

# “This is a man’s problem”: Strategies for working with South Asian male perpetrators of intimate partner violence.

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## RESEARCH GOAL:

To determine and develop strategies for implementing more effective prevention and intervention strategies for male perpetrators of intimate partner violence in South Asian communities in Greater Vancouver, the Fraser Valley and other regions of British Columbia.

This standpoint research provided:

- the opportunity to learn not only about the male perpetrators from the standpoint of front-line workers who intervene with them in the minutes, days and months following an incident of intimate partner violence;
- the opportunity to learn more about the victims/survivors and their children and;
- it solicited the participants’ opinions, based on their experiences, of what they consider are effective intervention and prevention strategies in reducing intimate partner violence in South Asian communities.

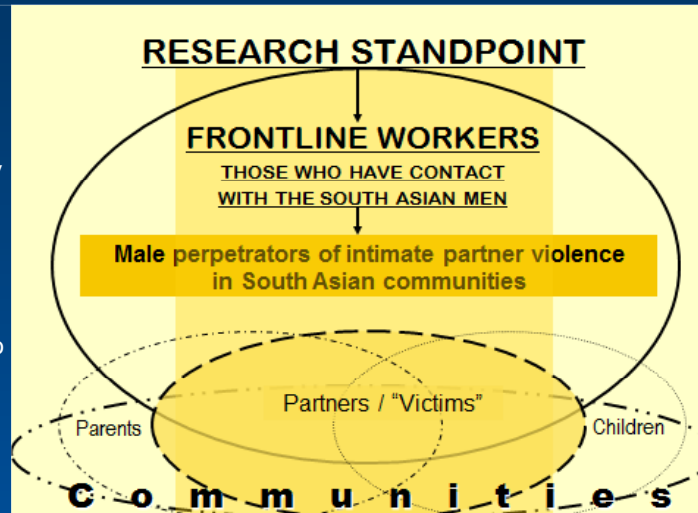
## METHODS

Qualitative Interviews with 17 front-line practitioners from South Asian Canadian communities; 2 focus groups with South Asian male perpetrators of intimate partner violence in group programs.

17 Interviews were audiotaped and coded using NVivo

## RESULTS

“THEY DID NOT WANT TO DO THIS” – But they did!  
Learning cultural male privilege from birth; “It’s up to me”:  
Gender role expectations; co-occurrence of Alcohol abuse.



## RESULTS (continued)

“MARRIAGE IS NOT JUST ABOUT THE TWO OF THEM”

Extended family involvement / over-involvement; Sponsorship and family support obligations; the stigma of divorce.

“I WANT MY FAMILY BACK.” After violence occurs, the overwhelming majority of the men and women want to reconcile; efforts required to reduce the “gap from the time the incident happened, to the intervention”: a need to strengthen criminal justice system interventions.

COMMUNITY-BASED PREVENTION: “Work on those kinds of problems before they become problems”: Pre-marital counseling / education; Outreach through media, forums, pre-migration education, education in schools; Arranged marriage compatibility versus bringing someone to Canada; Men and elders’ role in the anti-violence movement.

## DISCUSSION:

“This is a man’s problem” - The men are fully responsible for the violence they perpetrate. As they frequently reconcile with the victim, improving the intervention with the men may reduce recidivism and may increase the safety of the woman and her children.

An intersectionality approach, one that considers intersecting factors of patriarchal attitudes and role expectations, substance use, immigration experience and marginalization, can help us better understand the experiences of the men.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The development and delivery of culturally appropriate education, training and professional development for frontline practitioners;
- A domestic violence court designed to meet the needs of all BC families and communities;
- A provincial commitment to fund sufficient mandated programs for perpetrators and to fund parallel programs for their partners;
- South Asian community initiatives that focus on pre-marital education for couples and their extended family members;
- Community-based programs that address the challenges of the immigration and acculturation process including underemployment and discrimination, issues of Canadian family law and laws concerning violence, cultural norms concerning relationships (including marriage and parenting) .

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