

CAS: Ally or Not? The Views of Young Adult Canadians with Indian Subcontinent
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Abstract

The goal of this study was to assess how child welfare services are conceptualized and viewed by Canadian young adults with heritage from the Indian Subcontinent. Five second-generation young adults with heritage from the Indian Sub-continent were interviewed about their thoughts, attitudes, and opinions toward the Children's Aid Societies when they were youths, and also currently. Findings showed that lack of awareness around the function of CAS, observations of negative CAS-community interactions, and overt/subvert whiteness in the system all contributed to participants not trusting CASs during their childhood and teenage years. Participants felt that the CAS systems are designed for the white population and not for children and youth of South Asian descent. Reflecting back on when they were youths, instead of viewing CASs as a source of support or help in times of family trouble, participants indicated that they and their parents would seek support from trusted friends, family, or community members. Now young adults themselves, and envisioning having their own families in the future, participants said that if needed they would access the same friend, family and community supports rather than approaching a CAS. That being said, participants expressed that they would be open to accessing CAS services but that this would be a last resort given their perception that the CAS is not designed for them or their community. Participants expressed a desire to be able to access CAS services, but not until CAS deal with their own whiteness. In addition to being less Eurocentric, participants also recommended a number of changes CAS make so that they better serve communities with Indian Sub Continent heritage, these include increased community engagement, information campaigns, increased presence of workers/foster families from South Asian communities).

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EARTH AND AIR AND FIRE AND WATER

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Introduction

My research examines the relationship between communities with heritage from the Indian Sub-continent and child protective services in the GTA. My interest arises from the experience of being a Second-generation Canadian with heritage from the Indian Sub-continent. Growing up in the GTA, I would have conversations with peers of similar heritage around our attitudes and thoughts, as well as those of our parents, toward the Children's Aid Societies (henceforth identified as CAS). In these conversations, there was a clear understanding amongst ourselves that if there was ever conflict, child abuse, or neglect at home, that we would not report what was happening to the CAS, as we and our communities did not trust Canadian social work or the ability of CASs in addressing concerns in our family. Now, many years later, as a social worker with CAS experience myself, I wish to revisit these conversations because they clearly have implications for the way I do my work and the way child welfare services are delivered.

I completed my first BSW social work practicum at the Hamilton Children's Aid Society. While there I developed a better understanding of how the child protection system works. I learned about the roles of workers, as well as the various departments and their function. I also learned about the existence of preventative services and how they are operationalized by the various Children's Aid Societies. Preventative services are proactive, and meant to stop harm before it occurs or defuse situations that could potentially lead to harm occurring. The use of preventative services is a forward thinking model. However, awareness/knowledge of these services and their applicability to various

populations is not well understood. If individuals are largely unaware about preventative services, how can they critique the actions of the current Provincial government? This government has criticized agencies for providing prevention services and cut funding, arguing that prevention is not in the mandate of the CAS. This has been done despite provincial legislation mandating a focus on prevention (Child and Family Services Act, 2017; Rankin, 2019a, 2019b).

As well, if people do not feel these services are appropriately designed for them, then that indicates a need for reform in how they are delivered. The attitudes among peers I encountered when growing up are indicative of failures of the child welfare system. Child welfare can only be effective if it works with and has the confidence of the communities it serves.

The research question I wish to address is: “How are child welfare services conceptualized and viewed by young adult Canadians with Indian Sub-continent Heritage?”. In this research project, I want to revisit the conversations of my youth. I want to interview second-generation adults who grew up in Canada, and whose parents emigrated from the Indian sub-continent. I want to explore the views they had of child welfare services when they were growing up, their current views, and the subsequent implications for child welfare services. As previously mentioned, this research opportunity will generate data that will contribute to an understudied area of Canadian child welfare. Additionally it has implications for existing/future legislation and social policy around child welfare services in Ontario.

Chapter One: Literature Review

In this chapter, I explore existing literature and relevant studies on how South Asian communities conceptualize the child welfare system in Ontario. I also examine literature on concepts that inform these experiences and conceptualizations. These concepts include (but are not limited to): (1) statistics and demographics; (2) South Asian experiences of child protection; (3) disproportionality and disparity in child welfare; (4) factors influencing representation; (5) identity; (6) trust; (7) history of immigration and migration cohorts; (8) the socio-historical development of the children's aid society.

Statistics and Demographics

Visible minority refers to 'persons, other than aboriginals, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour' (Employment Equity Act, 1995, p. 6). Such individuals make up 22.3% of the Canadian population, with the three largest groups being South Asian, Chinese, and Black (Statistics Canada, 2017). Sitting at 24.5%, the South Asian category is the largest of these three groups, and comprises the biggest portion of the visible minority population in the GTA (Chouhan, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2017). With a national population numbering 1,924,635, South Asian identified individuals represent 5.5% of the Canadian Population (Statistics Canada, 2017). This population is projected to hit 3.2-4.1 Million by 2031 (Thandi, 2012). Relatedly, India is cited as the top place of birth for immigrants and recent immigrants to Canada (Statistics Canada, 2017).

The term South Asian is broad, and can be used to refer to individuals with affiliations to a number of diverse communities (i.e., India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, etc.); it is frequently operationalized in academic and government publications to refer to people

from (or with heritage from) the Indian subcontinent or places with populations of historically displaced people from Southern Asia such as India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh Parts of Africa, Guyana, etc. (Maiter, Stalker, & Alaggia, 2013; Thandi, 2012). With the exception of certain circumstances, I do not agree with the use of the term South Asian. South Asians are not a homogenous group, and the term South Asian is an umbrella term. This term covers such a diverse group of communities that the term itself becomes almost meaningless when used interchangeably amongst these groups. Existing literature supports criticisms of the label, as well as the complexities of its use (Maiter, Alaggia, Trocme, 2004; Maiter, Stalker, Alaggia, 2013; Pirbhai, 2015).

There are varying definitions of the term ‘second-generation’. Statistics Canada operationalizes the term ‘Second Generation’ to refer to the children of immigrants to Canada and/or Canadians as persons who were born in Canada and had at least one parent born outside Canada (Statistics Canada, 2017). In 2016, there were 8,219,550 First-generation and 6,100,725 Second-generation Canadians residing in Canada; of the latter category, 3,401,070 had parents that were both born abroad (Statistics Canada, 2017). In the latest census, Statistics Canada collected information on the identities of respondents using the population group question, question 19 on the 2A-L and 2A-R Questionnaires. The former was sent to private households, while the later was sent to private households on Indian settlements or in remote areas. This question includes 11 mark-in categories and one write-in space. That being said, the data available in the latest Canadian census does not control for generation status amongst those who identified as visible minorities (which accounted for 10/11 mark-in categories). Statistics Canada opted to operationalize

definitions from the Employment Equity Act (1995) in reference to the term ‘visible minority’ (see above).

The term second-generation has also been used to refer to individuals who were born to immigrant parents or who immigrated to the host country with their families before the age of five (Sodhi, 2008; Giguere, Lalonde, and Lou, 2010). I have opted to use a description that taps into both such meanings as I refer to Second Generation individuals as people who were born in Canada to at least one immigrant parent, or who immigrated to Canada prior to the age of five.

South Asian Communities Experiences of Child Protection?

Among studies examining South Asian families receiving child welfare services, a number of themes are apparent. These include (but are not limited to): reasons for child welfare involvement, challenges/barriers, and recommendations for improvement.

Reasons for accessing services. Based on data from national and provincial studies on incidences of maltreatment in Canada, we know that the most common reasons for child welfare contact and intervention are exposure to Intimate Partner Violence and neglect, with the least common reason being sexual abuse (Trocmé et al., 2010; Fallon et al., 2015). That being said, a word of warning is required before generalizing and projecting the above reasons for contact onto South Asian communities, and/or before making comparisons about referral rates/reasons between communities. Information from these studies is helpful as it provides us with general ideas about why individuals and families get involved with child welfare agencies, but the data in national and provincial

studies is not disaggregated by race or heritage. Thus it is unclear if those results are generalizable to every population or community.

The work of Maiter & Stalker (2011) and Maiter, Stalker & Alaggia (2013) focused on CAS-involved parents with heritage from the Indian Sub-continent. In these studies, participants were asked about their reasons for contact with the CAS. A common reason for intervention was family conflict; for example, parental inability to cope with extreme risk taking behaviours of child, or issues stemming from generational-cultural differences around discipline (Maiter & Stalker, 2011; Maiter, Stalker, & Alaggia, 2013). Other reasons for receiving services were: mental health issues of the parents, neglect, exposure to DV, and child sexual abuse (Maiter & Stalker, 2011). It is important to note that none of the families were receiving services as a result of self-referral to CAS; rather, most families were receiving services as a result of being reported by police, public health professionals, or workers in the social sector (Maiter & Stalker, 2011). Also worth noting is that participants were not always aware of why they were receiving child welfare services. Maiter, Stalker, & Alaggia (2013) identified that several of their participants had reached out for help to community agencies, and that child welfare services became involved as a result of mandatory reporting by the initial individual or institution from which they sought help (i.e., nurse, community health agencies, etc.).

Barriers and challenges. In their seminal study, Maiter, Stalker, & Alaggia (2013) describe a number of stressors/challenges that highlighted the experiences of South Asian immigrant families receiving child welfare services. In the study, participants discussed what led them to receiving services, factors that made it a challenge

to raise kids in the Canadian context and increased the likelihood of needing child welfare services, and subsequent barriers to meaningful engagement with CAS.

This study has been used to structure this section as it delineates how parts of the child protection process are not mutually exclusive. Reasons for contact have already been discussed in the previous section, as such this section will focus on factors that make it a challenge to raising kids in a Canadian context and the increased likelihood of needing child welfare services, and barriers to meaningful engagement with CAS. As well, I will discuss how their findings are supported by other literature.

The loss of support systems as the result of migration was frequently listed as a challenge for parenting; it has also been identified as both an indirect reason and a stressor for receiving child welfare services (Maiter, Alaggia, & Trocmé, 2004; Maiter & George, 2003; Maiter, Stalker, & Alaggia, 2013). Unemployment, under employment, and financial difficulties (some of which stemmed from not having foreign education credentials recognized) were also identified as factors that led to contact with child welfare services. This was due to the impact these stressors have on the relationship between parents and children (Maiter & Stalker, 2011; Maiter, Stalker, & Alaggia, 2013).

Both child welfare workers and child welfare-involved families have identified language as one of the most significant barriers for engagement between South Asian families and child welfare services (Alaggia, Maiter, & Jenney, 2017; Maiter et al., 2017; Maiter, Stalker, & Alaggia, 2013). Earlier studies from the UK have also acknowledged the existence of this barrier, and similarly critiqued the use of interpreters in the child protection process (Chand, 2005; Humphreys, Atkar, & Balwin, 1999).

Maiter & Stalker (2011) have further identified a number of barriers and challenges to engagement during their study with CAS-involved families of South Asian descent. These include: issues of punctuality on the part of the agency/worker, a lack of contact with workers, a lack of dissemination of information around how child welfare services operate, agency/worker ignorance to cultural issues, and worker aloofness to the realities of securing employment as a newcomer as issues during their contact with child welfare services.

Recommendations for improvement. Among South Asian families receiving child welfare services, recommendations for improving child welfare services include (but are not limited to): family-centred approaches over child-centred approaches, increased diversity amongst workers, and greater access/availability of ‘in-home’ services (Maiter & Stalker, 2011). These themes also emerge in the work of other people that have studied similar populations, such as Black, Indigenous, and Asian communities (Adjei & Minka, 2018; Du Four et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2017a, 2017b; Ma, Fallon, & Richard, 2019; Sanders & Fallon, 2008).

Disproportionality and Disparity in Child Welfare

Disproportionalities and disparities exist within the Canadian Child Welfare Systems (Barker, Alfred, & Kerr, 2014; Haight, Waubanascum, Glesener, & Marsalis, 2018; Loewen Walker, Henry, & Tait, 2013; Ma, Fallon, & Richard, 2019; Ojo, 2016; Toombs, Drawson, Bobinski, Dixon & Mushquash, 2018; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015a, 2015b). Disproportionality refers to over- or underrepresentation of groups in a situation, context, or set of circumstances in reference

to a phenomenon, based on comparisons to the representation of said group(s) in the general population; disparities exist when ratios of an event or phenomenon are not equal across groups, and can function as indicators of unequal treatment (King et al., 2017).

Tilbury and Thoburn (2009) state ‘data on racial disproportionality and disparity can be used as part of a suite of performance indicators, to highlight issues regarding the quality, equity, and accessibility of child welfare services’ (p. 1101). Examining disproportionalities and disparities at specific points helps to advance our understanding of the phenomenon at hand (i.e., investigation stage stats, level of intrusiveness stats, etc.) (Tilbury, 2009).

Black and indigenous youth have long been overrepresented in the Ontario child welfare system (Ojo, 2016; TRCC, 2015a, 2015b; Fallon et al., 2016). Data presented by Fallon et al. (2015) and the most recent version of the Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (OIS - 2013) depicts a similar, yet opposite effect in regard to racial disproportionality and disparities involving the South Asian Communities in the GTA.

For youth aged 0-14 in the Greater Toronto Area, South Asians comprised an estimated 4% of child abuse investigations in 2013, despite the South Asian population representing 17% of the regions population; the data demonstrates a smaller likelihood of investigation compared to white youth, a slightly higher rate of substantiation of abuse, and a significantly decreased likelihood of transfer to ongoing services (Fallon et al., 2015). Disproportionate representation or ‘underrepresentation’ of South Asian youth in

child welfare systems is a documented phenomenon in countries such as Canada, Britain, the United States, and Australia (Fallon et al., 2017; Tilbury & Thoburn, 2009).

Exploration of this disproportionality is important, but not simply for reasons of ‘underrepresentation’. Underrepresentation is defined as subgroups whose representation in an event/phenomenon/structure/organization is significantly lower than the proportion of their respective populations in a society (Robson et al., 2011). Negative connotations associated with assumptions of ‘underrepresentation’ undermine any such strengths the communities may employ in keeping kids out of the system (which, if true, should be lauded and studied). For example, one such connotation suggests that South Asian communities need greater representation in the child welfare system for reasons of proportionality – arguing that the abuse/neglect are surely present but just not being identified or reported. These connotations, and others like them, should be avoided. They are not ideas I want associated with my work. Indeed, the term ‘underrepresentation’ will not be operationalized in this paper.

Controlling for Factors Influencing Representation

Existing literature on over and underrepresentation of various racial and ethnic groups indicated two primary influencing factors in regard to child welfare involvement: family characteristics, and organizational/worker level factors.

Family characteristics. Family characteristics include (but are not limited to) variables such as: adolescent functioning, caregiver factors (i.e., single parent, high stress, etc.), and socioeconomic status (SES).

Research argues in favour of a positive correlation between lower socioeconomic status and higher rates of child welfare involvement (King et al., 2017; Sinha et al., 2013; Trocme, Knoke, and Blackstock, 2004). Similar arguments have been made for single parent households – particularly single, female parents and single parent households without support and/or who are socially isolated (Gosine and Pon, 2011; King, Fallon, et al., 2018).

Additionally, there is research to suggest that disparities in regard to child welfare contact and involvement are partially explained by the presence of risk factors related to parent/child functioning and SES (Fluke et al., 2010; King et al., 2018; Sinha, Ellenbougén, & Trocme, 2013; Trocme et al., 2004). King et al. (2018) found that after adjusting for child/caregiver factors and SES, no statistically significant differences were found between indigenous and white youth in the odds of being transferred to ongoing services following an investigation.

Caregiver factors were further assessed by Barker et al. (2019). The authors findings implicated family exposure to the residential school system in the overrepresentation of indigenous kids in care. They examined the relationship between familial residential school exposure and child welfare involvement among individuals with histories of drug use. They demonstrated that participants that had a parent(s) and/or grandparent(s) in the residential school system were twice as likely to have been in government care.

Reasons for overrepresentation are more complex and context dependent. In the aforementioned study by King et al. (2018), controlling for family characteristics and SES

did not show the same results for black youth as it did for indigenous youth; even after adjusting for such factors, black youth were three times more likely to be transferred to ongoing services than their white counterparts. This brings into question the next part of the puzzle: race and its influence on decision making by workers and agencies.

Whiteness in child welfare. Whiteness ‘refers to the specific dimensions of racism that serve to elevate white people over people of colour’ (Diangelo, 2011, p. 56). It is not a construct, but rather an ideology (Azzarito et al., 2017; Kester, 2019; Pon, 2009). Diangelo (2011) draws on a wealth of literature and operationalizes the term as a multi-dimensional social process, one that normalizes of the thoughts, values, definitions, and experiences of whites. Whiteness is driven or is underpinned by white supremacy (Dumbrill & Yee, 2018). As an ideology, it serves as a launching point for White privilege, which ‘refers to the conscious or unconscious and intentional or unintentional form of advantage that whites accrue in society’ (Azzarito et al., 2017, p. 637).

The spaces we occupy are not neutral. They are value laden. Canadian society has historically privileged the values, experiences, and norms of White, Anglo-Saxon, Christians, and evidence of Canada’s colonial relationship can be found in its system of government (Szto, 2016). The CAS is by proxy an extension of this colonial relationship; it continues to be dominated and controlled by white faces and white ideas (Dumbrill, 2003; Gosine & Pon, 2011).

Cultural competency and multiculturalism, unless taken up in a critical perspective, leave white normativity unchallenged and serve to ‘other’ the values, experiences, and norms of people from non-dominant communities (Pon, 2009; Bannerji,

1996). Aujla (2000) describes them as ‘simplistic and certain to fail because they do not acknowledge the deeply rooted racist, sexist, and colonial discourse that has constructed Canada and “Canadian Identity”’. Thus, leaving the systems of power unchanged. ‘Scholars of race have been encouraged to adopt the perspective of the daily struggle because both race and racism are produced and reproduced in the routine everyday workings of life’ (Sztó, 2016, p. 10).

Maitra argues that ‘Western views of normal family function or child-rearing can and [do] result in serious errors in the assessment of risk to children, and makes therapeutic interventions useless if not abusive themselves’ (p. 288). What is appropriate/inappropriate parenting has not been defined by minority communities. As well, it is white, middle-class individuals who have had the privilege of defining abuse (Maitra, 1996). I postulate that this is a driving factor of any potential distrust between Indian communities and the CAS of Ontario. Moreover, this can be broadened to apply to all ethnic/minority groups who feel the existing system was not created by/for their respective communities.

Identity

Identity is not static or stable, but a dynamic entity (Sodhi, 2008). Research on second-generation Canadians of South Asian Descent is limited in number and scope (Das, 2018; Rajiva, 2006; Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). Second-generation Canadian youth with heritage from the Indian Subcontinent have remained invisible in Canadian academic literature, as most research regarding minority populations has largely focused on the immigrant experience (Rajiva, 2006, 2009; Sundar, 2008).

The role of race in children's perspectives has been documented in a number of studies. Even at a young age, children are aware of racial biases and the role of 'race' in society (Friesen et al., 2012). Rajiva (2006) also describes adolescence as a raced developmental period and construct. Rajiva (2006, 2009) describes identity is a strong factor for second generation youth, and that such youth are less secure in who they are.

Identity is relevant for a discussion on trust/distrust between South Asian communities and the CAS because it is one of many factors that help to situate the population in reference to social sphere in Canada; it also assists with further understanding the relationship and associated barriers/challenges to engagement between the two. An individual's own perceptions of the self (in tandem with societal perceptions of the individual in question) impact their experiences of said individual within their respective society. Thoughts and feelings towards the social structures of the society in which an individual is embedded will impact how an individual will experience their life.

Race, gender, religious affiliations and nationality are all relevant aspects of identity for second-generation South Asian youth (Sundar, 2008). To what extent (if any), can minorities trust an institution that was created by whiteness? More importantly: should they trust it? Knowledge of this nature is relevant for social work, as it can inform the shaping of appropriate supports for these youth and their families (Sundar, 2008). Indeed, trust (or more precisely: a lack there of) in the existing child welfare system was one of the core concepts in the conversations I would have with my friends when I was younger. And as mentioned earlier, such questions are what inform part of this current study.

The role of culture in identity formation. Second-Generation Canadian Youth frequently find themselves experiencing two different realities: one in the home, and one in society (Das, 2018). These realities are separated on culture grounds; youth within this category remain radicalized others, whose norms remain outside those of dominant, white, Canadian culture (Gilligan & Akhtar, 2006; Islam et al., 2017).

Acculturation is an example of an early theory used to view the impact of ‘cultural divide’ on identity formation. While this theory applies more to the experiences of first-generation Canadians (i.e., immigrants coming into a foreign culture), it is worth mentioning due to its prevalence in early literature on identity formation amongst immigrants. Acculturation is a process that occurs when individuals from different cultures come into contact, as well as means of understanding their subsequent influences on one another (Samuel, 2005). It is a two-dimensional model that involves four sub-processes (or modes): assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization (Berry, 1997; Samuel, 2005).

Sundar (2008) outlined the separation of realities based on cultural grounds as ‘bi-cultural identity’, and describes this construct as both a strength and a challenge (i.e., receiving the best of both worlds while simultaneously not feeling wholeheartedly accepted by either of the cultures with which one identifies). Similarly, Das (2018) identifies ‘cultural interpreters’ as a self-identified title amongst second-generation youth, who work to find common ground between the expectations of two varying cultures. Rajiva (2009) refers to the navigation between these two realms as Accommodation, and

defines the term as an attempt to balance the normative white culture in which they find themselves and their minority identities.

Tirone & Pedlar (2005) argue the existence of three functional communities for second-generation youth: a place of their traditional family and home, a place of the dominant culture, and diverse or multicultural leisure places. ‘Individuals who are born in one country to parents who are immigrants know first hand the culture, values, and beliefs of their parents host community, and they also know and may have allegiance to the culture, values, and beliefs of their parent’s country of origin’ (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005, p. 33).

The largest limitation of existing literature involves trouble with fully capturing the flexibility of identity; indeed, the most recent research shows that identity is not so categorical, but rather fluid and situation/context dependent (Beharry & Crozier, 2008; Sodhi, 2008; Sundar, 2008). Some researchers have attempted to address this limitation. For example, Bhaba (2004) offers an alternative route to bicultural identity in his notion of the Third Space, which functions as a space in which an individual is able to live comfortably in both cultures through balancing expectations of both cultures into one mindset (Sodhi, 2008).

The role of community and friends. Friend groups, as well as the larger community with which one is affiliated, function as central components in identity formation. Such aspects of identity formation are of particular note for this project due to their exploration of a bilateral relationship between community and identity formation (identity can both influence and be influenced by community). Sodhi (2008) describes

how culture is preserved, maintained, and reinforced based on interactions between/amongst community members, friend groups, peers, and parents/grandparents: ‘Individuals originating from the same ethnic background are able to empathize with each other and share an understanding of their common concerns, which, in turn, serves to solidify their identity’ (p. 192).

Encounters with racism and discrimination cause second-generation Canadians/immigrants to seek out experiences with individuals from the same racial and class background as themselves, and any (Rajiva, 2013; Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). Dominant group friends are chosen carefully based on whether or not they are able to understand the individual’s participation in the norms of their cultural and ethnic community practices – a resistance against unchallenged assimilation into dominant culture (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). This is relevant for my study because if kids from the same backgrounds hang out together, they may all have shared understandings/views on the Children’s Aid Societies (CAS). What are these views? If these views are representative of a belief that CAS is not there to help them and overall detrimental to them and their families, it can be argued that current child protection practices (in combination with societal racism) further marginalize already marginalized youth (Maitra, 1996; Ojo, 2016). Moreover, it would be interesting to learn if and how these youths are able to function as supports for one another. It is worth noting that there are few, if any, studies on third-generation Canadians.

According to Sodhi (2008), a ‘cultural gap’ refers to challenges experienced by parents and children when they fail to understand each other’s perspectives. I argue that

this concept (a failure to understand one another's perspectives) can be applied to the relationship between South Asian communities and Children's Aid Societies in Ontario. Existing literature supports the existence of cultural gaps within the relationships amongst South Asian Communities and child welfare services in Ontario (Maiter, Alaggia, and Trocme, 2004; Maiter and Stalker, 2011; Maiter, Stalker, and Alaggia, 2013).

That being said, generation as a concept should not be ignored in favour of a focus on ethnic-identity. Research suggests that there are similarities in the barriers experienced by first and second-generation members of South Asian Communities; these include (but are not limited to) overt/subvert racism from members of the dominant race, feelings of exclusion in work/social/educational sphere, being 'othered', feelings of not belonging, etc. (Beharry & Crozier, 2008; Samuel, 2004, 2010; Poolokasingham et al., 2014).

While the systemic barriers experienced by first-generation immigrants may inform the stressors and experiences of their children, second-generation Canadians are less likely to face the same barriers and acculturative stressors as their immigrant parents (Abouguendia and Noels, 2001; Giguere, Lou, & Lalonde, 2010; Islam et al., 2017; Rajiva, 2006, 2009, 2013). Identity development is one such example of such an acculturative stressor. Youth represents a critical stage of life for mental health (Islam et al., 2017). Immigrants and immigrant parents - who are past their formative years - arrive in their host country with a developed sense of identity; this is not the case for their children, who experience exclusion and othering at a deeper level as a result of being othered by a society and culture into which they were born (Aujla, 2000; Beharry & Crozier, 2008).

Gross oversimplifications and generalizations of traits of South Asian populations are commonplace. Academia is not free from such biases. There exists a fear of consequences (as with any population, regardless of race), however this fear becomes conflated with identity and societal implications of race and ethnicity; Second generation youth don't want to play into cultural and racial stereotypes about parenting in South Asian communities (Goodman-Brown et al., 2003; Sundar, 2008). Maiter, Alaggia, and Trocme (2004) took a huge step towards dispelling the myth that South Asian parents find harder discipline practices more acceptable than their white counterparts.

Trust

Trust plays a large role in the child protection process, as disclosures of abuse or maltreatment are not events/single instances, but rather processes (Cossar, Brandon, & Jordan, 2014; Paine & Hansen, 2002; Finn, 2011; Sorensen & Snow, 1991). Research suggests that children are conscious about child protection process, and the existing literature has identified rapport/trust as a critical factor in disclosures of abuse (Cossar, Brandon, & Jordan, 2014; Finn, 2011; Palmer et al., 2001). Further research is needed on the experiences of second-generation Canadians, as well research regarding the intersection of race/ethnicity and child protection (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005; Sorenson & Snow, 1991).

History of Immigration and Migrant Cohorts

Disadvantages relating to race can be experienced differently based on the class to which an individual belongs (Sundar, 2008). As such, it is important to have an

understanding of the intersection between class, migration, and the subsequent impacts on second-generation youth.

There are 5-6 observable cohorts of immigrants from the Indian Subcontinent: those prior to 1900, early 20th century, mid 20th century model minorities, late 20th century unskilled labourers, '90s-'00s professional immigrants, and modern immigrants. An understanding of the 20th century cohorts is required for this research.

Othoring and distrust has highlighted the South Asian experience in Canada since the arrival of the first immigrants; immigration from the Indian Subcontinent can be traced back to the 19th century, and the experiences of the earliest migrants highlight the interwoven nature of nation building and racism (Aujila, 2000). Laws and regulations on the immigration of individuals from the Indian Sub-continent 'ranged from partial exclusion based on race and nationality and later racial quota system, to universal entry regulations influenced by labour force needs and political considerations' (Basran, 1993, p. 340).

From 1850-1920, South Asians were only allowed entrance to Canada as temporary workers or tourists. The experiences of these early immigrants were characterized by an inability to vote, denial of citizenship, prohibition from holding government positions, and forced adherence to property limitations (Dua, 2000; Rajiva 2006).

Three acts of legislation maintained South Asian exclusion during the 20th century: P.C. 23, P.C. 24, and P.C. 897 (Wallace, 2013). P.C. 23 stipulated that immigrants arrive in Canada by 'continuous journey' from their country of

birth/nationality (Basran, 1993; Pirbhai, 2015; Wallace, 2013). Very few ships offered such passage. P.C. 24 stated that Asian immigrants have two hundred dollars in their possession upon arrival, except in cases where such immigrants are governed by other legislation (i.e., Chinese, Japanese) (Basran, 1993; Wallace, 2013). P.C. 897 barred non-farming “artisans and labourers” from landing at B.C Ports (Wallace, 2013). Another piece of relevant legislation is Liberal M.P. Frank Oliver’s Immigration Act of 1906. This Act increased health requirements of immigrants and expanded the definition of an ‘undesirable’ immigrant (Wallace, 2013).

Early South Asian immigration was dominated by male migrants, a calculated manoeuvre to prevent the development of ‘alien communities’ on Canadian soil. And despite being homogenized as ‘Hindus’, the majority (>90%) of early immigrants from the Indian Subcontinent were male Sikhs from Punjab (Almy, 2018; Cambell, 1999; Johnston, 1988; Wallace, 2013). The population of natural born Canadians with heritage from the Indian subcontinent remained small well into the ‘70s and ‘80s - the result of restrictive immigration policies that lasted from 1906 to 1962 (Johnston, 1988; Wallace, 2013). In 1961, the total population of South Asians in Canada was less than 7000 (Johnston, 1988).

From 1904 to 1944, the majority of immigrants from the Indian Sub-continent would be labourers; the rise and decline of professional immigration from the Sub-continent would occur roughly from 1945 to 1983 (Basran, 1993). In his study on the development of the Punjabi community in Vancouver, Johnston (1988) describes how the existing communities had taken the shape that immigration policies had allowed; he

provides an excellent overview of Canadian immigration policies and patterns as they pertain to the Indian Subcontinent from the 1960's into the '80s. During the 1960's, the Canadian Government started to emphasize professional and technical qualifications in immigration selection procedures. Quotas applied to immigration from the Indian Subcontinent were abandoned in 1962, and the door to independent immigration was opened. Sponsorship of dependents was also extended. In 1967, the selection criteria for independent immigrants was formalized in the points system. At this time, a new immigration category was created: nominated relatives. Nominated relatives had to meet the same criteria as independent immigrants, but could qualify more easily. Between 1962 and 1967, 62% of all immigrants to Canada were independent, whereas 38% were sponsored. Between 1968 and 1973, this trend had shifted: 54% came independently and 46% were nominated or sponsored. Application and employment restrictions were applied in the 1970's, and were further tightened in the 1980's; the country became harder to get into via independent immigration, but sponsored immigration continued unabated (Johnston, 1988).

In 1984, 94% of all immigrants from India were sponsored and 4% were independents. The percentage of professionals among immigrants from India decreased significantly through the 1970's and 1980's: 42.6% from 1968-1972; 21.5% from 1973 to 1977; 10.4% from 1978-1982; 1.5% in 1983-1984 (Johnston, 1988). During this time, the percentage of unskilled workers increased. The sponsorship system during this time was closely linked to unskilled labour (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). A survey of 602 households of Sikhs found that 60-70% of the men were doing factory work or similar unskilled labour

(Johnston, 1988). Johnston (1988) argues that this trend would remain consistent through the '80s.

Continuing where Johnston left off, (Tirone & Pedlar, 2014) argue that the presence of friends, relations, and peers are what drove immigration in the '80s and '90s. For the first time, people were immigrating to places with established populations. Such communities function as an important source of acceptance, support, and information networks (Tirone & Pedlar, 2014). This is supported by stats around family sponsorship, and the establishing of communities. Ethnic enclaves and associations provided and continue to provide protective qualities to new immigrant families (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005).

Second generation youth are impacted by their parents, and it is reasonable to assume that the extent to which immigrant parents have adapted to 'Canadian norms/values' (a term synonymous with white norms and values) relates directly to factors such as: their historical migration cohort, their identity, the location to which they immigrated, and the extent to which they adhere to/have invested in western cultural capital. Cultural capital can be conceptualized as the behaviours, attitudes, and ways of being that dictate social mobility in a classed society (Erel, 2010). Thus far, I have demonstrated how researchers have independently examined all of these factors. However, I argue all these factors conflate together. While an in depth discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of my paper, it is noteworthy because it elicits reflection on the experiences of the parents of participants, as well as those of my own parents, and how belonging to a particular migration cohort affects the socialization of the subsequent

generation (i.e., immigrating in 1905 and undergoing forced assimilation versus immigrating in 1989 via family sponsorship into a small host community). Assimilation refers to when immigrants adopt the culture of the dominant group, and is rooted in the notions that it is undesirable to be different and that ethnically distinct cultural traditions are detrimental to one's ability to fit in (Tirone and Pedlar, 2005).

Socio-historical Development of the Children's Aid Society in Context

It is evident that throughout the 20th century, social, political, legal and even biological means were employed to exclude South Asians and keep Canada white (Almy, 2018; Wallace, 2013; Somani, 2015). I argue that this facet of nation building extended to the country's social institutions - one of which was the Children's Aid Societies in Ontario. Indeed: How could minorities have influenced the development of institutions like the CAS, when they were busy trying to justify their right to exist in the country?

At the turn of the 20th century, the CAS was not a new institution. That being said, it was certainly in its infancy. Indeed, the origins of the humane and children's aid movement in Ontario can be traced back to the presentation of a paper on social reform by Mr. J. J. Kelso (who would go on to become the president of the first Children's Aid Society in July of 1981) on Saturday February 19th, 1887 (Kelso, 1911; Woodger, 2013). Having been dominated by middle class values, Woodger (2013) argues that the institution viewed the moral reform of the working class as one of its primary duties.

The analysis of immigration, migrant cohorts, and the development of the CAS in Ontario represent coalescence. And the impacts of this coalescence can still be viewed today in the practices and approaches of the CAS, its treatment of minorities, and the

views of said minorities about organization itself. For example, Contenta, Monsenbraaten, and Rankin (2016) report on the disparities in contact and intervention rates between indigenous and black children compared to white children using data from the Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (2013), and outline the thoughts and opinions of prominent members of the impacted communities/child welfare sphere.

Systems of care, protection, and control of young are directly linked to conditions and history and the conditions in which they were created (Maitra, 1996). If a group has encountered historical violence, criticism from dominant culture, and ostracization, then it is reasonable to conclude that said communities may not trust governmental structures/organizations that are embedded and rooted in the beliefs of the dominant culture. The One Vision, One Voice Report explicitly delineates how the child welfare system is harmful toward black communities, and how this violence is enmeshed in social and political structures of the dominant society (Ojo, 2016). As well, Academic and grey literature have outlined and substantiated examples of historic and contemporary violence done/being done toward Black and Indigenous families by the Child Welfare System (Ojo, 2016; TRCC, 2015a, 2015b). The '60s Scoop is one such example of historic violence, while the overrepresentation of black youth in foster care serves as a contemporary reminder. As mentioned earlier, these systems weren't informed by minorities. Racism was imbedded in the way they were designed

The intention and context in which an action is performed determines whether or not said action will be considered abusive by a child or young person (Maitra, 1996).

How can such a nuanced and value-laden act be interpreted by a social institution that was borne through racism and race-based exclusion?

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

A paradigm refers to the sum of a researcher's epistemological, ontological, and methodological premises (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, 2008). Of the four major interpretive paradigms, I have opted to use the constructivist-interpretivist framework (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, 2008). Such a paradigm endorses relativist ontologies (multiple constructed realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understandings), and a naturalistic set of methodological procedures (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The research question I wish to address is: “How are child welfare services conceptualized and viewed by young adult Canadians with Indian Sub-continent Heritage?”. The ultimate goal of such a question is to inform policy making in the realm of child protection regarding Canadian families from the Indian subcontinent. In this research project, I will interview second-generation young adults who grew up in Canada, and whose parents emigrated from the Indian sub-continent. I want to explore the views they had of child welfare services when they were growing up, their current views, and the subsequent implications for child welfare services.

In addressing the research question of this study, an eclectic theoretical approach will be operationalized alongside an interpretivist framework. CRT, Narrative Theory, and Confluence will be used in coordination with a relativist ontology and subjectivist epistemology in order to inform a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm.

Methodology and Theory

Methodology is an analysis of how research should proceed, and as such it cannot be viewed as separate from the theoretical underpinning of the research in question (Baker-Collins, 2018). Indeed, both methodology and theory must align and flow together to properly inform the work at hand; the theoretical underpinning of research is woven into a work's ontology, epistemology, and methods. The theories informing my research include: Critical Race Theory, Narrative Inquiry, and theories of identity; the linking factors between such theories and constructivist-interpretivist methodology has to do with their focus on the ascription of meanings, their emphasis on the co-construction of knowledge, and their ability to provide a deep level of analysis.

Ontology is the philosophical study of the nature of being; it investigates the nature of social reality and establishes a theoretical perspective, worldview, and/or belief system (Baker-Collins, 2018a; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, 2008). The ontology of my research can be considered constructivist-interpretivist in nature. I feel this way because my thinking is explicitly focused around the complex/socially-constructed nature of the phenomena I wish to study (i.e., the relationship, or lack there of, between South Asian communities and CAS agencies).

Epistemology is the study of the nature of knowledge and justification; it asks the question of 'how do we know what we know?' (Baker-Collins, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Keeping my interpretivist epistemology in mind, my research will focus on: perceptions, interpretations, and ascribed meanings. The goal of qualitative research of

this nature is not generalization; rather, it is to understand the world of a specific population from the viewpoints of its members (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Phenomenological interviewing is concerned with uncovering knowledge related to specific phenomena. More specifically, a hermeneutic phenomenological approach is concerned with interpreting concealed meanings in phenomena (Sorrell and Redmond, 2005). Sorrell and Redmond (2005) state that “these common meanings are embedded in cultures which incorporate shared language, practices, and important practical knowledge about common day-to-day experiences” (p. 1120).

A connection can also be made between my methodology and ontology as phenomenological research of this manner assumes and interacts with the way the world is organized via assumptions that the researched world cannot be reproduced; it has to be represented by an analysis of what is derived from the stories of the participants. Relatedly, the form of that analysis reverts back to a dependence on my epistemology, as that is the frame that decides what is/is not included.

Theoretical Underpinning

Critical race theory. CRT is an approach to practice that was pioneered by Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman in the 1970’s. It found its stride by raising questions and concerns around the continued interplay between race and power in the wake of the civil rights era, such as the slow pace of societal transformation and/or the reversal of gains from the Civil Rights Era (Constance Huggins, 2012).

CRT is action/activism oriented; it operationalizes a critical/analytical framework for understanding oppression, and works on both individual and institutional levels

(Pulliam, 2017). The reproduction of knowledge without critical analyses of race or gender function against my ontology/epistemology, and “reinforce notions of positivism in regard to truths as measurable or observable” (Maiter & Joseph, 2014, pg. 756). The basic tenets of the theory include (but are not limited to): the ordinariness of racism in North American society, the social construction of race, the critique of liberalism, whiteness as property, the interest convergence and the unique voices/experiences of people of colour (Kolivoski, Weaver, & Constance-Huggins, 2014; Pulliam, 2017; Sugrue, 2019). Of particular note for my work are: the ordinariness of racism, the social construction of race, whiteness as property, and the unique voices of people of colour.

The ordinariness of race refers to the normalization of the interplay between race and power in our day-to-day interactions; racism is embedded in our structures, customs and experiences (Kolivoski et al., 2014, Constance-Huggins, 2014). Within the context of my epistemological framework, the Children’s Aid Society’s can be viewed as an organizational and systemic structure in our society, one that functions at both institutional and individual levels. Thus, CRT is being operationalized to evaluate the existence of unmet child welfare needs among racialized members of a community due to biases within the CAS itself.

The theory is rooted in social constructionism; it uses the social construction of race as a focal point from which to analyze, make visible, and acknowledge the differential manifestation of power in society (Pulliam, 2017). Furthermore, it embraces the notion that reality is socially created and rejects the idea of a wide-encompassing master narrative or universal truth (Constance-Huggins, 2014; Ortiz & Jani, 2010;

Pulliam, 2017). This connects to the interpretivist/constructivist nature of my ontology and epistemology, as my research is centered on perceptions, interpretations, and ascribed meanings. Within the scope of my work, CRT will be used to acknowledge if/how race is a significant force in shaping outcomes for minorities in regard to the Ontario Child Welfare System. More specifically, it will be used in reference to the potential unmet needs of second generation Canadians with heritage from the Indian Subcontinent. This is in line with CRT's structural approach to solving societal problems; promoting changes in institutional arrangements, while simultaneously recognizing personal distress/resistance (thus rejecting the divide between micro and macro social work practice) (Ortiz & Jani, 2010).

CRT's critique of liberalism is in-line with the ontological and epistemological premises of my research. My ontology rejects notions of equality through neutrality of law. Plus, my work validates subjective and socially ascribed meanings, just as claims of neutrality of law ignore structural inequities in society. Thus, CRT not only aligns with my framework, but also actively fuels my ontological and epistemological framework.

Ortiz and Jani (2010) advocate for the use of approaches that acknowledge the experiences of marginalized groups. CRT draws upon the unique voices of people of colour, and embraces the view that such individuals are best able to articulate the meanings of race and racism. It involves tapping into such experiential knowledge (i.e., via stories and interviews).

Narrative theory. The long interview method I have opted to use offers insight from the perspective of the participant in a manner that does not involve sacrifices in time

or privacy (McCracken, 1988; Crabtree & Miller, 1991; Corcoran & Stewart, 1998). A critical module of this methodology is the Narrative. As described above, a narrative involves tapping into experiential knowledge. Through ascribing meanings and definitions to concepts described by the participant, a narrative helps to situate the phenomena within social and cultural contexts. The nature and scope of my research question justifies the use of this method as it satisfies the qualitative research objective of discovery and description, and fits with the phenomenological nature of my intellectual question and the interviews in my study (Crabtree & Miller, 1991; Corcoran & Stewart, 1998).

A narrative can be oral, written, or naturally occurring; it can be a short story centered around a particular event (personal narrative), an extended story about one's life, or an extended story of one's entire life (life history) - or any combination of the three (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). There are a number of lenses through which to view the theoretical framework of Narrative Analysis: retrospective meaning making, expressing a reality that will affirm/challenge the status quo, narratives as temporally/spatially bound, narratives as socially situated and interactive (i.e., vary depending on audience - joint production between the narrator and listener), and/or the role of the researcher in interpreting/retelling the story (Bhattacharaya, 2016; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Fraser, 2004).

Narrative inquiry is inline with interpretive frameworks through its rejection of universal truths and acknowledgment of the role of power in the research process; it rejects thematic categories and emphasizes the role of shared meaning making

(Bhattacharaya, 2016; Fraser, 2004). This rejection of thematic categories connects Narrative Inquiry to a third influence on my theoretical framework: Confluence (discussed further below). Moreover, it is inline with the ontological belief in multiple realities, and further adds to this by describing said realities as subjective (Bhattacharaya, 2016).

Both CRT and the constructivist paradigm adhere to the belief that reality is intertwined with power (Bhattacharaya, 2016). This acknowledgement of power in the research process informs my work through recognizing the attention that is due to the co-construction of meaning making and the interpretation of narratives. This co-construction functions as a democratization of the research process. Power relations are a reality. If they remain unacknowledged, they have the potential to undermine/hinder the research process (as well as the communities the research hopes to serve). Thus, Narrative Theory and CRT function in tandem to contribute awareness of social conditions and structures to the research framework.

Narrative accounts have a bidirectional relationship to social action and justice (Bhattacharaya, 2016). In coordination with CRT, the tenets of Narrative Analysis inform my theoretical framework by situating stories in a wider cultural, political, and social context. Individual narratives are situated within larger societal structures, and - when used alongside critical ideas - can assist us in better understanding the functioning of said structures at a macro level. Indeed, this interaction with critical ideas is imperative for functioning within a constructivist framework, as the narratives may elicit hidden or subordinated ideas that challenge societal norms and structures (Fraser, 2004). This

action-oriented nature further informs my epistemology via the interviewee's role in the co-creation of meanings, as well as the identification of areas for change.

The flexibility of narrative influences is an undoubted strength in regard to theoretical frameworks. They can be modified and geared towards particular types of research. When operationalized from a critical perspective, narratives can challenge dominant social practices (Fraser, 2004).

The application of CRT to Narrative Analysis pushes researchers to go beyond face value analyses (Maiter & Joseph, 2017). Transparency and continuity among the philosophical/epistemological goals of my framework prevent research from being accepted without interrogation. When this does not occur, it can result in the perpetuation of historically oppressive and marginalizing systems of knowledge production.

Intersectionality, Interlocking Analyses of Oppression, and Confluence. Much of my research revolves around the identities and experiences of the participants; such identities and experiences inform one's worldviews, thoughts, and opinions. To incorporate a discourse on identities into my theoretical framework, a number of factors must be considered.

Intersectionality, an approach that was inspired by feminist scholars of colour in the 1970's, is a term that was coined by critical race theorist and legal scholar Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989; it refers to an analysis of how oppressions (i.e., race, gender, class, ability) intersect to form injustices such as: surveillance, domination, and discrimination (Hicks, 2015; Krumer-Nevo & Komem, 2015). Conversely, interlocking analyses of

oppression pay more attention to historicity and overlap of oppressions, as well as relations of power based on such categories (Joseph, 2014, 2015).

Both of the aforementioned approaches can be useful when examining systems of power in specific spaces/instances (Joseph, 2015). That being said, the aforementioned theories fail in their ability to capture the scope of a phenomenon. This ties into Maiter and Joseph's (2017) critique of face value acceptance and a need to probe beyond. People themselves may not identify with how they have been labelled (Joseph, 2015).

Joseph (2015) offers confluence as an alternative to intersectionality and interlocking analysis of oppression. An analysis of a confluence can be used to better understand the "the processes, discursive technologies, practices, historiographies, which produce ordered difference, relational and professional hierarchies and relations of power and dominance" (Joseph, 2014, p 96).

There are two main tenets of confluence that are of particular relevance: a confluence is never static, and no part is completely distinct from another. Confluence involves historical consideration, and analyzing how various factors and systems flow, merge, and influence one another. "Rather than focusing on distinct systems of oppression and identity categories of difference, confluence focuses on the how and the why..." (Joseph, 2015, p. 26). The notion of multiple perspectives from which to examine factors and influence is particularly relevant as it runs parallel to the ontological belief in multiple realities.

All three of these frameworks mesh well with both CRT and Narrative Inquiry in their focus around stories, the telling of experiences, and the ascribing of meanings.

However, Joseph (2015) argues that both intersectionality and interlocking analyses rely too heavily on the reproduction (and thus maintenance) of categories of difference as mutually exclusive but sometimes intersecting - thereby undermining the extent or depth to which oppressions are enmeshed. While such theories certainly have insight to offer, an emphasis on confluence is most appropriate.

Chapter Three: Methods

In this research project, I will interview second-generation adults who grew up in Canada, and whose parents emigrated from the Indian sub-continent. I want to explore the views they had of child welfare services when they were growing up, their current views, and the subsequent implications for child welfare services.

Thoughts around child welfare are not discussed so openly and easily. Least of all with individuals outside of one's cultural group, who are not likely to understand the nuanced, complex, and value-laden nature of interactions between members. As a member of the Indo-Canadian community, I am well suited to navigate this often ignored world and bring to light issues experienced by Second Generation Canadian youth/families of Indian descent. As mentioned earlier, my peers and I would frequently have conversations around our attitudes toward the child protection system. Being from the community, I understand the nuances of our criticisms and conversations.

Recruitment

Participants were recruited using a combination of purposeful sampling and snowballing. A purposeful sampling strategy was optimal for my research for a number of reasons. Firstly, such sampling methods are widely used for the identification/selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest. Secondly, it makes effective use of limited resources (i.e., funding, human capital, and time constraints). Thirdly, it is a qualitative method that is in line with the aims of my study: to understand a phenomenon of interest – not to minimize bias and increase generalizability (Palinkas et al., 2015). Rather than generalizability, I will be focusing on the criterion of

transferability. Transferability refers to whether findings from a study can be presumed to be transferable to other similar contexts or situations (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). Focusing on this criterion does not hinder the importance or trustworthiness or credibility of my results, and actually moves to strengthen the significance and applicability of my findings; the reader is presented with sufficient information and data to decide whether said findings are transferable (Krefting, 1991; Kuper, Lingard, & Levinson, 2008; Shenton, 2004).

While there are a variety of purposeful sampling strategies to choose from, my research operationalized a combination of the Criterion-I and Homogeneity purposeful sampling strategies. The former is a strategy that can be used to identify and select all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance. This can be used to identify cases from standardized questionnaires for in-depth follow up. The latter strategy aims to describe a particular subgroup in depth to reduce variation and simplify analysis (Palinkas et al., 2015). Both of these strategies were used to narrow the range of variation and focus on similarities. Moreover, purposeful sampling in this manner was appropriate as I already had an idea regarding the range of variation in the population from which the purposeful sample will be drawn (through a combination of personal experience and literature review). Additionally, I already had ideas in regard to potential participants/first points of contact in the community.

Snowballing was utilized in combination with the purposeful sampling as it helps to alleviate pressure on members of the community who would be asked to participate. In a snowballing sample, a few individuals are identified as points of contact/potential

participants and they in turn provide the names of other potential contributors (Baker-Collins, 2019). Informing individuals of the research, and providing them with a broadly tailored pamphlet/recruitment ad helped to alleviate pressure on the first points of contact (my personal connections), and thus strengthens the ethics of my study while simultaneously increasing my reach for participants.

Another method of recruitment involved recruiting participants through social media via a virtual snowball sampling method using Facebook and Twitter. The merits of this method in regard to increasing sample size have been discussed in recent research (Baltar & Brunet, 2012; Khatri et al., 2015).

Data Collection

Data was collected using the Long Interview Approach augmented with Narrative Inquiry. The Long Interview method offers insight from the perspective of the participant in a manner that does not involve sacrifices in time or privacy (McCracken, 1988; Crabtree & Miller, 1991; Corcoran & Stewart, 1998). It maximizes time and resources and helps to generate an abundance of data that's relatively free from biases (i.e., through use of structured, open-ended questions) and subsequent transcription/analysis. Through ascribing meanings and definitions to concepts described by the participant, the long interview helps to situate the phenomena within social and cultural contexts (McCracken, 1988). The nature and scope of my research question justified the use of this method as it satisfies the qualitative research objective of discovery and description (Crabtree & Miller, 1991; Corcoran & Stewart, 1998), and fits with the phenomenological nature of my research question and the interviews in my study.

Participants took part in structured, one-on-one interviews with myself. This method of inquiry involved both a questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire was composed of a set of biographical questions, which help to anchor and start the interview (See Appendix 1). The questionnaire was optional, and administered to interested participants before or after the interview, and designed to ascertain simple descriptive details of the participant's life (McCraken, 1988). These details help to situate the interviewer to the realities and context of participants' responses to questions during analysis stage. The questions are phrased in a general and non-direct manner.

The interview involved asking participants a set of structured questions, as well as appropriate prompts. The interview questions were open-ended and geared toward understanding the narrative of the participants toward the particular phenomenon of interest. Example questions for both the questionnaire and interview can be found in the attached appendices.

A brief follow-up period was incorporated into the end of the interview. This was done in an effort to allow for elaboration on any points deemed significant by the interviewer (myself), while simultaneously ensuring adherence to the Long Interview principle of not digressing from the standard set of interview questions during the interview itself. This principle was deemed valuable as it allows for easier analysis of the interviews (i.e., each question asked in the same order/way to each participant).

Consent/Confidentiality

Study information and recruitment materials were sent to participants after they expressed interest in participating. This information outlined all the steps being taken to

ensure their confidentiality. Additionally, relevant recruitment materials such as the letter of information were reviewed with participants immediately prior to the participant signing the consent form, and before each interview. This was done to ensure that participants were informed of the risks involved with the study (including risks to confidentiality), as well as to ensure their comfort with participating. These materials can be found in Appendix A and E.

Data Analysis

As previously mentioned, I have operationalized a constructivist-interpretivist ontological framework; from an epistemological standpoint, my research focused on perceptions, interpretations, and ascribed meanings. Similarly, the phenomenological nature of my interviews was aimed at interpreting concealed meanings within the phenomena being explored. As such, a thematic analysis of interview recordings and transcripts took place.

Participant's responses to the standard, open-ended questions were assessed and compared for commonalities and variations. This involved painstakingly re-reading and highlighting transcripts, and re-listening to audio recordings of interviews.

Participants

A total of five one-to-one interviews were completed for this research project. Interviews were conducted from June to July of 2019, at a location preferable to the participant. These locations ranged from participant's home to public libraries.

All participants were second-generation Canadians with heritage from the Indian Sub-Continent. Three self-identified their ethnicities as Indian, and two as Sri-Lankan

Tamil. Of my participants, one identified as male and four as female. Their ages ranged from 19 to 28.

The participants were recruited from a variety of regions across the GTA. Participants were working professionals in the emergency, social services, and business sectors, and/or University Students (one current undergraduate student and one graduate student, who would commence studies in September).

Ethical Considerations

My study received a certificate of ethics clearance to involve human participants in research (Please see Appendix C and D).

Chapter Four: Findings and Data Analysis

A number of themes emerged in regard to the conceptualization of CAS and child welfare services. Said themes can be placed into three categories: past/present conceptualizations and attitudes toward the CAS and child welfare services, the presence of internal supports and protective factors, and commentary on the child protection process and its agents.

Conceptualizations/Attitudes Towards the CAS and Child Welfare Services

No participant trusted the system while growing up, nor do they unconditionally trust the system now. To the best of the participants' awareness, these views are paralleled amongst the previous generation (their parents). Likewise, this attitude has carried over into the participants' present day adulthood. This attitude toward child welfare services is fueled by two primary influences: a lack of knowledge around CAS operational policies and procedures, and a general belief that the CAS as an institution is rooted in white/western normativity.

Knowledge and awareness of CAS. All participants were aware of child welfare services growing up. However, none knew anything about the organization, and only one (Participant 4) stated being aware of the specific name. The remainder were only aware of the presence of an overarching, unspecified child welfare authority. Most participants likened their conceptualizations of this authority to the police. Indeed, many participants all described ways in which the CAS is comparable to the police today. These findings are in line with similar literature with CAS involved Asian and Southeast Asian families,

in which participants ascribed social workers in the child welfare system to be comparable with police (Lee et al., 2017a; Lee et al., 2017b).

This lack of awareness regarding child welfare services, policies, and procedures is a theme that has been briefly touched on in existing research with CAS-involved South Asian immigrant parents; parents described coming into contact with CAS inadvertently/unintentionally via mandatory reporting (a set of laws of whose existence they were not aware, and which harmed their trust in the organizations/institutions of their host country), and expressed frustration at not knowing about services available to help them (Maiter & Stalker, 2011; Maiter, Stalker, & Alaggia, 2013). Lee et al. (2017a, 2017b) described a similar finding in their research projects, in which members of Asian families may be unaware of the purpose of the child welfare system beyond the removal of children, and/or the role of social workers in the system itself.

My findings help to fill gaps in existing research by providing further insight into how a lack of knowledge about the child welfare system and the role of its agents (in tandem with hearing about the negative encounters of friends, family, and community members) can hinder meaningful engagement between communities/immigrant populations and the CAS. And this insight is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Participant's conceptualizations of CAS during childhood ranged from comical apathy (i.e., CAS as just a threat used by kids toward parents or vice-versa) to indifference to outright fear. And there was a prevalent belief amongst participants that CAS intervention was reserved only for the most serious situations or abuse. With the exception of Participants 2 and 3, who have received training/knowledge regarding child

welfare procedures, this belief persisted into adulthood. Taken together, participants' divulgence of their past and present knowledge regarding the CAS have indicated that there is a dearth in awareness amongst South Asian communities regarding the roles, policies, and procedures of the agency, as well as those of its agents.

I think my notion of it as a child was that they were only for extreme situations. And not smaller things, or prevention, or not for like any other situation other than child abuse.

- P3

I would say the lack of knowledge is what made us not trust them. You don't know enough about them to make that judgment call. And your parents have used [them] as a scare tactic. So you know, you think they'll do more harm than good. And I think again, people in the same community would agree. Until you get older and form your own opinions, you don't know better than what your parents tell you. And at that point, you're just scared. That they [CAS] are the people that will take you away from your family.

- P5

Observations of negative interactions. Three participants (P2, P4, P5) described learning about the organization by hearing about or observing CAS interventions amongst their friends, neighbors, or community members. Each participant framed the experiences they observed or heard about as a negative interaction.

Furthermore, a special mention must be given to the role of media. Four Participants (P1, 2, 3 and 4) implicated negative portrayals in pop culture and media as influences in their past or current understanding of child welfare. These views are succinctly summed up by a quote from Participant 3.

A lot of people sort of view child protective services as bad, or [see them being portrayed] in the media as the people who would take your kids away from you. I think that's more with like American shows because they have like DCFS [Department of Child and Family Services] I think...It's always shown that they're [CAS/DCFS] like taking the child away from the home.

- P3

Additionally, both of these themes are present in the quote from Participant 4, responding to whether or not they trusted CAS while growing up.

I don't think I trusted them growing up. Based on what I saw on TV, but also seeing my friend being upset with them, and [CAS] having to interview them [friend and friends foster family].

- P4

On scare tactics and threats. Another common conceptualization of the CAS involved the child welfare intervention being operationalized as a scare tactic and threat between parents and their children. Participants 5 and 2 both described the scare tactic as being used by their parents in order to get them to behave.

But like growing up, we didn't talk about it. We just knew that the police took you away. So it's like what happens after that, we don't know. My mom use to tell me there were orphanages and stuff. I still believed like orphanage [and] hostels were a thing when I was a kid. My mom would be like 'If you don't listen to me, I'm going to send you to [live in] a hostel'. And like [us being like] 'Oh my god! What do you mean?!' [laughing]

- P2

I feel like my parents knew, they just didn't know a whole organization existed. They just thought the police came, [and] took your kids away. But at the same time, they knew something happened. Because they would like threaten us. You know [like] 'If you don't listen to me, I'm gonna get angry and then I'm gonna hit you and then the police are gonna come and take me away forever. And who is gonna watch you then?'. And then you're like 'Oh my god, who is gonna watch me then?'.

- P2

...when you [would] disobey them [parents], they would say 'Oh they're [referring to CAS] gonna come take you away'. Right? And then you would be like 'Oh my god, they're gonna take me away from my family and never gonna return me'. And I don't know what they thought. They were obviously empty threats. They obviously weren't going to call anybody.

- P5

These scare tactics are significant through the meanings ascribed to them by participants, as well as what the threat represents to them: disconnects from their

respective familial and cultural comforts of their homes and communities. Participant Two touches on this briefly in her above quote with the remark of ‘who is gonna watch me then?’. As well, this threat is best represented in another quote from Participant Two, in which she addresses the nuanced nature of removal from the cultural comforts and norms with which one aligns:

CAS was like normal [for them]. They were fearful, but they probably weren’t as fearful because they knew it was designed for them. I’m talking specifically [about] white families because I grew up in a white high school. So they’re like ‘Oh my god, just call the police’. And I’m like ‘No, I’m not calling the police. My whole family is gonna be arrested’. I don’t need that. And it’s also like...I don’t know if I talked about Tamil foster families, but what family am I gonna go to? Am I gonna lose touch with my culture? Am I ever gonna get to eat rice and curry again? I can’t survive on like meatloaf.

- P2

Conversely, Participant 4 described using child welfare intervention as a threat toward her parents.

I was just – and this is gonna sound silly – but it was just this threat...I just remember being in the grocery store with my mom, my brother, and myself. We were asking her to get candy for us and stuff. She obviously didn’t want to make a big spectacle and stuff. But she would like pinch us. And I would be like “I’m gonna call children’s aid on you”. More so than anything it was just this group of people who would like tell your parents off [laughing]. It’s so comical: “I’m gonna call children’s aid”.

- P4

While the participant described this in a humorous manner, the bilateral use of CAS as a scare tactic/threat is indicative of conceptualizations of the agency becoming more grounded with time.

Until you get older and form your own opinions, you don’t know better than what your parents tell you. And at that point, you’re just scared. That they [CAS] are the people that will take you away from your family.

- P5

CAS as rooted in whiteness. Although what has been discussed thus far may not seem to be different to what any person, regardless of race, would say about child welfare services, policies, and procedures, the participants thoughts and feelings around the presence of racialization/cultural biases within the child welfare system help to frame conversations around South Asian Communities' attitudes towards the CAS as an institution.

Abuse and neglect are difficult phenomena to pin down. There is no universal definition, and there is a breadth of existing literature that delineates how our current understanding of abuse does not take into account conceptualizations from cultures outside the western purview (Irfan, 2008; Lee et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2017a, 2017b; Maiter & George, 2003; Maitra, 1996).

The responses of participants were in line with arguments from such literature; while an in depth discussion on those topics are beyond the scope of my project, they are relevant for my findings and arguments nonetheless. Excerpts from the interview with Participant's One and Four demonstrates that critical consciousness and discourse around how and why we have come to accept certain types of knowledge, while vehemently rejecting others, can be operationalized to examine how members of marginalized communities have come to feel that certain organizations and services are not for them.

It's not that I don't trust them...I don't know what kind of context they [would/will] take into account when they do their searches or whatever...Or their welfare checks. So I don't know if they're gonna consider a slap like reasonable at least for a like pretty over active kid. And again, only because I grew up with it. So I don't see that as crazy. But I don't know if they consider that. So I don't know if their values or level of where a line can be crossed matches with mine.

- P1

I don't consider that [spanking] abuse, but maybe they might. I'm hoping it's getting better, where they're [the workers/organization] more educated and understanding about more cultures. But I think that's where my mistrust comes from potentially. Because I don't know if they have all of their facts, or if they understand all these cultures. If that makes sense?

- P4

All cultures acknowledge the existence of child abuse and neglect. However, the exact criteria between appropriate parenting and abuse or neglect are not absolute, but socially defined. These criteria are temporal, geographic, and culturally variable (Corby, Shemmings, & Wilkins, 2012). For example, what a society considers abuse evolves over time. Similarly, what is considered abusive or neglectful in one region, may not be considered as such in another part of the same region/country (i.e., rural-urban divide). Corby, Shemmings, and Wilkins (2012) argue 'the cultural context within which behavior takes place and the meanings attributed to it by those sharing the culture are important factors to be taken into account when labeling acts as abusive or neglectful' (p. 84).

Acknowledgement that it is possible for individuals to discuss the use of physical discipline, without endorsing it, are required for addressing the taboo nature of the topic; discussions around the use of physical discipline, without demonizing those who use it or victimizing/labeling those who received it, are critical for moving the conversation forward.

The responses of participants in this study were in line with existing literature, in which individuals made similar statements regarding the racial and cultural biases amongst western child welfare organizations and workers (Adjei & Minka, 2018; Lee et al., 2017).

I feel policies weren't really designed for a South Asian family...It was like the interventions weren't accessible. They imposed a white family style on us.

- P2

I think it's a lot tougher with people of colour. I don't want to make any generalizations, but I don't know if they understand the communities that they're going after sometimes. Because there are cultural differences that they may not be able to understand and misconstrue as bad behavior. Or abuse. When it's not.

- P4

All participants expressed that the system was not designed for their culture, or for any culture outside the western purview. The prevalence of these feelings allows us to ascribe and co-create meaning and define the CAS as they interpret it; in their view, CAS is an organization designed, controlled, and dictated by white faces, norms, and values.

Their responses offer a critique of the westernized, white outlook of CAS.

CAS always existed but like they're not there for us. Like the police are not there for us. They're only there to make our lives worse. Again because racialization.

- P2

No, because I think growing up in a community as far as a lifestyle like where being hit was thought of as a regular punishment. Not abuse. But getting slapped here and there. It was the norm. It was something that was not a surprise. I knew that other people were going through the same things. It's not something that was thought of as egregious in our, within our own cultures. So [if] I was hit or anything I would have felt more normal than thinking I need an outside body to protect me.

- P1

I would say it's probably common within the groups of people that my parents, my family, [and] I hung out with. Whether it be my other cousins or other parents of the same Indian background, people we met at like the temples and stuff like that...it's not something that was considered a common decision to make: to ask children's aid society to assist on helping. Because they would probably think that they would be misconstrued...I imagine they would probably think they would get in trouble if they were to discipline

children, and what have you, in the way that they did. Even if in their eyes it was perfectly fine.

- P1

The Presence of Internal Supports and Protective Factors

Having discussed the issues involved with calling CAS, we can discuss a second major category of themes that were visible in participant's responses: the presence of internal supports as an alternative to CAS intervention. To reiterate an argument from my opening paragraphs in Chapter Two: to simply chalk up the existence of disproportionalities and disparities to 'underrepresentation' would be unjust, as negative connotations associated with the idea of 'under-representation' undermine any such strengths the communities may employ in keeping kids out of the system. Indeed, responses from participants have crafted/reinforced notions of the presence of internal supports in South Asian communities. That being said, participants responses also indicated a desire and willingness of first and second-generation parents to access preventative CAS services, should the services become more accessible and equitable; participants described excellent, concrete means through which to further engage with communities with heritage from the Indian Sub-continent, a theme that is discussed in the final section of this chapter, as well as the subsequent chapter.

On privacy and the interest of the family and child. Before going into depth regarding internal supports, attention must be paid to how participants described the ideal scenarios for receiving help. Participant responses indicated strong resistance to allowing any outside, third-party into familial matters. This category is overarching; it refers to not

only to child welfare organizations, but any third party outside of ones immediate family and trusted circle of peers.

Indeed, participants felt their parents would be just as critical and hesitant of going to religious leaders for assistance as they would a service provider. This finding that has been reinforced by Maiter, Stalker, and Trocmé's (2004) research with parents from the Indian Subcontinent; they found that parents were unlikely to seek help or advice regarding parenting matters from either counseling agencies or religious/community leaders. Below are excerpts from participants' responses to how and from whom their parents may have sought help regarding matters related to parenting or child rearing.

...even if they [referring to parents] knew about those services, they would probably try to use other means to try and mitigate the situation before they went through this. This would be like a last resort, like 'I have no other choice, and I probably have to resort to this'. Again, not for preventive measures probably. They would feel more comfortable talking amongst themselves, than involving a third party.

- P5

I don't think either of them [referring to parents] would contact a religious leader either. But I think they would definitely go with anybody that's inside the community and that's like older than them, or one of their close friends. I don't think they would contact any sort of formal organization.

- P3

It's just not something people do usually. Like they'll deal with the problem themselves usually, and not get other people involved. It's also like frowned upon to let people know about the negatives about your family. Or you want to at least avoid it as much as possible, so reaching out to another body is a kind of admission that you messed up, or that something's wrong. And I think they would want to have that more private.

- P1

Such findings are significant as they are similar (but not identical) to findings from research with Asian, CAS-involved families, which stressed the role of privacy in

family dynamics and affairs; participants associated child welfare authorities and external interventions with shame and trouble (Lee et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2017a).

Additionally, privacy was also a factor when discussing whether or not they would report suspected abuse or neglect amongst their community. However, such conversations were four-fold, and connected back to: not knowing enough about the systems they are meant to report to, cynicism regarding the systems ability to meaningfully intervene, and acknowledgement that what the system would see is only a snapshot of the family's dynamics (i.e., don't have all the facts).

It gets kind of complicated because I remember having some relatives [and] they were very neglectful. I never really got to hear [about] it, because my mom didn't want our family being involved. But it was my cousins. And it was my aunt. Their mom was fine but it was their dad who was just very kind of abusive and neglectful of the kids, and they would leave them alone when they were very young. And I always thought "How far is too far?". And I was a teenager when this stuff happened. But I knew like if I reached out to any sort of children's aid, it would be a lot messier. Especially because I don't have all of the facts. It's very difficult, especially when you have a tight-knit community. It's a huge community, but it's also a very small community where everyone talks. And news like this, like if I did call, it would spread like wild fire. So you kind of have to think about that family as well. It's not as simple as "Oh they're abusing them so we gotta call children's aid". There are a lot of implications when that kind of stuff happens.

- P4

Internal supports. In explaining the value of privacy amongst South Asian communities, participants also described the presence of natural internal supports in the forms of family and trusted friends or community members. The presence of and access to such supports is reinforced by research into migration cohorts and how such communities have developed over time. Chiefly: it can be argued that the speculated sense of community amongst the first-generation parents of participants as well as similar

members of the community, is the result of immigration patterns and the natural cohesion that exists with select migration cohorts (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005, 2014). In essence: communities developed as a result of the removal of racist/xenophobic policies preventing family reunification and sponsorship, and a sense of community amongst the immigrants in those cohorts continues to be fueled by distrust of select aspects, organizations, and institutions of the host society (which as discussed earlier, are rooted in middle class, white normativity or ‘whiteness’). The result of this process is the development of internal supports of all capacities (i.e., social, economic) that function as protective factors.

I don't think so. I think they would ask for help within the family...I don't think they would go outside...Because my mom is like the middle child in a group of five. So she has like two older siblings she can refer to for help, who both have daughters and have been there already. I think with that experience as well, it would make it more comfortable to go there. If she was an only child, I don't know. Maybe it might be different. If she didn't have that kind of big support system. Or she didn't have all the cousins she had.

- P4

I think if they ever needed a break from us they would probably contact a grandparent or a family member.

- P3

I feel like you're more likely to confide in your friends. That's how this situation I told you about in grade eight or seven or something like that [played out]. She sought out her friends, and her friends were the ones that were like "maybe you should try to seek help". But yeah, I think they might tell each other. But again, you might not even think to take it further than that. You might just confide in each other. Lean on each other. And that's it.

- P5

Relatedly, Participant Two made interesting remarks on the impact of migration on connections and cohesion amongst members of Sri Lankan communities. While it can be said that networks and social structures amongst South Asian communities tend to be

larger than their Western counterparts, her comment expresses the nuanced nature of the development and maintenance of such connections as they pertain to immigration and community building.

The tight-knit [community] is so important because nobody gets left behind. Like my family here is way bigger than what it would have been had my parents stayed in Sri Lanka. Because people who are called family now, when we look at bloodlines, they're not really like that closely related... Because we all immigrated at the same time, they just became a family. Our functions are huge, five- [or] six-hundred people. But half of them are just through extended relations. You move as a whole. So it's hard. I don't feel CAS recognizes that need.

- P2

During this part of the interview, she went even further and discussed the value of kinship in Sri Lankan communities.

I think there are very few Tamil families that would take another kid... So I feel like if there were Tamil foster families, I would be more lenient, but there isn't. I just know there aren't. And the kids gonna suffer more... I was telling my mom [about fostering] and she was like 'Wait, you don't get to keep the kid?'. I said I wanted to be a foster mom. But she's like 'I don't get it; you just take in a kid?'. I'm like 'Yeah'. [She's asked] 'But they're not yours?'. And I said 'No, I would just take care of them'. She's like 'Whoa, what is this country?'. [In Sri Lanka] If you didn't have a parent, you had an aunt to take care of you. So it's like 'Why can't their family take care of them?'. I'm like 'It's not the same in every situation'. It boggles their mind [parents] how western families work. If I was in trouble, I would have like six or seven aunts ready to take care of me, take me in.

- P2

Commentary on the Child Protection Process and its Agents

On teachers and schools. While participants were skeptical about service providers' abilities to help them, and often found solace amongst family and friends (similar to their parents), they did identify the teachers and schools as playing a critical role in the protection process. Indeed, in responding to a variety of questions probing

about where they would seek help if not the CAS, participants indicated that: they would have sought help from a teacher and/or would refer a child/youth to seek help through their school (via a teacher or school administrator).

If I had a situation, I would go to my mom's sister. But if I couldn't go to that extended family as well, it would most likely be someone in school...I would maybe refer [friends] to somebody at school. Like a teacher I trusted, or family members, to intervene...it would be someone I trusted, who would help intervene first. Rather than go to CAS.

- P4

...if I knew where the child was going to school, I would honestly just contact the school and let them proceed with it. And I feel like teachers and school administrators have more access to training and resources to potentially help this child.

- P3

The identification of teachers as potential points of trust in the child protection process is intriguing given the significant role of trust in disclosures and help-seeking (Finn, 2011). Scholarship does align with the belief that teachers play a significant role in the child protection process; yet, the literature also argues that teachers are not receiving appropriate training and supports to properly deal with disclosures and help-seeking (Shewchuk, 2014, 2015). This clashes with participants' beliefs that teachers ability to appropriately navigate such situations.

Relatedly, Participant Three raised a very good point regarding mandatory reporting of child abuse by teachers.

I think I would definitely go toward a school staff. Particularly like a teacher. Because I know they're mandated reporters. So they would have to report it. And I feel if I didn't want to put myself in that situation, it would be easier to have someone, who's removed from the situation, contact CAS. And I think it would be a better situation in case the person didn't want me contacting them. Or didn't want someone contacting them. At least I would be involved with that situation. I don't think I would contact a religious leader of any sort.

There's very few extended family members, or family friends, who are like my parents age or around that age that I would go to. If there was no one else, I would maybe go to them or consider going to them. But that might just be because I don't really know them that well. I don't think involving more people in the community would be a good idea.

- P3

This is interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, because it once again brings into question the need for awareness of services among potential service users. If people and youth are not aware how can they take advantage of mandatory reporting laws?

Secondly, her feelings are the opposite of those of first-generation parents, who expressed distaste for the practice; parents' experience of being reported in that way made them distrust the services and organizations of the host country (Maiter & Stalker, 2011; Maiter, Stalker, & Alaggia, 2013).

And thirdly, because of the sheer amount of literature critiquing or condemning the practice as opposed to praising it (Ainsworth, 2002; Mathews & Bross, 2008; Melton, 2005; Thompson-Cooper, Fugere, Cormier, 1993). These criticisms focus on a number of key themes: the power and values involved with mandatory reporting, the financial costs of such legislation, the responsiveness of the laws in addressing the issue at hand, and the impact of such legislation on professional-client relationships. That being said, her comments are in line with the opinions of other authors. Such authors argue that while there are certainly critiques of mandatory reporting, that there are aspects of it that are working or worth salvaging; in other words, they argue for reform of the practice as opposed to a complete removal of it (Tonmyr et al., 2018, Mathews & Bross, 2008, Drake & Johnson-Reid, 2008). I am not advocating for one side or the other, simply mentioning

how her comments feed into a much larger conversation (one that is simply beyond the scope of this thesis).

On responding to harm, in and out of the community. Analyzing participants' answers to a question about whether or not they report a child being harmed to CAS has revealed the complexity and weight of such a decision. Below are excerpts from participant's responses to said question.

I assume that if I knew the child who's being abused, I would know their parents to a certain extent. And I think that my first reaction would be to talk to the parents or talk to the child. To see the extent of it, to see if you can resolve it without having to get a third party involved. But I think that I would monitor the situation. And if I thought it was getting worse, than I would [report it].

- P5

...Based on all the information I had. If I knew it was really bad. I would. If I knew there was already someone else intervening, or trying to help them navigate the situation, I wouldn't. Because I think it's a very tricky thing. It's something I obviously need to learn more about [laughing]...But that's the thing, I honestly had no idea they helped stabilize things going on in families. I just thought them as this scary thing. But if they were able to help things go on in a family, I think it would be important [for them to do that]...Obviously [I would call] as a last resort. But I would call...I feel like it's a lot about pride at the same time. I feel like personally intervening, it takes a toll on the other person. Because I've been there with family disputes and trying to be the mediator. And I've also been that person that calls out other people. Like "Okay, you're doing this and this, and you have to realize how that's harming the other person". And that takes a toll on them. Because no one wants to be attacked on their parenting. So I think I would I would first intervene if I could. Regardless of how the bad the situation can get. Because I'm trying to help someone out. Before calling CAS, I think I would do that. I mean now I would do that. Or I would try to get a family member who they would trust more. Or whoever else in the community they trust more to kind of get involved.

- P4

I think I would report it because that's just what you should do. I think it would make the situation difficult for the child for the time being, but at the end the outcome would be a more positive one...I'm very limited in what I

can do for that person. Because at the end of the day, I don't live in their house, and I don't know what's happening. And I don't think their parents would be receptive to hearing from a 19 year old about how they should parent their child...I would definitely recommend or have some sort of conversation with the child about where they would go. Or if they could maybe stay at their cousins house or at their friends house for the time being. I don't think I would talk to the parents directly or talk to any of their family members, unless there was like someone that was like willing to be on my side or on the child's side of the situation. I think I would probably tell my parents if I did contact CAS on someone they knew. Or for someone that they knew. Just because I feel they would find out either way. Or I think it would be best coming from me. I don't think I would go to them before I necessarily contacted CAS. They would probably discourage me from doing so.

- P3

It depends on how I know the child unfortunately. I want to say yes I would. It's situational. Is it my definition of harm? I'm still struggling. There's an internal conflict within me. Am I really doing good for this child? Because I know once the immediate family structure breaks away, you lose your external family structure, and then you lose your connection to the community as a whole...It really depends on what is harm. Do I really thing the child's upbringing is gonna be significantly impacted? But I will carry that burden with me. That's for sure. I will try my best to intervene when I can. Internally, CAS I feel is still there to take away the kids. In this program, I got to know some of the people [classmates] and I still see the problematic views that they hold towards brown people. I know they're out there working there, so it's like what are they gonna do? I still don't trust the system, even though I'm a part of the system now. I feel guilty saying that. As a social worker, it's my duty to report...That's the internal conflict: I know I'm doing wrong by walking away but sometimes it's like 'What can I do?'. Sometimes I may not even have information about the kid. I may be at a Tamil mall watching the kid get like severely beat. I have no choice but to walk away because the moment I intervene everyone's gonna be like 'Just mind your own business' [said in Tamil, translated into English]. Like 'Don't put your nose into other people's business'. That's the thing, it can be such a public scenario, but it's still a private scenario...[I would try] Intervening [and] like talking to the parent...I feel like I hold some credibility now that I'm about to do my masters. They're like 'Okay, she knows something'...Again it's very situational. You [have to judge]: Am I making more harm if I intervene?

- P2

I'm gonna say I'll probably not [report]...That might sound bad...I don't know the full extent of everything, it makes it hard to make that decision because it could be like a fully life-changing decision for someone else. And I

mean if it did come to that, I imagine it would have to be super serious...I know they [CAS] can have a very beneficial purpose for a lot of people. But it would have to be something like pretty serious for something like that to cross my mind...it feels like I'm kind of being intrusive to something I don't fully understand...realistically speaking, I can't even think of myself doing that. So I'm gonna say no...

- P1

With the exception of Participant 2, who states she would likely not call CAS and expressed the most concern around the action, every participant describes how they would call either as a last resort (after attempting other measures). Or, in the case of Participant One, take an alternative measure all together.

Participant Three, would call CAS and take the same precautions regardless of whether the child was in the community or not. Similarly, Participant One would also utilize the same alternative measure for a youth outside the community as he stated he would for a youth in the community, and Participant Five would still call CAS the same way (as a last resort following other methods of intervention). While Participant Four expressed some more qualms about making the call than Participant Two, both would appear to call CAS faster if the youth was outside the community.

A fascinating aspect of this comparison is that the decision to call CAS doesn't appear to be black and white in the minds of any participant; It is not simply a matter of calling or not calling because the child/youth in question is or is not in the community, and/or whether child welfare intervention would be beneficial or not. It is more a matter of how much critical thought the individual is putting into the consequences of their actions of calling. It is a question of ethics, the framework we use to make decisions about our lives (Copp, 2007).

Decision-making is a value-laden process, one that is nuanced and uses a myriad of factors. Indeed: the culture of the child, as well as the level of perceived ineptitude of CAS are only two factors among a larger mechanism that influences decisions about calling and reporting harm to CAS. That being said, capturing and attempting to understand the values behind said decisions is far beyond the scope of the questions above (or even this study) – though they are a good start. This topic is further discussed in the Limitations and Recommendations sections.

Implications for service providers. Participants, while highly critical of the existing child welfare system for its shortcomings and understanding/respectful of their parents views to avoid seeking help from ‘outsiders’, are themselves more open to seeking help from third party organizations and service providers – albeit with caution. Some further expressed a desire for increased availability and accessibility of existing services.

My first level would be to resolve it on my own...but if I have to reach out for help it really depends on what the situation is. It's hard to speculate. I can't think of anything in particular where I would call the children's aid society. But if it came to some kind of mental health issue, I would maybe ask for a doctor, or maybe the help of police if I have to get some advice.

- P1

No I feel like since I'm a social worker, I could redirect them to social work-y resources. I hope that when we're parents, [that] there are services and service providers who can better help us. If there wasn't, I would struggle to redirect them. I would try my best to provide my own methods of intervention. Like culturally competent resources. Or explaining in a manner that relates to their own experiences. But yeah., without the availability of proper resource tools that actually understand the culture without penalizing them, it would be hard even when I'm a parent. To intervene.

- P2

Like I know there's all these parenting groups. Especially for like new mothers. Or like when you're pregnant and stuff. Maybe you could seek out something like that. Or maybe just talk to another parent to see what their thoughts are. Or maybe family. Like my brother, who also has children. Maybe seek his help. So I think yeah. I think I would actively seek help if I needed it. We have Google at our disposal now [laughing]. Our parents didn't have that.

- P5

Chapter Five: Discussion

The goal of my study was to assess how child welfare services are conceptualized and viewed by young adult Canadians with Indian Sub-continent Heritage. My interest in this topic are the result of being a Second-generation Canadian with heritage from the region; Growing up in the GTA, I would have conversations with peers of similar heritage around our attitudes and thoughts, as well as those of our parents, toward the Children's Aid Societies.

I addressed my research question by interviewing five, second-generation adults with heritage from the Indian Sub-continent. A review of my findings has yielded knowledge about how child welfare services are conceptualized and viewed by participants, many of which have recommendations for service providers in regard to fostering meaningful engagement with South Asian communities.

The most salient theme amongst Participants, was the feeling that the existing CAS system is not designed for youth of South Asian descent. These feelings, in addition to a lack of awareness around the function of CAS, observations of negative CAS-community interactions, and overt/subvert whiteness in the system all contributed to participants not trusting the system during their childhood and teenage years.

Participants discussed the presence of internal supports in the form of trusted friend, family, and community members, to whom their parents could/would refer to for assistance with parenting/child-rearing matters. These alternative supports act/acted as protective factors, serving as preferable and realistic alternatives to CAS. None of the participants were parents, but they are of an age to become parents if they choose to do

so. They expressed a desire and willingness to access the same internal supports if they become parents themselves, as opposed to accessing services through the CAS (driven by a combination of not knowing about the services and a feeling the system is not designed for them). The value of privacy in combination with the aforementioned findings on a lack of awareness about CAS services and whiteness in the system reinforce internal supports as protective factors and alternatives to CAS.

That being said, participants expressed that they would be open to accessing CAS services but this would be a last resort given issues inherent in the system. They expressed a desire to be able to access the services without the aforementioned issues being present, but acknowledged that the CAS as an organization must deal with its systemic problems before that is a possibility. In addition to these systemic changes, participants also recommended a number of suggested changes that should be made within the agencies (i.e., increased community engagement, information campaigns, increased presence of workers/foster families from South Asian communities). In the following sections, I will discuss these recommendations, as well the limitations of my study and ideas for future research.

Recommendations

Participants' direct and indirect recommendations for child services providers can be categorized into two categories: required changes to CAS, and the need/methods of community outreach and engagement. These changes are not mutually exclusive. These changes/recommendations involve addressing hard realities about the CAS itself in order for any subsequent changes to be meaningfully implemented; they must occur together as

co-requisites. That being said, addressing systemic issues in CAS itself should take precedence as such changes will inform any community engagement that occurs. The issue of whiteness in the child welfare system must be addressed in a meaningful and overarching capacity.

Required changes to CAS. It is the belief of the participants, as well as this writer, that larger policy and institutional changes are required before any of the participants' direct recommendations can be implemented meaningfully. For example, A prevalent theme amongst participants was that workers, and the organization more broadly, need to be better educated on more cultures, so that they can work with families toward stabilization and act as mediators. However, education on culture does not necessarily address issues of racism, and almost certainly does not address issues of whiteness. The British Colonizers in India understood Indian Cultures and spoke the languages. This knowledge was used to further oppress.

To simply hire more workers of South Asian Descent without addressing larger systemic/institutional issues would fall flat. Pon and Gosine (2011) elaborate on this in their research; racialized workers 'spoke of having to contend with white-normed and middle-class-oriented policies, tools, and practices that often prevented them from meeting the unique needs of racialized service users' (Pon & Gosine, p. 135). Hiring more racialized workers or providing cultural education, without taking any other steps to address issues in the system, does nothing to change racist policies and practices of the CAS as an institution.

The above recommendation involves CAS recognizing and taking steps towards identifying and stamping out whiteness within itself. This is a complex task, but far from impossible. These findings fit with suggestions made by child welfare researchers. For instance: the jettisoning of cultural competency (Pon, 2009), acknowledgement and removal of the barriers to promotion for racialized workers (Gosine & Pon, 2011), and the creation of a service users union (Dumbrill, 2010). These findings also fit with suggestion that child welfare agencies should be placing a greater emphasis on cultural safety. Cultural safety is an approach that encourages service users to describe whether services are appropriate or not; the approach involves: a focus on positive outcomes, the analysis of personal/institutional power dynamics in client-service provider interactions, reflection on the historical and social origins of inequalities, and self-reflection on the part of the service provider(s) (Desouza, 2008; Williams, 1999).

A direct recommendation from participants involves the hiring of workers and recruitment of foster parents who are members of the communities in question. Participants expressed how the presence of workers that ‘look like them’ would foster meaningful engagement between CAS and South Asian communities through: trust that the worker has an understanding of cultural norms, comfort at knowing that actions/behaviours won’t be immediately misconstrued, and consolation at not having to explain relevant aspects of the culture to the worker. While having the worker from the same cultural community is ideal, participants expressed that they would be reassured even if the worker was simply a member of a fellow South Asian Community.

What participants described was ethno-racial matching, ‘the practice of assigning workers to families who share their ethno-cultural or ethno-racial backgrounds’ (Gosine and Pon, 2011, p. 151). This is not a new idea. In a study examining the thoughts of racialized CAS workers in the GTA, Gosine and Pon (2011) describe how participants largely agreed with the practice, though not without concern or critique (i.e., ‘pigeon holing’ of workers into working only exclusively with families of their background, being caught between expectations of service users and the organization, etc.). Concerns around ethno-racial matching also bring to mind questions of power. Regardless of their race or the cultural background, the worker will still be navigating a system not designed for people of colour. They may be able to do this better than white workers, however the inequities/inequalities in the system itself remain unchanged. Thus, there is a strong argument to be made in favour of this practice – albeit with due caution and consideration.

Ethno-racial matchmaking represents just one aspect of developing an increased understanding of the communities that CAS works with. As described earlier, CAS needs to understand their own whiteness first before the direct recommendations of participants can be implemented meaningfully. To discuss how to make CAS more equitable is beyond the scope of this project; I can only speak to how to make it more equitable for the communities with heritage from the Indian Sub-continent.

The need for and methods of community outreach. The lack of dissemination of information around how CAS operates is not a newly identified barrier. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Maiter & Stalker (2011) identified this lack of dissemination as one of

the existing barriers for South Asian families that are receiving or have received child welfare services. As well, previous research has also identified the presence of language barriers as a significant challenge to working with immigrant communities (Alaggia, Maiter, & Jenney, 2017; Maiter et al., 2017; Maiter, Stalker, & Alaggia, 2013).

Participants' chief recommendation was addressing this existing gap in services. Participants identified having little to no awareness of CAS beyond the removal of the child, views that either remained unchanged into the present or that changed as the result of a educational/work training much later in life. My findings also indicate that participants and their families were largely unaware of any preventative services offered. As discussed in Chapter Five: this is significant as participants were open to accessing preventative and stabilization services (albeit as a last resort).

Ironically, participant's lack of knowledge about preventative services being available through CASs, may reflect the growing reality in Ontario. Although the Child, Youth and Family Services Act (2017) mandates prevention, the extent this mandate is taken up varies between agencies. As well, the Ontario Government seems intent on stripping these services away. On Friday July 12th of this year, the board of directors of Brant Family and Children's Services resigned from their roles (Rankin, 2019a, 2019b). This mass resignation was the result of successive provincial funding cuts to the Children's Aid Societies by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (the provincial body charged with the funding and oversight of the CAS' in Ontario). The breaking point was cited to be when the agency received a recommendation that they discontinue their community-based care model, part of which is a focus on prevention;

the review was citing that the agency was funding services outside its mandate (Rankin, 2019b).

The board of directors responded to the accusations by stating the interconnected nature of prevention and child protection work; they also included social and fiscal arguments against such claims, arguing that keeping kids safe in the community is preferable as it is less expensive and less intrusive (Rankin, 2019b).

Just as child welfare underwent a “transformation” thirteen years ago, and a “reform” ten years prior to that (Dumbrill, 2006), so too is it undergoing changes now. Dumbrill (2006) described child welfare policy as a constant struggle between two extremes: ‘at one extreme the pendulum focuses practice on family support at the expense of child safety, and at the other it focuses practice on child safety at the expense of family support’ (p. 6). The direction of current legislation is indicating a swing of the pendulum toward the latter.

In contrast to the Ministry’s current views on the funding of community-based CAS services, participants’ recommendations were largely in line with beliefs of meaningful community engagement. Participants advocated for CAS to spread more awareness around their role, policies, and procedures as an institution, as well information around services they offer. Additionally, this information campaign should be accessible and friendly in nature. Part of this would entail addressing the aforementioned language barriers.

Participants suggested a number of creative methods through which to accomplish the above recommendations, both for youth as well as their parents. They advocated for

the use of PSA's on television or advertisements in places that children would see them. Based on additional findings related to technology, I would suggest also doing this through other technological means (i.e., social media campaigns, advertisements on YouTube videos, etc.). Technology plays a larger role for children today than it did for participants when they were young, as will be discussed in the subsequent section of this chapter.

Participants further advocated for the dissemination of information in the languages of those of the first-generation (not just by native speakers of the language, but by native speakers that are members of the communities themselves). But given the findings on how South Asian communities do not feel the system is built for them, as well as the conversation around whiteness inherent in CAS, engagement with communities will need to go beyond simply disseminating information about CAS. Such communities need to be permitted/invited to meaningfully participate in reshaping the system. Participants provided examples of means through which to engage in discourse with community members. These included (but are not limited to): culturally relevant newspapers, TV shows, and radios. While religious organizations may not act as internal supports in regard to child-rearing practices, participants identified that they can also function as places and platforms to have conversation around such matters.

Limitations and Future Research

There are undoubtedly limitations of my study. These can be categorized as temporal considerations. I have built off these limitations to suggest areas for future

research; these suggestions have also been developed as a result of findings from my study.

Temporal considerations. The experiences of participants are exactly that: their own experiences. While I was able to successfully assess participants' conceptualizations and attitudes toward the CAS, their present day views are informed by events that occurred decades in the past. Societies are socially and temporally organized; the world is simply a much different place. For example, it is evident that technology plays a much large part in the realities of children today than it would have when participants were children/teens. Whether or not their thoughts, views, and attitudes toward the CAS are applicable to youth and children today is a question that was beyond the scope of this study. Indeed, even the views and thoughts of the participants' parents in the study may not be transferable to their modern day counterparts.

With the exception of one individual, all participants in the study were youth/children just before the rise of the Internet, social media, and advanced technologies in our day-to-day life. Every participant interviewed discussed the significant role of technology and it's potential influence on second- and third-generation youths' perceptions, views, and thoughts toward organizations and service providers. Similar studies with second-generation Canadians with heritage from the Indian Sub-continent that are children or youth today would provide a valuable contrast to my work. More specifically, research on the role of technology in influencing thoughts and conceptualizations of second- or third-generation youth today would undoubtedly yield insight into if and how conceptualizations of the CAS have evolved in relation to our

increasingly technological society. Additionally, comparisons could be drawn to determine similarities and/or differences in regard to thoughts, knowledge, and attitudes towards child welfare services.

Conclusion

This study was inspired by my personal thoughts and experiences growing up, as well as those of my friends, family, and peers. I wished to revisit the conversations of my youth, to study the implications they raise for existing child welfare services, policies, and procedures. While this project was certainly not without challenges and set backs, I feel it was successful in achieving its purpose.

My study was designed to address a gap in academic, Canadian literature regarding the views, thoughts, and attitudes of second-generation youth with heritage from the Indian Sub-continent toward the Children's Aid Societies. In answering this question, I have explored: past/present conceptualizations and attitudes toward the CAS and child welfare services, the presence of internal supports and protective factors, and commentary on the child protection process and its agents. Additionally, I have provided critical discourse around inherent whiteness in the existing child welfare system, and how such a barrier hinders meaningful engagement with South Asian communities.

Findings indicate a general consensus that the CAS as an institution is rooted in white/western normativity. Whiteness in the current child welfare system is the greatest barrier to meaningful engagement between South Asian communities and the CAS. As such, addressing whiteness in the system is the chief recommendation of this study.

My literature review discussed how Ontario's child welfare system was borne from colonialism. Participants' conceptualizations and views describe how the existing child welfare system is not only thought of as harmful, but actively violent toward people outside the purview of whiteness. By enforcing the policies and procedures of a

colonialist institution/organization, we are by proxy enacting the moral judgments and values underlying those processes; we engage in the suppression and active destruction of cultures, histories, and other ways of knowing and being. The existing system is colonialism under the guise of child protection. Decolonizing the practice of child welfare involves asking ourselves ‘how do we know what we know?’, and a willingness to unlearn much of what we know in regard to the white/western defaults and standards to which we measure the behaviors, thoughts, and attitudes we encounter.

Participants were highly critical of the current system, but remain hopeful that it will be able to change and better serve communities with heritage from the Indian Sub-continent. Participants’ other recommendations for improvement included: information campaigns about CAS policies/procedures, engaging in discourse with community members to make preventative services more equitable/accessible, and hiring more workers of South Asian descent.

It is my hope that my work will encourage similar research and dialogue in the future. In closing: I am grateful for all those who participated and made this work possible, and for those who assisted and encouraged its completion.

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Appendix A
LETTER OF INFORMATION/CONSENT

A study about thoughts/attitudes toward the Children's Aid Societies amongst South Asian Youth in the GTA

Principal Investigator:

Paman Jhajj
Department of Social Work
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
(905) 525-9140 ext. 23795
E-mail: jhajjp@mcmaster.ca

Supervisor:

Dr. Gary Dumbrill
Department of Social Work
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
(905) 525-9140 ext. 23795
E-mail: dumbrill@mcmaster.ca

What am I trying to discover?

You are invited to take part in a study examining the relationship between South Asian communities and child protective services in the GTA. More specifically, this research is geared towards giving voice to the thoughts and opinions of Canadian children of parents from the Indian Subcontinent (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, and Bhutan). The aim of the study is to develop a better understanding of how child welfare services are conceptualized and viewed by young Canadian adults with heritage from the Indian Subcontinent.

I am hoping to learn about how child protection services and practices were viewed by participants growing up, how they view them now, and the implication these views have for the way CAS services are delivered to communities with heritage from the Indian Subcontinent. I hope identify barriers to meeting the service needs of youth and families from these communities, and find out the best ways to dismantle those obstacles.

The relationship between communities with heritage from the Indian Subcontinent and CAS services is an unexplored area of study. This is a newly emerging line of research, and one that I hope will continue to grow in the future. With your consent, your data will be used for this project as well as for future related studies.

What will happen during the study?

This Letter of Information and the attached consent form, as well as other recruitment documents (i.e., the research brochure), will be sent to potential participants after they have made initial contact expressing their desire/interest in participating. These materials

will be sent to you via email, even if you already have copies, to ensure that the documents are readily available to you and able to be reviewed at your leisure. Should you wish to participate, you will be asked to take part in a confidential, one-to-one interview with myself. The logistics (i.e., time and place) of the interview will be arranged either during the initial contact or shortly thereafter via a follow up call, email, or text (or any combination of the three).

This Letter of Information document and the attached consent form will be reviewed, signed, and collected upon meeting to complete the interview (immediately prior to any research activities taking place). You may choose to bring a signed copy of the consent form to the interview. If this is the case, the Letter of Information will still be reviewed prior to any research activities taking place. The interview will take approximately 1 hour, and will be conducted in a location of your choice. However, based on responses to the questions (which are open-ended), the interview may be shorter or run longer. You will be provided with as much time as you need to provide and answer you are comfortable with.

Prior to the start of the interview, you will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire. The questionnaire is entirely voluntary. You can still participate in the study if you choose not to complete it. Your decision to complete/not complete the questionnaire will have no bearing on: your ability to participate in the interview, the use of your data, or on compensation. Completion of the questionnaire is helpful as it is designed to collect basic background/demographic information that can be used during the analysis of the interview or any related data. The questionnaire will not ask for identifying information beyond what is needed to describe the participant sample for this study, and will be linked to your interview by number (not name). The Interview Number will be written at the top of a completed questionnaire sheet, rather than a name. For example, if you were the third person to be interviewed, 'Interview 3' would be written at the top of the sheet. It will ask questions such as:

- Where were you born? (Country, City, Province/State)
- How would you describe your ethnicity
- What is your occupation?

I will be taking handwritten notes as we talk. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded. The questions will be open-ended in nature, and you will be provided with as much time as needed to provide an answer you are comfortable with.

During the interview, you will also be asked about your past/current views on topics such as: parenting and child protection policies. I will be asking you questions such as:

- Were you aware of the Children's Aid Society (CAS) when you were a child?
- What was your attitude towards the CAS/child welfare services growing up?

- Hypothetically speaking, if you knew of a child or youth in your community that was being harmed at home, would you report it to CAS?

Following the interview, I will transcribe the audio recordings into a typed document. After transcription is complete, you will have an opportunity to review this transcript to change/redact/verify any of the information in the document and/or change your responses. Once the transcript has been deemed satisfactory, I will proceed with my analyses of the data. On the consent form attached to this letter, you may indicate if you wish to receive a copy of my completed work, along with your preference for how to receive it.

Are there any risks to doing this study?

You should be aware that there are some risks when taking part in this study. Some of the topics that we will discuss may be triggering and/or evoke emotional reactions. We will be discussing topics such as parenting and the Children's Aid Societies. In particular, we will be discussing views of child protection services and practices and the implications these views pose for the ways CAS services are delivered to communities with Indian Sub-continent heritage. Given the nature of the topic, you may feel emotionally heightened/uncomfortable; you may find it stressful to recall/retell/remember potentially traumatic experiences.

While pseudonyms will be used to mask the identities of participants, it should be noted that we could be identified through the stories we tell. Participants are asked to keep this in mind as they share stories/experiences during the interview. Direct quotes from the interview will be used in the analysis and final publication of the data.

You are free to withdraw from the study at anytime, even after signing the consent form. Additionally, you are free to take breaks during the interview. For more information, please see the section: 'What if I change my mind about being in the study?'

You do not need to answer questions that you do not want to answer or that make you feel uncomfortable. I describe below the steps I am taking to protect your privacy:

- All interviews/interview recordings are confidential and will only be listened to by myself or my faculty supervisor, Dr. Gary Dumbrill
- All participant names will be encrypted using code names
- Upon completion of the interview, you will have an opportunity to review everything that was discussed. This is done for a variety of reasons:
 - To help limit any identifying information
 - To ensure accuracy and clarity of the answers/data

- To ensure comfort amongst participants in regard to what will be published

Potential Benefits

This research may not benefit you directly. This research will generate data that will contribute to a fledgling area of child welfare. Participants have the added benefit of being part of early research into a relatively unexplored area of study. It is the hope of this investigator that readers of the research will be encouraged to complete projects in the same/similar areas of study.

Compensation

For your participation, you will receive a \$10 Tim Horton's gift card after the interview. Additionally you will be reimbursed for any public transportation (i.e., bus) or parking costs that you may incur as a result of meeting to complete the interview. Should you choose to drop out of the study after receiving compensation, you may keep any compensation you received during your time in the study. If you choose to drop out at any point during/after the interview, you will still receive and be able to keep any compensation and/or reimbursement for public transportation/parking costs incurred as a result of meeting to complete the interview.

Confidentiality

You are participating in this study confidentially. I will not use your name or any information that would allow you to be identified. No one, except myself or other members of the research team (i.e., faculty supervisor) will know whether you were in the study unless you choose to tell them. Pseudonyms will be used to code/protect your identity. A log will be kept to decipher the pseudonyms, however this information will never be kept in the same physical/digital location as any other research data/materials.

The information/data you provide will be kept in a locked desk/cabinet where only I will have access to it. Similarly, information kept on a computer will be encrypted and/or protected by a password. Your name will not appear on any transcripts or data. Once the study has been completed, the data will be destroyed and an archive of the data/study (without identifying information) will be maintained for a period of 10 years. The data will be stored for this period of time in case revisions need to be made and/or for future research purposes.

While a number of precautions have been taken to protect participant confidentiality, participants should note that people can be identified by the stories they tell. Participants are asked to keep this in mind as they respond to questions during the interview

Legally Required Disclosure:

Although I will protect your privacy as outlined above, if the law requires it, I will have to reveal certain personal information. For example, I would have a duty to report a child protection concern if I suspect that a youth under the age of 16 that may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

What if I change my mind about being in the study?

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. It is your choice to be part of the study or not. If you decide to be part of the study, you can withdraw for whatever reason, even after signing the consent form or partway through the study.

If you decide to withdraw, there will be no consequences to you. In cases of withdrawal, any data you have provided will be destroyed unless you indicate otherwise. If you choose to withdraw after June 1st, 2019, any data provided may still be used in the study. Additionally, if you do not want to answer some of the questions in the questionnaire/interview you do not have to, but you can still be in the study.

How do I find out what was learned in this study?

You will have the opportunity to revise and review any information you provide for this study. I expect to have this study completed by approximately August 2019. If you would like a brief summary of the results, please let me know how you would like it sent to you (see consent form).

Questions/Concerns about the Study?

If you have questions or need more information about the study itself, please feel free to contact me anytime at:

jhajjp@mcmaster.ca
647-297-6094

This study has been reviewed by the McMaster University Research Ethics Board and received ethics clearance. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, please contact:

McMaster Research Ethics Secretariat
Telephone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 23142
C/o Research Office for Administrative Development and Support
E-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca

CONSENT

- I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Paman Jhajj of McMaster University.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details I requested.
- I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I may withdraw from the study at any time or up until July 1st, 2019.
- I have been given a copy of this form.
- I agree to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Participant (Printed) _____

1. My prefer method of contact is:

[] Email: _____

[] Phone: _____

2. I agree that the interview can be audio recorded.

Yes No

3. Would you like to complete the questionnaire?

Yes No

4. I agree to have my responses from this project used in future related projects.

Yes No

5. Would you like to receive a summary of the study's results?

Yes, I want to receive a summary of the results

Please send them to me at this email address: _____

Or to this mailing address: _____

No, I do not want to receive a summary of the results

6. I agree to be contacted about having the opportunity to review any information or data I have provided, and I understand that I can always decline the request.

Yes

No

Interview Number: _____

Appendix B Questionnaire

This questionnaire is entirely voluntary. Completing this questionnaire is not a requirement for participation, and choosing to complete it/not complete it will not affect the compensation you are to receive. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather some basic information about yourself. You may skip any questions you are uncomfortable answering and/or are unsure of. You may ask the interviewer for clarification of any of the questions at any time.

Age: _____

1. What is your gender identity?

2. How would you describe your ethnicity? (i.e., Indian, Pakistani, Bengali, Sri Lankan, etc.)

3. Where were you born? (Country, Province/State, City)

4. If you were not born in Canada, how long have you lived here? If you were born in Canada, please skip this question.

5. Where were your parent(s)/Caregiver(s) born? (Country, Province/State, City)

6. Do you currently live in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)? If so, how long have you lived here? If not, where do you currently reside?
Note: The Greater Toronto Area includes: York Region, Durham, Peel, Halton, and the City of Toronto

7. What is your current occupation?

Appendix C

Ethics Clearance Certificate



McMaster University Research Ethics Board (MREB)
 c/o Research Office for Administrative Development and Support
 MREB Secretariat, GH-305
 1280 Main St. W.
 Hamilton, Ontario, L8W 4L8
 email: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca
 Phone: 905-525-9140 ext. 23142

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS CLEARANCE TO INVOLVE HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

Today's Date: May/13/2019

Principal Investigator:
Co-Investigator:
Research Assistant/Coordinator:
Supervisor: Dr. Gary Dumbrell
Student Principal Investigator: Mr. Paman Jhajj
Applicant: Pamandeep Jhajj
Project Title: CAS: Ally or Not? - Working with Canadian Families from the Indian Subcontinent
MREB#: 1908

Dear Researcher(s)

The ethics application and supporting documents for MREB# 1908 entitled "CAS: Ally or Not? " have been reviewed and cleared by the MREB to ensure compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement and the McMaster Policies and Guidelines for Research Involving Human Participants.

The application protocol is cleared as revised without questions or requests for modification. The above named study is to be conducted in accordance with the most recent approved versions of the application and supporting documents.

Ongoing clearance is contingent on completing the Annual Report in advance of the yearly anniversary of the original ethics clearance date: May/11/2020. If the Annual Report is not submitted, then ethics clearance will lapse on the expiry date and Research Finance will be notified that ethics clearance is no longer valid (TCPS, Art. 6.14).

An Amendment form must be submitted and cleared before any substantive alterations are made to the approved research protocol and documents (TCPS, Art. 6.16).

Researchers are required to report Adverse Events (i.e. an unanticipated negative consequence or result affecting participants) to the MREB secretariat and the MREB Chair as soon as possible, and no more than 3 days after the event occurs (TCPS, Art. 6.15). A privacy breach affecting participant information should also be reported to the MREB secretariat and the MREB Chair as soon as possible. The Reportable Events form is used to document adverse events, privacy breaches, protocol deviations and participant complaints.

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Letters of Support	Counselling Supports in the GTA	Feb/21/2019	1.0
Log files	Research Participation Compensation Tracking Log	Apr/01/2019	1
Recruiting Materials	Verbal Recruitment Script	May/02/2019	1
Recruiting Materials	Email Recruitment Script	May/02/2019	1
Recruiting Materials	Research Posters (Snowballing and Tear-Away)	May/02/2019	1
Recruiting Materials	Research Brochure 3	May/02/2019	3
Interviews	Interview Questions 3	May/02/2019	3
Test Instruments	Questionnaire 3	May/02/2019	3
Consent Forms	Letter of Information 4	May/09/2019	4
Response Documents	Revisions and Responses to MREB App and Supporting Documents 4	May/09/2019	4

Dr. Susan Fast

MREB

Appendix D

Approval of Amendment to Ethics Certificate



McMaster University Research Ethics Board (MREB)
c/o Research Office for Administrative Development and Support
MREB Secretariat, GH-305
1280 Main St. W.
Hamilton, Ontario, L8W 4L8
email: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca
Phone: 905-525-9140 ext. 23142

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS CLEARANCE TO INVOLVE HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

Today's Date: Jun/04/2019

Principal Investigator:
Co-Investigator:
Research Assistant/Coordinator:
Supervisor: Dr. Gary Dumbrill
Student Principal Investigator: Mr. Paman Jhajj
Applicant: Pamandeep Jhajj
Project Title: CAS: Ally or Not?
Full Project Title: CAS: Ally or Not? - Working with Canadian Families from the Indian Subcontinent
MREB#: 1908

Amendment Information:

Amendment Submission Date	Amendment Label	Transfer Amendment Date	Transfer Amendment Project Tree Info
May/27/2019	The amendment is asking for permission for recruitment materials to be posted on Social Media		

Dear Researcher(s)

This amendment for MREB#1908 entitled "CAS: Ally or Not?" has been reviewed and cleared by the MREB to ensure compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement and the McMaster Policies and Guidelines for Research Involving Human Participants.

The amendment request is cleared as revised without questions or requests for modification.

Form Documents Table

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Amendment - Methods Participants Recruitment	Social Media Recruitment Scripts	Jun/02/2019	1
Response Documents	Summary of Changes to MREB App Amendment	Jun/02/2019	1

MREB

Dr. Susan Fast

**Appendix E
Recruitment Poster**



RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS WANTED

I AM LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO TAKE PART IN A STUDY EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITIES AND CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES IN THE GTA. THIS RESEARCH WILL EXPLORE THE THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS OF CANADIAN CHILDREN OF PARENTS FROM THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

I AM SEEKING PARTICIPANTS THAT ARE:

- **CANADIAN CHILDREN OF PARENTS FROM THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT (INDIA, PAKISTAN, BANGLADESH, MALDIVES, NEPAL, SRI LANKA, BHUTAN)**
- **BORN IN THE GREATER TORONTO AREA (GTA), OR RAISED HERE FROM A YOUNG AGE (NOTE: THE GTA INCLUDES YORK REGION, DURHAM, PEEL, HALTON AND THE CITY OF TORONTO)**

YOU WILL TAKE PART IN A ONE-TO-ONE INTERVIEW AND HAVE THE OPTION TO COMPLETE A VOLUNTARY QUESTIONNAIRE

THE INTERVIEW WILL TAKE ABOUT 60 MINUTES TO COMPLETE.

IN APPRECIATION FOR YOUR TIME, YOU WILL RECEIVE A \$10 TIM HORTON'S GIFT CARD AND REIMBURSEMENT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION/PARKING COSTS INCURRED AS A RESULT OF TAKING PART IN THE INTERVIEW.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS STUDY, OR TO VOLUNTEER FOR THIS STUDY, PLEASE CONTACT:

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THIS STUDY HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY, AND RECEIVED ETHICS CLEARANCE BY THE MCMASTER RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD.

Appendix F

Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me about your family and household while you were growing up? (i.e., family composition, cities/towns/regions you grew up in, etc.)
2. Were you or your family connected to any cultural community when you were growing up? If so can you tell me about that?
3. Were you or your family connected to any religious community when you were growing up? If so can you tell me about that?
 - a. Prompt: Are you still a member of that community?
 - b. Prompt: Are your parent(s)/caregiver(s)/family still members of that community?
4. Are you currently aware of the Children's Aid Society (CAS)?
5. Were you aware of the CAS when you were a child? What about your parent(s)/caregiver(s)?
6. If so, what did you know about the CAS? What about you parent(s)/caregiver(s)?
 - a. Prompt: Were you aware that the CAS helps families who are having a hard time with parenting?
 - b. Prompt: Were you aware that the CAS also investigates cases where children may be getting harmed at home and try to stop that harm before it occurs?
7. What was your attitude towards the CAS/child welfare services growing up?
 - c. Prompt: What were the attitudes of your friends from the same cultural community?
 - d. Prompt: What were the attitudes of your friends from outside of your cultural community?
 - e. Did you or friends from your cultural community see them as a potential help if you or a family ever needed it?

- f. Prompt: Hypothetically speaking, if you or a friend were getting hurt at home, would you call the CAS for help? Would your response differ depending on whether your friend was or was not part of your cultural community?
 - g. Prompt: Hypothetically speaking - if your family was stressing you out so that you could not cope with school work or life, would you or your friends from your cultural community have called the CAS for help? Would you trust them to help? Why or why not?
 - h. Prompt: What about your parents—if they felt unable to cope as parents would they reach out to CAS?
- 8. What were your parents' attitude toward the CAS/child welfare services? Did you/they see them as a potential help if you or a family ever needed it?
 - i. Prompts: Was this attitude just among your parents? For example, did you, your friends, other children/youth in the community share this attitude? What might have changed this for you/them?
- 9. If not the CAS, was there anywhere else you would go for help? (i.e. School teacher/religious leader/auntie/uncle/grandparents)? Can you tell me why?
 - j. Prompt: What about your friends? Was there anywhere they would go for help?
 - k. Prompt: What about your parents? Was there anywhere they would go for help?
- 10. What about now? If or when you and friends from your community become parents, if you were struggling to parent, would you ask the CAS (or some other agency) for help? Why or why not?
 - a. Prompt: If not, is there anywhere else you would go for help?
- 11. How would you describe the parenting you or others in your cultural community experienced growing up?
- 12. How would you describe parenting in your community today—for instance if or when you become a parent, how will that parenting differ from when you were growing up?
 - a. Prompt: Do you think that the parental experiences of second generation Canadian youth are consistent over time? For example, would your

experiences be relatable to a second generation Canadian that is a child/youth in your cultural community today? Why or why not?

13. Hypothetically speaking, if you knew of a child or youth in your community that was being harmed at home, would you report it to CAS?

l. Prompt: If so, or if not, why?

m. Prompt: Would you take some other action to help? If so what?

n. Prompt: What if the child was not in your community, would that change what you would do? Why or why not?

14. If you did trust the CAS system growing up, what gave you that trust?

15. If you did not trust that system then, what would make the system more worthy of trust? [from your perspective but also from youth like yourself]

16. If your parent's did trust the CAS system then or now, what gave them that trust?

17. If your parent's did not trust the CAS system, what would have made the system more worthy of their trust?

18. Do you trust the CAS system now?

o. Prompt: If so, what gives you that trust?

p. Prompt: If not, what would make the system more worth of trust?