

**DIFFERENTIATION OF SELF AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT  
WITHIN THE ASIAN INDIAN AMERICAN POPULATION**

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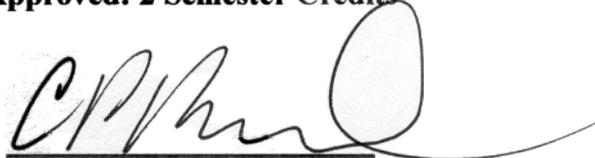
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C.P. Bhatt', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

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ABSTRACT

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Differentiation of Self and Marital Adjustment Within the Asian Indian American			
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This study was designed to examine the universality of Murray Bowen's theory of differentiation of self. Bowen believed that the level of differentiation a person achieves in their family of origin plays a crucial role in the types of adult relationships they form. He also believed that this theory of differentiation cut across, race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic barriers. To test this claim, a sample population of Asian Indian Americans was tested. The sample population, consisting of 13 participants, was based in a small midwestern town. Due to the small sample size statistically significant results were not able to be generated, although impressionistic observations and conclusions were.

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## Chapter I

### Introduction

One of the biggest influences in a person's development is their family of origin. The roles and relationships a person is assigned and experiences in their families lay the foundation for future relationships. "People often pursue relationships that resemble the pattern of relating they witnessed in their own family. The family's modeling can also affect a person's adjustment in relationships, particularly intimate relationships, like marriage (Murphy 1999, p.1)." It is natural that people recreate what they have learned in their lifetime. The roles and rules they learned as developing persons dictate as they create new relationships.

There are theories, like the one developed by Murray Bowen, that attempt to explain the way family functioning affects relationship choice and adjustment of an individual, however cultural differences are not considered. Culture affects individuals as they develop within it. Therefore, culture has a great impact on family patterns and functioning. It is necessary to study specific cultures when attempting to apply to it theories developed in another.

#### Problem Statement

Murray Bowen, M.D. believed that the level of differentiation a person achieves in their family of origin has an important and lasting effect on their life. The quality of relationships is one of the areas most impacted by the level of differentiation. Bowen also claimed that his theory was "universal" (1978), however, little research has addressed the issue of culture (Murphy, 1999).

Bowen developed his theory between 1957 to 1963, all the components were

added by 1975. Since that time, many clinicians and theoreticians in their work have used Bowenian theory. It is important to reevaluate this theory with various cultures in mind because professionals may not have been doing that in the application of the theory to their work.

Most of the research done, which has looked at differentiation of self and its relationship with marital adjustment/satisfaction (Lavery, 1985; Berger, 1991; Ng, 1992) has been done with Caucasian samples. There has been one study, which has looked at the Asian American population and level of differentiation with marital adjustment (Murphy, 1999).

While developing this theory Bowen states that his concept of differentiation of self "transcends categories such as genius, social class, and cultural-ethnic differences" (1978 p.364). Murphy (1999) did a study to test this proposed universality by examining the theory with an Asian American population, the sample for his study consisted of individuals from countries such as China, Taiwan, Korea, Philippines, and Laos. This paper will test the relevance of Bowenian theory to an Asian Indian American population.

The problem this paper was interested in examining was the level of differentiation of self participants achieved from their family of origin and its apparent relation to marital adjustment for Asian Indian Americans. Even though many minority groups are reluctant to seek mental health services and tends to drop out of treatment at a higher rate than non-minorities, (Chao, 1992; McGoldrick, 1982; Ho, 1992; D.W. Sue, 1981) the services will no doubt be needed. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the professionals in the field to determine what theories and treatment strategies are effective with what cultures.

Over three decades have passed since the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 liberalized the legal channels of Asian Indian migration to the U.S. Since that time, this immigrant minority group has been able to carve a niche for itself as a technical and financial force. Current U.S. demographic accounts declare that Asian Indian immigrants who came to the U.S. after 1965 have successfully acculturated to the North American environment (Agarwal, 1991). But, however well adjusted in the United States, Asian Indian immigrants seem to insist on keeping their ties with their heritage vital. These links are maintained physically through frequent trips to the homeland, while psychological closeness is maintained by reinventing "Indian culture" on foreign soil (Bhattachajee, 1992). In addition, by developing a network of religious institutions, cultural associations, and social gatherings, Asian Indians have adopted a pattern of renewing their commitment to their native culture (Mehra, 1992). One of the main ways of maintaining connection to the native culture has been through the age-old custom of arranged marriages.

#### Significance of study

The importance of this study is in its attempt to examine the universality of Bowen theory. This study contributes to the study of Bowen theory and marriage and family functioning as it applies to Asian Indian culture.

#### Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine if level of differentiation is related to marital adjustment for Asian Indian Americans.

## Review of the Literature

### Bowen Theory

Murray Bowen's professional interest in the family began as a psychiatrist working with individuals suffering from schizophrenia in the 1950's. Like many other family therapists at that time, Bowen worked within the psychoanalytic context. Psychoanalytic theory was formulated from a detailed study of the individual patient. "Concepts about the family were derived more from the patient's perceptions than from direct observation of the family (Bowen, 1978 p.148)." The focus was on the patient with the family on the periphery of theoretical and therapeutic interest. The principles of psychoanalytic therapy discouraged contact between therapist and family members in order to prevent contamination of the therapist-patient transference relationship. Like others at that time Bowen became intrigued with the family of his patients and started studying them. By the mid 50's and onward clinicians started to work with families, most went directly into family therapy from their orientation in individual therapy. This led to confusion and misunderstanding of the clients and their issues, however it also opened the way for research to develop theories exclusively for families. Unlike the rest of his peers Bowen was more interested in developing theory than technique relating to family therapy. Not only was Bowen interested in nuclear families but also his interest went beyond to extended families, up to three generations.

### Background of Bowen Theory

Bowen family therapy centers around two variables, "fusion/differentiation". The two concepts of togetherness and individuality must remain in balance in order for a healthy functioning, unbalance towards togetherness leads to "fusion", "stuck-

togetherness”, “undifferentiation”. Differentiation, the capacity to function autonomously, helps people avoid getting caught up in reactive polarities, which result in polarized functioning—“pursuer-distancer” and “overfunctioning-underfunctioning”. “The central premise is that unresolved emotional attachment to one’s family must be resolved rather than passively accepted or reactively rejected, before one can differentiate a mature, healthy personality (Nichols&Schwartz, 1998 p.144).”

The Bowen theory is comprised of eight interlocking concepts: differentiation of self, triangles, nuclear family emotional process, family projection process, multigenerational transmission process, sibling position, emotional cutoff, and societal emotional process.

## Concepts of Bowen Theory

### Differentiation of Self

Differentiation of self is the primary concept of Bowenian theory. This is complex concept and impact both intrapsychically and interpersonally. Intrapsychic differentiation is the ability to separate thought from feeling. Undifferentiated people rarely distinguish thoughts from feelings. They are incapable of objective thinking because their intellect is overrun with feelings. Lack of differentiation creates conflict interpersonally because people react emotionally-positively or negatively to the dictates of family members or other authority figures (Nichols&Schwartz, 1998). Poorly differentiated people are caught in a feeling world. Their emphasis on attaining the comfort of emotional closeness can increase their emotional fusion, which can lead to their alienation from others. The effort to balance their emotional life into a comfortable

situation lasts a lifetime (Murphy, 1999). The person goes from one extreme relationship to another, either they completely devote themselves to a relationship to the point of losing themselves, or they unattach themselves completely from a fear of getting hurt.

Bowen provided the following concise definition of differentiation of self: “The concept defines people according to the degree of fusion, or differentiation, between emotional and intellectual functioning”(Bowen, 1978 p.362). Bowen saw differentiation and fusion as two ends of continuum. On this scale people can be categorized from an extremely low representing greater fusion to an extreme high representing greater differentiation.

Before further definition is given of this concept it is important to note that Bowen was adamant that others know he was not making a claim for what is “normal.” The scale has nothing to do with emotional health or illness or pathology. Bowen recognized people who, while low on the scale, were able to keep their lives in emotional equilibrium without psychological symptoms, while others higher on the scale developed symptoms under severe stress. However, low scale people are more vulnerable to stress and, for them, recovery from symptoms can be slow or impossible while higher scale people tend to recover rapidly. The scale has no direct correlation with intelligence or socioeconomic levels (Bowen, 1978). There are intellectually brilliant people far down the scale and less bright ones far up the scale. A majority of the lower socioeconomic group is far down the scale but there are those in the lower social groups who are well up the scale and those from high social who are far down the scale.

Bowen was quick to differentiate between those individuals who were highly differentiated and those who function intellectually. Intellectuality is a psychological

defense used to avoid experiencing emotions. Well-differentiated people do not intellectualize their feelings, rather they allow themselves and are able to experience emotions, but these emotions do not override their ability to think logically.

Of course, not all people are on one end of the continuum or the other. Between the two extremes of fusion and differentiation lies the vast majority of combinations of emotional and intellectual functioning. Most people lie in the middle of the range, few are very high or very low (Murphy, 1999).

Bowen's scale of differentiation extends from 0 to 100. 0 represents the lowest possible level of human functioning and 100 represent a hypothetical notion of perfection. Through years of research and practice, Bowen realized that it was not possible to reach a 100, but he did not want to rule it out that it could be possible in the future through the course of evolution. To describe functioning at different levels, Bowen presented profiles of people in the 0 to 25, 25 to 50, 50 to 75, and 75 to 100 ranges.

Bowen was much more interested in the theoretical concept behind the use of a scale than the idea of using the scale to plot a number and, thereby, categorizes individuals according to the number they receive. According to Bowen, the theoretical concept of a scale "eliminates the barriers between schizophrenia, neurosis, and normal; is also transcends categories such as genius, class, and cultural-ethnic differences" (Bowen, 1978 p.364)

#### Solid Self and Pseudo-self

Two concepts that are an important part of the differentiation of self have to do with the level of solid self and pseudo-self in a person. The solid self is created from

clearly defined beliefs, opinions, convictions, and life principles. These elements are incorporated into self from one's own life experiences, by a process of intellectual reasoning, and the careful consideration of alternatives involved in the choice of what to believe in, what to stand for, and what to do or not to do. This allows for one to take responsibility for self and the consequences. There is a consistency in beliefs and life principles, and the self takes action on the principles even in situations of high anxiety and duress (Bowen, 1978).

Unlike the solid self, the pseudo-self develops under emotional pressure, and it can be modified by emotional pressure. People are always under constant stress to conform to group norms, whether they are from family or the total society. The pseudo-self is composed of a myriad of principles, beliefs, philosophies, and knowledge acquired because it is required or considered right by the group. Because these principles and beliefs are acquired under pressure they are random and inconsistent with one another, without the individual's being aware of the discrepancy. The pseudo-self is added onto the self, in contrast to solid self, which is integrated into self after careful, logical reasoning. The pseudo-self is not a genuine self, it is a "pretend" self. It was acquired to conform to the environment, and it contains discrepant and assorted principles that pretend to be in emotional harmony with a variety of social groups, institutions, businesses, political parties, and religious groups, without self's being aware that the groups are inconsistent with each other. It is relationships that motivate the joining of a group versus the principles involved. A person may "feel" that there is something wrong with some of groups, but he is not intellectually aware. The solid self is intellectually aware of the inconsistency between the groups, and the decision to join or reject

membership is an intellectual process based on careful weighing of the advantages and disadvantages (Bowen, 1978).

Bowen compares the pseudo-self to an actor who can be many different selves. Through a pseudo-self a person can pretend to be more important or less important, stronger or weaker, or more attractive, or less attractive than is realistic (Bowen). Depending on the situation the pseudo-self can be called upon for the self that is needed at that time. Since the pseudo-self was created within a relationship system, it is also negotiable in the relationship system in order to produce a desired outcome.

In situations that are not emotionally charged, pseudo-self can usually offer effective direction. An attitude or value, even if incorporated unthinkingly, can be an adequate basis for making decisions in low-pressure environments. While pseudo-self can provide a compass that is effective in most work and social situations, the deficiencies of the compass become evident in situations that are emotionally intense (Kerr&Bowen, 1988).

Bowen believed that the level of the solid self is lower, and the pseudo-self is much higher in all of us than most are aware. He describes the pseudo-self to be involved in fusion and the many ways of giving, receiving, lending, borrowing, trading, and exchanging of self. In any exchange, one gives a little of themselves, who gains an equal amount. Bowen illustrates this occurrence using a love relationship, where each is asking the other to be the way they want them to be, all the while trying to fulfill the other persons desire for them to be the way the other wants them to be. This interaction is seen as pretending and trading in pseudo-self. Bowen claims that in a marriage, two pseudo-selves fuse into a we-ness in which one becomes the dominant decision maker or the most

active in taking initiative for the we-ness (Bowen, 1978). The dominant partner gains self at the expense of the other, who loses it. The adaptive one may volunteer to give up self to the dominant one, who accepts it; or the exchange may be worked out after bargaining. The borrowing and trading of selves is healthy as long as partners take turns. "This exchanging of pseudo-self is an automatic emotional process that occurs as people manipulate each other in subtle life postures" (Bowen, 1978,p.366).

The exchanges of self can be brief, for instance, criticism that makes one feel bad for a few days. It may be a long-term process in which the giving spouse becomes so "de-selfed", he or she is no longer able to make decisions and collapses in selfless dysfunction-psychois or chronic physical illness. These dynamics are much less intense as a person's level of differentiation increases or when anxiety is low. This process of losing and gaining self in an emotional network is extremely complex for all people.

#### Profiles of Levels of Differentiation

Bowen divided the scale in four groups ranging from 0 to 100. The groups break down into 4 equal parts, 0 to 25, 25 to 50, 50 to 75, and 75 to 100. He has then described the emotional and intellectual functioning of these four groups.

The group with the lowest level of differentiation falls between 0 to 25 on the scale. Bowen describes people in this subgroup as those who are incapable to distinguish feeling from fact. Individuals in this group are completely relationship oriented. The Individual spends most his time searching for love and approval and in maintaining some sort of harmonious relationships, leaving no time for life-directed goals. If they should fail to secure approval from various relationships, they spend the rest of life either withdrawing or fighting the relationship system. Intellectual functioning is so immersed

in feeling that they are unable to say, "I think that..." or, "I believe...." Instead, They say, "I feel that..." when it would be accurate to express an opinion or belief. They consider it truthful and sincere to say, "I feel," and false and insincere to express an opinion from themselves (Bowen, 1978).

The individual spends most of their lives in a day to day struggle to keep relationship systems in balance, or in an effort to achieve some degree of comfort and freedom from anxiety. Those with this level of differentiation are unable to make long term goals except in vague general terms, such as "I want to be successful, or happy, or have a good job, or have security." They grow up exceedingly dependent on their parents, following which they seek other equally dependent relationships in which they can borrow enough strength to function. Those who fall in the lowest level are unable to live "outside the protective walls of an institution. Bowen describes this group as those who inherit a major portion of the world's serious health, financial, and social problems. For people in this group adjustments in life are strained, and when they fall into dysfunction, the illness can be chronic or permanent (Bowen, 1978).

The profile of moderate levels of differentiation of self applies to individuals that fall into the 25 to 50 range on the scale. Bowen describes this phase as the first beginnings of differentiation between emotional and intellectual systems, with most of the self expressed as pseudo-self. Emotional systems still guide life, but the life styles are more flexible than the lower levels of differentiation. This flexibility allows for a better view of the interplay between emotionality and intellect. Functioning can resemble good levels of differentiation, when anxiety is low. When anxiety is high, functioning can resemble that of low levels of differentiation. Lives are still quiet relationship

oriented, and much of life energy goes to loving and being loved, and seeking approval from others. The focus of life still remains on winning friends and approval than to goal-directed activity. Self-esteem is dependent on others.

The pseudo-selves of individuals in this group are put together from an assortment of incongruous principles, beliefs, philosophies, and ideologies that are used in pretend postures to blend with different relationship systems. Lacking solid self, they habitually use, "I feel that..." when expressing their pseudo-self philosophies; they avoid, "I think," or "I believe," positions by using another person or body of knowledge as their authority when making statements (Bowen, 1976 p.366). Lacking a solid self-conviction about the world's knowledge, they use pseudo-self statements, such as, "The rule says..." or "Science has proved..." taking information out of context to make their points (Bowen, 1978 p.368).

The pseudo-self of people in this group can be conforming followers who pretend to be in harmony with a particular philosophy or set of principles, or when frustrated, can assume the opposite stance as a rebel or revolutionary person. The rebel is lacking a self of his own and the position that the pseudo-self maintains is merely the exact opposite of the majority viewpoint. The revolutionary is against the prevailing system, but has nothing to offer in its place. Like the conforming pseudo-self, its position is determined by what the other parties think.

People in this range have the most intense versions of overt feeling. They are in a lifelong quest for the ideal relationship with emotional closeness to others and direct, open communication of feelings. These individuals are sensitized to reading moods, expressions, and postures of the other, and to responding openly with direct expression of

feeling or impulsive action due to their overt emotional dependence on others. They are in a lifelong pursuit of the ideal close relationship. When they achieve this goal of closeness, emotional fusion occurs which they react with distance and alienation, which then initiates another closeness cycle. Bowen postulates that people in this group develop a high percentage of human problems, including the full range of physical illness, emotional illness, and social dysfunction's. Their emotional illness includes neurotic-level internalized problems, depression, and behavior and character disorder type problems; they get involved in the increasing use of alcohol and drugs to relieve the anxiety of the moment. Their social disorders include all levels of impulsive and irresponsible behavior.

The moderate to good differentiation of self falls between 50 to 75 ranges. People in this group have developed enough differentiation of emotion and thought that they function well with one another as a cooperative team. The emotional system has developed enough so that it can function independently without having to rely on feelings for direction when anxiety increases. Those who fall below 50 have their emotional system directing their intellectual systems during critical situations, at this time the intellect is a pretend intellect. When pressure is felt from outside systems, there is not enough of a foundation for thoughts and belief therefore emotional responses are used to guide decisions. The above 50 group recognizes that for uncritical decisions the emotional system functions well and maintains a balanced life. However, during times of crisis the emotional system usually alleviates the immediate stress, but in the long-term emotional system decisions creates complications for the self-system. Recognizing this function, the self in this range chooses to ignore the response of the emotional system for

that of the intellect. The solid self of those in this range has been able to form "beliefs, principles, and convictions" using logical reasoning during times of calm which they can rely on in critical moments. As in any other group, the level of differentiation ranges between the in-group, causing those at the lower end to look like the group below 50 to 75 in moments of crisis even though they may know there is a better way. Those who are in the upper part of the 50 to 75 range have a greater solid self and are more able to access their intellect in times of crisis. The person in this subgroup can enjoy both the emotional and intellectual systems without one taking over the other. They are able to enjoy deep emotional relationships and at the same time are able to extricate themselves by intellectually processing when needed. They are capable of allowing the emotional system to guide them through life and when the need arises can allow for the intellect to take over to calm the anxiety and avoid life crisis. People in this group are less relationship oriented and can direct more energy in independent life goals. It is not to say that they are unaware of relationships, but they are able to direct the course of their life from within as opposed to from without through various influences. It is the ability of the self to direct the two systems as opposed to being directed by it them that differentiates this group from those who fall lower on the scale. This is similar to the ebb and flow of pseudo-self between two partners. The system functions well when each can give and take the others pseudo-self to complete their own solid self, the healthy system can do this exchange equally so neither partner loses self at the expense of the other gaining a solid self.

Partners who function with higher levels of differentiation can enjoy a great length of intimacy without being "de-selfed" by the other. They are able to function as

independent selves together and alone. Children who grow with well differentiated parents are able to grow and develop their own autonomy without the pressure of being lived through by the parents. Parents and children alike are able to function more responsibly in this group, without blaming others for their failures or crediting others for their successes. They live orderly lives free from a full range of human problems.

Bowen describes the group, 50 to 75, as more of a hypothetical than a real functioning group. "According to the theory, there is some degree of fusion in close relationships...at every scale level below 100" (Bowen, 1972, p.474). When Bowen first developed the theory, the score of a 100 on the scale was perfect in all levels of emotional, cellular, and physiological functioning. He believed that there might be some historical figure or some living at the time that would fall into the mid-90's range, but after more work and experience with the scale he concluded that all people have areas of good functioning and fundamental areas in which functioning is poor.

### Triangles

Bowen describes the triangle as "a three-person emotional configuration, which is the molecule or the basic building block of any emotional system, whether it is in the family or any other group" (1978, p.373). The triangle is seen as the smallest stable relationship. A two person relationship remains stable as long as the system is not under stress, once that occurs the dyad pulls in a third party to help alleviate the initial tension. All relationships fluctuate between moments of connect and disconnect. When the two person relationship experiences anxiety from within, or from outside, a third person gets involved creating the triangle. When the triangle gets over stressed, it involves others thereby creating interlocking triangles (Bowen, 1978).

These interlocking triangles can also extend out to society once the available triangles within the family are exhausted. Outsiders, such as law enforcement or social agencies in the community, are triangulated to help ease the tension in the family. A family is successful in externalizing their conflict when they have outside agencies in conflict with each other about the family, relieving the family of tension.

In moderate tension a triangle has two comfortable sides and one side in conflict. The tension causing dilemma is never resolved, but instead diverted. Since patterns arise out of repetition, people come to have fixed roles in relation to each other. Triangles hold a permanent place in families once they are put in and established. Once triangles are established they often outlive family members, recruiting members of the next generation to replace the previous (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). Therefore, its current participants may not have formed a particular triangle. Also, rather than triangles breaking apart, they lay dormant until the anxiety increases and then the triangle is reactivated to help relieve the tension (Kerr & Bowen, 1988).

Bowen found the concept of triangles proved most beneficial when applied it clinically to work with families. When he initially started working with parents and behavior-problem adolescents, he maintained a position outside the triangle. This tactic seemed to prove beneficial to the extent that symptoms were reduced, but he did not feel that real change had occurred. When he began excluding the child from the treatment and meeting the parents exclusively, he was able to work more effectively with their triangling moves, remaining in emotional contact with them but outside the emotional activity, he achieved a greater therapeutic effect when this adjustment was made.

#### Nuclear Family Emotional System

This concept describes a family's functioning within a single generation. The flow of patterns from one generation to the next influence the behavior of family members (Bowen, 1978). The flow of patterns starts at the inception of a new partnership. Each partner brings in his own generational patterns from their family of origin. A couple may go through an extensive period of happy open and honest relationship during the time of their courtship. The fusion of the pseudo-selves into a common self occurs at the time they commit themselves to each other permanently, whether it be the time of engagement, the wedding itself, or the time they establish their first home together. The lower the level of differentiation the greater the level of emotional fusion in the marriage.

As mentioned in the section discussing solid and pseudo-selves, one person in the relationship may assume the dominant role at the expense of the adaptive partner, who loses self. Both may try to dominate resulting in conflict. On the other hand a relationship may reach a decision paralysis when both attempt at being adaptive. More differentiated spouses have lesser degrees of fusion, and fewer of the complications. The dominant and adaptive roles have no relations to gender, but more on a person's position in their family of origin. The fusion between partners results in various symptoms, the most universal of those is emotional distance from each other.

Other than the emotional distance there are three major areas in which the amount of undifferentiation in the marriage comes to be manifested in symptoms. The areas are marital conflict, sickness or dysfunction in one spouse, and projection of the problems to children.

Marital conflict arises when neither partner is willing to give in to the other,

neither one is able to perform an adaptive role. This occurs when both strive to take the dominant role. Both partners invest a great deal of thinking or action energy, either positive or negative, focused on the other. The relationship seems to go through intense moments of closeness, only to distance one another due to conflict. This rollercoaster goes on endlessly moving from one extreme to another. "This in itself does not harm the children, the parents are so invested in each other that the children are outside of the emotional process (Bowen, 1978 p.378)."

The second symptom mentioned above is that of sickness or dysfunction in one spouse. This usually occurs for the one that functions in the adaptive phase for longer and longer frames of time. The spouse that remains in the adaptive position gradually loses the ability to function and make decisions for self. When this happens all that is required is a moderate increase in stress to trigger the adaptive one into dysfunction, which can be physical illness, emotional illness, or social illness, such as drinking, acting out, and irresponsible behavior. These illnesses tend to become chronic, and they are hard to reverse.

The children in these families can remain almost unaffected as long as there is at least one functioning parent. The main concern for children in these families is inheriting a life pattern as caretaker of the sick parent, which will project into the future.

The third and last symptom that appears in families with parents who are undifferentiated is the projection process, which can be immensely detrimental to the children in these families. This is the process by which parents project the undifferentiation to one or more children. Bowen saw this process to be so significant in poor family functioning that he singled it out to be discussed as a separate concept.

There are two main variables that govern the intensity of this process in the nuclear family. The first is the level of the emotional isolation, or cutoff, from the extended family, or from others important in the relationship system. The second important variable is related to the level anxiety. The symptoms mentioned earlier, marital conflict, dysfunction in a spouse, or symptoms in a child, are less intense when anxiety is low and more intense when anxiety is high.

### Family Projection Process

This concept describes the process by which parental undifferentiation impairs one or more children through the process of mother-father-child triangle. This process exists on many levels in all families, from those in which impairment is minimal to those in which the child is seriously impaired for life. There are few families in which most of the undifferentiation goes into marital conflict, essentially none to sickness in a spouse, and relatively small amounts to the children. Most families use a combination of all three processes. The more the problem moves from one area to another the less chance the process will be crippling in any single area.

Bowen noted definite patterns to the way that undifferentiation is distributed to children. It usually focuses first on one child, and then if it becomes too overwhelming, it moves on to other children in the family. Through his experience in work with families, Bowen noted that children were never equally involved in the family emotional process, meaning that the level of undifferentiation was distributed unevenly throughout the children (Bowen, 1978).

Specifically speaking the family projection process revolved around the maternal instinct and the way anxiety permits it to function during pregnancy, and the infancy of

the child. The father in this scene responds to the mothers' anxiety and supports her endeavors to mother the child. The cycle begins when the child responds anxiously to the mother's anxiety. The mother becomes aware of the child's anxiety and in response becomes overprotective. The child responds to this by becoming more needy and demanding, causing him to regress further in the infantile stage. Once this process is established it can be started by anxiety in the child or mother. In the average situation, there may be times that symptoms arise at stressful periods during childhood. These episodes can gradually increase to major symptoms during or after adolescence.

In situations where intense emotional fusion exists between mother and child, the relationship can remain in a positive and symptom-free equilibrium until the adolescent period, when the child attempts to function independently. At that point, the child's relationship with the mother, or with both parents, can become negative and the child develop severe symptoms. Mother-child relationships that are more intensely fused may remain relatively asymptomatic until young adulthood, when the child can collapse in psychosis after attempting to function away from the parents (Murphy, 1999). Almost every family has one child who was more triangled than the others, and whose life adjustment was not quite as good as the others. Bowen refers to the child who was the main recipient of the family's projection process as the "triangled child" (1978, p.382).

### Emotional Cutoff

This concept is defined as a way people handle their unresolved emotional attachments to their parents. Bowen believed that all people have unresolved emotional attachment to their parents, the lower the level of differentiation, the more intense the unresolved attachment. Cutoff describes the way people detach from their past in order

to start their lives in the present generation. The level of unresolved attachment to the parents directly reflects the degree of undifferentiation that must somehow be handled in the person's own life and in future generations. The attachment is handled by denial and isolation of self while living close to the parents; or by physically running away; or by a combination of both. "The more intense the cutoff with the past, the more likely the individual to have an exaggerated version of his parental family problem in his own marriage, and the more likely his own children to do a more intense cutoff with him in the next generation (Bowen, 1978 p.382)"

The person who runs away from his family of origin is as emotionally dependent as the one who never leaves home. They both want the closeness but cannot get it in their family of origin. The one who remains in physical proximity and chooses to use intrapsychic mechanisms to handle the attachment tends to have some degree of supportive contact with the parents, to have a less intense over-all process, and to develop more internalized symptoms under stress, such as physical illness and depression. The one who opts for the physical distance is more inclined to impulsive behavior. He tends to see the problem as being in the parents and running away as a method of gaining independence from the parents. The more severe the cutoff the greater the chances of him replicating his family pattern with the first available other person. When the tension builds in their new relationship they physically remove themselves from it as well.

#### Multigenerational Transmission Process

This concept describes the transmission of the family emotional process through multiple generations. The child who is the primary recipient of the parental projection usually develops a lower level of differentiation than the parents do. As a consequence,

the child has a more difficult time adjusting to life than his parents do (Bowen, 1978). Children who were exposed to less levels of projection, come away with a level of differentiation equal to that of the parents. And those who managed to stay out of the family's emotional process have higher levels of differentiation than their parents (Bowen, 1978).

This concept takes "emotional illness not only beyond the individual in the family, but also beyond the nuclear family to several generations (Nicholas&Schwartz, 1998 p.147)." This helps to alleviate any sort of blame an individual or family may feel for an illness. The illness is seen as a culmination of generations of communication patterns. Because this is a culmination of generational interaction and the process can slow down or stay static a generation or two, there can be a family with a high level of differentiation with one child who starts to slide down the scale, whereas a family low on the differentiation scale can have a child who starts to climb up the scale.

#### Sibling Position

Bowen integrated Toman's (1961) descriptions of sibling position and personality into his concepts of differentiation of self and the family projection process. Bowen believed that the personality traits for each of the sibling position would help to explain the level of differentiation and the direction of the projection process from generation to generation (Bowen, 1978).

#### Societal Regression

The concept describes the affects society has on the family functioning. The assumption is that prolonged increase in social anxiety can result in a gradual lowering of the functional level of differentiation in families. "The concept states that when a family

is subjected to chronic, sustained anxiety, the family begins to lose contact with its intellectually determined principles, and to resort more and more to emotionally determined decisions to allay the anxiety of the moment (Bowen, 1978 p.386)". Like in an individual this emotional functioning leads to a lower level of differentiation. For society the symptoms of this lower level of differentiation are high rate of crime and chaos.

### Empirical Studies of Bowenian Theory

There have been many studies that have examined the various aspects of

Bowenian theory, following are the summaries of a few of those studies conducted.

Kear (1978), utilizing the Differentiation of Self Scale (DOSS), an instrument that he developed, tested Bowen's hypotheses that (1) people marry others with similar levels of differentiation, (2) People with higher levels of differentiation of self tend to have more satisfying marital relationships, and (3) couples with similar levels of differentiation of self will tend to be more satisfied with their marriages. A sample of 30 couples, all married less than 18 months, was used to test the hypotheses, all of which were confirmed.

Lavery (1985) examined the significance of differentiation of self for understanding marital satisfaction. The sample was made up of a 101 nonclinical married Caucasian couples. The Family Systems Personality Profile (FSPP) was used to measure differentiation of self and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) to measure marital adjustment. The results of study revealed that, (1) Contrary to the Bowen theory, there was not a significant relationship between spouses' levels of differentiation of self. (2) Consistent with Bowen theory, there was a statistically significant positive correlation between levels of differentiation of self and marital satisfaction for males and females.

Nelson (1988) looked at the concept of differentiation of self and how it operates within marriages with a symptomatic spouse. The sample consisted of 40 clinical and 20 nonclinical couples. Level of differentiation was measured by the Family of Origin Scale (FOS) and the Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFSQ).

Although these instruments are not entirely rooted in Bowenian theory, the researcher felt that they corresponded to Bowen's concepts related to differentiation. Clinical couples were defined as legally married with only one symptomatic spouse seeking help from a

mental health professional. Participants also answered questions related to locus of control and anxiety. The results of the study indicated (1) Differentiation and locus of control were minimally related; higher level of differentiation were associated with interpersonal control. (2) Differentiation and anxiety were significantly related; higher levels of differentiation were associated with lower levels of anxiety. (3) Married couples were similar in terms of differentiation of self. (4) Clinical couples were not less differentiated than nonclinical couples when stress and depression were controlled. (5) Nonsymptomatic persons were not necessarily more differentiated than their symptomatic spouses.

Ng (1992) studied the impact of differentiation on marital satisfaction in four groups of couples. The marital satisfaction of the four groups was compared to determine if any of the groups were more satisfied in their marriage. Based on the participants level of differentiation, as measured by Personal Authority in the Family System Questionnaire (PAFSQ), they were placed into one of the four groups: healthy like, healthy unlike, unhealthy like, and unhealthy unlike. The Marital Satisfaction Inventory (MSI) scores in each group were compared to determine if a significant difference existed among the groups. It was found that couples marital satisfaction was impacted by their level of differentiation. The results also supported Bowen's theory that individuals seek counterparts with compatible levels of differentiation. This determination was made because more couples fell into the like category than the unlike category of differentiation. The researcher also concluded, based on an analysis of data, that a highly differentiated person with a basic self can enjoy emotional intimacy in significant relationships and experience greater marital satisfaction while individuals with

a pseudo-self with low differentiation experience higher levels of marital distress and conflict in relationships. The researcher also found, that in some scales, females had a greater number of low scores in marital satisfaction than males. Ng postulated that this finding may indicate that the impact of differentiation on marital satisfaction is stronger for females than for males.

Murphy (1999) examined the relationship of differentiation of self and marital adjustment for Asian-Americans and the affect of acculturation on the relationship between differentiation and marital adjustment for the same group. The study was focused in determining whether Bowen's theory can be universally applied, as claimed by Bowen. The study consisted of 32 participants of Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipina, Taiwanese, Korean, Laotian, and Multi-racial background. The first hypothesis of the study was that married Asian American would show a negative correlation between their marital adjustment, as measured by the total score on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), and level of differentiation, as measured by the total score on the Family Systems Personality Profile (FSPP). The second hypothesis of the study was the low acculturation, as determined by scoring below the median of subjects scores on the Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA) will show a greater negative correlation between their marital adjustment, as measured by the total score on the DAS, and differentiation, as measured by the total score on the FSPP, as compared against married Asian-Americans with high acculturation, as determined by scoring above the median on the SL-ASIA. The results of this study were not statistically significant and neither one of the two null hypothesis could be rejected. For the first hypothesis the results of study actually showed to be positively correlated, although it

was not a statistically significant, it did reveal a trend in the positive direction.

Skowron (2000) examined three aspects in the study. First, the claim that people seek out and marry individuals at similar levels of differentiation was examined. Differentiation of self was broken down into four individual variables, emotional reactivity, I-position, emotional cutoff, and fusion with others. Second, couples differentiation of self-scores were examined to test for the presence of complementarity among spouses in terms of the ways in which specific problems with differentiation were expressed. It was expected that greater complementarity along specific dimensions of couple differentiation of self would predict greater marital discord. The third and final aspect studied was the theoretical relationships between couple differentiation of self and husband and wife marital adjustment in the current sample of married couples. The results of the study did not support Bowen's theoretical claim that people marry individuals at similar levels of differentiation of self. This was tested by comparing DSI scores of actual married couples to pseudocouples created by randomly assigning people to each other. Of the four criteria examined within DSI for complementarity, only the correlation between the husband emotional cutoff scores and the wife emotional reactivity score was statistically significant, suggesting that husbands who are more emotionally cutoff are more likely to be married to wives who are more emotionally reactive. The analysis performed to determine the relationship between spouses scores on the four differentiation subscales, taken together, and husband or wife marital satisfaction, separately. Both for husbands and wives the higher the level of couple differentiation the higher the marital satisfaction for each partner. The husbands level of emotional cutoff made a significant unique contribution, indicating that less emotional

cutoff expressed by the husband predicted the greater marital satisfaction for himself and his wife.

### Asian Indian Culture

Culture is an extremely important factor to consider when reflecting on the

development of self. It shapes the way one feels, thinks, and behaves and, in doing so, it affects the way individuals and families function.

Although there has been a great increase in the number of pieces of psychological and anthropological evidence that suggests that people hold divergent views about the self, most of what psychologists currently know about human nature is based on the Western view of the self as an independent, self-contained, autonomous entity (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Specifically talking about family systems models, Rosenblatt says, "One thing that is obscured in metaphorically defining family systems characteristics as healthy or unhealthy is how much the criteria of family system health are bound to culture and class"(1994, p.183). Pare encourages for, "A view of persons that encompasses their historo-cultural context" (1996, p.38) and believes the family should be viewed "as a culture, as opposed to a system". From his postmodern perspective, Pare feels that, "When persons are viewed in cultural terms, culture diversity is the 'norm', and words like 'healthy' and 'functional' lose their currency." Cross-cultural survey of the self lends support to Durkheim's (1912/1968) early notion that the category of the self is primarily the product of social factors. The exact nature of the inner and outer self may differ considerably by culture. The Asian Indian culture is one, which consists of distinct differences from that of the Western culture.

An important aspect of the Asian Indian culture is the belief that all living things are connected and in immortality to which we are connected by reincarnation. Indians believe in reincarnation upon which the soul, after death, is reborn into another human being or animal. Dumont (1998) notes that whereas Western society tends to be individualistic in outlook, Indian society tends to be holistic. Indian society understands

the cosmos as a whole, of which society is a component of it. As society plays its role within the natural order of the universe, so people play roles within society, but these people are not individuals with strictly distinct identities. Rather, they are interdependent parts of society, parts organized in terms of hierarchically ranked castes with relationships that are roughly equivalent among caste members. Due to the interdependence of all living things, patience and positive relationships to other human beings and to the universe are essential human qualities. "These values are embodied in the concepts of karma (destiny), caste (a hierarchical organization of human beings), and dharma (living life in accordance with the principle that orders the universe), which are all essential concepts to understanding the worldview of Asian Indian families, whether they are Hindu, Christian, Muslim, or Parsi" (Almeida, 1996 p.396 ). Although there are distinct family development pattern differences among the various religious groups, there are deeply entrenched beliefs that unite the Asian Indians. Hinduism is much more of a cultural tradition than a religious doctrine. Therefore, to a certain degree the values of Hinduism flow through the family life of all Asian Indians.

In Hindu philosophy *Karma* is defined as fate. The activities of ones past life directly affects the nature and circumstances of the current one, and future destiny is determined by the actions and devotions made in this life (Roland, 1988). By leading lives of hardship and sacrifice one can hope to ascend to a higher caste in their next life. Therefore a difficult life circumstance is explained away by past misdeeds, and future lives are secured by following ones *dharma*.

Each Indian has a specific *dharmic* role, which he must follow in order to pacify the wrongs of his past life and possibly move towards a higher caste in his next life. A

soul can only become one with the cosmic absolute if it has traveled up to the highest caste of Brahmin. *Dharma* entails praying to household gods, fasting on specific days, and conforming to the social and societal roles and duties prescribed for ones caste. This holds true for first generation Hindu immigrants receiving Western education and training in modern scientific thinking in the United States (Ramisetty-Mikler, 1993 p.36). There are clear *dharmic* roles for men and women that transcend all castes, men are to protect and provide for their families, whereas women are to be devoted daughter, wife and mother (Pettys & Balgopal, 1998 p. 413). The many rules involve life events such as marriage, career choice, and death rites, deviance from ones prescribed duties affect future lives and caste status.

The caste system, which plays an integral role in family functioning of Asian Indians has been described as: *a system of ranked, culturally distinct, interdependent endogamous groups. An individual belongs to the caste of his or her parents and cannot move from one caste to another. Castes are usually associated with traditional occupations, and there are definite social boundaries between castes involving, for example, prohibitions on intermarriage, interdinning, and other spatial and social contacts. In India, caste is related to the Hindu ideas of spiritual purity and pollution, and the castes are ranked on the basis of these criteria. While the Indian constitution specifically outlaws the demeaning and oppressive aspects of the caste system, particularly those that limit the full participation of the lowest castes and untouchables (now called the scheduled castes), caste consciousness, and hierarchical relations between persons and groups based on caste distinctions, has by no means disappeared from the modern political and social scene (Almeida, 1996 p.398).* The caste of a Hindu

is determined by the deeds of his previous life. A virtuous life is rewarded by the soul being reborn in a higher caste, a life filled with misdeeds, is punished by being reborn in a lower caste.

The Asian Indian culture has been defined as being collectivist versus individualistic as the Western culture. A collectivist culture is defined by the emphasis it places on the need of the group versus that of the individual. The collectivist culture promotes interdependence for its members promoting the importance of the group over the individual (Asai & Lucca, 1988). Individuals in this group are expected to make sacrifices for the good of the group, specifically the family (Segal, 1991). The relationship of individuals in the collectivist group tends to be more stable than those in individualistic groups, even when the group makes exceedingly greater demands of the individual in the collectivist culture. Conformity to known norms is an integral part of the collectivist cultures, where deviant behavior is not tolerated. In collectivist cultures, love, status, service is valued much more greatly than money and material goods, in contrast the normal exchanges of affection and attention in individualistic cultures (Asai & Lucca, 1988). Collectivist cultures promote strict roles for family members; children especially are expected to be docile and obedient. They are expected to bring honor for their family by making great achievements in academia, and always practicing good social behavior. Relationships between parent and child are given precedence over those of spouses in collectivist cultures, whereas in individualistic cultures, the emphasis is towards spousal (Asai & Lucca, 1988)

High levels of interdependence are fostered in Asian Indian families, this remains to be a trend for immigrant families. The female is expected to be dependent on the

father, the husband, and the eldest son throughout his life. Children are dependent emotionally and often socially on their parents throughout the parents lives. The authority of and respect for elders are paramount. The family unit controls members in all areas of their lives. Traditionally, difficulties are handled within the family, whether these difficulties are familial, emotional, professional, financial, or health related (Segal, 1991). There have been many studies conducted in the U.S. and Canada which indicate that although immigrants from India have adapted significantly to their environment, they have retained their taste for traditional food, along with their values concerning home, family, children, religion, and marriage (Wakil, Siddique, & Wakil, 1981; Kaul, 1983; Naidoo, 1985; Saran, 1985; Sodowsky & Carey, 1987, 1988; Moghaddam & Taylor, 1987; Kurian, 1989; Segal, 1991; Kar et al., 1995/1996).

The concept of self for the Asian Indian is described as being considerably different from its Western counterpart. The development of the self can be seen as being greatly influenced by the culture within which it develops. Roland (1987 & 1988) describes the Asian Indian self as "familial self", in which he takes into consideration the emphasis placed on the family in the culture. The importance of the extended family in the Asian Indian life is a constant across religious groups. The familial self is created through an extreme focus on others' needs and feelings, with emphasis on being sensitive to what might hurt them. Familial self involves relationships that are emotionally intense and interdependence is highly promoted. Emphasis of the familial self is placed on "we", "our", and "us" rather than on the "I" and "you" of the Western sense of self. This concept of the self fits well into the collectivist Asian Indian culture that promotes interdependence, hierarchical relationships, and extended families. Another study looked

at the concept of conceptions of the self in the United States and India. The results of the study indicated that American participants used individual constructs whereas Indian participants used more context-specific and relational person descriptions. The Western view of the self was described as having stable and abstract traits that are constant over time and situations, as opposed to a more situational understanding of the changeable self for the Indian participants (Shweder & Bourne, 1984). For Indians the self is affected by the situation and alters itself to respond to it. Americans understand self and explain behavior in terms of context-independent, stable, enduring personality dispositions (Kagitcibasi, 1996).

### Marriage and Family in Asian Culture

Asian Indian family systems are extremely complicated. The family is a

foundation in the lives of most individuals. Proper marriages are extremely important in the Asian Indian culture, due to this emphasis on proper allegiance the task of mate selection is performed by the parents. The selection of the partner is based on criteria not related to the emotional expectations of the child. Also, the choice of career for the young adult is heavily influenced, if not dictated, by the family (Segal, 1991). The collectivist group also fosters social relations with unequal power as opposed to individualistic ones. Typically when a woman marries she leaves her family of origin and moves in with her husbands' family of origin. Although this is not typical for the immigrant families who may have left behind their extended families, the arrangement of living with the husbands' family is still seen as the norm. All married couples are expected to have children, it is considered the duty of the married couple to reproduce. Although it may not be in overt ways, a childless couple is seen a failure (Yamamoto 1997).

Children are considered extremely important in a family, especially the male children because they carry on the family name and are essential in performing final religious rites at the death of his father. Female children are desired only if a male child already exists in the family. Infants and toddlers in the Asian Indian culture, similar to other Asian cultures, are extremely pampered by parents, older siblings, and extended families. This time of over indulgence helps the child to develop healthy self-esteem and trust in the family. As the child grows however, autonomy is not tolerated and obedience is expected. As children enter adolescence and young adulthood, shame, guilt, and a sense of moral obligation are used as the primary mechanisms of control (Sue, 1981). This method of control assures the cohesiveness of the family, and secures group identity

albeit at the cost of individual freedom (Triandis et al., 1988). Although immigrant families may be influenced by their adopted country's culture, on topics of dating and marriage they adhere to the cultural norms of their birth culture.

In Asian Indian culture the extended family is extremely important, so much so that it can be seen as an entity on its own. The extended family has been described in many different ways, Hanchette (1988) describes as a "banyan tree, which expands by sending down new roots (individual families) into the ground from its branches." Similar to the Indian societal breakdown into different castes, the family itself is broken down into hierarchical roles. Within the extended family, structural hierarchy is dependent on kinship position, relationship, and gender. The head of the family system is the father, who functions to provide for the family; the mother's role is to nurture and attend to the day to day needs of the children and husband. Children in this nuclear family are expected to obey the parents, and achieve in the outside world. In India as well as the United States, the nuclear family may be physically separate but often will consider the reactions of the extended family when making family decisions. The husbands' parents and brothers will be greatly involved in the functioning of the nuclear family residing in the United States. The extended family, specifically the husbands' parents, will practice their control with frequent and extensive visits to their sons' family. During these visits, often the nuclear family adjusts to accommodate the visiting family members. Often this adjustment resembles the joint families in India, with the eldest of the family practicing a lot of their influence. The family system consists of well-defined roles, rules, and sentiments that bind family members together. The nuclear family is not necessarily seen as a new family, but the continuation of the husband's family line.

## Bowen Theory and Asian Indian Culture

The research done thus far clearly states that therapeutic treatment should focus on the family and not the individual exclusively, even when the individual presents alone (Almeida,; Carson & Chowdhury, 2000; Segal, 1991 ; Ramisetty-Mikler, 1993;Hines et al. 1992; Pettys & Balgopal, 1998). Both the interdependent focused Asian Indian culture and Bowen's intergenerational theory focuses attention on the importance of family systems and its affects on individual development. Researchers note that differentiation is not intrinsically linked to individuation (Roland, 1988), and able to occur within the bounds of Asian Indian self. Although Bowen theory and Asian Indian culture seem compatible, there are other traits of the Asian Indian culture that raise some questions of applicability. There are some characteristics of the Asian Indian culture which Bowen theory might define as "less differentiated". Those people with lower levels of differentiation are described as being more relationship directed and less independent goal oriented. The use of shame to eradicate autonomous functioning which helps to preserve the group harmony, interdependence and collectivity, may be seen as poor functioning when defined using the Bowen theory.

The development of the solid-self also seems to be hindered in the Asian Indian culture, where beliefs and values are incorporated into the self not by the process of thorough examination but by blind acceptance of the group norms. The pseudo-self, which is unstable and ever changing would be more prevalent and acceptable in this culture. Individuals with less solid-self and more pseudo-self are less differentiated and therefore more likely to have their intellect overwhelmed by emotions (Murphy, 1999). Those people with lower levels of differentiation are seen to experience more difficulty

functioning in life. With Married couples Bowen believed that the more frequently the couple can alternate dominant and adaptive roles the healthier the relationship. The partner, who adapts, functions more with the pseudo-self, whereas the dominant one operates through his solid-self. However in Asian Indian culture roles are prescribed such that females are taught to be adaptive whereas the male is expected to be dominant. It seems apparent that this cultural norm would give males an advantage when assessed against Bowen's contrast of differentiation of self. Recognizing these cultural expectations, it is important to question whether theories formulized in one culture can be applicable to another.

### Chapter III

#### Methodology

## Hypothesis

The review of the literature indicated that there were some areas of family functioning, in Asian Indian culture, that seemed to produce lower levels of differentiation, as defined by Bowen. Therefore, It was hypothesized that the dependent variable marital adjustment, assessed by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), would be negatively correlated with differentiation of self, assessed by the Family Systems Personality Profile (FSPP). In other words, married Asian Indian American men and women who reported high levels of differentiation would not report greater marital adjustment. Also, this population would not report low levels of marital adjustment in response to low levels of differentiation.

## Participants

The participants for this study were 14 (8 women and 6 men) married Asian Indian Americans in the upper Midwest region of the States. This was a convenience sample since they were available. The mean age of the participants was 39 years. While both spouses in a marriage were invited to complete the questionnaires, the focus of the instruments used in the study was on individuals who were married, not couples. Therefore, it was not necessary for both spouses to participate. The participants originated from a variety of regions in India, although there are differences amongst these regional groups, the emphasis on extended family and interdependence binds these groups together. There were also no religious limitations, 2 participants identified Islam as their religious belief, 10 identified as Hindu, and 2 did not specify.

## Instruments

### Family Systems Personality Profile (FSPP)

The independent variable, differentiation of self, was measured by the Family Systems Personality Profile(FSPP) which was developed by Howard Garfinkel in 1980. The FSPP is a 30 item self-report device that presents the items in a Likert type format with four possible responses. The responses are: 0=Completely Disagree, 1=Disagree, 2=Agree, and 3=Completely Agree. Respondents were asked to answer the first 20 items based on “behavior, experiences, and opinions throughout your childhood and adolescence and NOT those that are more current” (Garfinkel, 1980, p.122), and the last ten items as they “reflect your behavior, experiences, and opinions of only the last two years” (p.124).

Scores range from 0 to 90 with the lowest level of differentiation reflected by the 0 and the highest by the 90. This scoring system is intended to resemble Bowen’s differentiation of self scale of 0 to 100. Therefore, the higher the score the more differentiated or emotionally mature the individual. Garfinkel developed items for five constructs, which were believed to reflect the content of Bowen’s eight theoretical concepts. Initially, 25 items for each factor were developed resulting in a total of 125 items. Four psychologists with expertise in the Bowen theory judged these items for quality and accuracy of fit in the perspective subscales. Through this analysis 50 items were selected to represent the differentiation of self scale. Garfinkel (1980) then analyzed the five subscales to determine whether they were truly independent measures of the constructs he proposed. As a result, there emerged two distinct clusters of items. These items made up the final two-factor instrument. The first factor contained 25 items and clustered around constructs that reflected family dynamics. The second contained 16 items that reflected the construct of individual affective and cognitive response styles.

Garfinkel felt that the two constructs represented Bowen's method of assessing an individual's level of differentiation. To measure the test-retest reliability of each item, a Person correlational analysis was computed. This resulted in 20 items remaining in Factor I, Family Dynamics, and 10 items in Factor II, Intrapsychic Affective and Cognitive Response Styles. The instrument was tested on a sample size of 200 participants. The sample was made up of Caucasian and Mexican-American participants who were 18 to 68 years of age.

### Reliability of the FSPP

The purpose of testing reliability to determine whether a second administration of the instrument, or responses to an alternate equally good set of items, would yield substantially the same results. Testing internal consistency is an appropriate means of measuring the degree to which FSPP items reflects a consistent psychological theory. Lavery reported that the internal consistency coefficient for the FSPP, using the Kuder-Richardson formula 20 was, .88 (1984/1985). Test-retest reliability is the degree to which scores are consistent over time, it is measured by administering the same test, to the same group, on different occasions. Garfinkel (1980) reported a Person correlation coefficient for the FSPP total score of .76, using a three week interval between testings.

### Validity of the FSPP

The degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure is defined as validity. Tests are deemed valid for a particular purpose and for a particular group. As noted by Murphy (1999) many different forms of validity have been used to assess the Family Systems Personality Profile (FSPP). Content validity reflects how well a test measures an intended area. Experts in the field are used to determine if the items

included in the instrument fit the concept being measured. For the FSPP experts in Bowen Theory were asked to judge and rate potential FSPP items in terms of their quality and consistency with the Bowen Theory. This resulted in 50 items, which were then administered to the standardization sample.

Construct validity is another test of validity, which measures hypotheses deduced from a theory concerning the construct. Garfinkel (1980) used factor analytic methodology to determine if the items represented the different subscales of the FSPP. These subscales were developed using the constructs of the Bowen theory. As noted by Murphy (1999), a principle factor analysis with an orthogonal solution was used to estimate construct validity. A factor loading  $\geq .30$  was considered to have a significant amount of variance on a factor. A total of 41 of the 50 items were accounted for in this analysis. Garfinkel (1980) noted that a careful examination of Bowen theory revealed a similar dichotomy to that represented in the factor analysis. A theoretical rationale could be applied for the analysis.

Further reductions were made in the number of items based on test-retest analysis for each item in the scale, using Person correlations. Garfinkel (1980) decided that a minimum correlation of .60 was required in order to keep items in the family dynamics factor. Twenty of the 24 items fit the criterion. The range was from .60 to .86. The same analysis was done on each item in the intrapsychic dynamics factor. However, on this factor the minimum correlation was .40, due to a smaller number of total items. Ten of the 15 items fit this criterion. The range for these items was .42 to .80. The resulting scale consisted of 30 items.

Another form of validity, which indicates how well an instrument correlates with

some criterion outside to it, is referred to as criterion validity (Murphy, 1999). The external criterion can be another test or psychometric instrument. Garfinkel (1980) analyzed his instrument for criterion validity by administering it, and other instruments simultaneously. The other instruments were, the Mooney Problem Checklist (MPC), the Holmes and Rahe Social Readjustment Scale (Holmes), and the Crown-Marlowe Social Desirability Scale (C-M) to 200 Caucasian and Mexican-American subjects. Garfinkel predicted two things, that the relationship between FSPP scores and dysfunctional behavior, as measured by the Mooney, will depend on the level of stress, as measured by the Holmes, and there will not be a relationship between FSPP scores and social desirability, as measured by the C-M. The results indicated no interaction between FSPP scores and stress scores on the number of dysfunctional behaviors. Both the stress and FSPP scores were separate, significant ( $p < .001$ ) main effects. Further, while a significant relationship was found between FSPP scores and C-M scores, this relationship was found to carry less than 9% of the variance.

As described by Murphy (1999) in another test of criterion validity of the FSPP, Lavery (1984) used a step-wise multiple regression model to predict dysfunctional behaviors. Here, a selected number of Mooney items, the FSPP, Holmes and Rahe Social Readjustment Scale, and a number of family demographic variables were obtained from 181 subjects. The criterion variables in the analysis were three different combinations of Mooney items, e.g. somatic symptoms, social dysfunction items, and total. The hypotheses tested were: 1) The FSPP can account for a significant amount of the variance in the dependent variables (e.g. somatic symptoms, social dysfunction items, and total) after the effects of the family demographic variables and stress have been removed, and,

2) A composite predictor variable will emerge. The results supported the FSPP's ability to significantly add to the explained variance in Mooney scores for all three criterion variables. The unique variance ranged from 12 to 25 per cent. Regarding the predictor variable, a composite variable composed of FSPP scores, marital status, parent's marital status, and income, accounted for 41% of the variance in Mooney total scores. Further, this composite variable withstood a cross-validation analysis using an internally derived sample of cases.

The FSPP has been demonstrated through factor analysis to reflect a theoretically sound factor structure consistent with the Bowen theory. Also, FSPP scores have been shown to explain a significant amount of the variability in dysfunctional behavior over and above that contributed by a number of family demographic variables and stress. It appears therefore, that the FSPP was a psychometrically sound device worthy of inclusion in this investigation.

#### Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS)

This measure predicts the quality of adjustment to marriage. Marital adjustment was the dependent variable in the study.

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), developed by Spanier (1976), is used to "characterize the quality of a dyadic relationship" (Spanier, 1989 p.1). Since the development of this instrument it has become one of the most widely used measures of relationship satisfaction. Touliatos, Perlmutter, and Straus reported that the DAS has been used in over 1000 different studies (1990). It has been recognized as the best paper and pencil indicator of dyadic adjustment, based on its psychometric properties. The DAS is a self-report device that requires no administration from a professional and can be

completed in 5 to 10 minutes. The DAS was normed on a sample of 218 married, and 94 divorced white persons in Pennsylvania. The DAS is a 32-item rating instrument. Both or one of the partners in a relationship can complete the assessment. The DAS consists of four subscales, Dyadic Consensus, Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Cohesion, and Affectional Expression. Each item is scored on one of the subscales, and total adjustment score is then calculated by adding the scores for the four subscales.

Spanier has defined the four subscales as: 1) Dyadic Consensus which measures the extent of agreement between partners on matters of money, religion, recreation, friends, household tasks, and time spent together. 2) Dyadic Satisfaction assesses the level of tension in the relationship, as well as the extent to which an individual has considered ending the relationship. High scores on this subscale indicate satisfaction with the present state of the relationship and commitment to its continuance. 3) Affectional Expression measures the individuals satisfaction with the expression of affection and sex in the relationship. 4) Dyadic Cohesion assesses the common interests and activities shared by the couple.

### Reliability of the DAS

Internal consistency reliability refers to the assessment of whether all items on the same scale consistently or reliably measure the same dimension. Internal consistency reliability is a function of both the quality of the construct and the reliability is a function of both the quality of construct and reliability of a respondent. Spanier (1976) reported a total scale internal consistency reliability of .96. Other researchers have found comparable values for both males and females ranging from .84 to .96 (Johnson & Greenberg, 1985; Antill & Cotton, 1982; Filsinger & Wilson, 1983; Kurdek & Schmitt,

1986; Shrpley & Cross, 1982; Holman & Jacquart, 1988).

The reliability scores for the four subscales range as such: .73 to .92 for Dyadic Consensus, .77 to .94 for Dyadic Satisfaction, .58 to .73 for Affectional Expression, .72 to .86 for Dyadic Cohesion. The data indicate that the total scale and its components have sufficiently high internal consistency to justify their use.

Test-Retest stability of the DAS has been shown in many studies. Stein, Girodo, and Dotzenroth (1982) reported a correlation of .96 for the DAS total score after an 11 week retest. The subscale correlations over this period were .98 for Dyadic Consensus, .92 for Dyadic Satisfaction, .78 for Affectional Expression, and .88 for Dyadic Cohesion. A study by Belsky, Spanier, and Rovine (1983) found 12 month stability coefficients of .82 and .69 for wives and husbands respectively on the total DAS score. Subscale test-retest correlations ranged from .43 to .81.

#### Validity of the DAS

Three judges who reviewed approximately three hundred items evaluated the content validity of this instrument. Judges determined which items were consistent with the definition of dyadic adjustment suggested by Spanier and Cole (1976). A group of non-experts respondents were also asked to rate the importance of the items for assessing a marriage.

Criterion validity was tested by Spanier (1976) who conducted a study of married and divorced persons, which revealed that there were significant differences between the responses of the divorced sample and those of the married sample. A study done by Jacobson, Follette, and McDonald (1982) adds additional support for the criterion validity of the DAS. This study compared the reactions of distressed and happily married

couples to daily events. Generally speaking, distressed couples (those with low DAS scores) were more reactive to recent events than nondistressed couples (those with high DAS scores).

Concurrent validity refers to the fact that the scale correlate with other measures and behaviors measured at the same time in a theoretically meaningful way, whereas, predictive validity refers to the ability of a test to predict important outcome or criterion behaviors. The concurrent and predictive validity of the DAS has been demonstrated in numerous studies. Markowski and Greenwood (1984) found a significant correlation between the Adlerian concept of social interest and marital adjustment.

A study done by Smolen, Spiegel, and Martin (1986) demonstrated that low DAS score, indicative of poor marital functioning, were related to depression and ineffectual communication. Dobson (1987) also found a correlation between depression and scores on the DAS. Guidubaldi and Cleminshaw (1985) administered the DAS to 52 fathers and 78 mothers. The DAS was significantly correlated with a multifactorial parent satisfaction scale. Banmen and Vogel (1985) studied the relationship between dyadic adjustment and husbands' and wives' perceptions of adequate or unacceptable interspousal communication, inhibited sexual communication, and marital distress. The results confirm a strong positive correlation between marital adjustment and interspousal communication as well as between inhibited sexual communication and marital distress.

The convergent validity of the DAS was easily assessed because it was constructed from content valid items used in previous studies of marital adjustment. Spanier (1976) correlated the DAS with the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale (1959) and found correlations of .86 among married respondents and .88 among divorced

respondents. Other significant correlations have been shown between the DAS scores and the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale in a study conducted by Schumm, Paff-Benger, Hatch, Obiorah, et. Al. (1986); Grover, Paff-Bengen, Russell, and Schumm (1984).

### Procedure

The names and addresses of the participants were obtained through a Asian Indian community list of residents, created by the community members in a small Midwestern town in Wisconsin. All 35 families were sent a packet of questionnaires, an individual set for each spouse. From those 35 couples 10 individuals responded. A follow up was deemed necessary, and another set of 35 packets were sent out. The two processes of data collection resulted in 14 respondents, one participant returned an incomplete set of questionnaires and was discarded. The final sample size was 13 participants.

### Limitations

The main limitation of this study is the insignificant sample size. The sample size of 13 does not allow for any statistical significance in comparing the two variables. Also, the sample population was gathered from Asian Indians who had matriculated to the Midwest for whatever their reason. Some of these reasons may raise serious questions about how representative these subjects are of the larger, general Asian Indian population. Another limitation of this study stems from the lack of formal norms for Asian or Asian-American populations on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) and the Family Systems Personality Profile (FSPP). These instruments were not normed on people from various cultures. The DAS was normed on a sample of Caucasian Americans, so there are no published norms available for Asian population. This limits the ability to conclude with certainty that the marital status of the Asian Indian

participants was accurately reflected in their score on the DAS. The FSPP is also an instrument that was not normed when being developed. Therefore, it is not possible to know, on average, if Asian Indian scores are higher, lower or the same as other populations. This ambiguity does not allow for the scores to accurately reflect the respondents level of differentiation given their cultural background, and recognizing the concern for applicability of Bowen's "differentiation construct" to Asian Indians. .

## Chapter IV

### Results

## Overview

This chapter will present the results of the data collection, which focused on the relationship between marital adjustment and differentiation of self. This section will include a summary of the data collection process, and the summary statistics for each of the studied variables. Due to the small number of respondents, there were no correlation's conducted. Therefore, the study will merely note the in-variable means.

## Summary of Data Collection

The questionnaire packet included an introductory letter (Appendix A), two sets of three questionnaires. The three questionnaires completed by the participants included a demographic information form (Appendix B), the Family Systems Personality Profile (FSPP) (Appendix C), and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Appendix D). Fifty packets were sent to couples, and of those, 14 were returned, with 13 finally determined to be appropriate for consideration.

## Summary of Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics for the study variables and demographic variables are presented in this section. Means, medians, and standard deviation scores for the interval scales for all subjects in this study are presented in Table 1. Table 2 lists the frequency distributions for the nominal scale demographic.

The sample studied was made up of 6 female and 7 male Asian Indian Americans. The average age of the sample was 38, with a standard deviation of 8.7. The group consisted of 8 individuals who identified themselves as having “arranged” marriages, (mean of 61.53), 5 respondents reported “love” marriages, (mean of 38.46). This sample was highly educated with the mean years in school being 20.69, with a standard deviation

of 2.75. The length of the average marriage was 13 years, with a standard deviation of 6.36. Only one of the respondents had been previously divorced. Of the 13 participants in the sample, 12 had children with a median family size of 1 child, and a standard deviation of .51. Fifty four percent were in the middle income bracket ranging from \$51,000-\$100,000. Fifteen percent were below and 30.76% were above the middle income bracket.

Table 1

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

(N=13)

Variable	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
Age	38	36	8.7
Number of Siblings	2.5	2	1.91
Years of Education	20.69	20	2.75
Years Married	13	13	6.36

Number of Children	1.46	1	.51
Number in the Home	1.8	1	1.47

Table 2

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION FOR DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

(N=13)

Variable	Count	Percent
<u>Sex</u>		
Female	6	46.15
Male	7	53.84
<u>Siblings</u>		
Yes	12	92.30

No	1	7.69
----	---	------

Divorce

Yes	1	7.69
-----	---	------

No	12	92.30
----	----	-------

Separated

Yes	0	0.00
-----	---	------

No	13	100
----	----	-----

Type of Marriage

Arranged	8	61.53
----------	---	-------

Love	5	38.46
------	---	-------

Income

\$0-25,000	0	0.00
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\$26,000-50,000	2	15.38
-----------------	---	-------

\$51,000-100,000	7	53.84
------------------	---	-------

\$101,000-150,000	4	30.76
-------------------	---	-------

Above \$150,000	0	0.00
-----------------	---	------

Children

Yes	12	92.30
-----	----	-------

No	1	7.69
<u>Religion</u>		
Hinduism	9	69.23
Islam	2	15.38

The participants scores on the two test instruments revealed M=48.3 on the DAS, with a SD=9.88. The FSPP scores produced M=57.1, and SD=4.65(Table 3). Scores on the DAS showed 5 participants to be in the “average” range, 3 in the “slightly above”, and 1 in the above average range. Overall there were 4 participants in the below average range, with 1 in the “slightly below” and the other 3 in the range indicative of poor marital adjustment (1 in the “below average” and 2 in the “much below average” range).

For the FSPP, 12 of the 13 participants fell in the “moderate to good” range of differentiation of self, and 1 was in the “moderate”.

Table 3

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR STUDY VARIABLES

(N=13)

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Variable	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
FSPP (T-Score)	48.3	51	9.88
DAS	57.1	56	4.65

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### Discussion

The purpose of this study was to test Bowen's claims that differentiation of self, the central principle of his theory, affects the quality of relationships people experience, and that this theory can be universally applied. Since Bowen developed his theory in a Western culture, an Asian Indian sample was tested in order to determine if the theory could be applied to a non-Western culture. To test the applicability of this theory to a cross-cultural group, the relationship between level of differentiation of self and marital adjustment was tested.

The lack of a significant sample size deterred any significant statistical comparisons. As stated earlier in the limitations of this study, a larger sample size is necessary to determine the relationship of Bowen theory and Asian Indian development.

Feedback from the solicited community members, received without query, revolved around the intimate questions posed in the FSPP and DAS. Two community members felt questions around sexuality to be embarrassing/inappropriate and chose not to participate.

## Chapter V

### Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation

## Summary

The basis for this study was to examine the universality of a basic construct of Bowen Theory. Murray Bowen believed that the level of differentiation a person achieves in their family of origin has an important and lasting effect on their life. The development of future relationships is greatly impacted by that level, and the levels can be universally applied to discuss relationships. Since the development of this theory took place in a Western culture, this study chose to examine an Asian Indian American sample to determine if the theory did indeed apply to those who come from a non-Western cultural background.

To assess the applicability of this theory cross-culturally, the relationship between differentiation of self and marital adjustment was tested. The notion being tested being tested was that as in the Western culture, the level of differentiation of self would have a significant relationship with marital adjustment/satisfaction for the Asian Indian American sample population.

Based on the literature, it was hypothesized that a negative relationship would be observed between differentiation of self and marital adjustment for the Asian Indian sample. This would mean that married Asian Indian American men and women who reported high levels of differentiation would not report lower levels of marital adjustment. Also, there would not be a correlation observed in this population between low levels of differentiation of self and low levels of reported marital satisfaction.

The participants in this study were 13 Asian Indian, all of whom resided in the upper Midwest region of the States. As part of the research criteria, all subjects were married at the time of their participation in this study , and all had spouses who were of

Asian Indian descent. The sample population ranged in ages from 27 to 55, the average age being 39. Their length of marriage ranged from 4 to 28 years, with most being in arranged marriages. Most of the respondents were highly educated, with the average years of education being 21 years.

Questionnaire packets were sent out to 35 couples with an individual set for each spouse. The packets contained a cover letter, which described the study and criteria for participation, two sets of the Family Systems Personality Profile (FSPP) and Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS). Surveys were completed anonymously as subjects were not asked to provide any identifying information. Of those 35 couples, representing 70 individuals, 14 responded with one set of instruments being incomplete. Due to the small sample size, no statistical analyses were conducted. Within variable descriptive statistics were conducted for clarification purposes.

### Conclusion

This study was not able to conduct any statistical analyses, rendering it an unsuccessful quantitative study. Bowen's theory stated that the level of a person's level of differentiation greatly affects their relationship functioning. The lower the level, the poorer the functioning, adjustment, and satisfaction. Bowen also claimed that this theory cut across all boundaries of race, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status. The review of the literature on Asian Indian American's, and the feedback received from the population who chose not to participate in the study, provided the researcher much to consider. The importance of family cohesion and extended family, which provides both support and stress for Asian Indian's continues to be a great part of their development. This relationship focused development that is enforced by the Asian Indian culture would

be defined as a low level of differentiation of self using the Bowen theory. The ease with which Asian Indian Americans are able to remain connected with their country and culture of birth by frequent visits and phone, allows for that bond to stand the test of immigration. However, Rolands (1988) research on the familial self has shown that although there may be limited room to individuate for the Asian Indian American, the process of differentiation can be accomplished within the cultural boundaries.

The researcher believes, It is not so much the concept of differentiation but rather the instruments used to assess it which needs to be revisited when applying to groups such as Asian Indians. What is required is an instrument standardized on the Asian Indian Americans to accurately assess level of differentiation within that cultural context. Emphasis should be placed on developing a measurement, which assesses and defines differentiation with an Asian Indian population.

The feedback received from non-participants revolved around the excessively personal nature of the questions. The language used to assess spousal affection seemed to offend some of the community members. All questions around sexuality seemed quite uncomfortable for respondents and non-respondents alike. This leads back to what was stated earlier, in that it may not be the concept but the language used to talk and assess it that has proven to be of concern for the Asian Indians who immigrated to this small Midwest town.

For clinicians the use of the DAS could be of great help in trying to assess where conflicts may lie for a client couple. Since Asian Indians culturally are not oriented generally to verbalize the difficulties experienced by them in the relationship, a paper and pencil tool would help the client to express their concerns. Having the intergenerational

focus of Bowen is definitely recommended since extended families are of great importance and wield a lot of power in couple relationships even when continents away. However, the idea of differentiation as, developed and advanced by Bowen in the U.S., should be applied with much care.

### Recommendations

For further research in this area a larger and more diverse sample size of Asian Indian Americans is needed in order to arrive at any significant conclusions. Usage of different assessment instruments should also be explored, as the FSPP does not appear to be compatible with those from the Asian Indian culture. Along with these recommendations, a qualitative study focusing on more appropriately defining the Asian Indian sense of differentiation of self should be pursued in conjunction with development of more culturally sensitive data gathering tools. Also, the level of ethnic identity by couples should be gauged and its relationship to differentiation of self assessed. Future research should also look at other cultures to examine Bowen's claim regarding the universality of his level of differentiation of self construct.

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Dear Participant:

I am a marriage and family therapy graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Stout in Menomonie, Wisconsin. I am studying to see whether a theory of family therapy that is currently used to assess and treat families, couples, and individuals regardless of their culture, is applicable to Asian-Americans of Indian descent. For this purpose, I am asking you to fill out three questionnaires that should take about 10-15 minutes.

Your participation will help therapists and researchers better understand the relationship dynamics that are unique to the Asian-Indian families in the US. You are not asked to reveal your identity, so the information you provide will remain anonymous. I hope you will enjoy answering the questionnaires, and find the experience interesting and educational. It may even give you some new things to think about.

To participate, you should be between the ages of 20 and 55, married and currently living with your spouse, and both you and your spouse should be of Asian Indian descent. If you do not meet these criteria, please pass this questionnaire packet on to a friend or relative who does. I will need a certain number of people to make this a valid study. Since this study is examining married individuals, you and your spouse should complete separate questionnaire sets (I have enclosed one packet for each of you). Although participation of both is encouraged, it is not necessary, and it's fine even if only one of you is able to send in your response.

While the questions are intended to be "personal", people rarely find them offensive, and the risks involved in completing the questionnaires are minimal. When answering the questions, you'll find that it's assumed that a marriage or family relationship requires adjustments and accommodations. Therefore, a certain amount of tension is part of any marriage or family. Your candor and openness in responding to the items cannot be stressed enough.

In order for us to use the data you will be providing, it is important that you complete every section of the questionnaire packet and be sure not to leave any items unanswered. Your participation, however, is voluntary, and you may elect not to answer any questions, or terminate your participation at any time. By completing and returning the questionnaire, you are giving consent to be participant in this study.

Please complete and return this packet within a week to ten days of receipt in the attached addressed and stamped envelope. If, at any time, you have questions, or you experience any discomfort or anxiety as a result of your participation in this study, please feel free to contact this researcher at the address, telephone number, or e-mail address listed below. You can also contact me if you would like to know the findings of this study after it has been completed.

Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in the study.

Sincerely,

Pooja Bhatt  
University of Wisconsin-Stout  
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Menomonie, WI 54751  
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Email: [pooja500@hotmail.com](mailto:pooja500@hotmail.com)

**DEMOGRPAHIC INFORMATION FORM**

Directions: Please use checkmarks or write in answers where appropriate.

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any brothers and sisters? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, please list their age and sex below

Age

Sex

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your total number of years of education: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been married to your spouse? \_\_\_\_\_

Type of marriage: \_\_\_\_\_ Arranged \_\_\_\_\_ Love

Have you ever been divorced? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, how many times have you been divorced?

Have you and your current spouse ever been separated? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Total annual family income: \_\_\_\_\_ \$0-25,000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$26,000-50,000

\_\_\_\_\_ \$51,000-100,000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$101,000-150,000 \_\_\_\_\_ Above \$150,000

Do you have any children? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, how many \_\_\_\_\_

How many people live in your home other than you and your spouse? (List the number and their relationship to you, e.g. 3 children, I father, I mother-in-law, I uncle, 2 nephew, 2 cousins, I friend etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Do you currently practice or identify with a religion or belief system? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

FSPF

INSTRUCTIONS: Below are statements describing childhood and adolescent behavior. Following each statement are the numbers from 0 to 3. Read each statement carefully. Circle the number that represents the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement as it pertains to your childhood and adolescence, as follows: 0=completely disagree; 1=disagree; 2=agree; 3=completely agree. Remember, these statements reflect your behavior, experiences, and opinions throughout your childhood and adolescence and NOT those that are more current. There are no right or wrong answers. Please do not leave any statements unanswered.

	Completely Disagree 0	1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Completely Agree
1. When I was a child there was another family whose house I felt was like my second home.	0	1	2	3	
2. I felt helpless as I was growing up.	0	1	2	3	
3. I was never very attached to my parents.	0	1	2	3	
4. It seemed like running away from home could have been the only means of becoming independent as I grew up.	0	1	2	3	
5. As I was growing up each member of my family clearly had their own responsibilities.	0	1	2	3	
6. I became interested in the opposite sex about the same time most of my friends did.	0	1	2	3	
7. When I was growing up I never ran away from home.	0	1	2	3	
8. Members of my family expressed their anger by not speaking to each other.	0	1	2	3	
9. There was never any violence in my parental home.	0	1	2	3	

	Completely Disagree 0	1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Completely Agree
10. I sometimes feel guilty about how I acted to my parent(s) as I grew up.	0	1	2	3	
11. My parent(s) would have preferred a child of the opposite sex in my place.	0	1	2	3	
12. I felt (or feel it would be) better to leave my parental home than to argue with my parent(s) about leaving.	0	1	2	3	

13. As a child I was taught that problems and worries would disappear if I did not think about them.	0	1	2	3
14. My parent(s) seemed to be satisfied with me.	0	1	2	3
15. My family seemed closest when major problems affected one or more of us.	0	1	2	3
16. I can remember waiting for the day that I would move out of my parent(s)' house.	0	1	2	3
17. The easiest way to gain independence is to live at a distance from one's parent(s).	0	1	2	3
18. I had sexual relations for the first time before I was 17 yrs. old.	0	1	2	3
19. My parent(s) used to openly share their problems and worries with me.	0	1	2	3
20. The relationships in my family did not seem to change when problems arose.	0	1	2	3

INSTRUCTIONS: Your responses to each of the statements that follow reflect your behavior, experiences, and opinions of only the last TWO years. Please answer all statements.

	Completely Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
21. I feel more comfortable when my opinions are similar to those of my friends.	0	1	2	3
22. My emotional life is satisfying.	0	1	2	3
23. It is easy for me to express my feelings to others.	0	1	2	3
24. I say things to people that I later regret.	0	1	2	3
25. Being liked by others is less important than liking myself.	0	1	2	3
26. Children should grow up to carry on their parent(s)' beliefs.	0	1	2	3
27. I prefer to maintain and defend my own position rather than to conform to the majority'.	0	1	2	3
28. When I become angry the feeling lasts longer than I would like.	0	1	2	3
29. I find it uncomfortable to oppose the opinions of others.	0	1	2	3

30. I will change my opinions more on the basis of new knowledge than on the basis of the opinions of others.

0      1      2      3

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

	<u>Always</u>	<u>Almost Always</u>	<u>Occasionally Agree</u>	<u>Fre- quently Agree</u>	<u>Almost Disagree</u>	<u>Always Disagree</u>
1. Handling family finances	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Matters of recreation	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Religious matters	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Demonstrations of affection	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Friends	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Sex relations	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Philosophy of life	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Alms, goals, and things believed important	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. Amount of time spent together	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. Making major decisions	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. Household tasks	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
14. Leisure time interests and activities	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
15. Career decisions	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

All the time      Most of the time      often than not      More occasionally      Occasionally      Rarely      Never

16. How often do you discuss or

- have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight? \_\_\_\_\_
18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well? \_\_\_\_\_
19. Do you confide in your mate? \_\_\_\_\_
20. Do you ever regret that you married? (or lived together) \_\_\_\_\_

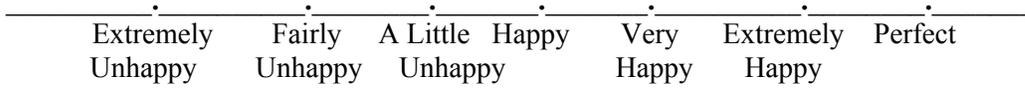
- |  | <u>All<br/>the time</u> | <u>Most of<br/>the time</u> | <u>More<br/>often<br/>than not</u> | <u>Occa-<br/>sionally</u> | <u>Rarely</u> | <u>Never</u> |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| 21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?                 | _____                   | _____                       | _____                              | _____                     | _____         | _____        |
| 22. How often do you and your "get on each other's nerves?"    | _____                   | _____                       | _____                              | _____                     | _____         | _____        |
| 23. Do you kiss your mate?                                     | _____                   | _____                       | _____                              | _____                     | _____         | _____        |
| 24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together? | _____                   | _____                       | _____                              | _____                     | _____         | _____        |

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?

- |  | <u>Never</u> | <u>Less than<br/>once a<br/>month</u> | <u>Once or<br/>twice a<br/>month</u> | <u>Once or<br/>twice a<br/>week</u> | <u>Once a<br/>day</u> | <u>Ho<br/>oft</u> |
|--|--------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas | _____        | _____                                 | _____                                | _____                               | _____                 | _____             |
| 26. Laugh together                       | _____        | _____                                 | _____                                | _____                               | _____                 | _____             |
| 27. Calmly discuss something             | _____        | _____                                 | _____                                | _____                               | _____                 | _____             |
| 28. Work together on a project           | _____        | _____                                 | _____                                | _____                               | _____                 | _____             |

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometime disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no)

- Yes      No
29. \_\_\_\_\_ Being too tired for sex.
30. \_\_\_\_\_ Not showing love.
31. The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness In your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.



32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

\_\_\_\_\_ I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.

\_\_\_\_\_ I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that It does.

\_\_\_\_\_ I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.

\_\_\_\_\_ It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed..

\_\_\_\_\_ It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.

\_\_\_\_\_ My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.