1934: 222).

The theories of Mead and Parsons however, make only a limited

contribution towards an understanding of sexual differences as they relate

to the socialization process, and the development of the self-concept in

women. If, in speaking of self-development, Mead means adopting the

accepted feminine role, the lack of clarity associated with this term

in a contemporary and cross cultural context poses problems. In a period

of rapid social change, when women have in a relatively short time gained

new socio-political and economic freedom, the feminine role has become

a less well-defined role and status category. Previously, it was

implicitly a family-linked role. In fact, psychologists writing on the

identity of women have typically assumed that self-development for women

is different to that of men. Freud observes sexuality to be different in

men and women and explains this by reference to what he considers to be

"innate psychic differences" (1962: 85-87). Erikson, in his essay on

women indicates that full self-development for women is related to family-

linked roles. He says:

> ... the stage of life crucial for the
> emergence of an integrated female identity
> is the step from youth to maturity, the
> state when the young woman, whatever her
> work career, relinquishes the care received
> from the parental family in order to commit
> herself to the love of a stranger and to
> the care to be given to his and her off-
> spring.
>
> (1968: 265)

A similar view is expressed by Bruno Bettlehiem. He states:

> We must start with the realisation that
> as much as women want to be good scientists
> or engineers, they want first and foremost
> to be womanly companions of men and to be
> mothers.
> (quoted in Greer, 1971: 95)

The development of identity in women is explained largely in terms of

their familial roles, and primarily in terms of women's ever lasting dependency

on men. Lindsmith and Strauss (1968) stressing that sex roles are socially

defined strongly agree that cultural ideals affect the development of the

self-concept in men and women. The structural processes governing these

cultural ideals cannot be challenged unless the underlying values and

assumptions are explored, for they are the determinants of a particular

social system's ideological basis.

Smith (1975) mantains that women, because they have historically

been excluded from the processes of market production have been denied

symbolic ways of perceiving a world that reflects their own experiences.

Not having had until recently an economic and political stand independant

of men, she states that:

> ... women have been deprived of the means to
> participate in creating forms of thought
> relevent or adequate to express their own
> experience or to define and raise social
> consciousness about their situations and
> concerns.
>   (1975: 354)

Traditionally excluded from active participation in the educational

sphere in relation to men, women have been unable to contribute to the

world of ideas to any significant extent. Their social status instead

has systematically been limited to the domestic, (Smith, 1977).

Both Smith (1975) and Bernard (1975) in questioning the traditional

roles that have been assigned to the sexes based on nature and culture

demonstrate the way in which social order shapes the thoughts, needs, and

interests of women. In accordance with Greer (1971), they argue that we

are living in a society that is class and sex differentiated, whereby the

hierarchal relationship between the sexes is maintained and perpetuated by

ideology, is in itself not a new phenemonon. The problems of women to

be rooted in the forces of capitalism in which men became the owners of

production and women came to represent the means of production was recorded

by Engels (1977) as early as 1884. Relegated to the private sphere of the

family, and isolated from the production of exchange values, the subordinate

status of women stems from the rise of different property relations, and

as a result, it has become increasingly difficult to attribute it to a

'natural' or biological order.

Presenting a position that clealy extends from Engels', Mitchell

(1971) presents a contemporary description of how ideology, or established

patterns of thought, serves to maintain a system based on gender differences.

Her review of the role of women in England reflects the assumptions made

about women in Western society as a whole, where:

> ... women are brought up to think of themselves
> primarily as mothers and wives; yet finding
> themselves despite this, nevertheless out at
> work, it is this family identification that
> determines their relationship to their job and
> their companions ... Saparated from her work
> companions by her dependence on her family,
> within this family she experiences a yet more
> fundamental division: that of herself and her
> husband -- the original unity ... Divided, indivi-
> dualized, isolate -- a woman is yet, paradoxically
> subjected to the most homogenizing, the most
> unindividual of ideologies -- the nature of her
> so called 'womanhood', 'femininity'. "Women
> are alike the world over," "Just like a woman,"
> "Oh women..."
>
> (1971: 139-140)

Previous studies using the "Twenty Statements Test", (TST), as

an indicator of the self-concept, have attempted to contribute towards

an understanding of sexual differences in self-identity. Kuhn (1960)

reported differences on mention of sex by men and women in a study entitled

"Self-Attitudes by Age, Sex, and Professional Training". He found that in

grade school onwards the salience of sex mention increased for women more

so then for men. Kuhn draws two hypotheses from his findings. First,

that salience of mention of sex is related to the status of women as a

minority group, in that they have a greater need to mention their status

by way of identification; and second, that salience of sex mention is

greater during coutship years since it is at this stage in life that females

are staking their life-time status chances on their "sexual attractiveness"

(1960: 121).

Kuhn also reports that women more frequently then men tend to

define themselves in terms of kinship status (1960). Mulford and Salisbury

(1964), provide evidence supporting Kuhn's data that women define them-
selves more frequently in terms of kinship statuses.

Couch (1962), however, points out that a conflict exists in women
between positive self-evaluation and prescribed female roles and statuses.
High role specialization is positively associated with mention of male
social status, while an inverse relationship exists bewteen high role
specialization and mention of female social status. Couch suggests that:

> females with a family background of high
> role specialization learn that statuses of
> female and daughter are somewhat negatively
> evaluated. This is in conflict with the
> positive value placed upon the self as a
> general object. As a consequence, they think
> of themselves less frequently as daughters
> and females than do females from families
> with low role specialization.
> (1962: 121)

Couch's assumptions are further supported by the empirical evidence
presented by Anne Oakley (1974) in her study of the sociology of house-
work. Oakley's main purpose was to detect whether "a conception of self
as housewife (is) in fact articulated as part of the self-image" (1974: 121).
The data gathered by Oakley clearly indicate that those women whose child-
hood life encouraged and stressed domesticity refer to themselves more
commonly in terms of domestic or family-linked roles: for those women for
whom non-domestic activities were encouraged in childhood, the mention of the
self apart from the housewife role is greater (1974: 132). Oakley reports
that preparation for the housewife role begins for girls soon after birth:

> Their roots lie in the lessons of childhood,
> when girls learn to equate their femaleness
> with domesticity, and female identities are
> moulded around the housewife image.
> (1974: 113)

The lesson of domesticity sets up, hence, what is a relationship between

self (feminine) and role (housewife); and the influence of the social-
ization process is apparent once again.

In general accordance with Oakley, Kate Millet (1970), and
Germaine Greer (1971) analyse women as being socialized to view and evaluate
themselves in relation to men; the relationship being characterized by
dependence and subordination. Although Greer (1971) gives evidence indicat-
ing the presence of creative and intellectual potential of women beyond the
ability to reporduce, she goes on to show that these capactities are not
allowed to fully develop by documenting the experience of women through-
out the socialization process. The conflicts facing women generally during
the complex period are captured nicely by Simone de Beauvoir:

> The drama of women lies in the conflict
> between the fundamental aspirations of
> every subject who always regards the self as
> essential, and the compulsions of s situa-
> tion in which she is the inessential.
>
> (quoted in Schur, 1964)

The importance of early familial training coupled with cultural
influences in female role specialization is further illustrated by the
findings of a study of Canadian East-Indian women, (Chopra, 1978). In
accord with the main socialization assumptions, the aim of the research
was to locate that aspect of the self based on social relationships and
role identities. A cross-generational analysis of the data suggests that
early socialization indeed plays a crucial role in the formation of the
self. All the women in response to the question "Who Are You?" listed
at least one statement relating directly to a family-limked status, and
a significant majority rated the statements indicative of a familial role as
positive. The results furthermore point out that the majority or women
are very satisfied with their present self; the minority that express

dissatisfaction do so in regard with the notion of being a "housewife".
It is important to emphasize that the levels of dissatisfaction among
the women are largely in terms of a dislike of domestic duties, rather
then marital or parental related role obligations, (Chopra, 1978).

The influence of early socialization on definitions of the self
is clearly visible. The overall data indicate that the woman, as an
'individual' does not exist in Hindu society One's self, instead, is
devoted to the interestes of the larger family group. In particular,
the self-identity of the women is subordinate to that of her family. The
findings of the above mentioned pilot study suggest strongly that the Hindu wife
sees herself largely as an extension of her husband/husband's family, and
that the mention of a family-linked role identity increases with length
of marriage (Chopra, 1978).

The empirical data considered this far support Smith's (1975)
premise that sex-role stereotypes continue to exist by reason of ideological
structures legitimizing a social order in which men are associated with
qualitites that are indicative of an "independent" nature, while women
are associated with qualities that are characteristic of a "dependent"
nature. In a traditional society such as India, for example, family
structure is essentially patriarchal, marriages are arranged, and the
husband (until very recently) is the sole breadwinner -- the supremacy of
the male therefore generally prevails. The wife's duties consist of super-
vising household activities, maintaining close ties with the husband's
relatives, and in large part to be active in the social and religious
activities of the community. This, in most instances contributes to a
stable and loving relationship between husband and wife, (Bharti, 1972).

The cultural ideology thus accounts for the East-Indian women's conception

of self in terms of family roles and statuses.

The results of Chopra's (1978) study furthermore suggest that in face

of a highly industrial, competitive urban society, the Hindu women are

retaining a fairly strong family-linked concept of self. The successful

maintenance of a traditional form of social organization may be attribut-

ed to a number of factors. Most importantly, the women have been socialized

to a very large degree to become professionals in the area of home-economics,

and the well-being of their families. Following Hewitt's (1976) logic

that the set of attitudes and individual acquires, or the symbols employed

when designating her behaviour is dependent on her location in the social

structure; it may be proposed that for the Hindu woman confined to home,

and isolated from the dominant social institutions, the only roles available

to her are those relating to her status within the family group.

The discussion so far implies that general value systems provide

basic principles for allocating social roles, and that they are based on the

theory that sex roles and behaviour are dependent on the individual's location

in the social milieu. Individual identities are submerged into social

groups to which one belongs, like the family. The fact that the role of

housewife for women takes on primary importance in the description of the

self further reinforces the position that early socialization to sex roles

is a primary means of maintaining current standards of sex differentiation.

It is at this point that the empirical concern of this study be brought into

focus.

Keeping in mind that Hindu society is based on a male dominated

system of social order, the main purpose of the research undertaken is to

investigate the self-concept of a cross-generational group of East-Indian

women currently residing in an Ontario city.

The T.S.T. (Kuhn, 1954), is utilized as the main indicator of the

self-concept. Conceiving the self as a structure of attitudes derived from

the individual's internalized statuses and roles, responses to the T.S.T.

indicate the extent to which sex-role socialization has a brearing in

areas of self-definition. Beginning with the percept that women are

socialized to view themselves in relation to men, the research addresses

itself to the following hypotheses.

First, in line with the symbolic-interactionist perspective that

the self alters with significant changes in social relationships it is

hypothesized that:

> the higher the role specialization is
> within the family, the likelier the
> woman will use their family status as
> means of self-definition

A second hypothesis suggests that:

> the longer the period of marriage, the
> likelier that the view of self be associ-
> ated with an indirect expression of
> identity through sex-linked family
> roles (wife, mother); rather then a
> more direct expression of identity,
> (female, woman)

Tying the above assumptions together, a third hypothesis mantains

that:

> the wider the generational differences
> between men and women within the ethnic
> community, the likelier the possibility
> that the ideological basis for traditional
> sex-role differentiation to weaken; and for the
> new generation to assume the major elements
> of the dominant culture

A question that logically follows upon examination of the above

stated hypotheses asks why the present research is restricted to exploring
the social identity of East-Indian women, and not the men within the ethnic
community. The intent of the study is not, in effect, to single out women
as a unique analytical category, but rather, to question the traditional
roles that have been assigned to the sexes based on biology and custom.
The fact that the research is directed towards an analysis of women's
definition of the self relative to the male arises in response to the
widely held assumption that women are thought to be more naturally the
tenders of home and children. Although such a view is currently being
challenged in the Western world -- a challenge that is not altogether
surprising given the pervaisive ideology of individualism, the structural
divisions assigned to men and women in a relatively traditional society
such as India lean towards a form of family and social structure in which the
woman is not a primary unit of thought. The needs of women are subordinate
to the interests of the family group; her own status and identity is derived
entirely from her placement in the family.

An analysis of the manner in which East-Indian women perceive and
locate themselves within the Canadian context therefore becomes of interest
for two reasons. First, it is my contention that due to the forces of a
very powerful cultural ideology, East-Indian women are unaware of a self
apart from well-defined family roles. Secondly, in accordance with role
theorists like Parsons (1955), it follows that an individual's attitudes
are influenced by the role she occupies in a social system. At a time of
rapid social change, it is possible that the attitudes and behaviour of
the younger generation of Canadian East-Indian women also be influenced.
From this perspective, the empirical date will point the extent to which
role interiorization reflects differences in expression of the self.

Following an outline of the methodological design of the study which is presented in Chapter Two, empirical data is gathered and summarized in Chapter Three.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE

[1]
        Since elaborate surveys of theory and reasearch on Mead's
self-theory are found in the existing literature, the discussion here
will be limited to those aspects of the self-concept pertinent to the
development of the present study.

[2]
        The significance of the concept of "consciousness of meaning"
in empirical investigation is an important issue, and will be considered
in detail at a later stage in the study.

[3]
        As the individual's self is capable of reconstructing or
"determining" society (or her particular segment of it), so also is the
individual this capable of determining herself. One must note clearly
then, that Mead attempts to avoid the trap of determinism. Neither
the society, nor the individual is ontolocically prior to each other.

[4]
        This is also another way in which Mead emphasized the co-con-
stitutive aspects of individual and society.

[5]
        Mead has been accused by some writers of constructing a basically
idealist image of man and society through his creation of the "I" and
"Me" phases of the self (note in particular the perspectives of Meltzer
(1972), Kuhn (1972), and Kolb (1972). It is beyond the intention of this
study to present a review of the criticisms.

[6]
        This process of reflection or thought is defined by Mead as
"an internalized conversation of gestures," (1934:47).

[7]
        Operationally, the self-concept has been defined by Kuhn and
McPartland (1954) by asking respondents to answer the question "Who
Are You?" The precise format of this technique is described in Chapter Two.

[8]
        It is pointed out that sex can also be socially variant. Recent
attention given to trans-sexuality, trans-sexual alternatives and problems
of gender indicate that sex-roles can be the subject of negotiation.

[9]
        The term "position" as used here refers to the process of
locating any given member of a society by the places (statuses) she
occupies within the status systems of her society.

CHAPTER TWO

THE METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodological design of the study is outlined. First, a description of the tools employed in gathering the data and the techniques utlized in analysing the data are presented. Second, sample characteristics, and a brief socio-historical account of East-Indian immigrants in Canada is provided.

A study concerned with describing the workings of any given social system needs to consider in some length the issue of data collection, and the adequacy of the research methods employed in gathering the data. When dealing with a group of women, specifically immigrant women, such a concern becomes of greater significance, especially if we accept D. Smith's (1975) accusation that socio-psychological instruments as methodological tools for the understanding of sexual differences are biased in their assumptions in favour of legitimizing a male-dominated, capitalist system of social thought.[1]

In order to avoid falling in the trap of merely reiterating sex-role ideology, the research to be reported here is undertaken from two approaches differing in technique, yet arising from the symbolic-interactionist tradition of giving analytical priority to the individual.

THE "TWENTY STATEMENTS TEST"

The first approach, directed primarily at discovering the subjec-
tive experience of identity involves the use of the "Twenty Statements
Test" (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954). The T.S.T. was first reported by Kuhn
and McPartland (1954) as a valid instrument for identifying and measuring self-
attitudes as they are defined in the self theory of G. H. Mead. Although
the precise format of the T.S.T. may vary, the central feature of the
instrument is that is asks the respondent to identify herself by providing
statements in response to the question "Who Are You?" A detailed review
of the theoretical bases upon which the T.S.T. is founded, as well as a
methodological instrument is presented below.

The T.S.T. was first developed by Kuhn (1954) in an attempt to
transform the self theory of symbolic interactionism to empirically
testable research. It was Kuhn's supposition that human behaviour is not
only organized and directed, but that an individual's attitudes toward
oneself cause this organization and direction, (Kuhn and MaPartland, 1954).
Conceiving the self as a structure of attitudes derived from the individual's
internalized statuses and roles, Kuhn asserts that central to a person's
conception of himself:

> is his identity; that is, his generalized position
> in society deriving from his statuses in the groups
> of which he is a member, the roles which stem from
> these statuses, and the social categories which his
> group membership lead him to assign himself.
>
> (Kuhn, 1964: 630-631)

Defining personality as a system of attitudes which are actually inter-
nalizations of the individual's role relationships, Kuhn (1956: 45)

writes:

> Social and cultural factors become determinants
> of personality factors only as the individual
> comes to internalize the roles he plays and the
> statuses he occupies. He aks "Who Am I?' and can
> answer this question of identity only in terms of
> his social position.

Kuhn's self theory views the individual as deriving her plans of actions

from the role she plays in society, and the statuses she occupies within

her reference groups. It follows, then, that the T.S.T. grows out of a

conceptual perspective of the self-concept stressing social relationships

and role identities. However, as pointed out by Spitzer et al. (1971: 1):

> While it is commonly referred to as a test, it is not
> a test designed to measure the level or extent of a
> talent or characteristic. Rather, it is an instrument
> that asks the respondents to define themselves...

By placing the burden of identifying one's self entirely upon the

respondent, the T.S.T. is an instrument for ascertaining how a person locates

and appraises herself in a given social system. By asking the respondent

to answer the question "Who Am I?" the T.S.T. elicits a person's self-

concept in a manner consistent with symbolic-interactionism. Reflecting

an individual's own perception of self, the T.S.T. is regarded as a valid

instrument for measuring identity then direct questions for:

> ... when a respondent in reply to the "Who Am I?'
> question of the T.S.T. writes 'I an a man,' 'I am
> a student,' it is reasonable to believe that we
> have far more solid knowledge of the attitudes which
> organize and direct his behaviour than, if, on a
> checklist and among other questions, we had asked,
> 'do you think of yourself as a mna?' 'do you think
> of yourself as a student?'
>
> (quoted in Oakley, 1974: 122)

In comparison with fixed response techniques, the open-ended format

of the T.S.T. allows the respondent the freedom to describe herself in her

own language, and in whatever order or manner desired by her. She does

not have to limit her responses to fit any pre-established category, nor does

she have to describe herself in terms of a set of pre-imposed adjectives

or phrases. The relatively unstructured format of the T.S.T. instead

elicits responses that are obtained directly from the subject. From this

perspective, it may be safely assumed that self-definition and self-rating

procedures reflect with greater certainty the individual's perception of self

then content scoring procedures (Spitzer et al., 1971).

While sharing the view that those self-definitions made by a person

herself have the greatest significance, it remains to be pointed out that

where the T.S.T. is viewed as a product of social interaction between the

person and others, it faces certain limitations. An obvious drawback lies

in developing a standard classification and coding system for the data

derived from the "Who Are You?" question. Once the respondents have

identified and evaluated themselves by supplying self-descriptions, the

responses are then coded (no standard way) to produce self esteem scores.

The reputed strength of such open-ended procedures is the flexibility it

allows the respondents in selecting those descriptions that best fit their

particular situation. However, while open-ended, the T.S.T. does not, it

has been argued, deal adequately with individual meanings. Most coding

systems are imposed by the researcher, (Mahoney, 1973). What may subsequent-

ly follow is an assigning of symbols and classification of persons accord-

ing to some criteria which is not necessarily "objective."[2] The position

undertaken here is that we are dealing with a methodological instrument which

is basically congenial to orthodox measurements of self-esteem. A radical

criticism asserts that self-esteem codings and self-esteem ratings essential-

ly ignore meaning, and ask the respondent to merely rank the statements

provided in terms of desirability and importance, (Wells and Marwell, 1976).
The T.S.T. in this manner makes assumptions and generalizations which
theroetically do not permit comparability across respondents for they do
not necessarilty share equivalent sets of meanings, (Wells and Marwell,
1976). The measures, therefore, by dealing with self-definition explicity-
ly as a social process, remain relative to the group under study, the
researcher, and the nature of the research question, (Wells and Marwell,
1976).

Any attempt to explain individual differences must begin by
acknowledging the symbolic-interactionists' premise that the self is a
social product, implying both interaction among individuals and the prior
existence of the group from which the self derives its meaning, (Mead,
1934). By insisting that there is not self apart from membership in a
group such that a community of attitudes exists within each member,
(Mead, 1934), draws the conclusion that humans respond to events and
objects in terms of the meanings they have attributed to them. Insofar
as people respond to an object differently, it has different meanings
for them. But given that the world is populated with diverse cultural
groups, and because individuals take their identities at least in part from
the groups to which they belong, it follows that within each culture we
find a variety of subcultures sharing similar ways of responding to an
object.

Following the above trend of thought, the problems of inference
by the researcher does not become of significant concern. Assuming that
the researcher and the subject are generally products of the same culture
and operate in terms of the same symbolic and communicative systems, it

is clear that many meanings can be shared.

It is suggested in turn, that the T.S.T. when used as an instrument for isolating factors of the self associated with a specific identity, may in fact be superior to other forms of written measures. In a study involving a sample of 1,213 adults, Kuhn (1954) found that in response to the question "Who Am I?" the majority of the individuals tend to first think of themselves in terms of their social roles. Working on the premise that the self is based upon the individual's interpretation of the responses of others, Kuhn differentiated self-identification on the basis of consensual and non-consensual statements. Consensual statements refer to "groups and classes whose limits and conditions of membership are matter of common knowledge," (Spitzer et al., 1971: 18), or statements which would generally be understood by others in the larger society without explanation; while non consensual statements are those which refer to "groups, classes, attributes, traits, or any other matter which would require interpretation by the respondent to be precise or to place him relative to other people," (Spitzer et al., 1971: 18). Following the consensual/non-consensual dichtomy, the problem of bias or inference on the part of the researcher is virtually eliminated in those studies utilizing the T.S.T. as a tool for indexing specific identities. The precise manner in which the T.S.T. statements for the present study are coded for analysis is outlined below.

MODES OF ANALYSIS

The "Who Are You?" Question

A modified version of Kuhn and McPartland's (1954) consensual and non-consensual dichotomous classification of the T.S.T. statements is used to measure respondents' "social anachorage" in their social system.

Given that my interest lies in exploring the extent to which Indian women define themselves in terms of traditional marital roles, I wanted to establish a coding system which would, in effect, single out those references pertaining directly to a family-linked status, and those responses which would suggest a self-concept relatively independent of familial reference. In order to code the statements in a manner which would permit their classification according to the family-linked, or independent referential frames, each of the self-identifying statements made by the respondents was coded according to the categories developed by T. S. McPartland (1959) for indexing specific identities.

The three categories utilized to make useful discriminations may be spoken of as representing self-identifications as being either "subjective", "objective", or "socially situated" in nature. Category A, comprising subjective self-identification contains responses which identify the self as a physical being, while the B (objective) category contains self-identifications which are more social in character. The C category is used for statements which identify the self as involved in more or less explicityly structured socially defined familial statuses. These three categories will now be described in some detail.[3]

Category A

The "A" category of self-identifying statements includes those statements which identify the self in terms of physical attributes, and other kinds of personal information without suggesting anything about social behaviour in any particular interactive context, (McPartland, 1959: 26). This kind of statement is illustrated by such examples as: "I am an individual," "I am strong," "I live in Canada."

Category B

.The "B" category of identifications of the self consists of statements which are socially distinguishing, excluding familial references. This category of self-identifying statements includes styles of behaviour which the respondent attributes to herself, such as: "I am a good person," "I like people," and so forth. This category also includes statements which, as stated by McPartland (1959:27) are "so comprehensive in their references that they do not lead to socially meaningful differentiation of the person who makes the statement." Essentially leading to no reliable expectations about behaviour, examples of such statements are: "I am a woman who always wishes the best for everyone," "I wish more people were kind in the world."

Category C

The "C" category used in analysis of responses of the T. S. T. differentiates statements which imply involvement in structured familial situations. This category contains references to marital statuses which are socially defined and maintained. More or less a positional category, examples of identification of the self which belong to the "C" category are direct mention of marital status and role such as "I am a mother," as well as statements suggesting domestic references, such as "I am a housewife," "I like to cook for my husband."

These three categories serve to describe not only the responses obtained by the T.S.T., but the respondents as well. This is so because a significant majority of the respondents make self references which exhibit a clear mode in one of the categories, (McPartland, 1959). Characterized by a set of dominant responses, it becomes meaningful to situate the respondent in the particular modal categories, or, in terms of displaying

a self-concept either relatively independent of any specific interactive

context, a self-concept which is essentially 'neutral' in that it does

not pin the respondent down to a precise category, or a self-concept

which clearly implies the respondent's interactive involvement in the family

group.[5]

Coding Rules

The T.S.T. statements were coded according to the following rules (McPartland,

1959: 26):

1. Only written responses on the T.S.T. page were coded.

2. Each numbered response represented a unit for coding.

3. Statements which were joined by the conjunctions "and," or "but" were
   coded separately.

4. Only those statements written in English were coded.

5. Illegible statements were not coded.

6. Negative statements were coded in the same manner as affirmative
   statements.

7. No distinction was made between self-statements which were of a
   qualifying nature; the primary aim being to place the statement
   in one of the three categories, and not to be evaluatative or judge-
   mental.

8. Given that not every respondent was able to provide 20 different self-
   references, the scores obtained by each respondent were computed on
   a percentage basis allowing for relatively simple mode of comparison.

Self-Evaluations and Self-Ratings of the T.S.T. Statements

In addition to asking the respondents to answer the question "Who

Are You?" the T.S.T. also instructs that the self-reference statements

provided be rated in terms of their desireablility and their importance.

These self-rating procedures, by permitting the individual to evaluate the

statements she has made of herself place once again the task of identification

soley upon the respondent. From the symbolic-interactionist perspective,

self-evaluations have come to refer to those statements a person makes about herself in comparison with other persons or some objective standards. Referring basically to an individual's awareness of her degree of success or failure in fulfilling those social roles which she has identified with, the purpose of indexing self-evaluations and self-ratings is to attain a measure of the respondent's own appraisal of herself without trying to locate it in any established framework (Hall, 1966).

The first self-rating procedure utilized in the present study asked the respondent to go back over the responses she has made on the T.S.T. and to designate those statements which she regards as being positive, neutral, or negative in describing her self-concept. Numerical scores are based upon the values assigned to the responses by the subject, and serve to describe the extent to which the individual portrays a positive, neutral, or negative self-image. Due to my concern with the respondents' precept of their location in their family group, only those statements falling in the C category were subsequently analyzed in an effort to determine the extent to which Asian women rate that aspect of self based on familial reference in positive, neutral, or negative terms.

A second procedure asked the respondents to indicate the degree to which they are satisfied with being what they have stated themselves to be. Numerical weights were assigned to each of the statements made by a given respondent in an attempt to determine her toal degree of satisfaction with self. Each of the statements relating to a direct mention of marital role or status were then coded separately in an effort to explore the level to which the women are satisfied with their said familial roles.

The final self-rating procedure instructed the respondents to rank the statements provided in order of importance. The respondents were ask-

ed to rate the statement they felt as being most important to them as (1), the next most important statement as (2), and so on. This part of the T.S.T. however, was done very poorly, and was not answered by all the respondents. Consequently the three statements ranked most important by each respondent out of the total statements given were taken as reflecting that part of self which is most important to the individuals, and to their self-concept. As pointed out by Kuhn and McPartland (1943: 72), "the saliency of self-reference may be understood as the relative spontaneity with which a particular reference will be used as an orientation in the organization of behaviour." Particular responses, thus, reflect levels of attachment in certain groups.

Assuming that a relationship exists between the role structure of a group and the way members of the group define themselves, in the case of the Indian women, the saliency and evaluation of a statement indicative of a family related status will indicate the extent to which the women have indeed internalized their wife/mother role, and whether such a role is valued positively or negatively. That relationship should prevail between one's concept of self, and the role structure of the family stems from awareness that the family is an influential institution and that the development of the self depends to a considerable extent on the form of interaction that occurs within the family group, (Couch, 1962).

Assuming furthermore that the self alters with significant changes in social relationships, it is hypothesized that soon after marriage, women generally, and East-Indian women in particular begin to identify themselves in terms of their marital roles, and that an identification based on family status increases with length of marriage, or role internalization.

It has been suggested by Spitzer et al., (1971) that one of the draw-
backs of the T.S.T. is that it may not always reveal that aspect of the
self that individuals have firmly internalized. Their argument is that
certain aspects of the self are so deeply embedded within an individual
that she unconsciously may not refer to them. However, I maintain that
due to the forces of a very powerful cultural ideology, East-Indian women
have no self apart from well-defined family roles. It is further main-
tained that because these roles serve as a means of achieving a socailly
sanctioned life-time status, and that because the women are conscious
of their social significance, the responses to the T.S.T. be organized
on the basis of family-linked roles and statuses.

While the T.S.T. permits measurement of self-identity at the
individual level, the implication that an individual's concept of self is
derived from her social circles suggests that in order to fully appreciate
the T.S.T. findings, a closer examination of the social structure from
which the individuals derive their symbols is warranted. It is quite
possible, for instance, that the responses of individuals be attributed
to the tendancy of respondents in general to produce socially desirable
answers resulting out of a need of approval. The ordering of responses
may, furthermore, be an unconscious action on the part of the respondent,
for, as stated by Oakley (1974: 125):

> When a norm is internalized, it is part of a
> person; automatically expressed in behaviour
> rather than regarded in a more detached way as
> a rule external to the self. Actual statements
> about the self (such as those obtained in the
> T.S.T.) may not refer to this dimension at all,
> but instead relate to the psycholinguistic question
> of the extent to which self and (housewife) role
> are differentiated in the self-image.

From this perspective, it is maintained that the self-concept of

the Asian women cannot be adequately considered without an understanding

of their socialization experiences and a knowledge of the foundation

which forms the basis of the wider East-Indian cultural system. By not

taking into sufficient account the processes that generate the initial

responses to the "Who Are You?" question, the T.S.T. leaves a vaccum in

the analysis of the data. It is hence felt that in order to obtain a

more complete method of understanding the structural conditions in which

the individual is involved, the findings of the T.S.T. be considered in

conjunction with research involving the use of participant observation

and unstructured interviewing techniques.

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Schwartz and Schwartz, (1955: 91) define participant observation

as a process in which:

> the observer's presence in a social situation is
> maintained for the purpose of scientific inves-
> tigation. The observer is in a face-to-face
> relationship with the observed, and, by partici-
> pating with them in their natural life setting,
> he gathers data. Thus, the observer is part of
> the context being observed, and he both modifies
> and is influenced by this context. The role of
> participant observer may be either formal or
> informal, concealed or revealed; the observer
> may spend a great deal or very little time in
> the research situation; the participant-observer
> role may be an integral part of the social
> structure or largely peripheral to it.

With the aim of tracing the individual's world her own perspective,

and in her own environment, the participant as observer role provides an

opportunity for formal observation, unstructured interviewing, and informal

observation of the group in question through participation in a variety

of social, cultural, and religious events. Observation of both the

private and public world of the Canadian East-Indian women leads to the

proposal of a number of hypotheses accounting for their on-going social

order. It demonstrates the extent to which the social traditions of the

women are being maintained in Canadian society. A cross-generational

survey of the data furthermore permits a measure of role internalization

in the development of the self.

It is felt, therefore, that while the theoretical assumptions of

the T.S.T. leave no room for that part of the self that cannot be

communicated in written form, or in other words, behaviour that is

non-symbolic, (gestures, facial expressions, modes of speech, dress, and

so forth), that participant observation records life as it is experienced

by the subjects in an everyday setting. The significance of studing

non-symbolic behaviour has been documented by Birdwhistell (1973). A

pioneer in the field of "kinesic communication", Birdwhistell argues that

the immense detail of various studies can be organized into a non-verbal

communicative system that is as orderly and regulated as the verbal one.

Scheflen (1972) also provides clinical evidence that posture, facial expression,

distance, touching and other non-verbal actions can convey detailed infor-

mation about one's self, and one's opinion of others.

In studies concerned with an understanding of social systems that

differ radically from the wider society, the importance of symbolic forms

of behaviour needs to be especially underlined. It is argued here that

in the majority of the societies characterized as maintaining a relatively

traditional form of social order, the role played by behaviour that is non-

verbal is a very significant aspect of the society's cultural foundations.

The respect for custom and observance of tradition is visible to the

eye, but the meaning of the behaviour cannot be shared in written

form, even though the symbols form such an integral part of the self.

However, as with the T.S.T., the issue of bias on the part of the

researcher has also been associated with participant observation. Various

experts have questioned the extent to which the researcher's assimilation

in a particular community may affect the objectivity of his field findings

and subsequent interpretations.[6] A commonly expressed opinion suggests

that the nature of the relationship exisiting between the observer and the

observed may influence the researcher's perspective indirectly.[7] Emotional

involvement in a group may, therefore, severely limit one's attempt at

recording valid data.

On the other hand, under certain cases being assimilated in a

community, that is sharing the group's customs, practices, and language

may, in effect, be conductive to understanding that particular community.

Empathy at times can serve to provide interpretation of events that may

remian unnoticed by the researcher who is not 'native'. In the case of

a study concerned with the workings of an ethnic community, the importance

of being able to empathize rather then simple sympathize with the group's

life situation is of even greater significance. In such an instance, not

just a following, but an understanding of customs and traditions to a

certain degree is important for meaningful participant observation to occur.

Instead of distorting reality, the observer's empathetic relationship with

the observed according to Schwartz and Schwartz (1955: 99):

> facilitates his understanding of their inner
> life and their social world, and increases the
> validity and meaningfulness of his observations.

The participant observer who lives in the community under study,

who adopts the customs of the group, and who has one of her purposes while

living in the community to observe its character can successfully control
her biases by being aware of her emotional involvement with the group of
study. In a situation where the researcher is aware of her informal ties
with members of the community, empathy consists in the utilization of a
complex skill (Martin, 1974). The skill partly consists of being able
to report objectively while assimilated in the group's social system.

The extent to which it is possible to remain detached, and thus
value-free while reporting is somewhat complex, and need not be considered
in detail at this time. Suffice it to state that my position on value-
neutrality is in accordance with Max Weber's (1974) notion of _verstehen_,
or subjective interpretation in social research. In his concept of
veretehen, Weber explicity argues for an analysis of meaning which appears
to the actor or the observer as adequate reasoning for the actor's conduct,
(1974: 35). Weber maintains that action has to be understandable in terms
of established patterns of behaviour. Inference from the observer's own
experiences, therefore, becomes vitally important, (Weber, 1974: 35). From
this perspective, complete objectivity in the explanation of social behaviour,
be it in the more intimate field of participant observation, or in the
relatively formal approach of the T.S.T. remains at the unrealistic level.

Ideally, research involving the use of participant observation might
best consist of two successive phases. The first, and most crucial step
in the research process involves gaining access and securing integration
in the on-going life situation of the given community. Already an as-
similated member of the group, in the sense that I live in the community
and an accepted through primary and secondary affiliations, gaining entry
into the field became a relatively easy task for me, automatically giving
rise to a participant as observer situation, (Gold, 1974). This role

provided opportunity for both formal observation, unstructured inter-
viewing, and informal observation through participation in a variety of
social and cultural events. Observation of the public and private
social organization of the Asian women's social structure lead to the
second phase of the research process; that is, it served to validate the
hypotheses generated by the T.S.T.

In summary, it is proposed that while both participant observa-
tion and the T.S.T. emphasize the social nature of the self, as separate
instruments for measuring human behaviour they both face certain methodological
difficulties. The major drawbacks of participant observation techniques
concern the time factor involved in gathering data, and the focus on
qualitative rather then quantitative forms of measurement. The T.S.T., on
the other hand, although an efficient method of empirically detecting
particular self-attitudes does not provide an adequate means of assessing
the influence of the structural process in the measurement of the self-concept.
However, used in conjunction with data obtained through the use of partici-
pant observation, it is maintained that the findings of the T.S.T. accurately
demonstrate the relationship between mental structures of individuals and
their cultural environment. A detailed report of the data gathered
through the two research techniques follows the discussion of sample
characteristics.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

As a social category, the term "East-Indian," includes a wide range
of groups of people -- people speaking different, mutually not always
understood languages, and often differing markedly in beliefs, customs, and
practices. This study deals primarily with a group of Canadian East-Indian
women originally from Kenya, East-Africa.[8]

Given that official population records by ethnic background are not available for Canadian cities, the sample of women for the present study was obtained primarily through the membership list of the Arya Smaj, a voluntary East-Indian religious organization based in the city of Burlington. Thus, not altogether a random sample, for purposes of an exploratory, extensive survey of the self-concept, role socialization and self-perception of East-Indian women in Canadian society, the present research sample is considered adequate.

The T.S.T. was administered to sixty married women; a majority of whom are members of the Arya Smaj, the names of the remaining few were obtained through mutual and kin-based acquaintences. Out of the total sample of sixty, forty-four women completed the T.S.T. as instructed. The remaining sixteen women either directly refused to respond to the T.S.T., did not return the test within the one-week time period considered sufficient to complete the test, or, if they did return the T.S.T., did not provide the information regarding the self-concept as instructed. The final sample of forty-four women share the following characteristics:

Although their heritage through blood may be traced to the land of Punjab (India), the majority of the women were either born and/or raised in Nairobi, (Kenya), before emigrating to Canada. As a group, therefore, they share a common cultural background, and though not differing greatly in matters of social custom and values from the Indians of Punjab, their unique socio-political and economic situation in East-Africa places them in a special category. The generally high social position and economic status accorded to the Asians in Kenya serves to account for their particular life experience and world view.

All the respondents are Hindu, they have been married only once, and
their husbands are also Hindu. The women share, in Canadian standards, a
middle to high standard of living. Though Punjabi is their primary language,
all the women employed in the sample can speak and write Englsih. As a
result, responses to the T.S.T., and conversations resulting during observa-
tion were communicated in English.

Although as immigrants, these women are relatively new to the
country, (the average family has been established in Burlington for 3 - 10
years),* the group is marked by differences in age, allowing for cross-
generational comparison. The sample consists of two groups of women;
those who have been married for less then 20 years, and those who have
been married for more then 20 years. The division of women into these
two categories follows Jean Lipman-Blumen's (1972) extensive survey of how
sex-role ideology shapes women's lives. Finding that the system of
beliefs regarding appropriate behaviour of women in regard to men acquired
during the socialization process shape adult women's perceptions of self,
Blumen reports that women generally adhere either to a "traditional," or
a "contemporary" sex-role ideology.

According to Blumen, women adhering to the "traditional" ideology view
the female role as one being responsible for homemaking and child-rearing;
men are responsible for financial support of the family, while the place
of women with children is in the home. The "contemporary" view is based
on the belief that women should be able to have equal educational and occupa-
tional goals as men, and that both men and women should be able to satisfy

*Information obtained through face-data sheet accompanying the
T.S.T.

their needs of achievement outside the home, (Blumen, 1972).

In this study, it is postulated that those women who have been married for less then 20 years will lean more towards a contemporary sex-role ideology, while those women who have been married for over 20 years will espouse a relatively traditional system of beliefs concerning appropriate behaviour for men and women. The terms "traditional" and "contemporary" as utilized here are more then mere tools of convenience. It is emphasized that these models are generalizations of statements made by various members of the Asian community, and therefore represent more complete descriptions and accounts of life situations then those provided by the views of single individuals.

The older group of respondents account for nearly one-half of the Asian communtiy under study, and consist largely of those individuals over the age of forty. Having lived the major part of their lives in Kenya, their image of India as a political and socio-cultural agent is deeply ingrained. As is the case with all Asian settlers in East-Africa, appreciation of the arts, to central matters such as in points of diet, religion and doctrine, to the ego image, the self, and the family are seen and reacted to exactly as in India, (Bharti, 1972). For this generation, hence, the conservative element dominates in all fields -- social, religious, and most importantly, in the sphere of ideology.

Included in the young generation are those individuals between the ages of 20 - 40. Although they were born/raised in Kenya, their young age and higher education allowed an exposure to Western culture at a relatively early stage in life. In Canada, this group's high level of participation in the public sphere further places them in a position involving continual interaction with the members and culture of the dominant

society. Constituting a little over half of the Indian population under study, this group represents the views of those able to identify with both Eastern and Western cultures.

Comparison of attitudes result primarily from measures of the self-concept obtained through the T.S.T. Cross-generational analysis is based as well on eight months of observations and numerous conversations with the research sample. Observation of the daily routine, the women's reactions towards the institutions of the family, marriage, kinship, religion, and education seemed most important in the effort to determine whether Canadian East-Indian women are preserving their traditional sex-role structure, or whether the conservative element is becoming oriented towards a more contemporary sex-role ideology. The East-Indian women's role perceptions emerging from this study are discussed in the following chapter.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER TWO

[1]   M. Eichler, "Sociology of Feminist Research in Canada," in
Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 3 (2), Winter, (409 - 422)
clearly points out that for female members of marginal groups there
exists a state of double dependence, the negative effects of their
mariginal status is reinforced by being female.

[2]   By using the term "objective" I wish to suggest that those
methodological instruments utilized be as free as possible from the
personal biases of the measurer, and of the discipline he/she is part of.

[3]   Specifically, self-references are categorized in the following
manner:

Category A

name, health, physical traits, desires, goals, age.

Category B

mood, sex identity, occupation, group membership other then family, ethnic
group references, educational references, beliefs.

Category C

direct mention of family status, family role, domestic references, extended-
family references.

[4]   A questionnarie inquiring respondents' face data such as length
of marriage, number of years they have been residents in Canada, and so
forth, as well as 10 questions with specially constructed categories design-
ed to rate the individuals as maintaining a traditional or contemporary
view of sex-role structure follows the T.S.T.

[5]   The level of reliability and adequacy of these categories was
attained by the use of certain procedural rules as outlined by McPartland
(1959), as well as by explicit definitions of the said categories.

[6]   The question of validity is well considered by Becker and Greer (1969).

[7]   See M. Martin (1974), S. Miller (1969), J. Dean, Eichorn and Dean
(1969).

[8]   T. B. Bottomore's (1971: 99) definition of a social group is
considered most appropriate for the present discussion. Bottomore

defines a social group as:

> an aggregate of individuals in which (1) definite
> relations exist between the individuals comprising
> it, and (2) each individual is conscious of the group
> itself and its symbols ...

CHAPTER THREE

SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

It is the purpose of this chapter to first summarize the responses

obtained on the T.S.T., and to subsequently suggest through data gathered

by informal interviewing and participant observation that a relationship

exists between sex-role socialization of East-Indian women and their con-

cept of the self.[1]

It was hypothesized earlier that the Hindu woman derives her status

and sense of identity from her placement in the family. The rationale

behind this assumption was formed on the grounds that East-Indian women

in general are socialized in a sheltered environment with emphasis on

conformity, obedience, and harmony (Cormack, 1957). Trained in social

relationships, girls are taught to leave matters of decision and responsibility

to male members of the family; individual initiative, hence is not develop-

ed (Cormack, 1957).

Although the present data are only exploratory, they imply that

while the concept of the self as perceived by the informants is strongly

related to groups, that the commitment to the family is more pronounced

in the older generation then in the younger group of Canadian East-Indian

women. As evidenced by some of the interviews in the present sample, the

upbringing of both groups of women is very similar. The older Asian genera-

tion, however, emerges as clearly traditional on values pertaining to the

family, home, religion, and education. There emerges, in contrast, a sense

of duality in the self-concept of the younger Hindu woman. The data indicate

that while she is deeply committed to her family and home, at the same time

she also reveals the potential for contemporary, achievement aspirations.

The difference in attitudes between the two groups of respondents is reveal-

ed in many statements, especially in those given in response to the "Who

Am I?" question.

THE T.S.T. DATA

The toal sample of 44 women was divided in terms of average years

of married life, permitting a cross-generational form of analysis. The

reasoning behind this form of classification whereby net years of marriage

is considered as the independent variable influencing the individual's

concept of self rests on the basic Hindu assumption that self-fulfillment

for women, reckoned through the roles of devoted wife and loving mother

can only be sowed, and blossom within the bonds of marriage, (Meyer, 1953).

Although it may be argued that a major role change such as that stemming

from marriage would generally promote self-change, the position undertaken

here is that certain role changes are more "persistent," to use Schmitt's

(1961) terminology, to an individual's self then others. As such, length

of marriage is seen as a significant contributing variable leading to

either a "contemporary," or "traditional" perception of self. The first

operational hypothesis, hence, is that the percentage of statements involving

an individualistic self-concept would be greater for the younger women

then for the older respondents. It is assumed that as the women become more

involved in the role of wife/mother, they will tend to see themselves more in terms of that role, and less in terms of former roles and statuses.

For analytical purposes, those women who have been married for less then 20 years were classified as belonging to the young generation, while those women who have been married for over 20 years were classified as the old generation. Table I classifies the sample into the old and young generations on the basis of average years of marriage.

TABLE I

Total Number of Respondents And
Average Duration of Marriage

Years	Respondents	
	N	%
0 - 5	13	29.5
5 - 10	3	6.8
10 - 15	4	9.2
15 - 20	2	4.5
20 - 25	2	4.5
25 - 30	12	27.3
30 - 35	3	6.8
35 - 40	5	11.4
Total	44	100.0%

Twenty-two, or half of the total number of women have been married for under 20 years, and as indicated by Table I, the average length of marriage for this group of respondents lies between 0 - 5 years. The remaining 22 women have been married for over 20 years, with the average duration of

marriage resting between 25 - 30 years. The fact that the majority of the

young generation is comprised of newlyweds, having been married for less

then 5 years as compared to the majority of the older women who have been

married well over 25 years permits a very clear exploration of the relation-

ship assumed to exist between length of marriage, and the self-concept.[2]

While differing markedly in length of marriage, a common element

between the two groups of women concerns their period of residence in Canada.

Although relatively new immigrants, the East-Indian women's length of stay

in Canada is variable, reanging from 1 - 17 years, peaking at 1 - 5 years,

(Table II).

TABLE II

	Average Period of Residence In Canada for Total Sample	
Years	Young	Old
0 - 5	11 (50)	9 (40.9)
6 - 11	11 (50)	7 (31.8)
12 - 17	-	6 (27.3)
18 - 23	-	-
Total	22 100%	22 100%

Half of the younger group of Asian women have been living in Canada for less

then 5 years, while the other half have been Canadian residents for a period

of 6 - 11 years. The majority (59 per cent) of the older women, however,

have lived in Canada over six years, with 27 per cent having emigrated to

Canada as early as 1963. The fact that none of the women reported having

lived in Canada for over 17 years suggests that for the most part, East-

Indians are fairly new immigrants to North America.[3] Whether the younger gener-

ation's relative recent arrival in this country is an influencing factor deter-

mining their self-concept, sense of self-worth, and sense of accomplishment

will be considered in conjunction with the responses obtained on the T.S.T.

The Self-Concept

For their first task, the women were asked to list 20 different

statements to the T.S.T. question "Who Am I?"[*] The frequency of response,

(Table III), was 704 for the total sample, giving a mean response

frequency of 16. This was noted to be lower then Lewis' (1971: 755) 19.1,

but consistent with Couch's (1966: 255), frequency measures of 16.4. The

majority of women in both the young and older generations provided a minimum

of 16 self descriptions. The remaining group of young women supplied an

average of 11 statements, while the remaining group of older women pro-

vided an average of 8 self-references. The high rate of response may be

attributable to the method of test administration. The women were not able to

complete the T.S.T. in my presence. It thus becomes difficult to predict

whether they had any outside help while responding to the given questions.

The self-concept of the Asian women was determined by the number

of references pertaining directly to a family-linked self description, an

essentially netural self-reference, and those statements descriptive of a

personal, or individualist referential frame.[4] Table IV summarizes the

percentage of statements calculated from the total number of statements

*Refer to the Appendix in regard to description of the precise
format of the T.S.T.

TABLE III

$$\text{Total Number}^* \text{ of Statements Provided in Response}$$
$$\text{To the "Who Am I?" Question}$$

Statements	Young	Old
20	12 (54.4)	11 (50.0)
19	-	1 (4.6)
18	-	1 (4.6)
17	-	-
16	3 (13.4)	-
15	-	-
14	1 (4.6)	1 (4.6)
13	-	-
12	1 (4.6)	2 (9.1)
11	-	2 (9.1)
10	1 (4.6)	3 (13.4)
9	1 (4.6)	-
8	1 (4.6)	-
7	1 (4.6)	-
6	1 (4.6)	-
5	-	-
4	-	-
3	-	1 (4.6)
2	-	-
1	-	-
	22 100%	22 100%
	$\bar{x} = 16.1$	$\bar{x} = 15.9$

Total Number of Responses = 704

Mean Response Frequency = 16

*As the total number of responses varied in each case, the data
includes computation of the total responses for each respondent on a
percentagem as well as net basis.

supplied by the respondents on the basis of their classification into the
three categories considered meaningful in situating the respondents' self-
concept.[5]

TABLE IV

Percentage Categorization of T.S.T. Statements Based Upon The Groups' Collective Identity

	Individual	Neutral	Family	Total
Young	30.0	47.5	22.5	100%
Old	24.4	44.4	31.2	100%

The majority of statements made by the older group of women, 44
per cent were classified as neutral. Only 31 per cent of the statements
displayed a family-oriented sense of self, and less than the mean of
33.3 per cent, only 24 per cent of their self references were characteristic
of an individualist self-concept.

The majority of the statements supplied by the younger generation,
47.5 per cent, also pertained to a neutral self-concept. However, a
higher percentage of their self-descriptions, 30 per cent, were found to
be characteristic of an individualist orientation, whereas only 22.5 per
cent of their statements reflected an identification by family roles and
statuses.

The pattern emerging from the first T.S.T. measure, wherein the
majority of the statements reflect neither a family-oriented nor an indivi-
dualistic identity lends support to Spitzer's (1971: 42) theory that "very

few respondents make over 4 - 5 statements that are based upon a single identity."
However, my emphasis lies in measuring the extent to which Asian women define
themselves in terms of familial roles, and accepting the tendancy of respond-
ents in general to supply self-descriptions that are not based upon a single
identity, it is pointed out that when familial references were supplied by
the present sample, the older generation scored relatively higher then the
younger group of women. Similarly, when statements depicting an individual-
istic orientation were provided, the younger generations obtained compara-
tively higher scores.

Overall, the self-descriptions listed by the respondents were fairly
simple, and in the majority of instances very similar. A content analysis of
the responses revealed that in answer to the question "Who Am I?",
responses characteristic of a subjective self-concept included: "I am an
individual," "I am strong-willed," "I am a human being," "I am self-center-
ed." Responses characteristic of a neutral referential frame included
self-descriptions such as: "I am educated," "I have a college degree,"
"I am a teacher," "I am a religious woman." In the family-oriented category,
frequent mention was made of marital roles such as: "I am a good wife,"
"I am a mother," "I am a daughter-in-law," "I am a widow." Statements reflect-
ing a domestic orientation (which were coded as belonging to the family
category) included references such as: "I like to cook for my family," "I
am a housewife," "I hate housework," "I wish I could have someone to help
with the household chores." Both positive and negative self-references
were coded in similar fashion on the grounds that self-definition is determined
by the individual's seld orientation. Whether the bond is negative or
positive is irrelevant if a family-linked or essentially individualistic
orientation determines the self-concept.

Content analysis of the self-descriptions provided by this sample of women give exploratory validity to the hypothesis that the identity of the Hindu woman is generally dervied from the perspective of the social group to which she belongs. The fact that the frequency of responses falling in the neutral category was the highest for both groups of respondents clearly suggests that their self is primarily one that is identified with others. However, when self-descriptions implying either an individualistic or family-orientation were provided, the percentage of statements involving an individualist self-concept weas greater for the younger generation then for the older respondents. The concern for personal growth and goals were emphasized by the young women, whereas the older women reflected a comparatively firmer anachorage in the family group and domestic setting. The data thus far lend support to the assumption that length of marriage acts as a relevent variable influencing the self-concept. The older women, the majority of whom have been married for over 25 years, did tend to describe themselves more in terms of familial roles and statuses and less in terms of subjective self-references. The trend seems to indicate that while the older East-Indian women have to a great degree internalized their status of wife/mother, that the younger generation are still coming to terms with the role change experienced through marriage. Hence, the younger women describe themselves more in an individualistic manner, and less in terms of the married self. Interestingly, however, the self based upon familial references is evaluated quite favourably by both groups of respondents.

SELF-EVALUATIONS AND SELF-RATINGS OF THE T.S.T. STATEMENTS

Self-Evaluations

After the "Who Am I?" question, the T.S.T. asks the respondent to
evaluate each of her statements. The respondents were first asked to
evaluate each of their self-descriptions as being either positive, neutral,
or negative. The mean percentage of statements reflecting a positive,
neutral, or negative self-concept is shown in Table V.

TABLE V

Mean Percentage of Statements Reflecting A
Positive, Neutral, or Negative Self-Concept

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Young	66.9	19.8	13.3	100%
Old	89.7	5.6	4.7	100%

Of the statements made by the older generation, 90 per cent were
evaluated favourable, while the remaining 10 per cent of the statements
reflected either a neutral or negative self-concept. For the younger group
of women, however, the number of statements rated as being positive did not
stand out as impressively as in the case of the older generation. Compared
to the 90 per cent of the self-descriptions evaluated positively by the
older group, only 67 per cent of the self-references of the younger genera-

tion were regarded positively. A higher percentage of their statements were evaluated as neutral and negative -- 19.8 per cent and 13 per cent respectively compared to 5.6 per cent and 5 per cent as neutral and negative by the older group of women. Content analysis of the self-evaluations suggests that those descriptions evaluated as positive by both the older, and young generation of women tend to be primarily related to a family linked identity such as: "I am a wife," "I am a good house-keeper." Self-descriptions involving humanistic or religious values such as : "I believe in God," "I want the best for everybody," were also evaluated as positive by both groups of women.

However, there was a difference among the two groups of respondents regarding their evaluations of neutral and negative statements. For the older generation, statements evaluated as neutral implied a lack of education and wishful thinking such as: "I wish I was more educated," "I don't know how to speak proper English," "I wish I was rich." The few statements that were evaluated negatively by the older Asian women centered upon employment and work related activities such as: "I am a working wife, " "I do not like to work," "I am a busy person." Interestingly enough, those statements pertaining to a domestic orientation apart from the specific role references of wife/mother, were evaluated negatively by the older women as well. Thus, self-references such as "I have to do all the cleaning at home," "I am a cleaning lady," "I have to iron," were not considered favourably by this group of respondents.

The younger generation evaluated favourably those self-descriptions related to a family status and also those statements pertaining to achieve-ment of goals and success: "I have a good job," "I am glad I finished

University," "I am a professional." The self descriptions evaluated as neutral tended to be career-related: "I am a secretary," "I have to work," "I am a student." The statements evaluated negatively implied a dissatisfaction with housework-related chores, and in this sense, the attitudes of the younger group of women were similar to those expressed by the older generation.

In contrast to the older women, however, the younger group of Asian women evaluated physical attributes they consider unattractive as negative. For example, self-descriptions such as: "I am fat," "I cut my hair," "I am dark," were rated as negative. Similar self-references were evaluated by the older respondents on a neutral basis, thereby suggesting that the younger generation is generally more conscious of the self in terms of appearance, and possess a relatively poorer self-image.

Two basic themes emerged from the content analysis of the self-evaluations provided by this sample of East-Indian women; a positive family orientation, and a concern about education and moral values. However, while family roles and statuses were evaluated favourably by the majority of the respondents, the younger generation placed relatively greater emphasis on personal growth and goals. Hence statements such as "I have a good job," were evaluated positively. In contrast, similar self-references were rated as negative by the majority of the older respondents. The fact that the older women reflect a sense of dissatisfaction with career-oriented statements may be taken to infer that for this group of women, loyalty to the family, and submergence of individual fulfillment is more important then personal achievement. Socialized to find ultimate satisfaction through catering to the emotional needs of her family, the older Hindu woman generally does not rate favourably the role of the career oriented or

working wife.

In contrast, and as suggested earlier, the younger group of Asian women do not positively identify with traditonal role expectations to the same extent as the older generation. By placing equal emphasis on both personal growth and goals, as well as on their family identity, the younger women's self evaluations denote the possible emergence of a duality in the nature of their self-concept.

The dual character of the younger generation's self-concept is further implied in the analysis of the manner in which the respondents evaluated those particular self-descriptions based specifically on family roles and statuses. The data presented in Table IV indicate that only 22.5 per cent of the statements made by the younger generation pertained to a direct family based identity, while in the case of the older generation, 31 per cent of the statements reflected a family orientation. Table VI summarizes the extent to which Asian women rate that aspect of self based on family roles in positive, neutral, or negative terms.

As is evident from Table VI, 97 per cent of the statements indicative of a family identity were evaluated positively by the older group of women. Only 3 per cent of the family-oriented statements were evaluated on neutral terms, and none of those self-references describing either a family status or domestic role were evaluated negatively.

A similar pattern emerged in the case of the younger group of respondents, that is, a majority of the family-linked statements were evaluated positively. Comparatively, however, a greater percentage, 8 per cent of the family references were viewed as neutral by the younger generation. While none of the statements were evaluated negatively by

the older women, 1 per cent of the familial references were rated negatively

by the younger group of respondents.

TABLE VI

Mean Percentage of "Family" Statements Reflecting A
Positive, Neutral, or Negative Self-Concept

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Young	91.3	7.7	1.0	100%
Old	97.0	3.0	0	100%

Although the scores for a positive family self-concept are extremely

high for both groups of women, the data suggest that the younger respondents

do not evaluate their family-oriented roles quite as favourably as the

older generation. The 1 per cent of family-oriented statements that were

rated negatively by the younger group of women is not of statistical

significance, but the trend does suggest that relatively higher levels of

dissatisfaction with traditional family roles are felt by the younger Asian

women.

Content analysis of those statements evaluated as neutral and nega-

tive revealed that is is not with the sacred statuses of wife and mother

that the younger generation express dissatisfaction. Rather, it is the

expectations that these roles carry with them that are regarded unfavourably.

For example, statements such as: "I have to clean," "I have to satisfy

everyone," "I have no privacy," are descriptive of the self references

not viewed positively by the younger generation, and in effect, they express

a clear sense of dissatisfaction with traditional role prescriptions.

In the case of the older East-Indian women, those familial self-references evaluated as neutral expressed their ambivalence towards a new role that they have had to incorporate in their lives since emigrating to Canada; one where the women is employed outside of the home. Thus, statements such as "I am a working mother/wife" were evaluated on a neutral basis by the older respondents.

Other statements regarding the family-oriented self that were rated in neutral terms by the older generation concerned their recognition of being unable to fulfill traditional role expectations. Hence, statements such as "I am not a mother," were evaluated neutrally. It is interesting to note that the self descriptions implying an inability to fulfill successfully prescribed role duties were evaluated as neutral, and not negatively by the older generation. A possible explanation for this form of evaluation rests on the premise that by negatively evaluating one's inability to fulfill a cultural expectation, one is admitting failure. A neutral self-evaluation, however, implies a certain ambivalence towards the demands of womanhood, and to a certain extent indicates that the hold of tradition, which emphasizes that full self-development for women lies in attaining the statuses of wife and mother still prevails in the attitudes of the older generation of Asian women.

The scores attained on the self-evaluation exercise by the younger generation indicate, however, that while those self descriptions linked to traditional role expectations were evaluated relatively unfavourably, nevertheless, a strong traditional dimension to their self-concept was revealed through their positive acceptance of their status as wife/mother.

The commitment to both the family and personal ambition once again points to the emergence of a dual self-concept. The traditional and contemporary duality is further brought to the surface in analysis of data exploring the Asian women's sense of satisfaction with their expressed self.

The third T.S.T. measure asked the respondents to indicate the degree to which they feel satisfied* with being what they have described themselves to be. The scoring of the two generations of women on levels of satisfaction with their described self is summarized in Table VII.

TABLE VII

Mean Percentage Categorization of T.S.T. Statements
Based Upon Levels of Satisfaction

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Total
Young	48.8	33.6	13.2	4.4	100%
		82.4		17.6	
Old	83.9	9.5	3.2	3.4	100%
		93.4		6.6	

The above data clearly indicate that both the young generation, as well as the older generation of Asian women are satisfied with their expressed self-concept. It is interesting to note however, that whereas a significant majority, (83 per cent) of the self-description were regarded as very satisfactory by the older generation, less then half, 49 per cent

*Satisfaction levels are expressed as: (3) very satisfied, (2) satisfied, (1) dissatisfied, and (0) very dissatisfied.

of the self descriptions supplied by the younger group were considered to be very satisfactory. Rather, a greater number of statements, (34 per cent) were rated as being simply satisfactory by the younger generation, compared to the 9.5 per cent of statements of the older women.

A similar trend is evident in the dissatisfactory categories as well. A relatively larger number of self-descriptions were rated disfavourably by the younger group of women. Thirteen per cent of the self-references made by the younger women were considered negatively, while only 3 per cent of the self descriptions supplied by the older women were rated poorly. No difference between the two generations was apparent in the very dissatisfied category.

For the older group of women, statements implying anchorage in the family-linked category such as: "I am a good daughter-in-law," "I am a grandmother," were rated as very satisfactory. Educational and occupational references such as: "I am educated," "I am a secretary," were considered satisfactory, while personal characteristics such as: "I am quiet," "I am frank," were rated as dissatisfactory. The relatively few statements that were considered as being very unsatisfactory were those expressing the inability to fulfill role expectations such as: "I am not a mother." These same self-references, it must be pointed out were earlier evaluated as neutral by the older women. However, a factor that stands out is that the dissatisfaction exists with one aspect of her role, and not with her total family self.

The younger generation of women also expressed extreme satisfaction with that aspect of the self exhibiting a family-orientation; most favoured were those self-references pertaining to the roles of wife/mother. While the statements indicative of a familial status were judged as being very

satisfactory by the younger group of women, those family roles relating

to the actual domestic sphere such as housework were rated as unsatisfactory.

In addition, personal characteristics such as: "I am shy," "I am not

smart," were regarded as unsatisfactory, while the more aggressive personality

traits such as: "I am strong-willed," "I have a hot-temper," were regard-

ed in a positive manner. Educational and occupational self-references

were evaluated as satisfactory by the younger generation, as was the case

for the older respondents.

While the satisfactory evaluation of roles pertaining to a family

status reinforce the assumption that the Hindu women dervies her essential sense

of self from her membership in the family, the negative attitudes expressed

by both generations towards the domestic routine, and the positive value

attached to education imply that although retaining a basically family

linked self-concept, the Indian women are exhibiting the potential for self-

development, with the younger generation scoring relatively higher levels

of satisfaction related to the independent self.

The fact that both generations of women regarded as unsatisfactory

the somewhat deeper aspects of the self such as: "I am shy," "I am reserved,"

"I can't say no," is an interesting finding. In some measure it depicts

conscious training, and in effect shows an unconscious interiorization of

the socially acceptable norms which emphasize "modesty" in the socializa-

tion of Hindu girls. Modesty is linked with femininity, and femininity

involves not being aggressive. By negatively evaluating that behaviour

which expresses passivity, it may be inferred that cognitive attitudes

involving ego expression and self-assertion are beginning to be valued

positively by Asian women.

The picture that emerges from this analysis suggests that although there is some underlying dissatisfaction with the passive element of their personality, the majority of the self references are regarded favourably by both generations of women. At a surface level at least, Asian women claim to be satisfied with their present life situation.

A central theme in this study has been that as the younger women becomes more invloved in their marital role, they will tend to see themselves more in terms of that role. A related assumption was that the women's sense of satisfaction with their family identity would also increase with role internalization. The data thus far, although exploratory, do suggest that the older generation conceive of themselves relatively more frequently in terms of a family role then the younger group of women. An analysis of the extent to which the respondents rate as satisfactory that aspect of the self based upon family identity further indicates that the older women are indeed more satisfied with traditional role perceptions then the younger generation, (Table VIII).

TABLE VIII

Mean Percentage Categorization of "Family" Statements Based Upon Levels of Satisfaction

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Total
Young	67.4	31.0	1.6	-	100%
		98.4		1.6	
Old	83.9	9.5	3.2	3.4	100%
		93.4		6.6	

While both generations of Asian women evaluated family self references as satisfying, 98 per cent of the family-oriented statements were rated as satisfactory by the younger generation compared to the 93 per cent rated satisfactory by the older group. Specifically, the majority, or 84 per cent of the family self references were valued as very satisfactory by the older generation, while only 67 per cent of these statements were viewed as very satisfactory by the younger women. However, while only one-tenth of the family-oriented self-references were indicated as being simply satisfactory by the older generation, 31 per cent of the family-related self-descriptions were considered satisfactory by the younger group. More interesting is the fact that while none of the statements provided by the younger generation were regarded as very unsatisfactory, 3 per cent of the statements in the familial category were considered to be very unsatisfactory by the older respondents. This finding was somewhat surprising since it was assumed earlier that the younger group of women, not yet having internalized their marital role and status to the same extent as the older generation would report relatively higher levels of dissatisfaction.

Content analysis of the nature of those family-linked self descriptions rated unfavourably by the younger women indicated that for the most part, those self-references pertaining to a specific daughter-in-law context were rated as unsatisfactory. Statements reflecting domestic responsibilities and household chores were also regarded as unsatisfactory, whereas those self-descriptions revolving around the roles of wife and mother were evaluated as most satisfactory.

While specific role related identities appeared to be dominant in the very satisfactory and satisfactory categories for the older generation as well, those family-linked self-descriptions rated unfavourably were

characteristic of the respondents' inability to fully meet prescribed role obligations such as "I am not a mother." The fact that a relatively greater percentage of older women expressed extreme dissatisfaction with their familial role due to regrets for not having any children suggests that this negative sense of self is perpetuated by a cultural ideology wich stresses that the woman as mother is the most critical aspect of the female personality. In contrast, the majority of the younger women have not yet experienced the emotional trauma of being unable to fulfill the mother role. It is assumed that such an inability would not be evaluated positively; but whether at a later stage in life this aspect of the self would be rated in neutral or negative terms is open to question. Considered from the perspective of a duality emerging in the self-concept of the younger women, it is probable that success oriented and achievement values would be considered by the younger woman as an equal source of individual fulfillment as that gained through the role of mother.

Further content analysis of those statements evaluated unfavourably revealed that both groups of women share a dislike of household chores. This sense of dissatisfaction is related most closely to the concept of "cleaning." The resistance to responsibility for household chores may be understood in the context that this sample of respondents are originally from Kenya (East-Africa), where they shared a life of comparative luxury in which the concept of "housework" was left largely to the servants. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the women express negative attitudes concerning house-related chores. Not used to doing the menial chores and routine of everyday housework that characterizes the woman's place in North American culture, we find that the major source of dissatisfaction in the familial category for both groups of women revolves around domestic

responsibilities rather then the more specific roles of wife and mother. The focus on self as a role-carrier is further supported by the findings of the last T.S.T. measure.

For their final task, the respondents were asked to rank the self-descriptions they had each supplied in terms of the level of importance they consider each statement to be worth. As this aspect of the T.S.T. was done rather poorly, only the first three statements rated by each respondent as being the most important to her were considered in the analysis. A breakdown of the self-descriptions perceived to be most important by the respondents is presented in Table IX.

TABLE IX

Mean Percentage Categorization of Statements Based Upon Levels of Importance*

	Individual	Neutral	Family	Total
YOUNG GENERATION				
First Most Important	41	18	41	100%
Second Most Important	18	28	54	100%
Third Most Important	14	32	54	100%
OLD GENERATION				
First Most Important	10	27	64	100%
Second Most Important	4	14	82	100%
Third Most Important	4	10	86	100%

The majority of the statements -- 64 percent -- reported as being most important by the older respondents were those pertaining to a family linked

*Levels of Importance are based upon respondents' evaluation of each of their self-descriptions in terms of being first, second, and third important out of the total number.

self-reference. Twenty-seven percent of the statements rated as being

most important belonged to the neutral category, while only 10 per cent

of the statements indicative of an individualistic self-concept were

rated as being most important.

In contrast, an equal number (41 per cent) of those self references

pertaining to a family-linked identity, and those self-references suggestive

of a subjective sense of self were rated as being most important by the

younger group of Indian women. The remaining 18 per cent of statements

considered most important were those belonging to the neutral category.

Family related self-descriptions were rated only as second and third most

important.

While only 54 per cent of the family related self-descriptions

were considered as second and third most important by the younger genera-

tion, relatively higher familial self-references were regarded as second

(82 per cent) and third (86 per cent) most important by the older women.

Conversely, while only 4 per cent of those self-descriptions belonging to

the subjective category were rated as second and third most important by

the older women, 18 per cent and 14 per cent of the subjective self-ref-

erences respectively were rated as second and third most important by

the younger group of respondents.

The findings of the final T.S.T. measure clearly that familial

based self-descriptions were regarded as being most important by the older

generation, while those self-descriptions denoting a more individualist self

were regarded as being least important. The fact that the majority of the

statements rated as being important by the older women belong either to the

family-oriented and the neutral categories suggests that it is almost in-

conceivable for the older East-Indian woman to think of herself apart from

her family status role. In addition, given that one-quarter of the
statements rated as being most important were characteristic of neutral
self-descriptions implies that the older married woman does not consider her-
self apart from being a member of a group. Individual personalities filter
through only in the third most important stage; thereby suggesting that
the self of the older Hindu woman is identified primarily with her family.

Such was not the trend among the younger generation. The younger
respondents considered both family related self descriptions and those
reflecting an identity apart from structured familial statuses as being
most important. Family identity only gained preference as the second and
third most important self descriptions, as statements indicative of a more
individualistic self-concept steadily decreased in levels of importance.
The fact that family-oriented self-references and those self-references
reflecting a self independent from the familial context were equally con-
sidered to be most important by the younger group of women again suggests
a certain duality in the nature of their self-concept. As the data are
exploratory, the individual/family duality cannot be expressed in terms of
an existing conflict between self-interests and group interests, but rather,
as one that is possibly emerging. While individualistic self-descriptions
were regarded as most important, the fact that family self references
increased in importance as the second and third most important statements
suggests that the younger Asian women, like the older generation, are
strongly influenced by traditional role expectations.

Although the younger generation show a certain ambivalence towards
their role, the older group of women perceive their seld mainly in terms
of their family status. The difference in attitudes is attributable to
the fact that for the older married woman, ultimate satisfaction does lie

in the context of the group. Generally having been socialized to do things

for others, it is not surprising that her self-fulfillment rests with a role

which implies more devotion and little personal ambition. Identification

of the self with the family, however, cannot simply be considered as a

given. Remembering that the self runs, parallel with the development of

the ability to take roles, it is proposed that it is only with time that an

individual begins to identify with significant others. As evidenced by

the above data, the older Hindu women are relatively more commited to

the family then the younger generation. While the older women have inter-

nalized their marital role, the self of the younger generation may be

thought of as being at a stage in which it is still developing.

Summary of the T.S.T. Data

Detailed inspection of the T.S.T. data for the East-Indian sample

indicates that the two generations of women perceive their self-concept

in a more or less similar fashion. It was shown that while the younger

group of women display a more "contemporary" self-concept in regard to the

concepts of education and careers outside of the home, as well as disp-

laying relatively greater concern on personal growth and personal recogni-

tion then the older group of Indian women, that, on the average, their

responses yield a strong family-orientation.

With regard to the notion of wife and motherhood, and the customs

governing marriage, Canadian East-Indian women are living primarily in

a world revolving around the family. It was clear from their responses to

the T.S.T. questions that Western values in the domestic realm are not

respected, nor is the Western concept of individualism felt to be worth

emulating. While there seems to be a difference in the extent to which

a family-linked concept of self is depicted in the attitudes of the younger

and older groups of women, analysis of the T.S.T. responses indicates that

the older Indian women are strongly adhering to traditional Hindu cultural

sanctions. Displaying a self-concept that is essentially related to the

roles of wife/mother, personal fulfillment and self-satisfaction for the

older Indian woman is achieved by being a member of the family group. The

findings of the T.S.T. for the younger group of Canadian East-Indian women,

however, are characterized by two basic themes; a family-oriented theme,

revolving around the traditional concepts of wife/mother, and a contemporary

achievement theme, centering upon educational and personal fulfillment.

The initial hypothesis suggesting that the Hindu woman's self-

concept is essentially derived from her membership in the family group

was confirmed by the T.S.T. findings. The second hypothesis, namely that

the Asian woman's identification with the roles of wife/mother strengthen

with length of marriage was also confirmed by the T.S.T. data, which

revealed that although both generation of women convey a self which is

primarily related to marital roles and statuses, that the older group's

identification of self with the family is relatively stronger. The younger

generation, the majority of whom are newlyweds, in turn, denote a self-

concept composed of a complementary interaction between traditional

feminine behavioural expectations, and the more contemporary, individual

oriented ideology of the Western world. As data obtained through partici-

pant observation are examined, it will be shown that these two themes are

repeated and form an important core of the younger East-Indian women's

concept of self.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION DATA

While insight into the Canadian East-Indian women's deeper aspects of the self was gained throught the T.S.T. measures, a brief questionnaire following the T.S.T., as well as data gathered through participant observation, further served to reveal the extent to which the respondents' role perceptions reflect either an individualistic or family-oriented self-concept. Before summarizing the research findings, an explanation of the institution of marriage in Hindu practice is considered relevent. This is based upon the concept of dharma,[6] or duty, and provides a backdrop for understanding the norms guiding the behaviour and personality of the Hindu woman.

Beginning with the age old custom of doli, when at marriage a daughter is given to her husband and is literally "sent" away by her father from his home to her husband's residence, the Hindu woman is socialized to remain eternally grateful to her husband and his family for permitting her to achieve the time honoured status of a married woman. Appropriate role obligations dictate that her ultimate goal as a wife lies in attaining the status of a good bahu, (daughter-in-law). In a family system based upon hierarchy by age and sex, security and social approval for women are primarily dependent upon satisfying kin in a manner consistent with traditional female behaviour expectations; with the underlying assumption that personal happiness and individual fulfillment are reckoned through the roles of wife and mother.

A central theme of the norms guiding female behaviour is that men must control women and their power (Jacobson and Wadley, 1977). It is

emphasized here that the dual character of the Hindu female's essential nature
(her duty and service), is not simply an ideal. In the present study it is
seen most clearly in the respondents' strong family-orientation, especially
in the emphasis given to the roles of wife and mother. The present
research suggests that despite the Western ideology of liberation for
women from their traditionally subordinate roles, that Canadian East-Indian
women continue to be strongly motivated by the classical Hindu conceptions
of the woman as a dutiful wife and devoted mother. It is the wife's
regard for and duties to her husband, not his towards her that is emphasized.

A closer analysis of the informants' attitudes regarding role
expectations and beliefs was obtained through an examination of the pattern
of responses to 12 questions* probing into the women's familial self
aspects. To report the findings in a systematic order, however, the writ-
ten attitudes are considered together with the more informal data obtained
through observation of their daily routine, and consisting of informal
conservations with the respondents.[7]

The questionnaire focuses on the private and familial spheres of
the respondents' lives. It is constructed so that responses falling in
particular categories will reflect the extent to which the Canadian East-
Indian women conceive their self in terms of an individualist self-concept,
and essentially neutral identity, or in terms of a family-linked sense
of self.

The questionnaire consists of 12 questions, out of which 10 deal
with that aspect of the self that is family-oriented. These questions
focus on settlement patterns in Canada, marriage and family structure,

*See Appendix for full description of the questionnaire utilized.

gender differentation and divison of labour within the home, significance

of religious practices, maintenance of traditional customs in relation to

authority patterns, attitudes regarding employment of women outside of the

home, role of kin, and their ideological aspirations. The remaining two

questions, focus on the more private aspects of the self. By asking the

respondents to list what they consider to be their most worthwhile accomplish-

ments the first question reveals those values which are perceived by the

women as being critical to their inner self. The last question, formulated

as a self-identity sentence completion test forces the respondent to once

again provide a definition of herslef in response to the question: "Who

do you think of yourself as?"

Coded in terms of an individualist, neutral, or family-oriented

scale, the responses to the questionnaire couple with the observed situation

serve to further validate the T.S.T. findings. The combined findings of

the questionnaire, as well as data obtained through naturalistic observation

are presented below. The analysis begins with an exploration of the

settlement patterns of East-Indian women in Canada.

Settlement Patterns

As outlined in Table II of this study, the majority of the East-

Indian women (82 per cent) are relatively new immigrants to Canada, having

been established in Burlington for less then eleven years. Patterns of

arrival indicate that between 1968 - 1974 numerous families were able to

emigrate from Kenya largely as a consequence of changes in the Canadian

immigration policy that made it possible for Asians to enter Canada on the

basis of the sponsorship system. The privilege of sponsoring close relatives

had important implications for the structure of the Asian community in

Burlington; because most of the East-Indians have sponsored their relatives, they have succeeded in re-creating their kin universe in Burlington.

In an analysis of the patterns of residential migration of Asians in British Columbia, Srivastava (1976: 375) concludes that it is precisely due to the established kin networks that new immigrants:

> do not feel lost among strangers, or hostile
> to the host society. In a majority of the
> cases, they either already are, or soon hope
> to be with those kin with whom they would
> interact if they were at home.

The change in the immigration policy of 1974 making entry into Canada dependent upon professional qualifications and availability of jobs did not effect the Burlington Asian community's growth to any significant extent. A combination of high levels of education and professional background permitted considerable numbers of the Asian immigrants to enter Canada on the merit of their own qualifications. While the tendency of the Asians to be attracted to Toronto and surronding areas may be particically explained by the availability of economic opportunities, the existence of primary associates is an equally influential element determining the locality selected as permanent residence by the new immigrant. Numerous conversations with the Asian women outline the importance of the kin network in the migration process. Some of their views are expressed below:

Case 1

Mrs. --- in her mid-60's, having lived in Burlington for approximately 11 years states that her family's primary reason for emigrating to Canada was due to the fact that:

> "life was getting much too scary back home. Things
> were just not safe, and it seemed that we were living
> on a day-to-day basis, never knowing what was going
> to happen tomorrow. We lived in a joint family, with
> my husband being the eldest, and so for everyone's
> sake and especially the future of the children my husband
> felt it would be best to leave Nairobi. My sister

and her husband had been living in Hamilton at that
time for about 3 years and they wrote to us telling
us that there were good chances her for business.
It if had not been for them, I don't think we would
have come to Canada. They helped us to get started,
and today all our family is here."

Case II

Mrs. --- who has recently been married, in her mind-20's, and a Canadian
resident for 4 years says:

"We got married in Nairobi but had to come to Bur-
lington because H--- (husband) had a really good
job here. I didn't want to leave my parents but
just knowing that many of my aunts and uncles were
in Burlington made the move a lot easier. Besides,
all of H---'s relatives are here, and they really
were a tremendous help during my first few months
in Canada."

Besides furnishing primary ties, the kin network, through encouragement,

sponsorship, and general guidance aids in residential migration; one

individual/family establishing an economic and residential "foot-hold" in

a city to be followed there by other kin. The existence of a strong com-

munity among immigrant people and its importance in the process of inte-

gration has long been recognized. Litwak (1960), in his study of immigrant

groups found that for psychological satisfaction primary groups were es-

sential, and for immigrants, this is generally the community of friends

and kin. The data for this study also points to the inportant role play-

ed by kin in enabling the migrating family to adjust successfully to a

new environment.

A network of family relationships forms the basis of the respondents'

community. Fitzpatrick, (1966: 05) defines an ethnic community as:

a group of people who follow a way of life
or patterns of behaviour which mark them out
as different from other people in the larger
society in which they live or to which they
have come. They ... have generally come from
the same place, or ... identified with the

> particular locality where they now live ...
> They have the same religious beliefs, they
> speak the same language. They tend to 'stick
> together'' to help and support each other.
> They have expectations of loyalty to one
> another and methods of control.

Grounded primarily upon kin membership, the ethnic community acts as

a buffer in the new society, providing the recent immigrant with a basis

of familiar relations, (Fitzpatrick, 1966). It is important to stress that

both generations of Asian women, in demonstrating a marked tendency to

locate in a kin-based community, emphasize the influence of the family as

a strong and functional institution. This reliance on kin is directly

related to the women's socialization experience during which they are made

to believe that their greatest fulfillment lies in being married and serv-

ing "others". The "other" is always the family and extended kin. Given

the important role played by kin in the socialization process, it is pro-

posed that the stronger the kin community, the likelier the possibility

for traditional sex-role differentiation to continue. By essentially

ensuring that basic Hindu religious and social principles regarding ap-

propriate rules of conduct are practiced, a kin-based community somewhat

tampers individual direction; with the needs and aspirations of the total

group being considered primary. [8]

An analysis of the structure of the interpersonal relations of this

sample of Asian women reveals that in Canada corporate kindred has not

lost its traditional restrictive function, but rather, exists as a most

significant influencing factor directing the structure of the respondents'

daily life. Precisely because this Asian community has succeeded in creat-

ing a community that is simply an adaptation of elements of an old society,

patterns of marriage and family structure of this group of women indicate

that a large part of their life is lived within the existing and available kin network.

Marriage Forms and Family Structure

The importance of satisfying others becomes especially evident in the attitudes expressed by the East-Indian respondents towards marriage forms. The patterns of mate selection vary from culture to culture in two important aspects. The first is a traditional arranged marriage where prospective spouses are selected by kin with little option for the couple to take an active part in the decision making.[9] The other extreme is elf-choice marriage which is based upon "romantic" love. Gupta (1976) estimates that "romantic love" marriages occur in less then one per cent of the population of India. The present sample is typical, since 86 per cent of the women claimed to having had arranged marriages rather then having married by choice (Table X).

TABLE X

Mean Percentage Categorization of Responses Regarding Marriage Form

	Love	Arranged	Total
Young	27.3	72.6	100%
Old	–	100.0	100%

All of the older respondents reported having married by arrangement, while only 73 per cent of the younger generation of women claimed to having had an arranged marriage. While the responses of this sample of women indicate that romantic love is not a precondition for marriage in Hindu

society, at the same time, the data point to the fact that the younger

women are beginning to marry on the basis of self-choice. It must be

underlined, however, that during several conversations with the group

of women who married for love, rather then by tradition, it was made

apparent to me that family approval and consent was of paramount import-

ance in their decision. In fact, none of these women had demanded

marriage by choice. The psychological security of gaining family approval

is evident in the following conversations with two of the women who report-

ed having married on the basis of romantic love:

Case I

Mrs. ---, 24 years old, and married for a period of 4 years explained:

> "Oh, H--- (husband) and I met at a birthday party
> given by relatives. He had just come back from
> England, and I found him to be so different from
> all the other boys in Nairobi. He was really
> good to me, he talked to me nicely and just made
> me feel important. He asked me out, you, know, and
> at first I was afraid to go with him. It was not
> so much what other people would say, but it mattered
> to me what he thought. Anyway, we kept meeting at
> all sorts of different occassions, and we began to
> really care for each other. He then asked me to
> marry him, and I said I would only if my parents
> didn't object. You know, I couldn't bear to have
> broken their hearts. But as it worked out, he
> talked to his parents, and they liked me and so
> they asked my parents ... in the end everyone approved."

Case II

Mrs. ---, also in her 20's claimed to having married for love, but only
after she was certain that her decision would not bring disrespect to
her family:

> "Well, we had been seeing each other for a number
> of years. We went through school together here,
> (Canada), and we became very close. Among our-
> selves, we talked constantly about marriage, but he
> was hesitant to tell his parents that he wanted to
> marry me because he knew they strongly believed in
> arranged marriages, and I guess he didn't want to
> offend them. In fact, I'm sure his mother had a

> girl all picked out and ready for him to marry.
> It was the same with my side of the family, but as
> time went on, I finally told me parents that X---
> and I had been seeing each other, and that we wanted
> to get married. My parents had known X--- and his
> family for years, and much to our delight they fully
> accepted my choice. His parents also accepted our
> decision to get married without complaint."

It is evident, hence, from the above examples that while there appears to be a trend among the younger generation of Asian women to marry by choice, the ultimate decision depends upon gaining familial approval and support. Although on the surface these women have broken away from the traditionally arranged form of marriage, the fact that family consent plays such a significant role in their decision suggests that they have not entirely abandoned old values. While showing signs of moving away from traditional attitudes, the women cannot be considered "modern" enough to be absorbed in the cultural pattern of the West, the interest of the family group clearly overrides any concept of the freedom of the individual.

Informal conversations with the majority of the younger women who had, in effect, married by arrangement, indicate that while none of them object to arranged marriages per se, they express different feelings regarding the actual process of arrangement. There was consent among all of the women regarding the humiliation they felt when "seen" or rejected by prospective husbands; that the felt they were on "display", and had to perform well. Yet, taking part in this tradition was justified in terms of their dharma, or duty. For example:

Case I

Mrs. ---, in her early 30's, having been married for 10 years states that:

> "I disliked every moment of the arranged meeting,
> I had to wear the best, and I had to look so demure,

and towards the floor all the time ... But then, girls
I guess are expected and even sort of trained to go
through this. I know that if I had acted differently,
my parents would have never forgiven me."

Case II

Mrs. ---, in her late 20's, and married for 8 years claimed that:

"Often I felt I was being judged, but it didn't
really bother me. If they (prospective husband's
side of the family), didn't like me for what I was
that was just too bad. And my parents didn't want
me to give false impressions. But, I guess you
just sort of unconsciously behave in the right
manner, you just do it."

In most of the cases, the respondents felt that while the psychological

strain of being "seen" and approved of by prospective husbands and their

families is considerable, that the advantages of arranged marriages, in

turn, are equally important. Time and time again the respondents stated

that although there is no romantic love associated with arranged marriages,

that they were guaranteed a secure economic and emtional future. In

essence, the majority of these women, having been brought up by traditionally-

oriented parents were socialized to regard marriage as a gateway to financial

security. Hence, the following attitude:

"The one thing that is really good about you
parents finding a boy for you I guess is that you
know that he is going to be educated, from a good
family, and good background."

"Well, at least you can see that in arranged
marriages, there are no financial problems.
Which parents would let their daughters marry
a man without a successful future? And I
really believe that you grow to love the
person you marry. Without money problems,
it's just easier to get used to each other."

It is apparent that while the younger generation of Asian women dislike

the manner in which arranged marriages are contracted, the majority of

them see in marriage ultimate security for themselves.

Although the majority of the younger group of women are retaining

traditional conceptions of love and marriage, all of the older respondents

defined marriage by arrangement as the best way to ensure marital stability.

Even though in Canadian society they are continually exposed to the Western

notion of romantic love preceeding marriage, these these women regard

arranged marriages as part of philosophy of life and as the only choice

available to "good" Hindu girls. Romance and romantic love is seen as

unreal; the emphasis is on marriage as a sense of duty and devotion, with

"love" proceeding marriage:

Case I

Mrs. ---, in her late 40's, married for approximately 25 years, states
that:

> "These days arranged marriages aren't what
> they used to be. The boy and girl are allowed
> to meet and even spend some time alone. In
> this respect marriages have changed a lot from
> our time, when the first time we ever saw the
> boy was after the marriage ceremony. At
> least today girls have the option of refusing
> the match. But this is rare. Boys are chosen
> by the parents before a meeting between the two
> is arranged. It is made certain that he is good,
> kind, from a respectable family, and can provide
> well for his wife. It is the parents' duty to
> ensure their children's happiness."

Case II

Mrs. ---, in her 50's and married over 25 years claimed that:

> "There is love between husband and wife in arranged
> marriages. But this love is not like the Western
> love which is combined with excitement and sex. The
> love between Hindu man and his wife is based upon
> respect -- it grows with time and strengthens as the
> woman proves herself to be a good wife. I do not
> believe that when young people say that they want
> to marry someone of their own choice that they are
> in any position to know what they will want and
> need in the future. Having already gone through
> the stages the young ones are going through, we
> are in a much better position to advise them on

what qualities in a man can ensure a good future."

In regard to the structural processes of arranged marriages, the majority of the older respondents were in accord with the following view expressed by one of the women:

> "So what if a boy and his family come to 'see' a
> girl? There is no need for her to be embarrassed.
> If coming from a good family, she should be proud
> to be considered and feel respected that her
> family is approved of by others ..."

As is evident from the above examples, for the older group of Asian women, as well as (for) the majority of the younger generation, it is the importance placed on marriage as an institution that make them accept marriage by arrangement as an endurable and satisfying system of union. The expressed attitudes indicate, however, that both generations of women feel that certain modifications are necessary within the system of arranged marriages. Both groups of women emphasize the importance of being able to meet with prospective husbands before agreeing to the proposed marriage. Yet, while the older generation strongly retains the traditional theme of duty and devotion of the wife, the younger group of women do not put the same emphasis on self-sacrifice, in spite of being reared to value these qualitites. The main stress seemed to lie in the psychological and economic security that a women is assured through an arranged marriage.

That the younger generation places such a significant amount of importance on the economic gains arising from marriage by arrangement is surprising. It seems that the ideology of the Western liberated woman, one who can work and support herslef has not been incorporated into the attitudes and values of the East-Indian women. While stating that they should have as much voice as the males do in mate selection, the emphasis placed on securing a financially prosperous future continued to be of

primary significance to them. Financial dependence, however, creates

emotional dependence. As such, it is concluded that while this sample of

women stress the importance of expressing individual wishes in regard to

mate selection, the fact that the main criteria of compatability and

stability are grounded upon economic terms suggests the continuation of

a pattern whereby the wife remains dependent upon her husband both fin-

ancially and emotionally.

Furthermore, the fact that both generations of women emphasize the

crucial importance of entrusting the older family members with what they

consider to be the most important decision of their lives suggests that

family interests are more important then those of the individuals getting

married. While, on the one hand, the increasing possibility of expressing

individual wishes has weakened the extreme authority of the family, on

the other hand, the role of kin to provide advice continues to be highly

valued. I am suggesting, hence, that while the older generation of Indian

women justify the tradition of arranged marriages in terms of fulfilling

one's duty, the younger generation is opting for a modified form of arranged

marriage in which both the self and the family group are equally valued.

The position of the younger woman is complex. When considred from

the perspective that the Hindu woman in general is taught to accept the

dictates of her parents without question, it follows that she would not

search for her own values to the extent that an individual who has been

socialized to value personal autonomy would. The older generation finds

it easier to accept the absolutism of the family perhaps because these

women themselves are now in a position of authority. The younger East-

Indian woman, however, seems to want to expand the traditional femal role

of passive member of the group to one in which her personal ambitons are

realized as well. The dual nature of their self emerges yet once again

as they attempt to merge individual interests with those of the family

group.

Authority Patterns

The conflict existing between satisfying the interests of the

family as opposed to individual fulfillment is further exemplified through

an examination of the forms of address utilized by the Canadian East-

Indian women within the familial setting. Recent studies of linguistic

etiquette have focused on the use of "plural" forms to shoe "politeness",

(Bean, 1970: Ullrich, 1970). In a number of languages the plural form of

address is used towards people in a postion of relative power, higher

status, and unfamiliarity, (Ullrich, 1970). In Hindu ideology, one is

more "polite" with those of greater power. Thus, when addressing their

husbands, as well as other older members of the family, Indian women are

taught to never directly state the first names of elders. Nor are pet

names such as "honey," "sweetheart", "darling", to be endured when referring

to one's husband, for they indicate a level of relative equality, and

hence disrespect. The use of the plural-respectful form when speaking about,

or to the husband intensifies the superior status of the male. Similarily,

utilization of the singular form for the husband when addressing his wife

reinforces her relatively weaker positon within the family. Table XI

illustrates that traditonal forms of address are being maintained by the

older generation of Canadian East-Indian women, but not so by the younger

group.

TABLE XI

Mean Percentage Categorization of Respondents Addressing
Husbands On A First-Name Basis

	All the Time	Often	Rarely	Never	Total
Young	72.7	13.6	9.2	4.5	100%
Old	18.2	31.8	27.3	22.7	100%

Out of the total sample, 45 per cent of the women address their husbands in the singular form all the time. Comparatively speaking however, a majority (73 per cent) of the younger group of Asian women reported being on a first-name basis with their husbands. Only 18 per cent of the older women refer to their husbands by first name all the time. However, a larger number of the older women (59 per cent), do address their husbands by first name occasionally, and 23 per cent never mention their husband's name.

Only 4.5 per cent of the younger women reported never addressing their husbands in the singular form. Twenty-three per cent of these women are on a first-name basis with their husbands occasionally, while the majority address their husbands by name all of the time.

The above findings show that there are clear differences among the two generations of Asian women regarding format of address employed towards husband, and hence, relative status within the family. The fact that 16 out of 22 young respondents are on a first-name basis with their husbands all of the time indicates that the majority of this group of women consider themselves to be in equal standing with their husbands.

This is an interesting finding. One would assume that since the majority of the younger women have had their marriages arranged, and are

relatively newlyweds, that they would be mainly on formal terms with their

husbands; and conversely, that the older women, having been married for

a longer period would enjoy a comparatively informal relationship with

their husbands. The trend indicates however, that while traditional

terms of reference are still very much in use by the older generation of

women, change in the structure of authority relations is apparent within

the younger group of Asian women.

A logical explanation for existing authority patterns is derived

from an understanding of the family as a status unit. In sociological

literature the family is usually seen as a status unit, meaning thereby

that the husband and wife who constitute the integral members of a family

ideally have the same status in the unit (deSouza, 1975). In most male

dominated societies, however, the wife occupies a relatively lower status

in the family as compared to the husband. The status of a person is

usually derived from his/her occupational prestige. Generally, it is the

man who is considered to be the natural breadwinner in the family, and

the various members of the family (including his wife) derive their status from

his occupational prestige (deSouza, 1975). As long as only the man in the

family is working, there is no ambiguity about the status of different

members in the family. The conflict also does not arise if the wife has

an occupation that is inferior in prestige to her husband's. The economic

sources of power for husband and wife are also noted by Gilléspie (1972:

135):

> "Not surprisingly, the wife's participation in
> the work force is an important variable. Women
> who work have more power vis-à-vis their husbands
> then do non-working wives."

Traditionally not expected to be career-oriented, Hindu women in

general remained financially dependent upon their husbands. This reienforced

the superiour social and economic rank of the husband, and served to create

to a certain extent a relationship based upon power. Brown and Gilman (1968:

254) define power in the following manner:

> One person may be said to have power over another
> in the degree that he is able to control the
> behaviour of the other. Power is a relationship
> between at least two persons, and it is non-
> reciprocal ...

Plural forms of address perpetuate the husband's economic power in the

family. The fact that the younger women in the present sample are on a

first-name basis with their husbands suggests that their position within

the family is not a subordinate one. The trend suggests that while the

older women tend to view their identity in terms of their husbands, the

younger Hindu woman emerges as relatively independent.

Although the responses obtained on the questionnaire imply that

the younger Asian women are inclined to be more independent then the older

generation, informal observation and conversations with the respondents

proved that while they are to a certain extent expressing individual

wishes, that they are not altogether breaking away from traditional role

expectations:

Case I

According to Mrs. ---, married for 4 years, women should not have to
use the plural form when addressing their husbands:

> "You know I didn't ever question the fact that
> my mother never said my father's name. I always
> just took it for granted. But when I got married
> I didn't see the reason for not calling my husband
> by name. I guess if he was really older then my-
> self, I might, but there is only 3 years of an
> age difference between us. If I had to say "tusi"[*]
> to him, I would expect him to refer to me the same
> way too ..."

[*] "Tusi" in Punjabi may be considered to be equivalent to the formal
"vous" in French.

Case II

According to Mrs. ---, married for 10 years:

> "I had a difficult time when we first got
> married because eveyone wanted me to call
> H--- in really formal terms. We had known
> each other before marriage, and we were pretty
> free with each other, so I just couldn't say
> 'tusi' to him. I know our families don't
> approve, so in front of them I talk to him
> in English and the problem just doesn't arise ..."

The views expressed in the above examples represent the attitudes of

the majority of the younger women. The feeling is not that they have no

respect for their husbands, but rather, that this respect should be mutual.

It was felt, furthermore, that if both spouses are approximately of same

age, then there is not need for one to be more submissive then the other.

The change from wide age differences between husband and wife to that

of approximately the same age is recent (Ullrich, 1975) and in effect,

may be an important variable influencing the authority structure of the

family. A wide disparity in the ages between husband and wife does create

a hierarchial relationship. However, little or no age difference, leading

to an increase in the wife's use of her husband's name implies a change in

the authority structure on the family level.

Of the few young respondents who either rearly, or never address

their husbands' by first name, their reasons for not doing so are based

upon familial pressure to conform to traditional expectations. Hence,

the following views are expressed:

Case I

Mrs. ---, married 3 years says:

> "Well, I found it odd to always say 'tusi' to my husband
> at first. I couldn't get used to it, but every time I
> said his name, his mother would says its not good for a
> wife to call her husband by name because it proves that she

    does not respect him. After a while just to keep
    everyone happy, I just started calling him 'tusi.'"

Case II

Married for approximately 16 years, Mrs. --- explains that:

        "Right from the beginning I just could not bring
        myself to say his name. We were always brought
        up to respect our elders, and my husband is 8 years
        older then me. I would feel very awkward if I
        said his hame. It's not very polite."

While the issue of address format is most definitely related to

that of "respect", it appears that the majority of the younger women con-

sider age to be the main variable influencing the manner in which they

address their husbands. As is evident from the examples cited above, it

is only when there exists a considerable age difference between the spouses,

that in the name of politeness and reverence, the women address their husbands

formally.

        Observation of the younger Asian women's interaction patterns with

their spouses revealed that those women who are on a relatively informal

name basis with their husbands generally are more outspoken in temrs of

expressing their own ideas and wishes then those women who are not on a first-

name basis with their spouses. For example:

Case I

According to Mrs. --- :

        "It's not that I don't respect H---'s wishes; but
        at the same time I feel that I have a right to my
        own opinions and wishes. I don't argue with my
        husband for the sake of arguing, but I just feel
        that I am capable of making my own decisions ..."

Not quite so apparent in the case of the younger group, but very

evident in the older generation was the impression that these exists between

the spouses, at least overtly, a definite sense of avoidane. This sense

of avoidance may be explained largely as resulting from the notion of
"respect" which is considered as an absolute in India, (Cormack, 1957).
The force of this tradition is very strong within the older group of
Canadain East-Indian women; the majority of whom have never addressed
their husbands by first name. The four older women who claimed to being
on a first-name basis with their husbands have been married for approximately
20 - 25 years, and in comparison to others in their generation, are relatively
young marrieds. Thus, the assumption that the Hindu woman becomes an
extension of her husband with an increase in length of marriage is further
validated in the analysis of the treatment of names.

It must be remembered also that this generation of women had
marriages arranged by their parents; consequently they are married to spouses
who are much older than themselves. One of the justifications of ensuring
that there exist such an age difference between husband and wife lies in
the belief that the woman must be protected and taken care of at all times.
During childhood a girl's protectors are her brothers and her father; upon
marriage this responsibility is entrusted to her husband. Married at a
fairly early age, the personality of the woman is largely developed by her
husband. The idea that a woman is developed by her husband and with the
husband is deliberately planned so as to make for lasting harmony and
happiness, (Cormack, 1953). Individual personalities, therefore, are
given very little chance to mature, as is evident from the following views
expressed by two older respondents:

Case I

Mrs. ---, married for approximately 30 years remembers that:

> "I was only 16 when I got engaged and 17 when we
> got married. He was the only man I had ever had
> direct contact with besides my brothers and cousins,

> and he was 10 years older then myself. I felt that
> I knew nothing and he knew everything. And it's
> ture ... he taught me how to speak English, how to
> act properly, what to wear sometimes, and even how
> to eat with a knife and fork. I don't think I
> would have learned if it had not been for him ..."

Case II

A similar view is expressed by Mrs. ---, who has been married for over
35 years:

> "H--- (husband) is 12 years older to me. So right
> from the beginning I have had very high respect for
> him. In some aspects he almost reminds me of my
> father -- very strict, very demanding, yet very kind
> hearted. When we got married I was so impressed
> with him; he was so educated, and so well-respected
> by everyone. I wanted him to be proud of me so I
> did all that I could to please him. I had to change
> a lot, but he was very patient with me ..."

The personality of the Hindu wife, thus, is largely developed by
her husband. Adjusting herself constantly towards the husband, the con-
flict between individual personalities simply does not arise. An un-
conscious interiorization of the cultural norms in effect serves to trans-
form the woman into an extension of her husban's personality. Numerous
times it was observed that the older women never took the initiative on
any level. Statements such as: "Let me talk to him first," "I'll ask
him what he thinks," "It's up to him," "Go ask your father," are frequently
heard among the older women. The essentially compliant nature of the older
generation of women, hence, is revealed through their unwillingness to
make decisions or choices. Not encouraged to develop individual initiative,
the women remain dependent upon their husbands both emotionally and
economically.

Although the younger generation is relatively more assertive in
expressing individual opinions, it was found that overall, the Hindu wife
considers herself to be of an inferior status in relation to her husband.

While the older woman's low regard for herself is based largely upon her

belief in the concept of dharma, coupled with a general acceptance of

traditional avoidance patterns, for the younger Indian woman, her inferior

status is perpetuated by her exclusion from the social life of her husband.

Gillespie (1971) suggests that the migrant husband holds more power than

the non-migrant husband partially because of the wife's increased isolation

and also beacuse of her increased dependence upon her husband for a variety of

socio-psychological services provided previously by significant kin. It

would appear from this that the presence of kin in a new society is critical

in determining the nature of the relationship between husband and wife.

As noted by Litwak (1960), the presence of kin in a new environment gives

the wife a sense of continuity and a group of people to legitimize her

identity. It was reported earlier that the community of the present sample

is largely formed by kin ties. Yet, while the presence of kin is presumably

of social and psychological comfort to the immigrant wife, the same kin

also act as a possible source of disadvantage; for in providing the recent

immigrant with elements of the old culture, the traditional hierarchial

role relationship between spouses is perpetuated. The absence of kin, on

the other hand, may lead to a situation in which the husband and wife

would be drawn closer to each other precisely due to unavailability of other

family ties.

Observation of the social milieu of this sample revealed that it

consists largle of informal evenings spent with kin, formal dinner parties,

monthly religious gatherings, and increasingly, it was noted that Hindu

movies and music parties are beginning to form an integral part of the

respondents' secular entertainment. The pattern these social functions

follow are relatively similar. The following account of a dinner party

attended by the majority of women considrred in the present study provides an

adequate description of the format and nature of the gatherings:

> As I entered the living room a very clear division
> of people was taking place. In the main living room,
> stood the older Indian women chatting amongst them-
> selves. In the foyer and outside on the patio the
> older men were gathered. The younger men, married
> and single were clustered around the bar area, and
> in the family-room a mixture of young married couples,
> and the young singles was forming.
>
> All the men were dressed in dinner suits. Most of
> the ladies were wearing ornamental saries, and were
> adorned with fair amounts of jewellery -- mainly
> gold and diamond jewellery.
>
> Topics of conversation among the older group of women
> revolved largely around family/kin based matters,
> custom, cooking, and jewellery. These women coverséd
> in Punjabi at all times. Clothes, jewellery, and
> gossip seemed to be of most interest to the younger
> group of women as well. However, talk among them
> was conducted largely in English, with a few Punjabi
> phrases being utilized here and there.
>
> Among the men, talk centered upon politics, sports,
> hobbies, and work. While the older men conversed with
> each other in both Punjabi and English, the younger
> men spoke English only.
>
> The food at the party consisted of a mixture of Indian
> and non-Indian tid-bits. Eveyone, except the tradi-
> tional group of women were drinking liquor. Approx-
> imately half of the men present were smoking. None
> of the ladies smoked...

It was noted a number of times, that although women attend the

same social functions as their husbands, the sexes are isolated from each

other upon arrival, regardless of age. This division may, in part be

attributed to the relative ignorance of the women in political and economic

matters as is illustrated by the following statement made by one of the

younger married women, as conversation at a dinner party turned to politics:

> "Here they go again with their boring talk of
> Carter. I might as well clean up for I don't

really know anything about politics."

Another young-married, also admitted her lack of interest in political

matters:

> "He (husband) never talks with me about such
> things, and so I never bother with the news.
> He thinks I'm so dumb, so why should I bother?
> I'd rather talk about some more interesting
> things anyway..."

And older woman, in her mid-40's revealed that,

> "Oh, I leave politics to my husband ... he
> knows more about the world then I do ..."

The relative ignornace of women about public affaris may be attributed

to a number of factors. Most importantly, the women have been socialized

to a very large degree to become professionals in the area of home-economics, and

the well being of their families. A high level of education, and an avid

interest in world matters were traditionally considered a liability in the

girl's chances for marriage and subsequent happiness; for a woman was never

to be as knowledgeable as her husband. In this way, women remained confined

to the home, and subordinate to their husbands.

Upon arriving to Canada, and with increased participation in public

areas, Indian women are becoming more educated not only through the work

environment, but also through the influence of the media and television.

As a result, they express the desire to become involved with their husbands'

in social activities. They meet, however, only with limited success,

judging by the remarks of the following respondents:

Case I

According to Mrs. ---, married for approximately 4 years:

> "When we do get together as couples, the men
> tend to drink and talk politics in one room,
> and the women don't have much else to do but
> gossip and talk in the kitchen. The men just

won't earnestly talk to us. I guess they don't
think we are smart enough ..."

Case II

Stated by Mrs. ---, married for 25 years:

> "I suppose men and women gather differently
> because they have different things to talk
> about. The men aren't interested in cooking,
> or talking about the children, they are more
> interested in politics, and sports ... Maybe
> if both husbands and wives took more interest
> in each other's interests things would be
> different."

Role differentiation by sex, thus remains basic to this group of

Indian women. Their relative isolation from the dominant society, coupled

with their own assumptions regarding appropriate patterns of male-female

behaviour reienforce a traditional form of social orgaization. A possible

conclusion is that immigrants are connected to their groups through either

emotional or economic ties of interest. From a social-psychological per-

spective, it may be suggested that there is a comfortable feeling of being

close to those who are like onself. It follows, therefore, that associations

be drawn from within the ethnic group.

The Asian family system with its implicit rules of sex segregation

means that Indian women invariably spend their day in the company of

other women/children; in Canada, the most meaningful relationships are

those with other women of the same family, kin, and newly formed relation-

ships with women from the same socioeconomic and cultural background.

Patterns of leisure for both generations of the women center around

family/kin. Visiting is usually a family outing, and as a result mainly

on week-ends when there are no work or school obligations. During the

week-days, however, the telephone and television have begun to play a very

significant role in the lives of the non-working Asian women. Long tele-

phone conversations with kin have become a daily habit, and in essence,

serve to provide the housewife with a link to the outside world. In add-

ition, the afternoon television soap operas have succeed in even alluring

the traditional Hindu women. These soap operas, aside from providing

entertainment to a group of women isolated from the outer world, also act

as important sources of reference, and are thereby directly responsible

for creating a somewhat distroted image of the Western social and moral

reasoning. The following description provides an example of the extent

to which the media is an influencing social agent:

> At one point during the soap-opera, as an intimate
> bedroom scene appeared on the screen, Mrs. ---,
> looking away from the set and shaking her head said:
>
> "I don't know how these 'chitas' (white
> people) live ... they go in and out of
> marriage as if it were a game!"

The dramatized triangles of "love", conflicts, and despair depicted by

soap-operas serve in essence to further strengthen traditional Indian values

and code of ethics. It must be emphasized, however, that the woman judge

Western patterns in terms of their own traditional beliefs, rather then

in terms of the more modern Western values. A culture that so strongly

idealizes the institution of marriage and family no doubt is influenced

negatively by the image of a contemporary, sexually permissive society.

When contact with members of the host society is limited to larger formal

associations for both the old and younger group of Indian women, the

continuity of a social system based on traditional laws of conduct is ensured.

There appears to be, as a result, no element of conflict between traditional

beliefs and the modern, urban values for this sample of Hindu women.

The allegiance to one set of values, however, is more evident in the

attitudes expressed by the older generation of respondents. Their responses

to the question, "Do you feel that a wife should be able to act contrary
to her husbands wishes?" reveal that for the older Hindu women, role expecta-
tions are largely linked to traditional patterns of authority, (Table XII).

TABLE XII

Mean Percentage Categorization of Responses To
The Question, 'Do you feel a wife should be
able to act contrary to her husband's wishes?'

	Yes	No	Total
Young	81.8	18.2	100%
Old	31.8	68.2	100%

The attitudes expressed by the majority of the younger women, (82 per
cent) clearly indicate that a woman should be able to act contrary to her
husband's wishes, and hence be relatively assertive. In contrast, only
32 per cent of the older generation were of this opinion.

Informal conversations with the respondents revealed that the
difference of opinion on the subject of a wife's obedience to her husband
is based essentially upon a difference in the understanding of the word
"obedience". In strongly asserting that a wife should not act against her
husband's desires, the older group of Inidan women justify their position
by arguing that in accommodating their husbands' wishes, they are fulfilling
their own natural wifely desire to please and serve him. As expressed by
one older woman:

> "Often my husband is impatient and very quick to
> demand -- But I know that if I do as he says he will
> be in a much better frame of mind quicker and he will
> then calm down. Most of the time I do what he tells
> me to do because I know that he is right ..."

And according to another respondent:

> "There is no point arguing over who is right and
> who is wrong. A woman should leave important decisions
> to their husbands ... she should not make them her
> business ... It is only for her own good that she
> should respect her husband's wishes."

This feeling of "obedience", it must be emphasized is not seen

by the older women as an act that one is forced to carry out, but rather,

is regarded as an act of duty leading to personal fulfillment. In the

case of the younger generation, however, following of husband's wishes is

conceived of generally as "obedience", in the literal sense of the word.

While stressing that they wish to please their husbands', the majority

of the younger group of women emphasized that the relationship should be

based upon mutual respect. The following attitudes underline the impor-

tance that the younger women attach to a relationship based upon reciprocity:

> "It's not that I would deliberately go against
> H---'s wishes, but in certain matters if I earnestly
> believe that he is wrong, I would rather try to
> talk to him about it and sort things out that way.
> I just think that he should have as much respect
> for my demands too ..."

> "Of course a wife should be able to question her
> husband's wishes. She should not have to do some-
> thing just because he wants her to ... she has as
> much of a right to her own opinions and desries."

It is evident, hence, that the younger group of Indian women are

emphasizing the ideological equality of man and wife, while the older women

consider wifely obedience a social necessity. Although there is some

difference of opinion in the attitudes of the women, in general it was

felt that following the husband's dictates is not understood by either

group of respondents as "obedience" via external compulsion, but as the

natural wifely desire and duty to please her husband. It is only those

women who in fact refuse to comply with the traditional assumptions

regarding overt display of servitude towards husbands who realize that

the following of wishes under the belief of "duty" is, in fact, obedience

in the literal sense of the word. In this respect, the picture that emerges

reinforces the traditional character of the older East-Indian women;

they satisfy their needs of self-fulfillment predominantly through ensuring

that their husbands' wants are fulfilled. The younger group of women,

on the other hand, are choosing to fulfill their aspirations not predom-

inantly through their husbands', not through their own efforts, but as

pointed out earlier, by attempting to balance self-interests with those of

the family.

The requirement to be self-sacrificing in the name of self fulfill-

ment is seen most clearly in the conflict which women experience because of

the demands of marriage and career. Apart from the general expectation

that all wives must be housewives, Brenard (1957) notes that it has been

widely assumed that household chores are the responsibility of the wife,

irrespective of whether she is employed outside of the home for the benefit

of the family. With respect to Indian women in particular, de Souza (1975)

points out that with the belief that childrearing and housework are "women's

work", women are compelled to manage two full-time jobs with little or no

support of the husband. In addition, Kapur (1969) notes that traditional

concepts about women's work in India persist, with the tendency of husbands

to act on the belief that household jobs and child care are the wife's

duty. The occupational status of the present sample, and their attitudes

regarding division of labour within the household suggest that traditional

role expectations persist not only because of the cultural attitudes to

the wife/mother role, but also because women themselves in the prevailing

system of arranged marriages tend to find their emotional fulfillment in

the superior-inferior relationship.

There are several reasons why this pattern of sex and occupational segregation is maintained. First, socialization in the family and education in the school reinforce gender role stereo-typing. De Souza (1975) notes that in school, girls are encouraged to aspire to a limited range of occupations which are believed to be 'feminine' and compatible with the demands of their primary gender roles of housewife. Second, Indian women lack role models who have risen from seclusion and subordination.[10] The result is that they have internalized self-sacrificing values, and hence, their dependent status.

The views expressed by the respondents towards education and employment of women outside of the home, revealed that while both groups of women desired an educational status for females comparable to that of males, the older women stressed that the place of women is essentially in the home. The younger generation, in contrast, were of the view that women should be economically independent, and if so desiring, should have the opportunity to secure employment outside of the home.

Employment Patterns

An examination of the employment patterns of this group of women revealed that 53 per cent of the respondents do not work outside of the home, and hence are full-time housewives. Specifically, among the older Indian women, 54.4 per cent claimed to be gainfully employed outside of the home, while only 41 per cent of the younger women reported to being in the work force, (Table XIII).[11]

TABLE XIII

Mean Percentage Categorization of Respondents' Employment Status

	Employed	Unemployed	Total
Young	40.9	59.1	100%
Old	54.5	45.4	100%

Of those women who are not employed outside of the home, 70 per cent of the younger generation claimed that their reasons for not working are personal, or that they simply have no desire to secure employment, (Table XIV). Only 30 per cent of the non-working women in the younger generation reported not working because they felt that their place is in the home.

In contrast, only 10 per cent of the older housewives claimed to have personal reasons for not working outside of the home; the majority of the non-employed older women based their reasons for not working on the grounds that a wife's place is in the home. It is interesting to note that the decision to not work, on whatever grounds is made by the women themselves. Nine of the respondents justified their reason for not working on the grounds of pressure from either husband/kin.

TABLE XIV

Mean Percentage Categorization of Unemployed Respondents' Reasons For Not Working

	She Does Not Want to Work	Husband Does Not Want Her to Work	Feels Her Place Is At Home	Total
Young	70	–	30	100%
Old	10	–	90	100%

For the older group of non-working Indian women, their economic dependence

is related to emotional subordination. The following views express the

older housewives' perceptions of self:

>"I don't need to work. Whenever I need some-
>thing, I just ask my husband for it ..."

>"I don't want to work because I like to be home
>when the children come home. I don't think I
>would be able to take care of them or the house
>properly if I was at work all day."

The restrictions placed on these women do not seem to create a sense of

dissatisfaction because they are not particularily motivated to work. In

fact, all of the non-working group of older women upheld the traditional view

that once a woman was married, she no longer had a need to desire self-fulfill-

ment outside of the family unless it was with the approval of her husband.

The attitudes expressed regarding the issue of women securing employment

are summarized well by one of the older respondents:

>"Sometimes too much education and independence
>can influence you in the wrong way. Before
>thinking of satisfying yourself by working for
>other people, you should think of looking after
>your family. In my opinion, running a home is
>the only work a woman can really be proud of."

Interestingly enough, of the older women who are employed, the majority

work not due to economic necessity, but due to the need and desire to break

away from the sense of alienation felt within the home. As the children

of these women are for the most part grown adults, they assert that they have

fulfilled their primary duty, and now have no reason to stay at home. Hence,

the following views are expressed:

Case I

Mrs. ---, married for 26 years, mother of two adult children says:

>"I work because it gets me out of the house.
>I would not know what to do here all day ... the

> children are away at university, my husband
> keeps long working hours ... I don't drive, so
> if I wasn't working, I would not have much to do."

Case II

Mrs. ---, married for 32 years, mother of married children states:

> "I started to work when coming to Canada because
> there is nothing else to do here, especially in
> the winter. The children don't need me anymore ...
> What can one do here if not work? Back home we
> were so invloved in religious and charity affairs
> that everyday there was something to be done.
> But here, life is very difficult. You can't rely
> on others ... I suppose if I had young children, I
> would have a reason to stay at home."

It is evident thus, that for the older women who are employed, work

is seen as a means to alleviate the boredom of the daily routine. None of

the older working women, however, expressed a feeling of satisfaction, or

self-fulfillment arising from working outside of the home; the sacredness

of the duty towards their family remains of paramount importance. Such

attitudes toward women and work reflected again the fundamental powerlessness

of these respondents. In not receiving a sense of satisfaction from working,

the women remain personal dependents, both socially and econonically under

their husband.

In emphasing a desire to get away from the daily confinement of

the home as one of the reasons for working outside of the home, the attitudes

expressed by the younger group of employed women is similar to those felt

by the older generation. In contrast to the older women, however, the majority

of the young women stressed that another reason for wanting to work is coupled

with the desire to be economically independent. The stress placed on the

necessity of being financially independent is expressed openly by the

younger generation:

Case I

Mrs. ---, married for a period of approximately 7 years states:

> "I don't have to work because my husband is a
> professional and earns good money. But I work
> because I find it is good for me -- I am in
> contact with more people, I earn money, and I feel
> up-to-date with what's happening in the world.
> I'm home by the time the kids come back from
> school, and in that respect my working has not
> affected our family life."

Case II

According to Mrs. ---, married for 3 years:

> "I didn't work for the first year after my
> marriage and I remember being so out of touch
> with everything. But since I started working,
> I am more happy -- I'm earning, and I'm generally
> satisfied with myself."

What is important is that although for these women marriage combined

with work results in a more satisfied concept of self, they still hold a

partially traditional view of themselves. They are of the opinion that

women do have a right to self-expression, and if they find such in working

outside of the home, they should do so. However, while recognizing the

modern dilemma of women not being fully satisfied with domesticity, they

feel that the issue at hand is one of conflict of interests, and not women's

liberation.

All of the younger women, employed, or unemployed insisted that

male dominance was essential for marital harmony. The following comments express

this attitude:

> "Just because a woman is working does not mean
> that she is no longer a wife/mother. The
> husband's first responsibility may be to his
> job, but a wife's primary responsibilities
> are to her husband and children."

> "I think it's a must that those women who can
> work should do so and have a life outside of

> the home, but when it concerns her family, the
> wife should let her husband be the dominant
> one -- it's not good for children to be brought
> up in a home where the father is not respected ..."

The above opinions are shared most strongly by the non-working respondents.

Unable to work due to being mothers of young children, these women emphasize

the crucial importance of showing primary responsibility towards one's

family.

Thus, it is apparent that the younger generation of East-Indian

women view themselves as individuals with a right to self fulfillment.

Domestic happiness for them is achieved by a successful combination of

work and marriage. While their need to work has created a wider social

outlook, and reduced their capacity to be submissive, the strong belief

in the authority of the husband in the household has created a situation

in which the interests of the individual have been successfully merged with

those of the family.

In the case of the older generation of women, however, a very different

trend is evident. Even in the families where both husband and wife are

employed, the husband is still regarded as the voice of authority and

decision-maker. I asked some of the older women to comment on the division

of labour within their households:

Case I

Mrs. ---, married for approximately 22 years feels that her husband:

> "should not have to do woman's work. I would
> never ask him to help me with the housework,
> that is my work, not his."

Case II

Mrs. ---, married for 30 years states:

> "Oh, he (husband) does do a bit around the
> house -- he enjoys gardening a lot, but as far

as cooking or cleaning, well, I wouldn't want
him to -- it's not man's work, though I wish
I could have someone to help me with the
ironing ..."

The above views, shared by the older respondents suggest that the

women although working outside of the home do not expect their husbands

to contribute towards household chores. All women agree that housework

is "woman's work". In the case of the older generation, their early

socialization, strong comitment to marriage and the family allow for the

continuation of a system where the division of labour is based soley on

gender.

The women belonging to the younger generation, however, are less

inclined to simply accept their secondary position in the household. The

following examples illustrate the younger respondents' views regarding

the division of labour:

Case I

Mrs. ---, married for 2 years claims:

"I expect V--- (husband), to help me with the
housework. Why should I do it all alone? It's
not as if I'm home all day with nothing to do.
I leave the same time in the morning as he
does and come back in the evening at the same time.
It's only logical that he help around the house, and
he does."

Case II

Mrs. ---, has been married for eight years. While discussing the amount
of work involved in maintianing a house she claims that:

"H--- (husband) really helps around the house.
I don't expect him to cook, but I don't think
there is anything wrong with him doing the
dishes one in a while, and taking care of the
children the odd time -- we don't have 'Ayas',
(maids) here, so I can't do everything by myself.
Maybe if I was not working I would have time to
do all the housework ..."

The above attitudes indicate that while the older women accept
as given their traditional status as mother and home-maker, the younger
generation of Indian women are asking more readily for their husbands'
cooperation when it come to household chores. It must be emphasized,
nevertheless, that although these women are demanding that household
chores be distributed, they, like the older generation, are unwilling to
let the men help with the "cooking and cleaning," the duties that have
traditionally been delegated to women.[12]

It is proposed hence, that this group of Canadian East-Indian
women is maintaining a fairly patriarchal form of family organization, and
as a result have not departed from tradition; the strong commitment to
the home and family being most evident for the older generation. In the
case of the younger group of women, although they are not adapting to
their husbands' privileged status as ideally as they should, their position
vis-à-vis their husbands remains at a subordinate level, and has thus
not altered to any significant extent.

One of the major elements contributing towards the continuation
of a traditional family structure is the kin network. The concept of
dharma, discussed earlier, for the Hindu wife, as ideal does not simply
apply to her sense of devotion and service to her husband, but, in fact,
extends to include the manner in which kinship obligations are perceived
and the efforts that are made to meet these obligations. In general,
the attitudes of the present sample indicate that family and kin obligations
are conceived of as a duty that has to be met.

Intrafamilial Relationships

Responses to the pertienent question[*] revealed that kin members play a very large role in the lives of the Canadian East-Indian women, (Table XV).

TABLE XV

Mean Percentage Categorization of Respondents' Attitudes Regarding Kinship Obligations

	Very Large Role	Fairly Large Role	Not Large Role	Total
Young	22.2	61.1	16.7	100%
Old	4.8	71.4	23.8	100%

While both groups of women expressed that kin play a fairly large role in their family-decisions, only 5 per cent of the older respondents regarded kin interference to be very strong. In contrast, a higher percentage, 22 per cent, of the younger women felt that kin play a very large role in their lives. Seventeen per cent of the younger respondents stated that kin do not have a large role in their family decisions, while a relatively higher (24 per cent) percentage of the older women reported the same.

Although the respondents of the majority of the older group of women indicated that they are relatively free from kin interference, in conversing with them, many of the women expressed the social and economic benefits of living jointly with in-laws. The views presented below illustrate the manner in while role obligations are perceived:

[*]The question under discussion is phrased as follows: "Do you feel that your in-laws play a (1) very large, (2) fairly large, or, (3) not large role in your family decisions?"

Case I

Mrs. ---, married for approximately 27 years, states:

> "Back home we all lived together. In fact, right
> after marriage it was understood that the couple
> will carry on to live with the boy's side of the
> family. There is nothing wrong with this kind
> of an arrangement as long as there is good
> understanding between everyone ..."

Case II

According to Mrs. ---, married for 24 years, life in a joint family is
successful because:

> "Everyone carries their own weight. Women share
> the household responsibilities, while the men
> share the financial responsibilities. The
> important thing is that there be good understanding
> and good relationships between everyone."

The above attitudes suggest that role obligations are being met

successfully by the older Indian women; with the concept of mutual "under-

standing", and respect offered as the basis of family integration. The role

of kin in family affairs is seen by the majority of the older generation

as a positive feature of their tradition. Most advantageous is the financial

cooperation, and sharing of household tasks, with comprimise being the

significant element contributing to individual happiness.

A greater number of the younger generation, however, reported that

in-laws play a very large role in their family decisions. The following

attitudes suggest that this group of Indian women are not fulfilling their

role obligations as well as the older respondents:

Case I

According to Mrs. ---, married for approximately 15 years, life in a joint
family is stressful:

> "When living in a big family, everyone has to
> pull their weight and share. I don't mean
> money-wise, but in other ways as well.
> I work 8 - 6 everyday, and even so when I

get home I still have to prepare dinner,
do the dishes, and all the housework in
the evening. I don't know what S--- (sister-
in-law) ·does all day. I realize that the
baby takes up a lot of time, but if one
wants to, one can always find the time to
do the work that has to be done ..."

Case II

Mrs. ---, married for 7 years expressed the following:

"It's funny, but ever since we got married,
H (husband) always said that he and his
brother would always live together. We were
living together back home, but I guess Mama
(mother-in-law) was there and things were
different. She sort of took care of everything,
but here, S (sister-in-law) and I kept having
silly arguments, you know, over the cooking, and
cleaning, and I guess she didn't really approve
of H's drinking, and so we just thought it
would be better if we moved to our own place.
It didn't look good, you know, but we had to ..."

It is evident that in cases where compromise and mutual aid is lack-

ing, conflict over the interests of the individual versus the interests of

the larger group does arise. While some of the younger women are resolving

this conflict by establishing nuclear households even though "it didn't look

good", in many cases family traditions prevent young couples from moving

outside the confines of the joint-family.

The above data show that the developmental process of the Indian woman's

interactions with members of her family results in frustration, unless she

is willing to give priority to group intersts over self-satisfaction. To

elaborate, it seems that in order to maintain a system like the joint-

family, women must be capable of adjusting to their own roles and to the roles

of others so that conflict can be avoided. The possibility of conflicts,

however, is inherent in the system because individual personality needs

can conflict with the needs of the whole system.

Hence, when the woman finds her utmost satisfaction arising from the
fulfillment of her role of wife/mother, the ideal of the joint-family is
maintained. However, when the adjustment between an individual's person-
ality, and her marital role expectations are in conflict, the threat of disruption
does arise, as is apparent in the attitudes expressed by the younger genera-
tion. Whereas for the older women, the ideal of the joint-family is practiced,
in the case of the younger generation the ideal is maintained through mutual
aid and social contact with kin; the reslut is a successful combination
of individual needs, and the interests of the family group.

One of the functions of the family is the perpetuation of the
religious tradition. While in India, teachers, schools, and voluntray
organizations are important elements in the religious realm of the education-
al process, with women being responsible for creating an atmosphere of
spiritual harmony in the home, in Canada, such props in the wider society
are unavailable. Religious responsibility, thus, has been largely left in
the hands of women. The present data indicates that Canadian East-Indian
women are maintaining traditional religious beliefs and practices to a signifi-
cant extent (Table XVI).

Religious Practices

The majority of the respondents (82 per cent) reported celebrating
traditional Indian religious festivals and rituals. This practice however,
is being maintained by the older generation of women to a relatively higher
extent (91 per cent) than the younger group (73 per cent).

The successful preservence of religiosity has been largely possible
through the creation of the "Ary Smaj".[13] Through the arrangment of
prayers, as well as observances of religious festivals and occasions
according to the Hindu calendar, the Arya Smaj, a non-profit, voluntary

organization is attempting to provide the East-Indians in the Burlington

area a spiritual environment in which to practice customs, traditions, and

beliefs on a regular basis.

TABLE XVI

Mean Percentage Categorization of Attitudes Regarding Religious Preservence

	Yes	No	Total
Young	72.7	27.3	100%
Old	90.9	9.1	100%

The present sample of women obtained through the membership list

of the Arya Smaj; consequently, all respondents are members of the religious

organization. An element that stood out very clearly during informal

observations was the active participation of older women in religious

activities, and the relative lack of participation of the young generation.

A major factor contributing to the younger respondents' participation in

traditional rituals is their lack of fluency in Punjabi/Hindi. Consequently,

the younger generation does not share the enthusiasm of their elders in

matters concerning actual participation in religious rituals. The comments

of one young woman illustrate their general viewpoint:

> "I don't even understand what's going on there
> (Arya Smaj) -- how can we sing something we
> don't understand? I go because I guess it
> wouldn't look good otherwise -- It's not that I
> don't believe in our religion, it's just that
> I don't know the meanings of all the activities ..."

Although the younger group of women attend the religious sessions,

the future of the <u>Arya Smaj</u> is not of immediate concern to them. Generally,

this group cannot understand the language in which the hymns are conducted;

participation is difficult. Nevertheless, the younger women contribute to

a significant extent in the maintenance of the cultural vigor through

attendance (no matter how limited their participation may be), at the <u>Arya</u>

<u>Smaj</u>, through cooperation in social events sponsored by the organization,

and through a general following of holy events and customs. The younger

generation may not quite understand the "why" behind certain traditions

and practices that their elders follow, but at the same time they are not

rejecting the old values.

In this respect, it is proposed that Canadian East-Indian women are

fulfilling their expected role obligations by ensuring the preservation

of their religiosity. Essentially, perpetuation of traditional beliefs is

strengthened by the network of interpersonal relationships, and a strong

kin-based community. Hence, while basic religious concepts have an important

influence on the lives of over 90 per cent of the older women, the influence

of religious observances in terms of symbolic affirmation in the lives of

the younger generation is also considerable, (73 per cent).

As is evident from the above data, the East-Indian woman's sense

of security is her family solidarity. While in the case of the younger

generation we not a growing awareness of a self apart from well-prescribed

roles, there exists among them nevertheless, a strong emotional attachment

to the family group. Most important, however, despite the actual subjugation

of their individuality, both groups of women report being satisfied with

their life status. Such a feeling of satisfaction is evidenced by the

small number of respondents who expressed the desire to have remained single

(Table XVII).

Ideological Aspirations

Out of the total sample, 66 per cent of women expressed feelings of satisfaction with their marital status. In response to the question, "Do you ever wish you had remained single?" the majority of the older women (77 per cent) replied negatively, and 23 per cent admitted to having given the thought of remaining single only some of the time. In contrast, only 54.4 per cent of the younger generation replied that they never wished they had remained single. Forty-one per cent of the younger women stated that only some of the time they wish they had remained single all of the time.

TABLE XVII

Mean Percentage Categorization of Respondents' Ideological Aspirations Regarding Their Marital-Self*

	All The Time	Sometimes	Never	Total
Young	4.6	40.9	54.4	100%
Old	–	22.7	77.3	100%

In those cases where women expressed the feeling of wanting to have reamined single, it is important to underline that for both the young, and older groups, this belief is not necessarily an actual desire, but is often composed of an idealized fantasy. Although from their written responses to the given question it may be assumed that these women are not content with their marriage, informal conversations revealed that this

*The question under discussion asked the women to respond to the following question: "Do you ever wish you had remained single?" in terms of (1) yes, all the time, (2) sometimes, and (3) never.

sense of dissatisfaction results primarily with the women's life style after marriage. The negative feeling is not with the institution of marriage, for none of the respondents actually expressed the desire to wanting to remain without a spouse.

The fact that the younger group of women express more readily the thought of remaining single, does however, suggest that they are relatively less bound by a tradition that demands a woman's worship and eternal loyality to her husband. Married for a comparatively short time, it is proposed that the younger generation has not internalized the fitting concept of dharma to the extent that the older women have.

This deep commitment to the family is further revealed in the analysis of the women's responses to the 1st two self-identity probing questions. The first one asked the respondents to state what they considered to be their two most worthwhile accomplishments. The statements, coded in the already established subjective, neutral, and family-oriented categories clearly support the theory that for both groups of East-Indian women the roles of wife/mother are of paramount importance (Table XVIII).

The majority of the respondents stated their most worthwhile accomplishments in terms of family roles and statuses. Specifically, 71 per cent of the statements provided by the older generation indicated a family-orientation, while a relatively lower number of statements (56 per cent) provided by the younger group reflected a family-orientation. Conversely, while the average number of statements supplied by the young generation were characteristic of a neutral self-concept (33 per cent) only 21 per cent of the older women's 'accomplishment' statements were classified in the neutral category. An insignigicant number of the total statements reflected an individualistic self-concept.

TABLE XVIII

Mean Percentage Categorization of Respondents'
"Accomplishments" in Terms of a
Subjective, Neutral, or Family Identity

	Subjective	Neutral	Family	Total
Young	5.2	33.4	56.4	100%
Old	2.6	21.1	71.2	100%

It is proposed that although both groups of women listed family-oriented accomplishments as most important, the younger wives lean relatively more towards expressing those accomplishments such as education, profession, and general social achievement. The trend is similar to that of the T.S.T. data, and emerges again in the self-identity completion test.

In response to the question "Who do you think of yourself as?" the majority of the statements supplied by the older group of women were characteristic of a neutral self-concept (52 per cent), an equal number of the self-descriptions reflected a family oriented and individualistic self-concept (24 per cent). In contrast, a majority (84 per cent) of the self-references provided by the younger generation were characteristic of an individualistic oeientation. Eleven per cent of their statements reflected a neutral self-concept, while only 5.5 per cent of the self-references pointed to an identity based upon familial roles (Table XIX).

Content analysis of the self-descriptions revealed that in the neutral category, educational self-references were stressed most often by both groups of women. Statements describing their moral and religious character were frequently stressed by the older generation, and to a lesser extent by the younger women. However, professional abilities and career related self-

descriptions were expressed by the younger generations to a relatively
greater extent.

TABLE XIX

Mean Percentage Categorization of Responses to the Question
"Who do you think of yourself as?"

	Subjective	Neutral	Family	Total
Young	83.3	11.1	5.6	100%
Old	23.8	52.4	23.8	100%

While only 24 per cent of the older respondents made self-references
pertaining to a self independent of familial or other social group reference,
the majority of the younger women scored highly in the individualistic
category, with the emphasis resting on personal recognition and self-
achievement. For the older women, the focus was primarily on personal growth,
and to a less extent on personal achievement.

Content analysis of those self-descriptions depicting a family
orientation revealed that for both groups of women, mention of the tradition-
al wife/motherhood theme was dominant. It is interesting to not that when
replying to the T.S.T. question "Who Am I?" the respondents generally did
not qualify their self-descriptions. In the self-identity completion test,
however, and especially in those references pertaining to the family, it
was frequently noted that the women qualified their statements in terms of:
"I am a good mother," "I am a devoted wife," "I am a wonderful mother,"
"I am a good mother-in-law."

SUMMARY

The findings of the questionnaire supported with the observed situation reval two similar basic themes emerging from the Canadian East-Indian women's self-descriptions. These themes are "traditional", focusing on the self as an explicit mother and wife role-carrier; and "contemporary", focusing on personal growth, and self-achievement. The study revealed that the younger women are moving away from the attitude of submissiveness which was traditionally expected of them. The older generation, however, continues to believe that the submissive nature of women is related to biological characteristics.

In regard to marriage and the family, the older women tended to be more conservative and insisted that parents should choose the partners for their children. On the other hand, the younger women felt that they should select their own husbands, and that some acquaintence before marriage was crucial for adjustment in marriage. The older women were of the view that men should not participate in household chores. The younger women, however, felt that household tasks and the rearing of the children should be shared by both parents.

While both groups of women stressed the importance of education, the older women generally believed that the place of the women is essential in the home, and they were of the view that higher education tended to make women more self-centered. In contrast, the younger women were of the view that women should use education as a means of developing self-confidence and economic independence. Nevertheless, they felt that a woman should be employed only if she could perform effectively the role of wife, mother, and career-woman. On the other hand, the older women felt that the attention

128

of a woman should be devoted to her family and the home. While agreeing that
employment of women leads to economic independence, they felt that this
serves to create tensions in the home.

The majority of primary and most meaningful relationships of both
groups of women were reported to be with relatives and friends from the same
regional and socio-economic background as in Kenya. The fact that the
majority of relationships with the white indigenous population or other
ethnic minorities is restricted to formal associations has resulted in the
creation of a community supported by kin-dominated networks. The effective-
ness of the kin group as an active agent of social control was shown by a
general acceptance and following of traditional religious beliefs by both
the young and older generation of respondents. Yet, while the older women
accept their dharma as consisting of devotion to the family, with their
role being primarily as a member of a group rather than a self; in the younger
generation a new self-image is developing. These women see themselves as
equal partners with men not only in education and employment but also in the
family.

What emerges on the surface level is the impact which education and
urbanization, among other variables, have made on the values and attitudes
of the younger generation of Canadian East-Indian women. Education appears
to be of pivotal importance not only because it enables the woman to be-
come more economically independent but because through it she acquires
the self-confidence necessary to affirm her self as an individual. Never-
theless, the data imply that to a great extent the younger women continue
to live under male dominance and to be hampered by traditional cultural
and religious values.

Hence, it is suggested that while it is essential for the older women to conceive of themselves primarily as wives and mothers, the younger East-Indian women are beginning to show a complementary interaction between traditional and contemporary expectations for women.[14] The implications of these findings are further considered in the concluding chapter.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE

[1]   Since chapter 2 contains a summary of the methods employed obtaining the data to be analysed, further exposition is not considered necessary.

[2]   In addition, a breakdown of the sample in terms of their age (Table A) revealed that the majority of women who have been married for less then 20 years are between 27 - 38 years of age, while the majority of the older married women have been married between 39 - 56 years; again permitting a cross-generational comparison.

TABLE A

Present Age of Total Sample

Years	Young		Old	
15 - 20	-		-	
21 - 26	4	(18.2)	-	
27 - 32	9	(40.9)	-	
33 - 38	8	(36.4)	1	(4.5)
39 - 44	1	(4.5)	5	(22.7)
45 - 50	-		1	(4.5)
51 - 56	-		6	(27.4)
57 - 62	-		4	(18.2)
63 - 68	-		1	(4.5)
Total	22.	100%	22	100%

[3]   While immigration of peoples of Asian origins into Canada commenced at the turn of the century, during the period 1967-74, large numbers of East and South-Asians came to this country in response to Canadian needs for professionals to fill vacancies in institutions of higher learning (Naidoo, 1978).

4   Refer to Chapter 2 for complete descriptions regarding the
categorization and coding or responses.

5   The coding of the T.S.T. responses for specific identities for
the two generations of women was accomplished by calculating a mean
percentage based on all statements made by each group, not individuals.
I am aware that the collective identity may not adequately reflect
individual differences. However, keeping in mind that individuals respond
to events and objects in terms of the meanings they have attributed to
them (Mead, 1934) it is logical to assume that insofar as people respond
to an object differently, it has different meanings for them. But given
that the world is populated with diverse cultural groups, and because
individuals take their identities at least in part from the groups to which
they belong, it follows that we find within each culture a variety of groups
sharing similar systems of thought. It is consequently suggested that
because this sample of women share a similar culture and operate in terms of
the same symbolic and communicative systems, that empirically a collective
identity would reflect the general life orientation and values of the
individual respondents.

6   "Dharma" is a basic religious precept, and is defined as <u>duty</u>, or
socially approved conduct in an individual's relationships with other human
beings. The influence of <u>dharma</u> on the lives of Hindu women lies in its
emphasis on duty, with virtue consisting of performing this socially
prescribed duty (Cormack, 1957).

7   One of the primary reasons for including the orally expressed views
of the respondents stems from the fact that a majority of the women were
initially reluctant to fill out the questionnaire if they were required
to only answer questions as stated, without being permitted to elaborate
on their views. Once they were assured that they could express their
attitudes concerning any aspect of the questionnaire orally, the women
accepted the questionnaire more readily. As will be seen in the analysis
of the views of the respondents, the combined method proved to be a useful
technique and demonstrated in fact, that a questionnaire alone without the
informal data collection would have been inadequate in such an inquiry. The
questionnaire, in turn, was useful and essential, as it served to focus
attention on the area of concern and put a restraint on the respondents;
answers.

8   In this respect, the present findings are similar to Couch's
(1962) and Kuhn's, 1960) empirical confirmations of the influence of sex-
role socialization as a means of identifying one's self.

9   The arranged marriage structure whereby parents have a responsibiltity
to select a spouse for all their children, together with the strong belief
that love for women is confined within the sacred bond of marriage, combine
to ensure that for the most part, all Hindu women do get married.

10   Although in India there have been several outstanding women associated
with the freedom movement, they were largely in the political sphere.

[11]   Students in the present sample were considered as unemployed, and consisted of only one respondent.

[12]   Various recent studies point out that not only Indian women, but women all over the world are primarily responsible for the majority of the household tasks (Oakley, 1975).

[13]   The "Arya Smaj" is a highly fundamentalistic, theologically un-sophisticated sect and has represented Hinduism during the past 80 years almost singlehandedly in the region of India -- conservative Hinduism was thus transferred without any modification to East-African Hindus.

[14]   Suggestions for future research would invlove developing more effectively then the present study was able to do the precise nature and degree of self-change involved with a major role change, and the consequences of this change in individual behaviour.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS

We have seen in the data presented in Chapter Three, and indeed in the entire study, that the Hindu woman feels a strong identification of self with the family. Defining herself primarily in terms of a wife and mother role, and gaining personal fulfillment from this role, it was found that it is almost inconceivable for her to think of herself as an individual person, separate from the family. In this respect, the present findings support the conclusions arrived by several researchers (Cormack, 1973; Mehta, 1970) that Indian women identify primarily with the social group, that within the family women have been subjected to a lowered position to that of men, and that most of them have been submissive; their attitude towards status being related to their Dharma, or feeling of loyalty to the family. This concluding chapter will show how the respondents' concepts of womanhood fit into our general theoretical perspective and also how the particular quality of womanhood in the sample is integrated with the philosophy of Dharma on which Hindu social theory and practice is based.

According to Lipman-Blumen (1972), it is the system of beliefs regarding appropriate behaviour of women acquired during the socialization process that is responsible for the shaping of adult women's perceptions of self on

the basis of either a "traditional", or "contemporary" sex-role ideology.
A simplified version of the traditional ideology is the belief that women
belong in the home caring for children and performing domestic duties,
whereas men are responsible for major decision-making and the financial
support of the family. The contemporary ideology is based on the belief that
men and women should share equally in domestic and financial responsibilities
(Lipman-Blumen, 1972: 35).

It is a well recorded fact that Indian society is sharply segregated
between the world of women and the world of men. Men and women, (especially
among the high strata), lead segregated lives with few contacts between their
respective worlds.[1] It is generally the men who participate in spheres of
economic and other public affairs. Access of women to these two spheres is
severly limited so that women are excluded from direct participation in a
wide range of economic, political, and social institutions (Das, 1976).

The woman's world maifests itself in their participation in the home
and in their networks of relations with other women kin. In such a patrilineal
society, women do not have any jural roles in either the private or public
domain. Therefore, their main contribution is to their family where their
role as mother becomes very important: Throughout India the concept of
motherhood is revered. Whereas the wifely role is one of subordination,
of devotion and of dutifulness, it is the mother who as a giving, loving
individual is given extreme inportance. The wife is the woman under male
control; the mother is the woman in control of herself and her children
(Jacobson and Wadley, 1977).

Hindu girls therefore, have a definite place in a structured family
group and in a structured society. Their role is defined for them and it is
their status in the family group that is most prescribed. Maturing in an

essentially sheltered environment, girls do not make decisions; individual

initiative is not developed (Cormack, 1953). The result is that a woman,

if faithful and dutiful, will retain the approval of society. This approval,

in turn, is an essential ingredient to her self-respect.

Trained in social relationships rather than to value personal goals

and ambitions, it is not surprising that the Hindu women in this study

perceive their self-concept primarily in terms of social groups. By defining

themselves largely in relation to "others" (in this context the "others"

are members of the family and significant kin), and acheiving self-satisfac-

tion in their roles of wife and mother, their sense of self appears to be

shaped on the surface level at least, by a traditional sex-role ideology.

Analysed closely, however, it was found that although Canadian East-Indian

women are living primarily in a world revolving around the family, there

is a difference between the younger and older respondents' perceptions of

their life goals, educational, and occupational aspirations.

It was found from their responses to the T.S.T., observation, and

other interview data, that while traditional values involving interpersonal

relationships with the family, including highly esteemed conventional

values such as fulfillment of one's Dharma, and respect for traditional

authority patterns are perceived as crucial by both groups of women,

contemporary attitudes concerned with the development of self such as

personal ambition, assertiveness, and involvement in the wider society

are also perceived as important by the younger generation.[2] It was sub-

sequently proposed that a complex duality may be emerging in the self

identity of the younger Hindu woman. On the one hand she appears to be

traditional in her attitudes towards the institution of marriage and family;

she expressed the desire of being a good wife/mother. On the other hand,

however, she also reveals the potential for high achievement, and the awareness of contemporary values characteristic of those fostered in the wider individualistic society.

The postion of the younger Hindu woman in particular, but generally of all Indian women immigrants is indeed a complex one. Viewing the issue of culture-conflict in abstract terms, certain fundamental characteristics of Indian culture do appear to be in direct contradiction to fundamental characteristics of Western culture. Western society values and fosters individualism which is in marked contrast with Asian society's stress on the group, its subordination of the individual, and hierarchy of status and authority (Khan, 1975). The demands of urban life, increased mobility of labour and smaller family units do in effect stimulate the spread of individualism and a greater independence from the group. The resulting generation gap, is exacerbated by the differential influences of a second culture and value system (Khan, 1975). However, the present sample of Canadian East-Indian women have retained to a very large extent the particular traditions of their own culture.

Although a certain ambivalence was found in the behavioural expressions of the younger generation, overall the traditional dimension to their self-concept, stressing the basic philosophical beliefs in fulfillment of one's duty as wife and mother, appeared to dominate their life-orientation. In this respect Canadian-Asian women are retaining integral aspects of their cultural identity.

However, it would be erroneous to assume, on the basis of contemporary Western values, that the elements of submission so pronounced in the personality of Hindu women result in a lack of self-respect. The Hindu woman's self-respect stems from her identification with the family. This is not

surprising given that the chief factor influencing her psychological security is her relationship in the family. There is hence, a maximum of identification with the social group. Cormack (1953) suggests that the closeness of family ties in turn results in a minimum of tension between the interests of the individual over those of society. By devoting herself to the family, the Hindu woman knows that she is doing what is expected of her and thus feels a deep sense of achievement.

It is helpful at this point to view the Hindu woman's concept of self in relation to its formation and development. The basic personality structure, according to social-psychological theory is that it is formed by culture and in culture. Symbolic-interactionists conceive of the self as a set of ideas about oneself that are acquired and maintained in relationship with others. Central to an individuals conception of herself is her identity; that is her generalized position in society derving from her statuses in the groups to which she belongs (Kuhn, 1964). The self that is a set of statuses and identities is acquired and maintained in symbolic-interaction with others, and is a reflection of the social system in which it is acquired and maintained, (Mead, 1934). Essential to Median theory is that the self cannot develop or continue without others. From Mead's perspective, hence, the individual develops a set of attitudes and evaluations of herself as an object; therefore it is only through the process of taking the role of the other towards oneself that the individual begins to acquire a self (Mead, 1934).

Mead describes the self reaching full development by becoming a reflection of the general patterns of group behaviour in which it and others interact. Socialization is regarded as the primary process by which a

culture is transmitted to each new generation. The socialization process, whether regarded as a process of shaping and molding of personality, or as an internalization of the norms and values of a given culture is defined by most theories as conformity to social norms (Skolnick, 1973). The socialization process, considered as a form of learning that contributes to the individual's ability to perform social roles stems from Mead's (1934) assertion that the self is a product of self-other relationships.

Considered from the perspective that the social structure that preceeds the individual is a factor directly influencing a person's self-concept, it follows that a person may have as many self-concepts as the groups to which she belongs. This is partially because the self consists of different levels of experience; what one thinks and how one acts can constantly develop and alter depending on one's social situation. Accordingly, the acceptance (or rejection) of an identity is influenced by the extent to which a symbolic system has been acquired and applied to onself. Stressing that sex roles are socially defined and perpetuated, Lindsmith and Strauss (1968) maintain that development of identity in women is explained largely in terms of familial roles precisely because cultural ideals encourage sex-linked patterns of behaviour.

It was the interactionist theory (Mead, 1934) that one's sense of self is significantly influenced by one's group membership that led us to make the assumption that a relationship would prevail between a major role change and the self-concept. Accepting the general premise that it is an individual's social structure which determines the roles that are most central for one's self-image, it was implied earlier that the greater the extent to which a symbolic system has been acquired and applied to oneself, the more effectively will the person conceive of her self-identity in

terms of her statuses within the social system.

While it is logical to assume that women in families with a high degree of role specialization would tend to generally define themselves in terms of sex-linked statuses (Couch, 1972), the results of the present research suggest that a major role change such as marriage does influence the self-concept; the majority of the women conceived of themselves primarily in terms of an identity acquired through marriage. However, the data also indicate that a major role change has differential effects on the individual, and is dependent largely upon the extent to which one has internalized a given role and status.[3] It was found that the older Hindu woman defines herself relatively more frequently in terms of her family status then the younger generation. Thus, she described herself as a wife before she described herself as a woman; the former being more important to her than the latter. The evidence therefore suggests that as individuals become aware of differential expectations and internalize these behavioural expectations, the greater the probability that they will present themselves as they wish to be regarded. Accordingly, it was found that as the women become more involved in their marital role, they tend to define themselves more in terms of that role. The rationale here stems from Strauss' (1959: 92) suggestion that " in coming to new terms a person becomes something other then he once was."[4]

The present data suggest that the woman as an "individual" does not exist in Hindu society. One's self is instead devoted to the larger family group. Born into this cultural role expectation, the Hindu woman finds real satisfaction in the group. It was marked characteristic of the respondents' concept of self to generally accept womanhood, without a rejection of its

demands. This means that the present sample of women, reflecting their own and the general attitudes of the Hindu woman, approve of a system in which male and female roles are strictly prescribed (Cormack, 1953). Relative to her role acceptance is the fact that there is great consistency in the response of others to her role; thus permitting her to realize the dominant goals of her group (Cormack, 1953). This is in marked contrast with the conception of the feminine role in the Western world. Whereas previously it was implicityly a family linked role, the feminine role in a period of rapid social change has become a less well-defined status category. The lack of clarity associated with this term in the contemporary Western world results in an under evaluation of the female role. In contrast, socialized to equate her femaleness with domesticity, the Hindu woman expressed relatively little desire for change. This is undoubtedly rooted in the fact that her society exerts a minimum of pressure upon the individual. Personal happiness, success, and security lie within the system of inter-dependence.

Although the present findings are only suggestive, they imply that the Canadian East-Indian woman's source of fulfillment lies with the family, with its emphasis on the group. At the same time, however, the data also hint at a possible duality emerging in the values of the younger generation of Asian women. While there is little doubt that the impact of education and urbanization with its emphasis on individualism will have fundamental effects on the group-orientation of Hindu women, at this point it is premature to assume that such individualism will necessarily take the form it has in the West. Cormack (1953), and Khan (1975), remind us that Hindu traditions are strong and deep; and as the present study indicates,

the Hindu woman in Canada is not being alienated from her parental genera-

tion and cultural heritage. The ability of tradition to survive in a

modern industrial environment is attributed directly to the part played

by kin in the ethnic community. The sponsorship system, by its very

nature broughtmigrants to live with (or near) relatives, thus enabling the

East-African Asians to successfully re-create their kin universe in

Canada. It was suggested that a functional relationship is created be-

tween the immigrant and the receiving community, in which the kin network

plays a significant role. It was further noted that for the Indian women,

primary group relations are of a functional significance in facilitating

the more and subsequent adjustment to the new society through the provision

of help in the form of advice and general socio-economic aid.

Observation of the Hindu respondents' life-style revealed that the

preservation of culture has been possible due to the concentration of a

sufficiently large number of older women in the community. With social

participation confined to community membership, this group has succeeded

in transplanting to Canada the basic elements of their ideological system.

The available kin universe froms an important part of the community's

resource group and acts as an effective agent of social control regulating

the behaviour of the members. By providing support for traditional customs,

the kin networks contribute to the maintenance of an on-going system of

family and social organization.

Aside from common feelings of interest, it was found that there

appears to be an attempt on the part of the older women at formal organiza-

tion through the creation of voluntary associations that are not available

in the larger host society. The data suggest that specific forms of

social organization, such a voluntary associations, contribute to the

retention of cultural identity. Although not institutionally complete,[5]
it was found that through a firm commitment to the Arya Smaj and a kin-
based network of social relations, the older generation of Asian women has
generally been able to transmit the social and moral values of the Indian
tradition to the younger generation. Steady participation in community
affairs on the part of the young respondents may be seen as evidence of
the group's desire to conform to cultural expectations.

The establishment of a unique culture within the framework of a
new country, however, is not an easy task. Though able to empathize with
the teachings of the older generation, the young group of Hindu women is
at best adapting to its new environment. On their part, there is much
greater evidence of involvement in the host society. This to some extent
has been helped by the loosening of certain traditional bonds. The trans-
ition of nuclear families, the desire for the wives to take paid employ-
ment outside of the home as a means of asserting economic independence, and
the impact of mass media have lead to a greater integration with the host
society. Yet, at the same time, the preservation of traditional sex-role
structure within the home, the continual desire for wearing Indian dress,
observance of religious occassions, and participation in the voluntary social
organization, as well as maintenance of informal ties with kin demonstrate
a will to preserve the dynamics of the traditional culture. From a socio-
logical perspective, it is suggested that for the immigrant group, their
home life, which is almost everywhere a private affair much less dependent
on the larger society for its survival, can remain constant outside of the
group's homeland.

By the same token, one must bear in mind that the ethnic community
is simply an adaption of elements of an old community. Martindale (1960)

suggests that over time the second and third generations may develop all
the anxieties of the marginal man caught between two cultures. In the
present study, the duality expressed in the life-orientation of the younger
group of Asian women provides evidence to support this theory. As the
children of these women become educated in Canadian schools, and experience
the presence of a Western ethos, the higher is the chance of culture con-
fusion and disorganization. Lack of fluency in their mother-tongue may
also limit the new generation's participation in community affairs and
interaction with their kin. Their impact on the family organization, thus,
will be great.

The preservation of culture and following of traditional family
and social organization is only possible through the continuation of a
community that is characterized by effective leadership, powerful social
institutions of its own, and an increasingly supportive kin network. The
evidence indicated that because the Asian community is not institutionally
complete, the phenomenon of a generation gap may become increasingly apparent,
running consistent with theories of modernization. However, this is not to
suggest that the future will witness a death of tradition. Given the nature
of the present findings, it is maintained that as the numbers of Asians in-
crease in Canadian cities, kin networks, acting as powerful sources of inte-
gration will succeed in regulating the behaviour of its members, and thus con-
serving a distinct ethnic identity.

Although it is too early to determine a third generation's full impact
on the East-Indian community's social organization, the trend evident in
the reported findings suggests that the young group of Hindu women is
oriented more towards the traditional rather then the contemporary pattern
of behaviour. Consequently, it is still essential for Hindu women to be

primarily wives and mothers.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

[1]
       Men and women belonging to the lower strata segregate the sexes less sharply, only because of the economic necessity which makes women work for a living along with their men.

[2]
       J. Naidoo (1979) reports similar findings in her research on women of South-Asian origins in Canada.

[3]
       One of the limitations of this study is that it could not obtain data regarding the self-concept of unmarried women; thereby not permitting a comparison between groups. Thus, I am only suggesting that length of marriage be seen as an important factor contributing to the Hindu woman's conception of self in terms of family roles and statuses.

[4]
       It is emphasized here that length of marriage be regarded as <u>one</u> of the variables promoting definition of self through marital roles. Undoubtedly the influence of Western values such as individuality, coupled with the socio-economic effects of urbanization also attribute to the women's perceptions of self.

[5]
       The term "institutionally complete" is utilized by Breton (1964) and implies the maintenance of ethnic identity in a new society through concrete forms of organization among members of the said immigrant group. Breton suggests that specific forms of social organization, such as voluntary associations contribute to the maintenance of ethnic sub-cultures essentially by giving the new immigrant the psychological security of living according to familiar traditons and familiar people.
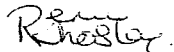
APPENDIX

December, 1979

Dear Participant:

I am a graduate student at McMaster University, and as part of my
research, am conducting a survey for the Department of Sociology.

Any information provided will be kept strictly confidential, to
be used only for study purposes. You are therefore free to remain
anonymous, and under absolutely no obligation.

Your willingness and cooperation in this matter is deeply
appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Renu Khosla

We are going to begin by a very simple task. In the spaces provided below,
please give twenty different statements in answer to the question "WHO AM I?"
Give these answers as if you were giving them to yourself, not to somebody else.
Relax, and don't worry about the logic or order of your answers. For the
moment, disregard the columns at the right of the blanks.
Please do not turn the page until you are finished.
Thank you.

STATEMENTS	COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3
1			
2			
3			
4			
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9			
10			
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20			

Now, I would like you to go back to the first page, and in the <u>first</u> column to the right of the page, indicate by putting a plus (+) sign beside a statement which in your opinion refers to a positive quality about yourself; a zero (0) sign beside a statement which refers to neither a positive nor a negative quality; and a minus (-) sign beside a statement which according to you refers to a negative quality about yourself.

Please carry on to the next page once you have finished.

Once again, I would like you to refer back to the first page, and this time, in the second column to the right of each statement that you have given in answer to the question "Who Am I?", indicate the degree to which you are satisfied with being what you say you are as follows:

If very satisfied with a statement rate it as (3).

If satisfied, rate the statements as (2).

If dissatisfied, rate the statements as (1).

If very dissatisfied, rate the statement as (0).

When finished, please continue on to the following page.

Going back to page one, and I promise this will be the last time, in the third column to the right of the page, please indicate how important each of the statements is to you by ranking it from 1 - 20 as follows:

The most important statement out of the total number of statements will be shown by the number (1) beside it in the third column.

The next most important statement will have the number (2) beside it, and so forth.

The statement that is least important to you out of the total number of statements will have the highest number, (for example, if you have provided twenty statements, the statement that you consider to be the least important will be rated as number 20 in column three).

This part of the questionnaire simply asks some general questions. Please answer/circle the statement that most relates to you.

(1)   Your present age is between:

     1. 15 - 20 years
     2. 21 - 26 years
     3. 27 - 32 years
     4. 33 - 38 years
     5. 39 - 44 years
     6. 45 - 50 years
     7. 51 - 56 years
     8. 57 - 62 years
     9. 63 - 68 years
   10. 69 years and over

(2)   You have lived in Canada for:

     1. 0 - 5 years
     2. 6 - 11 years
     3. 12 - 17 years
     4. 18 - 23 years
     5. 24 years and over

(3)   You have been married for:

     1. 0 - 5 years
     2. 5 - 10 years
     3. 10 - 15 years
     4. 20 - 25 years
     5. 25 - 30 years
     6. 30 - 35 years
     7. 35 - 40 years
     8. 40 - 45 years
     9. 45 years and over

(4)   Was your marriage:

     1. A love marriage
     2. An arranged marriage

(5)   How often do you address your husband by his first name?

     1. all the time
     2. often
     3. rarely
     4. never

(6) If you do address your husband by his first name, how soon after marriage did you begin to do so?

    1. right away
    2. within 5 months - 1 year
    3. within 1 year - 3 years
    4. within 3 years - 6 years
    5. within 6 years - 9 years
    6. 10 years and after

(7) Do you feel your in-laws:

    1. play a very large role in your family decisons
    2. play a fairly large role in your family decisions
    3. do not play a role in family decisions

(8) Are you gainfully employed (outside of the home)?

    1. yes
    2. no

(9) If you do not work, it is because:

    1. you do not want to
    2. your husband does not want you to
    3. you feel your place is in the home

(10) Here in Canada, so you celebrate most of the traditional Indian religious festivals?

    1. yes
    2. no

(11) Should a wife be able to act contrary to her husband's wishes?

    1. yes
    2. no

(12) Do you ever wish you had remained single?

    1. yes, all the time
    2. sometimes
    3. never

(13) Please state (2) of your most worthwhile accomplishments:

    1. _____

    2. _____

(14) Who do you think of yourself as?

Thank You.

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