

Experiences and Understandings of Stress and the Role of Social Support in Enhancing Wellbeing Among Youth of Indian Descent in New Zealand

Anjali Bhatia

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Abstract

Youth of Indian descent in New Zealand are regarded as highly vulnerable to mental health issues, yet these young people are not routinely engaged in exploration of issues or support options and strategies. There is a global prevalence of stress among youth which is of significant concern. Experiences of stress and strategies for addressing stress can be viewed as intertwined with the social, cultural, and familial contexts which shape them. To effectively enhance the wellbeing of this group, it is imperative to explore the complexities of stress within this context. Indian youth who were born in New Zealand, or have migrated here, are exposed to the Western culture in their social environment while also being exposed to their parents' Indian culture at home. This can result in conflicting beliefs and values. The understandings and voices of young people are underrepresented in discussions of how they navigate their experiences across numerous social and cultural contexts. This study was positioned within the theoretical framework of social constructionism and used intersectionality as a method of analysis to gain insight into the complex interplay of social and cultural factors shaping stress for Indian youth.

The methodology employed was narrative inquiry, involving interviews and focus groups conducted with 14 youth, 10 parents, and three school-based counsellors in Auckland, New Zealand. A mediated dialogue method was employed to support parents and counsellors to engage with youth narratives.

The thematic analysis was conducted through an intersectionality approach, which made visible the production of multiple constructs of stress experienced by youth of Indian descent in New Zealand. These youth experienced a profound sense of conflict between dominant constructions of valued identities within their native and host (New Zealand) cultures, leading to a sense of not belonging. The findings were also suggestive of the presence of overt and subtle forms of systemic racism, discrimination, and racial stereotypes, leading to marginalisation and exclusion from their social environment. In order to avoid exclusion, youth often engaged in complex identity negotiation which carried a mental load. However, these sociopolitical factors were downplayed by parents and counsellors, who emphasised individual psychological constructions of youth resilience instead. Additionally, the social construction of parental aspirations for children's academic success and the notion of being compared to others had a significant impact on stress experienced by youth in this study.

Addressing stressors involved various strategies including youth distracting and diverting their attention to extra-curricular activities, driven by their feelings of hopelessness, resentment, and anger. Moreover, some Indian youth took pride in their connection to their Indian heritage and most embraced their dual Kiwi–Indian identity, which helped them navigate the complexities of living between cultures. Findings also pointed out a sense of helplessness stemming from their lack of control over their situations in some cases, resulting in instances of self-harm and suicidal ideation. Youth narratives highlighted the prevalence of mental health stigma, and their hesitancy in seeking a counsellor’s help when in distress.

The mediated dialogue method facilitated an increased awareness among parents and counsellors about the challenges experienced by these youth and the support they require to improve their wellbeing. While some of the youth narratives were acknowledged by parents and counsellors, some, for example the effects of systemic racism on youth wellbeing, were invalidated or refuted. Both parents and counsellors suggested collaborative approaches to raise their awareness of the stress experienced by youth in order to effectively support them. They emphasised the importance of educating parents and counsellors on youth stress and enhancing cultural sensitivity. Additionally, both groups accentuate the need for schools to adopt a proactive approach to help migrant youth in understanding and integrating themselves into the educational system of New Zealand. Moreover, this study indicated the need to amplify the voices of youth, establish a youth-led framework, and for an ally’s movement to drive systems change and not solely depend on minority communities and professionals to drive this change.

Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Contents</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>viii</i>
<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>Attestation of Authorship</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>Chapter 1: Introduction</i>	<i>1</i>
Indian Diaspora in New Zealand.....	3
Focus of the Study.....	4
Background and Rationale	6
Researcher Positionality	9
Objective of the Study.....	10
Research Questions	12
Overview of the Study.....	13
<i>Chapter 2: Literature Review</i>	<i>15</i>
The Social and Cultural Context for Indian Youth in New Zealand	15
Demographics of Indians in New Zealand.....	17
A Brief Background of the Indian Culture	19
Youth Mental Health	21
Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing Globally	22
Asian Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing in New Zealand.....	24
Gender Differences	27
Stress During Youth	28
Concept of Stress in Indian Culture.....	30
Constructions of Stress	32
Minority Stress.....	33
Acculturation	42
Models of Acculturation	42
Critique of Berry's Acculturation Model	45
Acculturative Stress	47
Acculturation and Mental Health.....	48
Coping and Coping Strategies to Reduce Stress in Youth	50
Gender Differences	52
Social Support to Reduce Stress in Youth	53
Parents and Peers	54

Counsellors.....	56
Barriers to Help-Seeking.....	58
Culturally Appropriate Services to Mitigate Barriers to Help-Seeking.....	59
Conclusion	60
<i>Chapter 3: Theoretical Underpinnings and Methodology.....</i>	<i>62</i>
Theoretical Approaches	62
Social Constructionism.....	62
Intersectionality as an analytical approach.....	64
Methodology.....	66
Narrative Inquiry Methodology.....	67
Research Questions	70
Recruitment and Data Collection	70
Sampling	70
Participants	71
Data Collection.....	73
Ethical Considerations	73
Informed and Voluntary Consent.....	75
Vulnerability.....	75
Privacy and Confidentiality	75
Insider vs Outsider	76
Research Methods	77
Interviews in Social Constructionist Research.....	78
Mediated Dialogue	81
Focus Group Discussion	83
Data Analysis	84
Researcher Reflexivity	85
Quality in Qualitative Research	86
Credibility.....	86
Transferability	88
Dependability and Confirmability	88
Trustworthiness	88
Conclusion	89
<i>Analysis.....</i>	<i>91</i>
<i>Chapter 4: Constructions of Stress.....</i>	<i>92</i>
Stress as ‘Negotiating Whiteness’	93
Normative Pressures to Gain Acceptance.....	94
Systemic Racism in Educational Settings.....	103

Stress as Loss of ‘Belongingness’ and ‘Outsider’ Status	107
New Zealand-Born Indian Youth: Disconnected and Perceived as Foreigners in India	108
Migration Stress and Discrimination	109
Feeling Out of Place within New Zealand Indian Communities	113
Stress as Managing a ‘Dual Personality’	114
Don’t Forget Your Roots! Parents as Guides	114
Parents’ Limited Understanding of the Social Constraints in Schools	119
Stress as Cultural Expectations and Restrictions	121
Academic Expectations	122
Comparison with Peers	127
Gender-Specific Restrictions Imposed on Youth	128
Intersectional analysis	132
Conclusion	133
<i>Chapter 5: Constructions of Ways to Address Stress</i>	<i>134</i>
Resisting Whiteness/Embracing Indian Identity	136
Coping Through Distraction and Avoidance	137
Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation	142
Seeking Social Support	145
Help-Seeking Behaviour	148
Family/Friends Finding Out About Youth Stress and Seeking Help	149
Stigma and Cultural Barriers in Help-Seeking	151
Lack of Cultural Sensitivity Among Counsellors	154
Previous Negative Experiences Over Confidentiality Concerns	156
Intersectional analysis	157
Conclusion	158
<i>Chapter 6: Mediated Dialogue</i>	<i>160</i>
Parental Recognition of the Importance of Actively Listening to Youth	163
Parents and Counsellors’ Responses to Youth Experiences with Racism	166
Parents Being “Guilty” of Comparisons and Imposing Expectations Leading to Youth Stress	167
Parental Emphasis on Building Youth Resilience to Stress	169
Prevalence of Stigma Associated With Mental Health Issues	171
Limited Recognition and Funding for School Counsellors in New Zealand	172
Educating Parents and Counsellors on Youth Stress and Cultural Sensitivity	174
Need for Proactive Approach and Integration for Migrant Youth	175
Collaborative Practice Approach with Parents and Youth	178
Conclusion	180

<i>Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion</i>	182
Stress as a Social Construct	183
Answering the Research Questions.....	186
Stress Experienced by Youth of Indian Descent in New Zealand.....	186
Negotiating Identities	187
Overt and Subtle Forms of Systemic Racism, Discrimination, and Racial Stereotyping ...	193
Parental Expectations	198
Support and Help-Seeking Behaviour	201
Social and Cultural Factors Influencing Youth Help-Seeking Behaviour	202
Key Recommendations.....	206
Challenges of this Study	197
Contributions of this Study	199
Strengths of this Study	202
Beyond this Research	203
Closure	204
<i>Conclusion</i>	206
<i>References</i>	208
<i>Appendices</i>	247
Appendix A: Ethics Approval	247
Appendix B: Recruitment Flier (Youth).....	248
Appendix C: Recruitment Flier (Parents – English)	249
Appendix D: Recruitment Flier (Parents – Hindi)	250
Appendix E: Recruitment Flier (Counsellors).....	251
Appendix F: Participant Information Sheet (Youth).....	252
Appendix G: Participant Information Sheet (Parents of Youth – English).....	256
Appendix H: Participant Information Sheet (Parents of Youth – Hindi).....	260
Appendix I: Consent Form (Youth)	264
Appendix J: Assent Form (Youth).....	265
Appendix K: Consent Form (Parents/Guardians).....	266
Appendix L: Participant Information Sheet (Parents – English).....	267
Appendix M: Participant Information Sheet (Parents – Hindi)	271
Appendix N: Consent Form (Parents – English)	275
Appendix O: Consent Form (Parents – Hindi).....	276
Appendix P: Participant Information Sheet (Counsellors)	277
Appendix Q: Consent Form (Counsellors)	280
Appendix R: Safety Protocol	281

List of Figures

Figure 1 Asian ethnic population in New Zealand.....	18
Figure 2 Model of stress developed by Palmer and Strickland in 1996.....	23
Figure 3 Asian students, aged 13-17 years: Depression and suicide behaviours in 2007	25
Figure 4 Acculturative research framework.....	42
Figure 5 Inclusion criteria for each cohort in the study	78
Figure 6 Constructions of stress	93
Figure 7 Intersections of constructs of stress	185
Figure 8 Key recommendations to improve youth services and wellbeing	207

List of Tables

Table 1 Depression in secondary school students	27
Table 2 Youth – Demographic information	72
Table 3 Parents – Demographic information	73
Table 4 Counsellors – Demographic information.....	73
Table 5 Youth addressing stress: Key themes identified	135
Table 6 Parents’ and counsellors’ reflections on youth narratives facilitated through mediated dialogue: Key themes identified	163

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

11th December 2023

Signature

Date

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The global prevalence of stress among youth is of significant concern (UNICEF, 2019). Research has indicated an increase in suicide attempts and the prevalence of anxiety and depression among youth aged 15-29 years worldwide over the last two decades (World Health Organization, 2019). UNICEF (2020) indicates that the situation in New Zealand is particularly alarming, with the youth (15-19 years) suicide rate among the highest in the developed countries at 14.9 deaths per 100,000 youth. This rate is more than double the average recorded across 41 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (OECD, 2017). Furthermore, findings from the New Zealand Youth19 survey in 2019, which surveyed secondary school students (13-19 years), revealed that 21% of the Indian youth had intentionally engaged in self-harming behaviours within the preceding 12 months (Peiris-John et al., 2021). Additionally, data from the Youth19 survey in 2019 indicated that 19% of the Indian youth had contemplated about attempting suicide, 10% had formulated a plan for suicidal attempt, and 6% (comprising 7.3% females and 5% males) had attempted suicide in the past 12 months (Menzies et al., 2020).

Youth is a critical phase of human development marked by significant changes in the physical, social, and emotional domains (Anniko et al., 2019; McCarter, 2013). Youth is a time of exploring one's interests, learning, achievements, and flourishing of talent, but is also a time of heightened vulnerability when stressful life experiences have a significant impact on youth wellbeing (Papalia et al., 2009). In addition, this vulnerability is compounded with further complexities such as racialised status and immigrant status (Chiang et al., 2017; Kapadia, 2008). Negotiating these multifaceted changes can be challenging, and the prolonged stress increases the risk of mental health issues among youth, including anxiety, depression, and mood disorders (Auerbach, 2015; Krapić et al., 2015). The term 'stress' is a complex word to define and it is often used loosely and indistinctly within the public discourse, contingent upon the context. Moreover, stress is usually constructed as a physical and psychological illness (Cohen et al., 1995; Schneiderman et al., 2005). However, research suggests that the interpretation of stressful experiences and its management is influenced by social and cultural factors (Aldwin, 2004; Senanayake et al., 2020). In this sense, stress and the strategies adopted to address stress are socially constructed, meaning that they are not inherited realities that have been

discovered, but rather ideas and constructs that emerge through conversations and interactions. Diverse cultural backgrounds often result in distinct perceptions of stress, reflecting the influence of societal norms and values (Aldwin, 2004; Chun et al., 2006).

The concept of stress perceived in the Indian culture differs from the Western perspective. Indian literature suggests that stress in individuals primarily arises from environmental stressors rather than physiological reactions. Moreover, traditional texts emphasise that stress results from interactions between the mind and body (Telles et al., 2014). However, in current times, the prevailing perspective on stress is heavily influenced by Western philosophy, often overlooking the impact of cultural nuances that shape individuals' understanding of stress. Nonetheless, research recognises the importance of understanding the social context of stress experienced by youth, as it is deeply intertwined with one's cultural context (Kuo, 2011).

Individuals suffer stress throughout their lives, and the number of stressors grows with age, particularly during their youth, before a gradual reduction in stress levels during old age (Scott et al., 2013). Youth, particularly between the ages of 14 and 18, is positioned within psychology as a developmental stage that comprises stages of biological, cognitive, psychological, and social development, as well as a period of transition in all domains of development in which individuals face a plethora of new problems and stressors. When these stressors are compounded for youth of colour with the added layer of negotiating identities in a predominantly white country, the stressors increase significantly (Kwate & Meyer, 2011; Williams, 2018).

This study focuses on youth in the 14–18 age group, following the definition of the Ministry of Social Development in New Zealand (Blissett et al., 2009; United Nations Population Fund, 2007; World Health Organization, 2006). According to G. Stanley Hall (1904, as cited in American Psychological Association (2002, p. 3), youth is a time of “storm and stress”, where many youth strive for independence, experience sexual attraction, spend more time with their peers than with family, and improve their decision-making skills (American Psychological Association, 2002; Gorrese & Ruggieri, 2012; Halpern-Felsher, 2009). Youth in the age group of 14 to 18 years navigate tremendous changes, including personal, social, and emotional development. For instance, during this phase, youth experience rapid physical growth and hormonal changes, explore their identities, and experiment with different roles, values, and belief systems. Specifically, ethnic minority youth face a heightened vulnerability to mental health challenges, such

as heightened stress, experiences of prejudices, and discrimination, resulting in emotional turmoil (Douglass et al., 2016; Sattler & Zeyen, 2021). This transitional phase necessitates flexible timelines in the youth development stages and a supportive environment to facilitate their growth and wellbeing.

This chapter presents an overview of the research topic and the rationale and aim of the study. It offers an insight into the theoretical framework of social constructionism, employing intersectionality as a method of analysis. This chapter also highlights the process of developing the research focus, incorporating an exploration of the study's contextual backdrop. Finally, it emphasises the significance of the study and provides an outline of the thesis.

Indian Diaspora in New Zealand

New Zealand possesses a rich history of migration, and with more than a quarter of its current population being born outside of the country it ranks fourth among OECD countries (OECD, 2023). The population of New Zealand is made up of people from many ethnic backgrounds. Each ethnic group has its own set of values, customs, ethics, and culture, which they carry with them when they immigrate to a new country. The 'Asian'¹ population is a heterogeneous group with various cultures, languages, religions, migratory patterns, and socio-economic situations. Young Asian New Zealanders are diverse as well, with various levels of socialisation, ethnocultural identities, and connectivity to mainstream society. When Asians are included in health studies and surveys in New Zealand, their data is often provided for the aggregated group, which fails to acknowledge the group's heterogeneity and masks important variations among 'Asian' ethnic groups (Rasanathan et al., 2004). Numerous stories are concealed behind the dropdown box labelled "Asian," a category that cannot begin to represent the diversity of identities associated with the world's most populous continent. The Asian population comprises mainly Chinese and Indians, with Koreans and other ethnic groups clustered together with them.

In New Zealand, the Indian community is diverse, and includes (but is not limited to) individuals born in Fiji of Indian descent, those born in New Zealand to Indian parents,

¹According to Statistics New Zealand (2015), the 'Asian' group is defined as individuals with origins on the Asian continent, from Afghanistan in the west to Japan in the east and from China in the north to Indonesia in the south.

and those born in India who have migrated to New Zealand (Friesen & Kearns, 2008). Given this rich diversity within the Indian community in New Zealand, it becomes imperative to provide a clear definition of the term 'Indian' as used in this research. Therefore, in the context of this study, the term 'Indian' encompasses youth who were born in India and later immigrated to New Zealand, as well as those who were born in New Zealand but have parents with Indian origins, having been born and raised in India. Any parent not born and raised in India will be excluded for this study.

This research study unveils a narrative regarding the wellbeing of Indian youth that has previously been hidden in the New Zealand context. The Indian population is rapidly growing in New Zealand, with over 19% considered as youth (aged 10-19 years) (Statistics New Zealand, 2021). According to Statistics New Zealand (2019), the number of Indians living in New Zealand increased from 155,178 in 2013 to 239,193 in 2018. According to growth projections, the Indian ethnic community will nearly double in the next decade (Statistics New Zealand, 2017).

Growing up in a predominantly white country might be difficult for Indian youth. According to researchers, these young people are building their identities and transitioning into adulthood while balancing culturally diverse expectations and ethnic minority status (Costigan et al., 2010; Espinosa et al., 2018). It is critical for researchers and health practitioners to understand how these young people understand their challenges and how they deal with them. Although there is a growing corpus of international research focused on understanding the overall wellbeing of Indian youth, encompassing aspects such as their physical and mental health, and emotional wellbeing, few studies consider social and cultural aspects that have a significant impact on youth stress and coping. This understanding is pivotal in order to appropriately address and contextualise the wellbeing of Indian youth in New Zealand.

Focus of the Study

In this thesis, it is argued that stress is a social construct, and each construction of stress entails associated meanings that are embedded in specific contexts. The meanings attributed to these constructions of stress can both be shaped by and, in turn, shape other constructions. In this sense, stress is not fixed; instead, it emerges, evolves, and is understood through social interactions and cultural contexts. At any given time, multiple

social constructions coexist, highlighting the evolving nature of stress as a social construct.

Numerous studies have consistently demonstrated that the psychological and emotional wellbeing of young people is continually influenced by their family dynamics, school context, and peer interactions (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Kwan et al., 2018; Ling et al., 2014). Stressors can originate from various sources, including worries about academic performance, familial challenges, and experiences of racism and discrimination. Ethnic minority youth, as they navigate the complexities of the dual cultural environments of their home and host countries, often find the situation even more stressful due to the need to balance conflicting cultural expectations, norms, and values (Crengle et al., 2012; Harris et al., 2018).

According to Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, the development of young people is influenced by multiple layers of their surrounding environment, from immediate settings of family and school to the broader cultural values and traditions (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). In this sense, youth do not function in isolation and are constantly interacting and shaping their understanding within these environmental systems. Therefore, to gain a deeper understanding of stress and its management among youth, it is essential to explore various perspectives and viewpoints. To facilitate this exploration, this research adopts the theoretical framework of social constructionism and intersectionality as an analytical approach. These frameworks serve as a lens through which the interpretations and understandings of stress are examined.

Social constructionism is rooted in the belief that meanings constructed are contextual (Lincoln et al., 2011), fluid and dynamic (Gergen, 2008). It emphasises that meanings are derived socially through language and not by individuals (Allen, 2005; Willig, 2013). The construction of one's understanding "is mediated by the social force fields of power and knowledge in which they are produced, reproduced, or challenged" (Pfohl, 2008, p. 645). Intersectionality examines individuals' experiences in relation to different social identities such as ethnicity, migration status, and gender (McCall, 2005). This lens emphasise that an individual identity is not just shaped by single dimensions, but rather are influenced by a combination of factors, such as cultural background, geographical location, and social interactions (Mehrotra, 2010). This lens also helps to examine how social identities are configured through power and oppression (Azmitia & Mansfield, 2021).

Throughout this research, I have pursued the idea that stress is a social construct by exploring the diverse contributors to stress from the perspectives of Indian youth, parents, and school-based counsellors. Through the theoretical framework of social constructionism, and intersectionality as a method of analysis, it aims to provide a deeper understanding of how stress is interpreted and understood within the context of different social and cultural factors, ultimately contributing to a more nuanced and holistic perspective on the phenomenon of stress.

Background and Rationale

Within the context of high levels of migration, New Zealand's youth population increasingly comprises of migrants and their children. This reflects a rich diversity of language, racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, as well as a wide diversity of experiences. Previous research with young migrants has investigated parallels and distinctions based on the immigrant generation, including children born in New Zealand as children of migrants (Areepattamannil et al., 2018). Some children immigrate with their parents, and some are born in a new country while their parents immigrated as first-generation migrants. According to literature, immigrant experiences differ depending on language, culture, and citizenship status.

In New Zealand, Indian children may have lived their whole lives in Western society, but they are also exposed to their parents' Indian culture at home. Growing up in an atmosphere where differing perspectives on human development exist between Western and Indian societies, Indian youth are likely to encounter conflicting beliefs and cultures. Identity conflict is especially prevalent during youth (Erikson, 1993; Sapru, 2006). Young people who struggle with the process of forming their identity may experience psychological challenges while navigating the complexities of belonging to two different cultures simultaneously. This possibility is heightened when they experience discrimination and hear negative views about their race and culture from the dominant society (Williams et al., 2019).

Research suggests that these challenges are not merely cultural but are compounded by other dimensions including migration, identity, social status, gender, and family dynamics (Cheon et al., 2020; Harris et al., 2018). Furthermore, Indian youth living outside of India may be subject to numerous psychosocial challenges, owing to a conflict between their heritage and prevailing cultural norms and traditions, language, and family systems (Zaidi

et al., 2016). Acculturation has traditionally been characterised as the transformation that occurs as a result of a dynamic and evolving process of contact between dominant and non-dominant cultural groups, which provides opportunities to learn and adapt. However, recent studies indicate that acculturation can lead to negative consequences such as poor mental health outcomes (Jardin et al., 2018).

Acculturative stress is the tension caused by the acculturation process. Indian youth, in particular, exhibit elevated levels of acculturative stress, which is likely to compound the typical youth stressors faced at home and school (Dey & Sitharthan, 2017). Acculturative stress encompasses various forms of stress, including familial and language difficulties, peer pressure, academic expectations, and social and economic stress. Although the prevalence of stressors varies across generations, acculturative stress is intragenerational (Dey & Sitharthan, 2017; Renzaho et al., 2017). Research has shown that Indian youth overseas experience heightened stress because of intergenerational differences in expectations to adhere to that culture's norms and values (Renzaho et al., 2017). This may pose a considerable risk to the wellbeing of Indian youth and the onset of mental health concerns.

The process of migration can be stressful as it involves cultural, social, and familial changes (J. Kim et al., 2014; Ling et al., 2014). Migrants often face the challenge of adapting to their new culture by learning new norms that may differ from those in their home country. As might be expected, this adaptation process is usually considered easier for their children who were born in the new country (J. Kim et al., 2014; Toppelberg & Collins, 2010). In contrast, a recent study challenged this viewpoint and found that second-generation migrants are equally susceptible to same vulnerability as first-generation migrants (Simon-Kumar et al., 2022). Acculturation gaps and conflict may emerge as parents and children adapt to a new society while retaining features of their native culture. Individuals may feel increased pressure to identify with and belong to a cultural group during their youth as compared to adults. This heightened construct of identity and belongingness is typically accompanied by encounters with unfamiliar, perhaps opposing cultural perspectives, ideas, and values. The experience of ethnic prejudice may damage the development by Indian youth of a strong cultural identity, increasing their likelihood of experiencing stress and anxiety. Furthermore, societal pressures and expectations, such as career expectations and socio-economic success, may

have a negative impact on their mental health, which is often hidden because of the ‘model minority’ stereotype (Meyer, 2003).

The ‘model minority’ myth is a racial stereotype that presents a specific racial and ethnic group as high achievers, often in domains such as academics and socio-economic status. For instance, research has highlighted the ongoing persistence of the model minority image of Asians as competent and studious, particularly in STEM courses (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) (Asher, 2008). However, these stereotypes lead to feelings of frustration among youth because of the constant pressure of conforming to these societal expectations.

Moreover, the racism encountered by Asian youth within the school setting, either through unjust treatment by their teachers or through instances of racism, bullying and harassment by their peers, can be tracked back to the underlying ‘white’ or racist ideologies present within the New Zealand society (Peiris-John et al., 2021). While there exists a substantial body of research on racism and discrimination towards Māori (Clark et al., 2018; Roy et al., 2020) and Pasifika communities (Maquiso, 2019) in the New Zealand context, the experiences of other ethnic minority groups remain comparatively unexplored (Crengle et al., 2012), despite high levels of racial discrimination and mental health concerns experienced by the Asian population (Harris et al., 2018; Simon-Kumar et al., 2022). Within this under-researched landscape, the encounters with racism among Indian youth, who constitute approximately 19% of the Indian population in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2021), remain particularly understudied. While some experiences of ethnic minority youth may overlap across different national origins, researchers must focus on the nuanced experiences of these groups to better understand how the various social categories such as identity, family and school dynamics, and stress interact and influence each other. It is therefore critical that their voices and perspectives be heard for effective policy changes aimed at enhancing inclusivity. This study can serve as a foundation for understanding the lived experiences of stress among Indian youth and how those experiences shape their reality and truth. This thesis begins to fill a knowledge gap on the role of social and cultural factors on youth stress and coping. Indian youth have distinct cultural beliefs and customs, and they should be treated as a distinct group by scholars and society in general.

Further to understanding the experiences of stress of Indian youth in New Zealand, understanding how they handle stress is important, since that would enable future

initiatives to build and support positive coping skills among youth. Although there is a growing corpus of literature on youth stress and coping, there is a scarcity of studies on youth of Indian descent in the context of New Zealand. Moreover, moving away from that overly broad ‘Asian’ term would allow for more targeted actions.

Researcher Positionality

Research reflexivity is critical because it allows for transparency and reflection on how my perspectives, values, and experiences as a researcher informed and moulded the research itself (Olmos-Vega et al., 2022). Researchers are perceived to exert influence on all areas of the research process, such as topic selection and data collecting, analysis, and interpretation. Participant narratives are not perceived as being produced completely by participants. Rather, they are viewed as a collaborative and interactive process between the researcher and the participant, both of whom add their own lived experiences and meaning making to the process, ultimately shaping the stories that are produced (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). Furthermore, it is assumed that participant reports are interpreted and analysed from the researcher’s point of view.

In light of this, I acknowledge my constructive role in the entire process, from conception to completion. This research is based on my personal experience dealing with stress as a teenager. Academic pressure, relationship troubles with my friends and parents, seeking autonomy, and societal expectations to get the greatest achievements in every part of my life were all sources of stress for me. I needed to talk to someone about what was going on inside of me, but seeking professional support was considered a taboo. With limited mental health awareness, it was considered normal to face such situations and cope by oneself. Additionally, my master’s degree paper on the influence of migration on the lives of youth fuelled my desire to learn more about the pressures generated in the lives of migrants and those born in a foreign nation.

The inclusion of parental and school-based counsellors’ understandings in this study permitted the exploration of social and cultural factors that are likely to influence youth experiences. Because youth spend the majority of their time at home or school, these situational experiences contribute to their experiences and understandings of their reality, and it is critical to consider their perspectives as well. I also hope to bridge the gap in knowledge between youth stress and ways of coping through the use of the mediated dialogue. This may help identify narratives that youth might not share with parents or

counsellors due to Indian culture's hierarchical structure (Ganapathy-Coleman, 2013; Jensen & Dost-Gözkan, 2015).

Objective of the Study

While extensive study has been conducted on stress and the immigrant community, most previous research has focused on the experiences of adults only. The perspectives and voices of youth are significantly lacking in terms of stress and coping research. There is a space and a need for research that highlights the views of ethnic minority youth as they navigate experiences across numerous social and cultural contexts. Additionally, it is important to understand how youth negotiate their identities within their communities, schools, and broader society.

The research described in this thesis is one of many steps that need to be undertaken to help fill this knowledge gap by employing intersectionality to analyse how youth navigate and interpret their social locations and identities, including ethnicity, migration status, and cultures. Intersectional analysis seeks to understand the interaction of various systems of power and their impact on individuals who belong to multiple social categories, such as gender, class, and ethnicity (Phoenix & Pattynama, 2006). This approach goes beyond merely adding the effects of different categories; it reveals how these categories intersect and influence each other, creating unique and complex identities. Essentially, intersectional analysis examines how being part of multiple social groups shapes individuals' experiences and identities in interconnected ways (Buitelaar, 2006; Christensen & Jensen, 2012).

In this study, intersectional analysis will be used to explore how dominant social narratives classify youth of Indian descent in New Zealand. By breaking down participant narratives along intersectional axes, this research aims to understand how factors such as age, ethnicity, gender, power dynamics, and socio-political contexts shape the perception of youth experiences of stress in New Zealand.

This research aims to explore the understanding of stress, coping, and help-seeking among Indian youth, parents, and school-based counsellors in New Zealand. This exploration is crucial to ensure that the assumptions and interpretations of parents and counsellors, which may sometimes be misguided, do not hinder the wellbeing of these youth. By examining these intersections and being attuned to the unique stress and coping

experiences of Indian youth, the study aims to strengthen the understanding of adults in the immediate environment of youth to provide appropriate support to young people.

The objective of this qualitative research is to explore the understanding of stress and coping among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand. Additionally, the mediated dialogue method (Nakhid, 2003) is utilised to study the perspectives of parents and counsellors on youth stress and to bridge the gap in knowledge about the perspectives among the three groups. The mediated dialogue method allows for rich and nuanced data to emerge through exploring multiple perspectives and shared meanings, and uncovering insights that may not be accessible through individual interviews (Nakhid, 2003). Researchers have constantly emphasised the general lack of engagement with youth perspectives in society (Benenson et al., 2016; Devic, 2020). This is particularly relevant in Indian communities, due to high prevalence of hierarchy, where young people often do not voice their opinions to adults due to the power dynamics between groups (Chadda & Deb, 2013). A social constructionist theoretical framework (Burr, 2003) and intersectionality analytical approach (Hancock, 2016) aids in comprehending the numerous layers of social and cultural influences shaping youth stress and coping narratives.

The narrative inquiry methodology (Clandinin & Huber, 2010) utilised in this study allows researchers to gain insight into how young people make sense of stressful circumstances. As this methodology emphasises that reality is constructed in a narrative manner, and is influenced by cultural nuances and language use (Bruner, 2004), it will enable me to investigate how the participants comprehend their subjective realities (Polkinghorne, 2007). Because the emphasis is on the stories that participants develop based on their own experiences, there is a greater possibility for participants to share perspectives that may not necessarily align with those of parents, professionals, or researchers. Youth are able to demonstrate how they grasp the significance of stress and coping in the context of their own lives through their experiences. As previously mentioned, it is significant to recognise that youth do not function in isolation; their perspectives of their world and experiences are shaped by both personal and external influences. While my research focuses on personal meaning making, this methodology and social constructionism framework recognise that when people try to make sense of themselves and their experiences, they depend on societal and cultural notions and nuances that both constrain their meaning and allow their meaning to be built.

Participants' narratives were thematically analysed (Braun & Clarke, 2006) using NVivo Version 12. The analysis adopted a social constructionist lens, by taking into account the influence of societal norms, values, and beliefs on the experiences of young people. Through this lens, the narratives have not just been taken as evidence of what 'really happened'; rather, the focus was on the language participants used when expressing their experiences, which provided the contextual factors that shape their perspectives. Moreover, the generated themes have also been addressed through an intersectional approach to explore the interconnectedness of the social categories, such as identity and migration, recognising that these social categories do not exist in isolation.

By gaining a deeper understanding of the influence of multiple factors in shaping youth experiences of stress, the findings should enable the development of more targeted and culturally sensitive support services. Bringing in more awareness and addressing the root cause of the challenges confronting Indian youth in New Zealand might lead to reduced discrimination and contribute to create a more inclusive society. A comprehensive understanding of ethnic minority youth stress might be used to advocate for policy changes across different levels, including educational, societal, and national levels, leading to equitable treatment and improving the overall wellbeing of youth.

Research Questions

This research was driven by the significance of understanding stress experienced by Indian youth in New Zealand and recognising the interconnectedness of individuals with their social environment, which is particularly relevant for youth who rely heavily on social systems for their wellbeing. Therefore, this research aimed to explore the perspectives of stress among Indian youth and adults within their immediate environments, parents, and school-based counsellors. This study focuses on the following research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences and understandings of stress among New Zealand youth of Indian descent?
2. How do New Zealand youth of Indian descent understand and/or experience support available to them?
3. How do parents and counsellors involved in supporting Indian youth understand the stress experienced by this group in New Zealand?

4. How can support be enhanced and/or improved to reduce stress and promote wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand?

By addressing these research questions, this study endeavours to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the stress and wellbeing experienced by Indian youth in New Zealand. Moreover, the study aspires to raise awareness among adults present in the social environments of these youth so that they can help youth navigate the complexities of cultural differences, societal expectations, and the dominant discourse. It also aims to provide insights that may inform interventions and community initiatives to reduce stress and enhance the overall wellbeing of Indian youth in New Zealand.

Overview of the Study

This thesis comprises seven chapters, with each chapter of this study serving as a layer contributing to an enriched understanding of the narratives and experiences shared by the research participants. The first chapter serves as the foundation, elucidating the rationale for my doctoral study. In this introductory chapter, I have articulated what drew me to this study, specifically the rationale for and overarching significance of this study. Additionally, I have outlined my story, my positioning within this research, and the scope of the study, which together justify the methodology used in this study and inform the study's contextual backdrop. Finally, I have presented a structured overview of the thesis, summarising the flow of the study.

The second chapter, comprising a comprehensive literature review, is dedicated to the exploration of stress experiences among youth and how they manage stress. More specifically, it examines pertinent research findings related to the experiences of youth of Indian descent. The first section of the literature review concerns the social and cultural context within which Indian youth in New Zealand navigate their lives. The second section is a description of the various constructs of stress emphasised in the literature, including psychological and physiological responses to stress. This section also examines acculturation and minority stress, and its impact on youth ethnic identity. The third section emphasises the pivotal role of the social environment in facilitating stress management among youth, exploring and articulating the barriers that often prevent youth from accessing necessary support networks and resources.

In the third chapter, I examine the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of this research. The first section of this chapter outlines the social constructionism theoretical

framework, and intersectionality as the method of analysis. Considering the context of Indian youth in this study, this framework provides a valuable lens through which to discern the influential role of social and cultural factors in shaping their understanding of their lived experiences. The second section of the methodology chapter considers the use of the narrative inquiry methodology in this study. This is substantiated by the argument that the narrative inquiry methodology enables an in-depth investigation of the lived experiences of the participants and how they made sense of those experiences. The third section of this chapter describes the significance of the research methods used in this study, including interviews, focus groups, and mediated dialogue. The remainder of the chapter includes an outline of the ethical considerations, rigour, participant recruitment, and data analysis.

The next three chapters are a thematic representation of the findings that emerged after the analysis of the interview and focus group transcripts. The chapters serve to elucidate the intricate facets of how youth construed and gave meaning to their lived experiences, as well as the insights into the perspectives provided by parents and school-based counsellors. These chapters facilitate a deeper understanding of how social and cultural factors influenced the experiences of the participants. The research findings are divided into three chapters (Chapter 4, Chapter 5, and Chapter 6) and are thematically aligned with the research questions – the constructions of stress, the constructions of strategies for managing stress, and what was made possible through mediated dialogue to support parents and counsellors to engage with youth perspectives.

Finally, Chapter Seven, the discussion and conclusion, is an interpretation of the research findings with a focus on emphasising possibilities for change in order to improve support offered to youth, thereby contributing to the enhancement of youth wellbeing. This chapter further answers the research questions and reflects on the strengths and limitations of this research. It also considers the contribution of this study to the field of stress and its management. It further emphasises the bridging of a substantial gap through mediated dialogue, enhancing the understanding of stress from the perspective of Indian youth. Furthermore, it explores the influence of social and cultural factors on their perceptions of their experiences. The thesis is brought to a close by outlining potential implications and proposing recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, I discuss the relevant literature on the main areas of current research influencing the understanding of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth. I begin the chapter with a brief background on Indian culture, and the social and cultural context for Indian youth in New Zealand. Further, I discuss stresses experienced by young people and the mental health issues among youth worldwide and in the New Zealand context, before focussing on youth from ethnic minorities, particularly Indian youth, and the phenomenon of acculturation, and highlighting important statistics from research. I then discuss the importance and role of social support in helping youth cope with stress. I end the chapter with outlines of and plans for the current study in the context of the reviewed literature.

The Social and Cultural Context for Indian Youth in New Zealand

To understand the experiences of youth of Indian descent in New Zealand, the historical, social, and cultural context of both India and New Zealand must be considered. In this section, I review the migration history of Indians in New Zealand and provide a context for understanding the experiences of Indian youth in New Zealand.

New Zealand has a long history of migration (Bedford et al., 2001). The Indigenous people of New Zealand, the Māori, inhabited the land for several centuries before the arrival of European settlers in the early 18th century. Eventually, this led to the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi) in 1840 between Māori and the British Crown (Bartley, 2010), setting forth the foundation for power sharing between tangata whenua (Māori as the original inhabitants of New Zealand) and tangata Tiriti (all others who subsequently arrived). Te Tiriti upheld the sovereignty of hapū (kin groups) while also giving the right to the British to exercise governance. Its overarching objective was to establish a lasting, mutually beneficial relationship based on trust and good faith between tangata whenua and everyone else. Colonial violence eroded the foundations of Māori society and did not safeguard hapū rights for self-determination. Processes of colonisation and their effects continue to the present day; consequently, a profound imbalance exists within our communities/societies, resulting in disparities in Māori health (Durie, 1997).

The Treaty of Waitangi encompasses four articles, with three of them incorporated into the written version (Barrett & Connolly-Stone, 1998). Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) is presented in two versions: one in te reo Māori and the other in English. In the Māori text, ‘kawanatanga’ (the right of governance), ‘rangatiratanga’ (tribal land ownership and taonga), and ‘oritetanga’ (equality) are mentioned. Due to the absence of direct equivalents of Māori terms in English, transliteration was employed. In the English text, the first article conferred authority upon the British Queen to govern, with an obligation to protect Māori interests. The second article allowed the Māori chiefs to retain complete ownership of their land and their possessions until they wished to sell their property, with the purchaser being appointed by the Queen. The third article granted equal rights to all Indigenous people, including Māori and other New Zealanders. The fourth article pertained to the right of freedom in matters of religion and belief, referred to as wairuatanga.

Simultaneously, the European settlers actively tried to push migration policies favouring migrants primarily from the United Kingdom and Ireland, with an intention of constructing a ‘white’ homogenous colonial society (Bartley, 2010). This ‘white policy’ was practiced until 1945 when labour shortages necessitated the inclusion of Pacific Island migrants. Legislation strictly regulated migration from Asia and imposed poll taxes. Nonetheless, persistent labour shortages compelled the government to introduce a migration law that allowed migrants to be admitted based on their skills. Since the 1980s, New Zealand has witnessed an influx of migrants from the Pacific Islands and Asia, resulting in New Zealand becoming more multicultural and diverse (Cox, 2002).

Subsequently, New Zealand has evolved into an increasingly multicultural society. Statistics New Zealand employs a hierarchical framework to categorise the ethnic diversity of the population in New Zealand. At the broadest level, there are six major ethnic groups, namely New Zealand European, Māori, Pacific, Asian, MELAA (Middle Eastern / Latin American / African) and Others (Statistics New Zealand, 2018a). In this classification, the New Zealand European group constitutes the majority of the population, while the remaining groups are categorised as ethnic minorities due to their relatively smaller demographic numbers (Statistics New Zealand, 2015, 2018a).

Within the Western healthcare system, a focus on individuals, rather than the family/whānau, has given rise to accessibility challenges and poorer outcomes for Māori and other ethnic and cultural groups in New Zealand. This diverges from the support and

interventions that embrace critical cultural concepts such as whānau (family systems) and wairua (spirit) (Graham & Masters-Awatere, 2020). Given the observed inequities among the ethnic groups and the impact of different cultural contexts, exploring an in-depth understanding of the construction of stress and strategies of managing stress from the perspective of Indian youth is significant.

Demographics of Indians in New Zealand

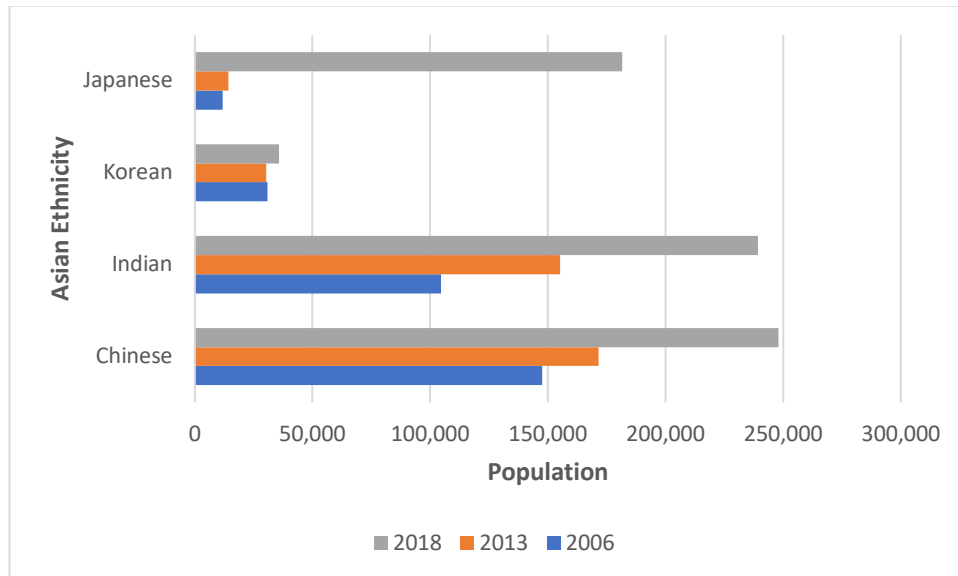
While the broad ethnic categorisations described above have played a central role in shaping research in New Zealand, these overarching categories can obscure significant disparities within ethnic groups (Rasanathan et al., 2004). For example, among the immigrant population in New Zealand, Asians are the second largest group. However, the term “Asian” encompasses a diverse array of ethnicities, including (but not limited to) Chinese, Indians, Koreans and others.

Migration refers to individuals, families, and cohorts moving from one location to another, whether within or outside the country. Studies indicate that Indians arrived in New Zealand around the same period as Europeans and Māori first came into the country. Nachowitz emphasised the significance of recognising the contributions of ethnic minorities in New Zealand’s history to enhance social cohesion (Leckie, 2021; Nachowitz, 2018). The migration of Indians to New Zealand traces its roots back to 1769, when an Indian lascar (seaman) disembarked while working on European ships during a Pacific trading voyage for the French East Indian company. Significant migration waves began in the mid-1880s, primarily from Punjab and Gujarat, through a process known as chain migration (Nachowitz, 2018). The Asian population experienced a slow growth rate until the late 1980s. A significant surge in Indian migration was observed following changes in migration policy in 1987 and 1991 (Bedford et al., 2001). These policy shifts replaced the previous occupational priority list with a points system, considering factors such as employability, age, educational qualifications, and financial resources. Under this new system, applicants meeting a minimum threshold of points gained automatic eligibility for admission. Consequently, the Asian population in New Zealand grew rapidly from 4.8% in 1996 to 9.2% in 2006 (Statistics New Zealand, 2011). Presently, the Asian population is one of the major ethnic groups and the fastest-growing group in New Zealand, constituting 12% of the total population (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). Projections indicate that by 2026, Asian peoples will comprise 16% of New Zealand’s overall population (Statistics New Zealand, 2017).

Within the Asian community, the Indian ethnic group is one of the largest, as shown in Figure 1. These include Indians from (but not limited to) India, South Africa, Fiji, and Malaysia. In 2018, the Indian population constituted approximately 32.3% of the Asian community, comprised of 23.8% born in New Zealand and 76.2% born overseas (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c).

Figure 1

Asian ethnic population in New Zealand



Note. Data from (Statistics New Zealand, 2018b).

In New Zealand, 19.6% of youth are under the age of 15 years and 33% are under the age of 25 years (Statistics New Zealand, 2019). Indian youth in the age range of 15-19 years are comprised of 6.4% male and 6% female among the Indian population in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c). In Auckland in particular, 28.2% of the population comprises people of Asian ethnicity (Statistics New Zealand, 2018b). Even within this group, substantial diversity and heterogeneity are evident.

The Indian community is not homogenous and comprises New Zealand-born Indians and overseas-born Indians. There are several subgroups within the community in New Zealand, predominantly Indian-born Indians, New Zealand-born Indians (often referred as Kiwi Indians), and Fiji-born Indians (Fiji Indians), Anglo Indians (British ancestry) as well as those from South Africa, Malaysia, and other countries (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c). Hence the Indian diaspora has varied geopolitical experiences and economic development, and speaks many different languages.

The present study focuses specifically on youth of Indian descent in the age group of 14-18 years, since it has been reported that half of mental health issues begin by the age of 14 years (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2019) due to heightened emotional and behavioural turmoil that youth experience before transitioning to adulthood (Anniko et al., 2019; Santrock, 2011). The youth participants included in this study were either Indian-born and migrated to New Zealand with their families or are Kiwi Indians (youth born in New Zealand whose parents migrated from India). This study only included individuals originating from India and excludes those of Indian heritage who have migrated from other regions, as the experiences and challenges faced by different groups can significantly differ due to distinct social contexts associated with various countries. Moreover, given the paucity of research pertaining to the Indian population in New Zealand, it is essential to first understand the stressors experienced by one group of Indian heritage before subsequently exploring the distinct sub-groups that exist more broadly within the Indian community. These groups have not been extensively researched in New Zealand, particularly in terms of their experiences involving stress and related issues.

This research aims to shed light on the unique challenges and perspectives of these youth within the broader context of New Zealand's multicultural society. Following the exploration of the social context surrounding the Indian community in New Zealand, it is essential to explore the cultural context that profoundly influences the experiences of Indian youth in this diverse and multicultural setting.

A Brief Background of the Indian Culture

While the simple categorisation of culture has been questioned, some researchers have argued that fundamental disparities in values persist among cultures. Consequently, it becomes imperative to unpack such differences in order to enhance our understanding of diverse ways of knowing, existence, and identity formation. Nevertheless, it is essential to remain cognisant of the inherent limitations associated with cultural categorisation (Hofstede, 2011).

India, as a country, is diverse in language, religion, and ethnicity, with more than 800 languages, five major religions, and approximately 4,600 distinct ethnic groups (Gautam, 2013). Despite the linguistic, religious, and ethnic differences prevalent across India, the cultural significance of family ties remains prominently evident. Indian culture places

value on collectivism, hierarchal structures, and respect for chronological age (Chadda & Deb, 2013).

A prominent facet of Indian culture is its emphasis on the institution of the family. Within the context of collectivist Indian culture, individuals are encouraged to perceive themselves as an integral part of the family unit rather than separate from it. The culture entails an expectation of familial sacrifices from its members, where the needs of the family consistently take precedence over those of the individual. Traditionally, Indian families adopt a patriarchal structure, consisting of grandparents, parents, and children cohabiting as a joint family, and striving for harmonious relations and interdependence. As a general rule, within the family there are defined and fairly rigid roles for each family member.

Young people are often brought up with an understanding that their parents and other adults have accumulated wisdom and experience, and they cannot be questioned. This respect is often conveyed through speaking softly and refraining from challenging the opinions of their elders. The parent–child relationship is a hierarchical relationship in which children are expected to obey without question, excel academically, demonstrate compliance towards their elders, and to value family (Chadda & Deb, 2013). This power dynamic often mean that young people do not express their opinions or desires to avoid confrontation and disobedience.

Gender norms also play a significant role in this power dynamic and can be particularly strong in Indian culture (Ram et al., 2014; Siddiqi, 2021; Sivakumar & Manimekalai, 2021). Indian society has long been characterised by traditional gender norms, which assign specific roles and behaviours to individuals based on their gender (Chadda & Deb, 2013). These norms are rooted in cultural, historical, and religious traditions. For instance, girls, are often expected to be more submissive and reserved in their interactions with adults. Boys, similarly, are expected to not express their vulnerabilities and control their emotional expression, thereby adhering to the traditional masculine norms. Studies have reported that adhering to these traditional gender norms has a significant impact on the mental health of young people, leading to, for example, anxiety and depression (Stavropoulou, 2019, June; Wilkinson et al., 2018), and adherence to the norms also limits their ability to communicate their concerns to their parents and other adults (Freedenthal & Stiffman, 2007; Nagabharana et al., 2021). Therefore, it is imperative to explore how the intersections of gender, migration status, social environment, and the dominant culture

of New Zealand might contribute to the stress experiences of Indian youth in New Zealand.

I now explore the mental health issues especially experienced during the transitional phase of youth.

Youth Mental Health

According to the World Health Organization (2004), “Mental health is defined as a state of wellbeing in which every individual realizes his/her potential, can cope with the normal stressors in life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to his or her community” (p. 12). The prevalence of stress is widespread among youth worldwide (UNICEF, 2019) and increases substantially during youth years. “It is a period of transition between life as a child and life as an adult” (Smith, 2016, p. 1). There are many changes at different levels during this phase of an individual’s life: pubertal changes, redefining social roles, cognitive development and the emergence of sexuality (Eccles et al., 2009). During the transition from childhood to youth, decision-making skills are developed (Halpern-Felsher, 2009). Research has shown that while most mental health problems are not recognised until adulthood, symptoms begin to manifest during youth (Kessler et al., 2007; Merikangas et al., 2009). Additionally, mental health problems that arose during youth can persist and result in significant functional impairment, resulting in long-lasting effects on an individual’s functioning (Schlack et al., 2021).

In addition, skills such as planning and future thinking are strengthened over time (Steinberg, 2007). When an individual enters this stage of development, they face an ‘identity crisis’, as outlined by Erik Erikson’s psychosocial development theory, which posits that youth marks a stage of identity versus role confusion (Erikson, 1993) and establishing connections with people outside the familial context (Drummond, 1991). This is because it is the time when youth struggle to develop a sense of identity and define themselves in relation to the world outside of their families. It also provides individuals with decision-making opportunities to achieve personal goals related to the situation/environment (Nurmi, 2004) that might make them vulnerable to mental health issues (World Health Organization, 2019). For example, self-harm is one of the leading causes of death among young people worldwide (World Health Organization, 2018).

Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing Globally

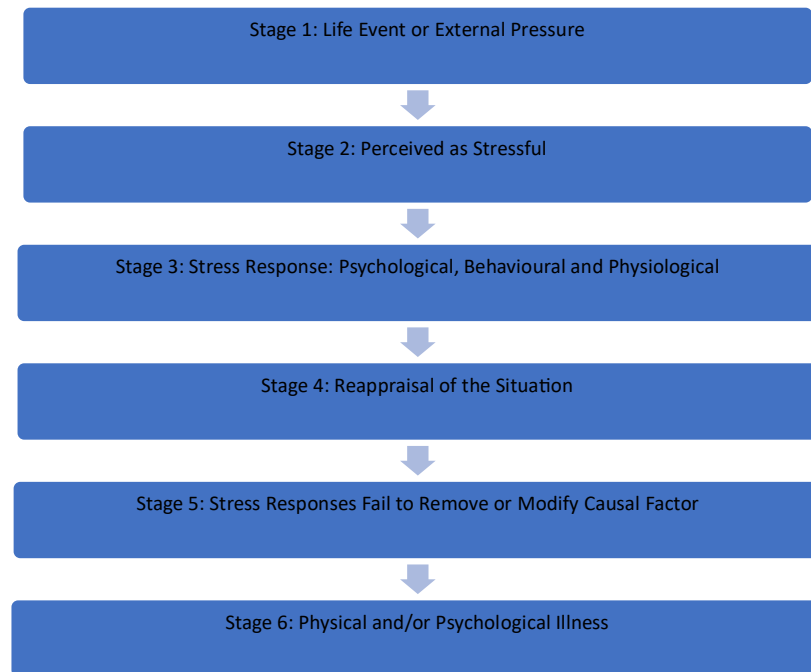
Research has shown that approximately one in four young people have experienced mental health issues in the last year, and around a third during their lifetime (Merikangas et al., 2009). Meta-analysis estimates indicate a global prevalence of 13.7% or 241 million youth with mental disorders, establishing youth mental health as a primary global health concern (Polanczyk et al., 2015). In addition, research has indicated an increase in the numbers of youth between the ages of 15 and 29 who attempt suicide and suffer from anxiety and depression (World Health Organization, 2019). In a young person's life, daily stressors can impair psychological and physiological wellbeing (Yahav & Cohen, 2008), as highlighted by various models of stress (Palmer, 2001). On the other hand, there is a possibility that youth who experience stress can thrive and grow from those experiences by overcoming challenges that could enable them to improve their skills and abilities. Furthermore, growth can occur in a variety of psychological areas, such as: an expanded knowledge base, increased acquisition of coping skills, and a more positive self-concept. Findings from Kim et al. (2012) highlighted that when Korean youth faced discrimination based on cultural and ethnic differences in the United States, it motivated them to improve their English-speaking abilities and further improve their social interaction. These experiences contributed to developing endurance among them. Experiencing stressors can help youth to engage in hobbies, work on personal growth, and eventually become mentally strong.

Palmer and Strickland (1996) as cited in Palmer and Cooper (2007), presented a six-step psychological model of stress. If stress is not recognised by an individual at an earlier stage, it can lead to physical or psychological disorders. Although this model focused specifically on work-related stress, it can be applied to understanding the stress experienced by ethnic minority youth. For instance, the model highlights that workplaces often do not focus on the root cause of the stress, but instead offer stress management workshops to employees. In this sense, they inadvertently overlook the underlying issues and place the onus on employees to manage their stress. Similarly, when considering the experiences of ethnic minority youth, failing to identify and address the fundamental source of stress may result in the psychological model's sixth stage, 'physical and/or psychological illness'. Therefore, by addressing stressors early, it may be possible to mitigate long-term impact of stress through their lifespan. Moreover, this model implies that perceptions of stress are determined by contextual factors (Palmer & Cooper, 2007). These factors may include cultural norms, family dynamics, racism and discrimination,

and the availability of support resources (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Kwan et al., 2018; Peiris-John et al., 2021). The model is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Model of stress developed by Palmer and Strickland in 1996



Note. Model from Palmer (2001).

This model of stress is significant because it represents different situations that an individual goes through when an unpleasant or stressful event occurs. When an individual is under stress, the body may experience changes such as: an increase in heart rate, the release of hormones to ready body organs to act, a decrease in blood clotting time to provide extra energy, an enormous increase in sugar and fat levels, and an increase in blood pressure until the individual is stressed. Once circumstances have relaxed and the individual has dealt with the situation, the body returns to its normal tendency (Palmer & Puri, 2006; Pascoe et al., 2020).

Furthermore, individuals often exhibit changes in behaviour when they experience stress. These changes may manifest as heightened irritability in various situations, withdrawal from activities, aggressive behaviour, feelings of sadness, changes in sleeping patterns, physical symptoms like headaches and stomach aches, eventually contributing to the development of anxiety and depression (Chu et al., 2022, September 12; Schneiderman et al., 2005).

However, it is crucial to recognise that this model primarily focuses on an individual's responses to stress, while literature suggests that stress is socially constructed (Loriol, 2019) and is deeply intertwined with societal and cultural influences (Aldwin, 2004; Birk, 2021). An excessive emphasis on the individual nature of stress tends to overlook the impact of cultural norms, support systems, and social contexts on an individual's stress levels and their ways of managing stress. Moreover, stress is often exacerbated by external factors such as family issues, peer pressure, and socio-cultural influences (Senanayake et al., 2020). Neglecting these external factors restricts the model's applicability and its capacity to provide a holistic understanding of stress. Recognising how societal structures and cultural expectations contribute to stress is essential for addressing its underlying causes and effectively mitigating its impact. Moreover, by recognising these nuances, tailored support and interventions could be provided to address the specific needs of an individual, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of stress management and mental health support efforts (Vostanis et al., 2022).

Health and wellbeing is one of the goals developed by the United Nations as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2016). It aims to ensure healthy living and promote wellbeing in all age groups. It includes mental health as one of the components at increased risk worldwide (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2019). Addressing mental health issues is crucial, as poor mental health impacts health and development during youth and can lead to the use of alcohol, drugs, and risky behaviour (World Health Organization, 2019). This is similarly noticed in the New Zealand context as well, particularly among Asian youth (Peiris-John et al., 2021).

Asian Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing in New Zealand

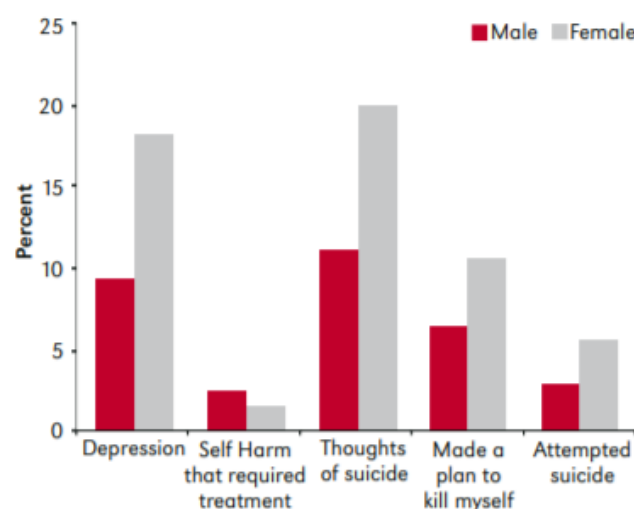
The prevalence of psychological distress (estimated by the experience of symptoms such as anxiety, psychological fatigue, or depression among youth) in New Zealand is higher among youth (15-24 years) than among adults aged 25 and over, as assessed through survey questionnaires (Ministry of Health, 2019b). Suicide rates are also significantly high in New Zealand. A 2016 study found that youth aged 15 to 24 had the highest suicide rate compared to other age groups (Ministry of Health, 2019c). The Youth2000 study series by Crengle et al. (2012) was conducted in New Zealand to examine the health and wellbeing of youth from different ethnic groups. It was a cross-sectional survey, collecting information from school students in New Zealand about their health and wellbeing. The study found a statistically significant difference in the instances of ethnic

discrimination experienced by Asian and European students. Particularly, the regression analysis showed that Asian youth in New Zealand encountered higher prevalence of mental health issues (2.53%) and more instances of ethnic discrimination (20.6%) compared to European students (2.32% and 9.6% respectively). Studies in New Zealand have reported that bullying occurs in schools, in public and at social gatherings (Suicide Mortality Review Committee, 2019). In addition, Asian youth had a higher prevalence of depressive symptoms (13.5%) than European youth (9.3%) (Fortune et al., 2010). However, the data for different Asian ethnic groups were combined, preventing comparison between the various Asian ethnic groups in New Zealand.

The 2007 Youth survey by Parackal et al. (2011) reported that 25% of Asian youth faced poor mental and emotional wellbeing, with a higher prevalence among females (31%) than males (20%). Only 16% of females and 12% of males consulted a healthcare professional. Further, self-harm was reported among the students, as seen in Figure 3 (Parackal et al., 2011), underscoring the high prevalence of depression, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts among females. Conversely, there was a higher percentage of self-harm by males that required treatment, as compared to females, yet no rationale was provided to explain this disparity. Other research has attempted to explore the potential causes of this gender disparity in self-harm and have found a direct association with issues such as conflicts related to gender roles, experiences of violence, and negative interpersonal interactions (Chao et al., 2016).

Figure 3

Asian students, aged 13-17 years: Depression and suicide behaviours in 2007



Note.: Data from Parackal et al. (2011).

Mental health issues have been alarming among Asian youth, especially among females. For Indian students in the Youth 2007 survey by Ameratunga and Horner (2011), depressive symptoms were reported by 18% of females and 7-8% of males. Issues that may impede positive health include language and cultural barriers, support systems, racism, discrimination, bullying, and difficulties in understanding the culture of the country. Although New Zealand's Asian population is rapidly increasing, concerns about mental health issues have not received much attention (Ho et al., 2003). New-Zealand-based initiatives to support young people (Ameratunga & Horner, 2011) with mental health issues include services such as telephone counselling, internet-based chat support, free phone calls or text messages, and websites to help youth identify and understand their stress and anxiety. These services provide interpreters (Mortensen & Lim, 2018). Studies have reported that mental health perceptions and coping mechanisms are influenced by cultural beliefs (Kwan et al., 2018; Tewary, 2005).

The understanding and interpretation of mental health varies from culture to culture. Individual perceptions of mental health explain their help-seeking behaviour or lack thereof. Cultures transmit belief systems that can affect how an individual understands and, consequently, is able to cope with distressing experiences. For example, within the context of Indian culture, individuals often rely on their religious and spiritual beliefs as a means to cope with stress (Avasthi et al., 2013). Additionally, there is a pronounced emphasis on protecting the family's honour and reputation, leading to many people to not express their stress but, rather, independently manage stress (Gilbert et al., 2004). In contrast, Western cultures emphasise open communication regarding feelings and emotions, fostering an environment where individuals are often encouraged to share their stresses and seek support from others (Taylor et al., 2004).

Although the studies discussed above emphasised the significant impact of culture on an individual's perception of stress and coping and their help-seeking behaviour, these studies primarily involved the understanding of adults and not the perspectives of youth. This study aims to amplify the voices of young people and explore their perspectives on how their social and cultural surroundings shape their viewpoints. Moreover, the studies mentioned did not recognise the importance of systemic influences such as cultural norms, economic conditions, school environment, and migration status on young people's lives, particularly within the New Zealand context.

Gender Differences

Gender differences are prevalent in stress and coping during youth. Studies have reported that the prevalence of anxiety and depressive symptoms is high among females (Patton et al., 2012). This may be due to an increase in peer relationships, and higher levels of self-disclosure and seeking of emotional support among females (Maccoby, 1990). Furthermore, a study by Piña-Watson et al. (2015) involving 516 Mexican American youth (14-20 years) in the United States found that gender and family stress significantly predicted poor mental health outcomes, particularly in the context of bicultural stress, which involves navigating conflicting cultural expectations. Moreover, gender and peer stress were identified as key factors contributing to suicidal ideation among female youth. Studies have shown that females rely more on peer support and share personal information, leading to higher levels of stress identification in comparison to males (Rudolph, 2002). It is also reported that the prevalence of stress leading to depression among youth is twice as high in females as in males (Hankin et al., 2007; Nolen-Hoeksema & Girgus, 1994; Wilhsson et al., 2017), also shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Depression in secondary school students

		Significant depressive symptoms	
		%	(95% CI)
Total		22.8	21.4 - 24.1
By gender	Male	16.4	14.9 - 17.9
	Female	29	27.2 - 30.9
By age	≤15	22.5	21.0 - 24.1
	≥16	23	21.3 - 24.8

Note: From Sutcliffe, Ball, Clark, Archer, et al. (2023).

The high prevalence of depression may be due to the development of self-awareness, physical appearance, puberty, or the daily management of various stressful situations, such as societal expectations (Crosnoe & Johnson, 2011; Nolen-Hoeksema & Girgus, 1994; Watode et al., 2015). On the other hand, a study by Thomas and Choi (2006) with second generation Korean and Indian youth in the United States reported that there are no gender differences in the stress experienced by Indian youth.

Stress During Youth

Human beings across all stages of life face a multitude of problems. They experience stressful situations in every phase of life and develop mechanisms to cope with them. Stress has many facets (Gore & Colten, 2017) and varies in context, e.g., with academic performance, future decisions, and relationship problems with friends and family (Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2009). According to the World Health Organization (2023), stress is a “state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. Stress is a natural human response that prompts us to address challenges and threats in our lives” (para. 1). Stress is generally described as events that contribute to increased emotional, behavioural and cognitive difficulties such as peer pressure, parental expectation, and academic pressures (Dutt & Jahan, 2019), including the experiences of mental health issues such as depression or anxiety (or both), and suicidal ideation (United Nations, 2014). However, “there is a great deal of controversy over what the term means” (Martin et al., 2013, p. 682).

The definition of stress is fluid; its meaning changes with context and its interpretation is influenced by the social and cultural factors which impact youth (Aldwin, 2004; Senanayake et al., 2020). Moreover, stress is considered to have negative consequences for mental and physical health (Howland et al., 2017). It is not, as many argue, a well-defined clinical, biological, and psychological condition that affects people in different cultures and in different contexts in the same way. Despite the lack of empirical data supporting the clinical, biological, and psychological causes of stress, most experts define stress as an objective illness that is clearly diagnosable and definable in different social and cultural contexts (Loriol, 2019). Similarly, research has shown that the stress experienced by youth is influenced by many factors in their environment. In this sense, stress processes are diverse and embedded in social contexts (Birk, 2021).

Youth is considered a critical period in which rapid changes occur in all domains of development, i.e., physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional (American Psychological Association, 2002; Crosnoe & Johnson, 2011; Ernst et al., 2006; McCarter, 2013). It is also recognised to be a time of vulnerability when stressful life experiences can have a significant impact on youth wellbeing, mediated by the resources available to them to address the challenges they face. The formative phase of youth presents itself as a phase of heightened stress (Spear, 2000), and an increase in the incidence of mental health problems and of the risk of self-harm, and a reduction in wellbeing (Sham, 2015; World

Health Organization, 2019). Youth also marks the time for developing knowledge and skills, and emotions and capability are learned that are crucial in the developing years (World Health Organization, 2015). Papalia and colleagues note that youth is a “developmental transition that involves physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes. It takes varying forms in different social, cultural and emotional settings” (Papalia et al., 2009, p. 354). It is also a stage in which an individual develops their identity (Ernst et al., 2006; Smith, 2016).

Youth “is a time of increased emotional complexity, and a growing capacity to understand and express a wider range of emotions and to gain insight into one’s own emotions” (McCarter, 2013, p. 445). Furthermore, youth is a stage of rapid change, and factors such as peer pressure, academic opportunities and challenges, and parental expectations can result in the emotional turmoil that can eventually impact youth mental health (Dutt & Jahan, 2019). Compas (1987) conceptualised stress in youth into three categories: first, the nature of life events, which relates to the events occurring and their impact on the psychology of youth; second, acute and chronic stressors, which relate to the life events that occur as a continuous challenge and eventually affect other events as well; and third, everyday situations such as problems with parents and peers that cause stress.

G. Stanley Hall (1904, as cited in American Psychological Association, 2002, p. 3) categorised the phase of youth as a time of “storm and stress” to describe the emotional and behavioural turmoil experienced by youth as they transition to adulthood (Santrock, 2011). This phase is particularly pronounced during middle (14-16 years) to late youth (16-18 years) (Anniko et al., 2019). “Storm and stress” is characterised by parent–youth conflict, mood disturbances, and the adoption of risky behaviour. This phase is considered more challenging than other life phases (Arnett, 1999) as an individual faces identity issues (Levesque, 2018; Smith, 2016) and the social environment heavily influences decision-making during this period (Ciranka & van den Bos, 2019).

Culture and biological changes, such as hormonal changes, also contribute to the “storm and stress” (Arnett, 1999). “Culture is a system of beliefs, values, languages, and behaviours, and human-made aspects of the physical environment, that varies from one group to another” (Chen & Ferruggia, 2002, p. 5). In cultures where skills are transferred at a young age, the concept of storm and stress loses its relevance (Pillai & Singh, 2015). In cultures where families engage in frequent conversations and allow children to work alongside them, the transition may be smoother (Chen & Ferruggia, 2002). Prolonged

stress during this phase can lead to depression (Auerbach, 2015) and potentially even suicide (World Health Organization, 2016). Historically, researchers have sought to gain a better understanding of the youth experience (Rickwood et al., 2005), but more recently the importance of acknowledging the different cultural contexts in which young people live has been recognised (Curtis et al., 2019).

According to the New Zealand Ministry of Health's health survey (2019a) report for 2017/2018, the prevalence of psychological distress, mood and/or anxiety disorders and depression among those over 15 years of age was higher than reports from 2006/2007 to 2017/2018. Psychological distress increased from 6.6% to 8.6%, mood and/or anxiety disorders from 12.7% to 20.9%, and depression from 10.4% to 16.6%. In particular, among Asians, the prevalence of mood or anxiety disorders increased from 4.3% to 5.7%, of anxiety disorder from 1% to 2.9%, and of depression from 3.8% to 4.5% from 2006/2007 to 2017/2018 (Ministry of Health, 2019a). Because of this trend, it is very important to study stress among youth, to reduce mental health risks that may have an impact on their future and create supportive environments for them.

In relation to stress, researchers have remarked that although there may be universal biological changes experienced by all young people, the concept of youth also varies between cultures (Chun et al., 2006). When stress experienced by youth gets coupled with being an ethnic minority, the stress becomes multifaceted. I argue that young people's experience of stress and coping is shaped by social and cultural factors, and there is a need for more research exploring how young people from minority cultures experience and cope with stress.

Concept of Stress in Indian Culture

Researchers have highlighted that the experience and understanding of stress is influenced by one's culture, beliefs and values (Aldwin, 2004). Although there is no word in the Indian texts that corresponds exactly to the term 'stress', its term and meaning is widespread in current times. In ancient times, Indians perceived stress in two main Sanskrit words namely 'klesha' and 'dukha'. Klesha and dukha are the concepts closest to the word stress. Klesha, derived from the root 'khis', refers to an afflicted state, a condition of pain; and dukha means the distressing experiences faced by individuals. This indicates that it was more about the environmental stressors than physiological response. These concepts originated from yoga and Ayurveda (Ramchandra, 1983).

Samakhya-yoga explains that the dukhs (stress) people experience is due to their interactions with the world around them. Furthermore, *Samakhya-yoga* emphasises three types of stress: personal (adhyatmik), situational (adhibhotik), and environmental (adhidevik). The personal stresses, in turn, can be of two kinds, namely, physiological and psychological. The physiological stresses arise from imbalances between the three basic physiologic components, namely, 'vata', 'pitta', and 'kaph'. The psychological stresses are caused by emotional states of lust, hate, greed, fear, jealousy, and depression. The situational stresses are usually caused by unhealthy interpersonal transactions that can include conflict, competitiveness, and aggression. The third type of stress, namely environmental stress, is caused by natural calamities, extreme temperatures, and storms.

The concept of stress in the Indian context is influenced by ancient texts such as the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Yoga*. According to traditional Indian texts, stress is caused by mind-body interactions (Telles et al., 2014). Furthermore, stress has been associated with attachment, which was the result of repeated reflection on one's circumstances, and the way to coping with stress was found in meditation (Rajesh et al., 2014). However, contemporary Indian studies of stress experienced by people are heavily influenced by Western concepts and theories (Laungani, 1996). Palsane and Lam (1996) asserted that, unlike Western psychology, which posits that stress primarily arises from environmental factors like socio-economic conditions and peer relationships, Indian psychology emphasises that stress potentially stems from individuals' goals and expectations that diverge from societal norms and expectations.

This study examines how young people understand an event to be stressful and the strategies they adopt to cope with the event. The stress constructs are influenced by culture (Aldwin, 2004). However, there are various models of stress applied to young people (Moos & Swindle, 1990), but these are influenced exclusively by Western culture (Lazarus, 1999). Therefore, it is imperative to consider the cultural context when studying stress.

Contemporary stress and coping literature increasingly recognises the centrality of culture; however, there are still limited systemic theoretical conceptualisations on cultural pathways of stress and coping (Kuo, 2011). One of the models postulated by Aldwin (2004) advocates a socio-cultural conceptualisation of stress and coping, recognising the social context of the stress and coping process as deeply embedded in one's cultural

context (Kuo, 2011, 2014). Depending on the social and cultural context, youth construct stress in different ways.

Constructions of Stress

While various studies have examined both the causes and consequences of stress on youth (Furman et al., 2018; Moodie et al., 2019), this study specifically focused on the causes, emphasising that understanding these causes is key to addressing stress and providing appropriate support to improve youth's wellbeing. By identifying and addressing the underlying factors contributing to stress, interventions can be more effective in managing stress among youth.

Researchers have argued that Indian youth living in a Western country may experience additional and unique challenges compared to young people of Western background, as youth is embedded in the context of migration, in negotiating diverse cultural worlds, and is part of an ethnic minority group navigating interactions with the dominant group (Areepattamannil et al., 2018; Dey & Sitharthan, 2017). This cultural duality creates internal conflicts and identity challenges, adding an additional layer of complexity to the youth experience of stress.

The concept of stress takes on multiple forms, and its interpretation is heavily shaped by the social and cultural surroundings of an individual (Areepattamannil et al., 2018; Senanayake et al., 2020). Stress is conceived and defined in several ways, such as being viewed, firstly, through a medical lens (physical illness), including headaches, sleep disturbances, or stomach issues (Chu et al., 2022, September 12); secondly, through a psychological perspective (mental health), including anxiety, depression, impacting the overall wellbeing of youth (Schneiderman et al., 2005); and, thirdly, from a social and cultural standpoint, where it is intertwined with family dynamics, societal expectations, and cultural norms (Renzaho et al., 2017; Stuart et al., 2009).

Stress as a Psychological Response

Stress, in the context of psychology, refers to the psychological and emotional responses an individual experiences when they perceive that the situational demands exceed their ability to adapt. This feeling of stress can manifest in various ways, including feelings of being overwhelmed, helpless or hopeless, a sense of isolation, and loneliness. Moreover, individuals feel misunderstood or unappreciated, leading to irritability, anger, and restlessness (Dobson, 1982; Schneiderman et al., 2005).

A prolonged stress-induced psychological response is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes mellitus, and other diseases (Franklin et al., 2021). Psychological stress can also precipitate adverse mental health outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideations (Schneiderman et al., 2005). Youth is a time of heightened stress perception and responsiveness (Bhargava & Trivedi, 2018). Various studies suggest there is an increasing prevalence of stress among youth and that its impact on youth health is increasing accordingly (Arora & Khoo, 2020; Fortune et al., 2010). Rapid change in various aspects of the youth phase, including its physical, psychological, physiological and social aspects, may increase the reactivity to stress (Spear, 2000).

Stress as a Physiological Response

Stress, as a physiological response, represents the body's natural alert system that is activated in response to the stressful situations. The physical symptoms are apparent in respiration, heart rate, blood pressure, overall oxygen consumption, and the release of stress hormones (Schneider et al., 2021). Stress can also lead to stomach or digestive problems such as diarrhea or constipation, and cause nausea, dizziness or tremors, leading to a weakened immune system, and contributing to diseases such as obesity and heart disease (Chu et al., 2022, September 12). In response to the stressors, catecholamines are released, which have been associated with hyperlipidaemia, hypertension, and myocardial infarction (Sharma, 2018).

Stress can heighten sensitivity to pain, and cause bloating, nausea, and various forms of stomach discomfort, potentially leading to vomiting in severe cases (Megha et al., 2023). Additionally, stress can disrupt normal appetite patterns, either causing an excessive increase or decrease in food intake (Yau & Potenza, 2013). This, in turn, can negatively impact an individual's mood when combined with an unhealthy diet.

Minority Stress

The understanding among youth of the experiences of ethnic minorities are driven by minority frameworks and, because these frameworks are mainstream/dominant among the ethnic minorities, they may be readily available for young people to construct their experiences of stress. A minority is defined by UNHCR (2011) as "ethnic, religious and linguistic group, fewer in number than the rest of the population, whose members share a common identity" (p. 3). Meyer (2003) defined minority stress as "the excess stress to which individuals from stigmatized social categories are exposed, often as a result of their

social, often a minority, position” (p. 675). The minority stress theory (Meyer, 2003) first highlighted the prejudices faced by the lesbian, gay or bisexual population. However, this theory has been further incorporated into the study of women, migrants, and minority ethnic groups (Missinne & Bracke, 2012). The stresses experienced by minority young people are influenced by cultural and ethnic background (Rogers-Sirin et al., 2014). Previous studies on minority stress have highlighted the discrimination faced by Indians in particular, such as bullying, verbal harassment and not being welcomed in a social gathering/event (Samuel, 2009; Suicide Mortality Review Committee, 2019; Tummala-Narra et al., 2011). Ethnic minority youth are highly vulnerable to mental health issues and increased experiences of stress due to greater exposure to discrimination, bullying and isolation, leading to emotional turmoil and further stress (Crengle et al., 2012).

In addition, ethnic minority youth often face stress related to the intersection of their ethnic and racial identity with other factors such as socio-economic status, gender, and migration status (Cheon et al., 2020). Researchers have argued that individuals occupy multiple social positions that interact to shape their experiences and identities (DiAngelo, 2012). Understanding intersectionality is critical when examining the stress experienced by ethnic minority youth because it helps us to recognise that their experiences are not solely determined by their ethnicity but are influenced by a complex interplay of factors. For instance, ethnic minority youth face stressors related to their ethnic identity, including discrimination, stereotypes, and cultural conflicts (Douglass et al., 2016). These can have profound effects on youth wellbeing, such as feelings of isolation, exclusion, low self-confidence, and increased stress levels (Thomas & Choi, 2006; Tummala-Narra et al., 2011). The increase in stressors can have a significant impact on youth physical and mental health, including anxiety, depression, and cardiovascular problems (Schneiderman et al., 2005).

In New Zealand, there is a high prevalence of racial and/or ethnic discrimination among Asians, which has a significant impact on their mental health and wellbeing (Harris et al., 2018). It is reported that most youth who migrate experience discrimination in their first year of living in New Zealand (O'Connor, 2014). They are bullied because of their ethnicity, religion and/or because of their migrant status (Suicide Mortality Review Committee, 2019). Bullying related to ethnicity was more prevalent among Asian youth than other ethnic groups in New Zealand (Crengle et al., 2012). In addition, another study conducted by Fleming et al. (2007) with youth (13-17 years) of various ethnicities

reported that the prevalence of Asian youth feeling unsafe in schools is high as compared to their European counterparts. Furthermore, the majority of Asian youth did not share their encounters with bullying with their parents and/or family (Fleming et al., 2007). However, these studies have been quantitative in nature and require an in-depth exploration of an individual's experiences.

The minority stress framework is important because it engages with minority views of various stressors, the coping strategies employed and their impact on health (Pittman et al., 2017), and can lead to the development of interventions to support youth by addressing cultural factors and taking into account specific needs. Previous studies of ethnic identity development have emphasised a constructive approach to understanding how different factors such as family, friends and culture affect an individual's identity in a minority group (Cheon et al., 2020; Hughes et al., 2016; Yi & Shorter-Gooden, 1999). Studies among Asian ethnic groups in New Zealand have shown that factors related to psychological distress such as increased depression and alcohol addiction are more prevalent among Asians in comparison to New Zealand Europeans (Ho et al., 2003; Rasanathan et al., 2006; Te Pou, 2010). In New Zealand, there is insufficient knowledge about the impact of socio-cultural factors on mental health issues among Asian ethnic groups (Ho et al., 2003; Wong et al., 2015). Researchers have argued that there are differences in the levels of stress experienced between and within ethnic groups, including recent migrants, and established communities, and therefore particular groups need to be studied in isolation (Rasanathan et al., 2004). For instance, the Youth2019 survey conducted by Peiris-John et al. (2021) with youth in New Zealand (12-19 years old) reported that South Asian youth, from India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, experience higher rates of poverty, with 15% having parents who always worried about money for food. However, youth from East Asian countries, from China and Japan, were less likely to report concerns about poverty.

Academic Stress

Academic stress is a major concern among youth worldwide, particularly among Asians (Areepattamannil et al., 2018; Costigan et al., 2010). Asian parents tend to have high academic expectations of their children, perhaps borne at least partly out of intense competition for places at university and, subsequently, for well-paying jobs (Pong et al., 2010; Sakamoto & Wang, 2021). This often-relentless pressure is thought to be a major source of stress among Asian youth. Studies have shown that Asians place immense

emphasis on education, hard work and a sense of accomplishment compared to their Western counterparts (Archer & Francis, 2006). A study by Wong et al. (2005) with Chinese youth from Hong Kong found that academic performance was a major source of stress for them. These youth wanted to excel to make their parents proud, as it would be a source of gratification for the family. The study also found that young people who fail to excel in academic pursuits felt a sense of shame and failure, and that this eventually had a negative impact on their self-esteem and confidence. The pressure to succeed emanates from both personal and familial sources. Parents and/or family members exert significant pressure on youth to be successful and influence their career aspirations (Tummala-Narra et al., 2016).

Career-related pressures from family members can make youth feel that they are restricted from pursuing careers in areas in which they have skills or interests. In Indian culture, it is often perceived that it is important for youth to pursue a lucrative career path. As a result, parents tend to put pressure on youth to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) or the healthcare professions. This pressure stems from the belief that these careers lead to high pay and hence financial security for themselves and their families (Pong et al., 2010).

These academic expectations are transmitted through generations (Farver et al., 2002), leading the young person to compare themselves to the academic performance of other students, which eventually becomes a source of stress (Arora & Khoo, 2020). It is assumed that Asian children are high achievers and excel in academics (Chandrashekara et al., 2007), a social construction of Asian young people that is prevalent in both Asian and Western cultures.

Academic stress can have a negative impact on an individual's health. A study conducted by Chung and Cheung (2008) reported that academic stress is a major source of disturbance in sleep among 12-19 year old Hong Kong youth. Similarly, studies in the Indian context have reported that academic pressure leads to high anxiety and low coping skills, eventually leading to severe damage to the immune system (Chandrashekara et al., 2007). Furthermore, there is a positive correlation between academic stress and mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, behavioural problems and suicidal ideation (LaRue & Herrman, 2008; Schraml et al., 2011). It has been found that females are more vulnerable than males to mental health problems related to academic pressure (LaRue & Herrman, 2008).

Indian parents often emphasise the importance of success to their children, both vocationally and financially (Kapadia, 2008). This can be attributed to parents viewing their children's education as a reflection of themselves. As a result, parents expect their children to perform well academically in order to be able to attend a respected higher education institution (Inman et al., 2007; Warikoo et al., 2020).

Youth–Parent Conflict

When a family migrates from one cultural context to another, even if it is within South Asia, youth may encounter conflicting cultural values and systems instilled by their family which, in contrast to the Western culture, creates an acculturation gap between parents and youth (Farver et al., 2002). Similarly, it becomes difficult to find a balance between cultural tradition and what youth experience in the present scenario. When young people compare their parents to the parents of their peers, it becomes even more challenging as they begin to question their parents being strict and traditional, as opposed to other parents. This may result in conflicts within the family, the decline in their academic excellence and, further, may lead to mental health issues (Tummala-Narra et al., 2016). Youth seek autonomy from their parents when they are in their teen years and question their parents' decisions (Pillai & Singh, 2015), which also creates conflict between them.

A study by Tummala-Narra et al. (2016) with South Asian youth aged 14-18 years in the United States reported that these youth felt a sense of disconnection from their parents. The disconnection arose because both parents were working outside the home to support the family's financial needs, resulting in less quality time spent with their children and thus widening the communication gap between them. Studies have reported that parent–child conflict may be related to a decline in academic performance, behavioural problems, being antisocial, and increased drug and alcohol use (Hartas, 2019; Sahithya et al., 2019).

Language Barriers

The native language of Indians is not English; therefore, when Indians move to a new culture where English is the dominant language, it creates communication difficulties. Since some parents also do not speak English fluently, their children have to translate everything for them, causing stress among them as well as communication gaps between them (Tummala-Narra et al., 2016). The language barrier limits social interaction with other people of various ethnic backgrounds (Kim et al., 2012).

Similarly, a study by Arora and Khoo (2020) with Asian youth (14-20 years) reported that a lack of fluency in English was a major source of stress, leading to feelings of non-belonging, anxiety and isolation. They also reported that due to language barriers, they had difficulty in communicating with their teachers in school. Furthermore, some participants said that they were being teased in school for not speaking the language properly, and the stress of learning a new language added a lot of pressure for them. Language is one of the prime factors that create stress. This is because if an individual is unable to express themselves, they will not be able to convey their feelings and needs.

Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity is a multifaceted construct gauging the extent to which individuals conceive themselves as belonging to or identifying with a particular ethnic group (Balidemaj & Small, 2019). It refers to the sense of self and one's understanding of and positioning within their social group. The development of this identity is dynamic, influenced by different sociocultural contexts and internal and interpersonal experiences within these settings (Branje et al., 2021). Additionally, identity reflects fluid and evolving experiences of social locations shaped by power dynamics (Cho et al., 2013). In case of immigration, "individuals face both challenges and opportunities in developing and making visible a sense that reflects their authentic experiences of pre- and post-migration contexts" (Tummala-Narra, 2020, p. 119). The process of acculturation and the immigration journey are deeply intertwined with the intersections of multiple social locations and identities, as well as the experiences of marginalisation and privilege in both pre- and post-migration contexts (Tummala-Narra, 2020). The implantation of the self in society is a psychological process that occurs over time and across environments (Rogers et al., 2020). Ethnic identity among youth is positively linked with one's self-esteem (Farver et al., 2002). Researchers have proposed that young people may also experience increasing stress in relation to constructing their identities (Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2009).

Young people face increased complexities in both social and cultural contexts. They are expected to respect their inherent culture as well as integrate with the new culture. In these circumstances, young people often deal with conflicting identities and the notion of not belonging to a particular culture. This ongoing effort to strike a balance between cultures has a significant impact on youth mental health and wellbeing (Suicide Mortality Review Committee, 2019). Similarly, a study done with Indian youth in Australia found

that a major problem faced by youth of Indian descent while acculturating was conflicting cultures and values (Dey & Sitharthan, 2017).

Growing up in a dominant culture, i.e., the host culture, and simultaneously belonging to an ethnic group, results in complicating the process of forming one's identity (Balidemaj & Small, 2019). If a young person experiences conflict regarding their identity, it may result in negative outcomes concerning their mental health (Bove & Gokmen, 2017). On the other hand, studies have highlighted that if an individual has developed a strong ethnic identity, this can result in increased self-esteem which, in turn, contributes to positive mental health and wellbeing (Balidemaj & Small, 2019; Espinosa et al., 2018). Furthermore, a positive link is observed between higher levels of ethnic identity and quality of life, and as a result better adjustment into the new culture (Espinosa et al., 2018).

Ethnic minoritised youth can positively experience identity development through cultural socialisation, involving interactions with or establishing connections within members of their ethnic community. Some minoritised youth may initiate this process in response to negative experiences involving prejudice and/or discrimination (Hughes et al., 2016). However, a study involving Asian youth (13-17 years) in New Zealand examined the intersections of identity, power dynamics, and language, revealing that these youths often avoided being seen with members of their ethnic community or speaking their native language to prevent negative reactions from others (Sobrun-Maharaja, 2002; Wong et al., 2015). This avoidance was partly due to their feelings of inadequacy, perceiving themselves as inferior to European/Pākehā locals. Several studies have demonstrated a correlation between racism and the mental wellbeing of ethnic youth, noting that experiences of racism often lead to feelings of shame and inferiority, resulting in significant distress and adversely affecting self-esteem and confidence (Kim, 2007; Sobrun-Maharaja, 2002). Racism also affected their sense of belonging and acceptance, posing a considerable barrier to their integration into wider New Zealand society.

Racism

Racism and racial discrimination are major causes and factors of global health inequalities (Stanley et al., 2019). Young people are especially sensitive to the negative effects of racism. Racism is an organised system of oppression that divides and ranks social groups into 'races' and devalues, disempowers, and unfairly distributes authority and resources to those deemed inferior (Williams et al., 2019). Throughout history, race is a social

construct used persistently in classifying social class (Machery & Faucher, 2005). Racism is typically manifested by individuals and institutions as prejudice and stereotypes, as well as discrimination against racialised and minority groups. Racism persists in societal structures, organisations, and policies, even when blatant racial prejudice may not exist among people (Braveman et al., 2022). Prejudice on a systemic and structural level is so ingrained that it is considered as essentially independent of discrimination on an individual level. A dominant white racial frame – that is, a dominating framing of society that maintains white privilege and supremacy – is a fundamental component of systemic racism. Individuals, for example, may not publicly accept unfavourable racial attitudes and views, but they also may not perceive the need for change in current systems and structures that continue to benefit whites. Racism and power cannot be understood apart from one another, even while individual racial sentiments are critical in shaping a racialised social order and racial inequality. Racial discrimination is the behavioural manifestation of racism revealed via behaviours at the individual or institutional levels (Hope et al., 2015).

Racial discrimination is a significant source of stress in the lives of many young people, and there is growing scientific evidence of a link between racial discrimination and a variety of youth health outcomes. Numerous studies have found that experiences of racism have a negative impact on the mental health of ethnic minority groups and are linked to engagement in risky behaviours as a strategy for dealing with such encounters (Braveman et al., 2022; Mourad, 2022; Stanley et al., 2019; Trent et al., 2019). In New Zealand, several studies have shown that mental health issues due to racism manifest in various forms and across different institutional and educational contexts, including both interpersonal and institutional racism (Chiang et al., 2017; Kim, 2007; Simon-Kumar et al., 2022; Wong et al., 2015). Racial discrimination and biases often result in the differential treatment of ethnic youth, leading to feelings of stress, sadness, and isolation (Wong et al., 2015).

Racism arises from the adherence to the established norm of ‘whiteness’, a concept that has evolved and diversified across several different interdisciplinary definitions over time. Whiteness, according to Helms (2017), is “the overt and subconscious socialisation processes and practises, power structures, laws, advantages, and life experiences that favour the white racial group over all others” (p. 718). The prevalence of whiteness gives rise to manifestation of white privileges. As defined by McIntosh (1988), white privilege

is an “invisible package of unearned assets that I can depend on cashing in every day but about which I was ‘meant’ to stay unaware” (p. 1). McIntosh argued that the invisibility of white privilege allows those possessing it to establish their way of life as the societal norm and a benchmark against which others are compared. Many researchers agree that the concept of ‘whiteness’ is a social construct (Guess, 2006; Shaffer, 2016). Moreover, racism significantly impacts identity formation among ethnic minority youth, such as normalising/accepting the preconceived stereotypes about their own ethnic group and/or experiencing discriminatory behaviour, leading to the acceptance of negative beliefs about themselves and their community, ultimately resulting in negative self-esteem. Moreover, experiencing discrimination creates a conflict between how ethnic minority youth see themselves and how they are perceived by society. This struggle can cause confusion and distress as they navigate their dual identities—balancing their cultural heritage with the pressures to conform to the dominant culture.

Adding to the complexity of racism and prejudices experienced by ethnic minority individuals, researchers have emphasised the concept of ‘respectability politics’. According to Dazey (2021), “respectability politics sheds light upon overlapping power relations, both between dominant society (outward-facing perspective) and within marginalised groups (inward-facing perspective)” (p. 581). The concept of respectability politics has also been researched with various groups, including African Americans (Smith, 2014) and queer/rainbow communities (Nakhid, Tuwe, et al., 2022). In order to protect themselves from encountering racism and discrimination perpetrated by the dominant group, individuals belonging to marginalised groups often conform to the prevailing societal norms. This deliberate conformity aims to seek social acceptance, thereby mitigating the risk of being perceived as different (Dazey, 2021). Navigating multiple identities such as being Indian, New Zealander, gender, with the added layers of racism and discrimination contribute to a complex and multifaceted understanding of one’s social reality. The experiences of youth navigating multiple identities are shaped by how these identities intersect and interact.

Experiences of racial discrimination and unequal treatment have been regarded as part of everyday life for ethnic minority youth, particularly at school, where youth spend a significant amount of time. As a result, prejudice may contribute to negative developmental consequences for youth, such as low social competence and self-confidence. Similarly, researchers have argued that the impact of racism on individuals

within minority groups is not uniform but varies according to their access to resources such as social status, networks, and relationships (Trent et al., 2019; Williams, 2018).

Acculturation

In 1954, the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) in America defined acculturation as

cultural change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems. Its dynamics can be seen as a selective adaptation of value systems, the processes of integration and differentiation, the generation of developmental sequences, and the operation of role determinants and personality factors. (as cited in Trimble, 2003, p. 6)

Ethnic minorities adapt to the culture of their host country through the process of acculturation. Indians, for instance, have encountered the challenge of balancing or integrating their ethnic culture (Indian culture) with the host culture, as described in studies undertaken in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom (Areepattamannil et al., 2018; Farver et al., 2002; Samuel, 2009).

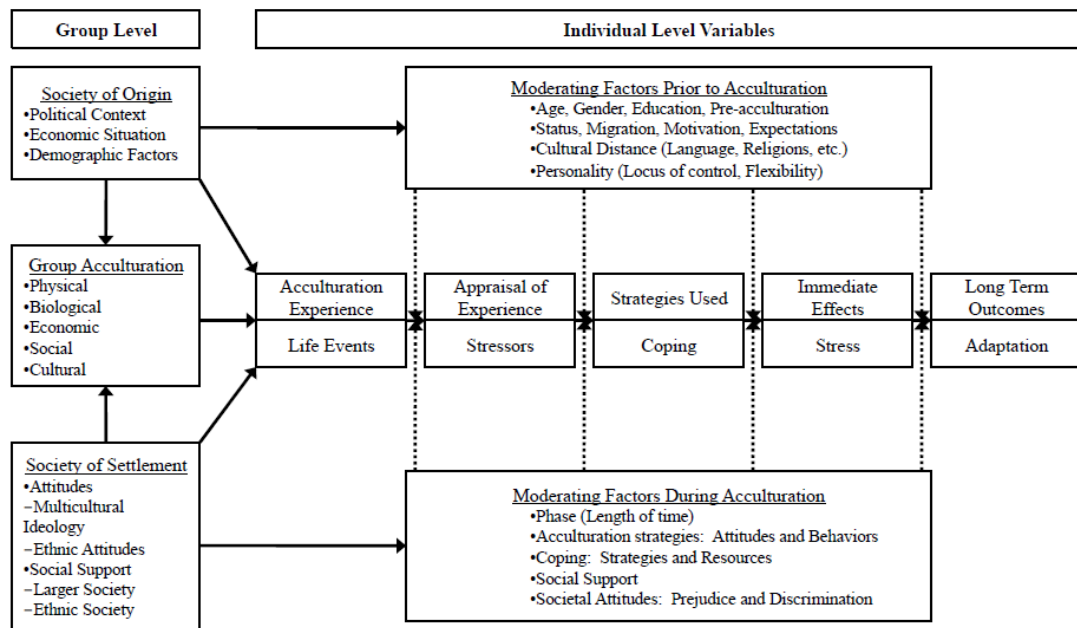
Wei et al. (2007) defined acculturative stress as “a stress reaction in response to life events that are rooted in the experiences of acculturation, the psychological difficulties in adapting to a new culture, or psychological stressors resulting from unfamiliarity with new customs and social norms” (p. 386). It has been found that migration, acculturation, and tension between the old and new cultures have a significant impact on the stress experienced by young people from ethnic minorities (Kuo, 2014).

Models of Acculturation

There have been various models of acculturation. Berry’s model illustrates the changes that occur at both individual and group level, and explains the process in multiple levels (see Figure 4, below). The acculturation model presented by Berry (1997) highlighted a strong sense of ethnic identity and cultural factors that influence strategies for acculturation. He developed a framework guided by cultural as well as individual factors.

Figure 4

Acculturative research framework



Note. From Berry (1997).

The framework highlights various factors that affect the process of acculturation and the level of acculturative stress experienced by individuals. Berry (2006) believed that using his acculturative framework would allow “comparisons between individuals and their groups, and between non-dominant peoples and the larger society” (p. 706).

Further to his framework, Berry’s (2006) acculturative stress model views the process of acculturation from the viewpoint of both the dominant cultural group and the minority immigrant group, and explains the four strategies in detail, i.e., integration (accepts and retains both host and home culture), marginalisation (rejects both host and home culture), separation (rejects host culture and retains the home culture), and assimilation (accepts the host culture and rejects the home culture). Acculturation is often a complex process (Farver et al., 2002). Individuals can acquire hybridity/biculturality by adhering to some features of their ethnic culture while selectively incorporating aspects of the host culture of the larger majority into their identity. Berry’s theory explains the complexities of the acculturation process as well as the differences and behaviours, experiences, and attitudes of migrants based on a variety of factors such as modes of acculturation, demographics, social characteristics, and the influence of these factors on acculturative stress.

A study conducted by Farver et al. (2002) explored the acculturative styles used by Indian adolescents in America. The findings indicated a predominance of the integrated style,

followed by assimilation, separation, and marginalisation styles. The prevalence of the integration style was higher in males. Among females, the marginalisation style was more prevalent. The study also highlighted that the styles of acculturation were influenced by the socio-demographics of the participants. Another study was conducted in Australia by Dey and Sitharthan (2017) with adolescents from the Indian subcontinent and explored the acculturative strategies used by them. The study found that integration was largely preferred and marginalisation the least favoured strategy. There was also a correlation between ethnic identity, acculturation strategy and psychological wellbeing.

During the process of acculturation and adapting to new systems, individuals may go through psychological changes. They can be identified as changes in their behaviour such as dressing and eating that might create problems in their everyday lives and eventually lead to acculturative stress, manifested as anxiety and depression (Berry, 2003). These aspects of acculturative stress impact the health and wellbeing of the individual. If the individual adapting to the new situation is successful, they develop self-confidence, positive sense of self and will continue to engage in social interactions. On the other hand, if they become unsuccessful in adapting to the situation, they may experience low self-esteem, low confidence, and unfriendly community relationships (Berry, 2017).

Further to Berry's acculturative model, various other frameworks have been introduced. Arends-Tóth and van de Vijver (2006) model of acculturation emphasises the importance of targeting a particular life domain, which will help in understanding the appropriate acculturation strategies that apply to the individual in different situations. Schwartz et al. (2010) argued that acculturation is a multidimensional process and should be studied in various domains, such as practices, identity, and values, among the host and the home cultures. They argued for an emphasis on how each domain varies with time with individual beings. Also, the process of acculturation occurs with people and groups from different cultures and social structure. Bornstein (2017) highlighted the importance of considering various aspects, including the condition of settling, individual characteristics, time spent in the host country, social support, and the level of adaptability. This was suggested to explain the challenges and the adjustment experienced by an immigrant child. However, all the models and frameworks have roots in Berry's acculturative model (Juang & Syed, 2019), and help to study acculturation among youth in a diversified manner. The various models presented contribute to the development and integration of acculturation frameworks, enhancing a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the

acculturation process. For instance, the model proposed by Arends-Tóth and van de Vijver (2006) acknowledges the intricacies of acculturation and its contextual dependence, while Schwartz et al. (2010) model recognises the variability of acculturation across different domains and over time. Bornstein's (2017) model extends this understanding by considering individuals from diverse backgrounds. As a result, these different models indicate the multifaceted nature of acculturation and the diversity of factors that influence this process, thereby fostering a more comprehensive understanding of this concept.

Critique of Berry's Acculturation Model

Berry's (2003) acculturation model has created a substantial body of research that provides us with understandings of migration and acculturation concerns. However, experts have been increasingly critical of the acculturation concept for a variety of reasons. First, the acculturation model's assumptions regarding culture have been called into question. The body of common values, attitudes, beliefs, habits, and activities of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group has historically been characterised as culture. Most studies have employed the concept of cultural differences to explain observed variations between persons from different societies. Traditionally, these cultural distinctions have been conceptualised as a dichotomy. The acculturation model, in particular, relies on the distinction between Western/individualistic and non-Western/collectivistic cultures to describe this dichotomy (Triandis, 1989). Following this dichotomy, Western/individualistic cultures, such as in North America and Western Europe, value personal goals, assertiveness and achievement; in contrast, non-Western/collectivistic cultures, such as in Asian, Latin American, and African cultures, value an interdependent societal structure in which individuals subordinate their personal goals to their affiliation(s) and align their behaviour with the fulfilment of obligations to the group(s) (Chun et al., 2006; Oyserman et al., 2002). However, researchers have expressed concern that such a dichotomy oversimplifies complex cultural systems (Oyserman et al., 2002). There is significant variation within cultures and significant variances across them.

Second, Berry's model has been questioned around the validity of one of the acculturation categories, i.e., marginalisation, as researchers have argued against the idea of developing identity without accepting or retaining a culture (Rudmin, 2003). It is difficult to envision people drawing on neither the host nor the home culture for their cultural reference. Also, studies have argued for having various subcategories rather than just four categories

(Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008). In response, Berry (2009) highlighted that in situations where conflicts exist between groups and where cultures are not compatible, separation and marginalisation are common strategies used. Also, he re-emphasised that the four strategies were considered after analysing two issues, i.e., attitude towards own group and other groups. Variations in these strategies are dependent on variations in one's own experience and demographics (Berry et al., 2006).

Third, another critique of the acculturation model suggests that the model puts its emphasis on the psychological changes that occur in an individual; however, the societal factors are not given importance. This model has not been able to explain the impact of social and environmental factors on the way individuals adapt in a new culture (Berry, 1997; Hernandez, 2009). Studies have reported that an important aspect of an individual's acculturation is the attitude of the host culture, i.e., if they are welcoming, individuals acculturate in a positive manner (Hernandez, 2009).

Fourth, academics have argued that perceiving cultures as unchanging and objective entities neglects the ongoing social processes of hybridisation. Hybridisation refers to the processes by which established cultural practices intermingle and evolve alongside other cultural practises, resulting in new, hybrid cultural practices (Hermans & Kempen, 1998). The negotiation and fusion of existing cultural practices in the formation of cultural identities result in self-transformation, leading to the inhabitation of a 'third space' or 'in-between space', where cultural boundaries converge and blur, and the self encompasses partial, multiple, or hybrid identities (Smith, 2008). Researchers have suggested that the extent of social interconnectedness between cultures correlates with the prevalence of hybridisation (Smith, 2008).

Despite the growing significance of hybridisation, some academics have contended that attempts by psychology experts to comprehend this process among migrants have reverted to conventional methodologies grounded in cultural dichotomies (Bhatia & Ram, 2009). For example, while the acculturation model aims to capture instances where individuals embrace both cultures, it simplifies the intricate process of cultural negotiations into a linear association between attitudes, acculturative strategies, and psychological wellbeing. Researchers have asserted that migrants' experiences are more complex than a linear progression (Smith, 2008). It is suggested that most migrants actively engage with multiple cultural domains in a fluid and dynamic manner,

perpetually negotiating past and present, home and host country, and self and other (Bhatia & Ram, 2009).

Moreover, within the New Zealand context, only a few studies have explored the experiences of school-age youth of Asian ethnicity (Bartley, 2010; Lei, 2016), highlighting their formation of hybrid identities in order to assimilate themselves into their social environment. However, there is still a gap in the understanding of the experiences of Indian youth in New Zealand. Therefore, more research in this specific context is required to gain a more comprehensive insight into the intricate nature of hybrid identities within Indian youth in New Zealand.

Acculturative Stress

Acculturation is construed as a very stressful process (Gassman-Pines & Skinner, 2018). Acculturative stress is defined as a reaction to the life events that are based on the experience of acculturation (Berry, 2006). Acculturative stress can be illustrated by Berry's acculturation framework (Figure 4). The level of acculturation stress is impacted by cultural as well as psychological variables (Berry, 1997). The stress is experienced due to demands from both the groups, i.e., interactions with home and host cultures. Berry (2006) explained acculturative stress as two categories: eustress (positive) and distress (negative). Acculturative stress is positive when it gives new opportunities for people to explore, and negative when it includes discrimination, bullying and so on. Young people are highly impacted while trying to adjust to a new culture, language, values and unfamiliarity (d'Abreu et al., 2019). Acculturative stress may influence their sense of belongingness and identity in a new culture (Tummala-Narra et al., 2016). Furthermore, since their identity is developing, it becomes difficult for young people to cope with all the changes in their environment (d'Abreu et al., 2019).

Studies have indicated that the youth phase is a particularly stressful period during the process of migration, as the psychological wellbeing of youth is more vulnerable compared to other life stages (Mortensen & Lim, 2018; Tartakovsky, 2009). There is a correlation between acculturation and mental health concerns (Balidemaj & Small, 2019). Acculturation stress includes language barriers, understanding various cultures, values, and beliefs. These have a negative influence on individuals migrating from one culture to the other (Balidemaj & Small, 2019). A study conducted with Chinese youth reported that the main sources of stress included communication barriers due to language, academic pressure, adjusting and adapting to new norms and values, lack of support, and the feeling

of discrimination (Wei et al., 2007). Additionally, young people start living a dual life, one at school and the other at their home, to strike a balance between both the cultures, which creates a lot of stress (Samuel, 2005).

Researchers have reported that ethnic minority youth are highly vulnerable to stress caused by discrimination, bullying, and isolation. They are likely to indulge themselves in binge drinking to cope, leading to an adverse effect on their health and wellbeing (Crengle et al., 2012; Hawkins-Elder et al., 2017). Studies on youth of Indian heritage worldwide have focused on the acculturative stress and the importance of social support (Thomas & Choi, 2006), academic stress (Areepattamannil et al., 2018; Khan et al., 2016), stress experienced by Indian youth in the United States (LaFromboise et al., 2010), and other stressors including conflict with parents (Sapru, 2006).

Studies on acculturative stress have predominantly focused on Asian ethnic groups as a whole rather than sub-ethnic groups (Arora & Khoo, 2020). Few studies have focused on acculturative stress faced by youth of Indian origin. The stressors include racial discrimination, conflicts with parents, the expectation of academic performance, language barriers, a feeling of not belonging to the place, and trying to fit in the new culture (Thomas & Choi, 2006; Tummala-Narra et al., 2016). A qualitative narrative study conducted in United States involving 10 Indian high-school students born to immigrant parents found that youth often struggled to balance home life with school life, family and peer expectations, and myriad identities, since there are different expectations and desires between generations as to how individuals of Indian backgrounds should conduct themselves (Asher, 2008). Studies have reported that youth of Indian origin face difficulties during acculturation due to their ethnic values and cultures. This leads to psychological issues such as low confidence, lack of self-expression, and identity confusion (Dey & Sitharthan, 2017).

Acculturation and Mental Health

Acculturation and mental health are interlinked. When an individual moves from one culture to the other and this is combined with the confusion of a new ethnic identity, it is considered to be a very stressful period (Balidemaj & Small, 2019). Acculturative youth are at immense risk for psychological issues such as low self-esteem, social disengagement, anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, identity confusion, and threats to their wellbeing (Jibeen & Khalid, 2010; Lo, 2010). Factors contributing to these issues involve adverse personal experiences of acculturation, lack of social support, and

negative attitudes and behaviours of people from the host culture (Lo, 2010). A study conducted with Asian American youth indicated that Asian youth are at greater risk in suicidal cases compared to other ethnic groups, for example, in the sample, 14.1% Asian, 3.3% black, and 7.4% Hispanic American youth reported suicidal thoughts. There is a high probability of acculturation stress among first- and second-generation migrants (Schwartz et al., 2007).

Acculturation is considered to be a difficult process that involves conflict with parents, risk-taking, language barriers and therefore difficulty in communicating with people of different cultures (Balidemaj & Small, 2019). All these factors have a negative influence on the mental health of an individual (Organista et al., 2003). Acculturative stress may result in impacts on wellbeing and eventually lead to anxiety, depression, or severe psychological problems (Schwartz et al., 2007). On the contrary, young people experiencing acculturative stress may have a positive outcome as well. A study conducted by Kim et al. (2012) with Korean immigrant youth aged 13-18 years in the United States found that, amidst the stressful circumstances, these youth engaged in volunteering activities that not only enabled them to broaden their social networks but also yielded a profound sense of happiness. Furthermore, youth developed the ability to focus primarily on the new opportunities to facilitate their personal growth, such as improving their proficiency in English language and pursuing their hobbies. Consequently, these experiences contributed to their mental resilience and fostered a positive emotional state, which served as a coping mechanism.

Studies have reported negative mental health outcomes among youth due to acculturative stress. A study done by Lee et al. (2004) with Korean youth found that young people under immense acculturative stress reported mental health symptoms, such as sense of loneliness, shakiness, and anxiety. Another study conducted with Asian youth revealed that young people often felt a sense of detachment from both cultures, experienced interpersonal conflicts, and eventually contributed to mental health issues (Yeh, 2003). On the other hand, studies have reported that once the acculturation increased, the stress associated with acculturation tended to decrease, ultimately resulting in improved mental health (Kwan et al., 2018; Organista et al., 2003).

Although the present research study is not specifically about acculturation and acculturative stress, it is an important construct since I am exploring the understanding of stress among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand, their experiences, attitudes, and

beliefs of young people about the help-seeking behaviour, and coping strategies they adopt to overcome stressful circumstances. Recognising the concept of acculturation in this study is significant for the ability to recognise various factors that contribute to the experiences of stress experienced by Indian youth in New Zealand. These factors encompass the tension between their heritage culture and the dominant culture in New Zealand, as well as the complexities associated with navigating their dual identities.

The discourse on stress discussed in this chapter indicates a considerable body of research demonstrating that stress comprises both psychological and physiological responses, while also emphasising that individuals' perspectives on their circumstances are influenced by their social and cultural factors. However, the studies discussed tend to focus on specific determinants, such as either the psychological or social aspects, without exploring the intersection of these diverse factors. In the context of the current study, stress is defined as a complex and multifaceted experience that extends beyond an individual's experiences, encompassing the intricate interplay of psychological, physiological, social, and cultural factors.

Coping and Coping Strategies to Reduce Stress in Youth

Coping is defined as an “ongoing dynamic process that changes in response to changing demands of a stressful encounter or event” (B. E. Compas et al., 2001, p. 88). According to Bandura (1981), coping is defined as “The flexible orchestration of cognitive, social, and behavioural skills in dealing with situations that contain elements of ambiguity, unpredictability and stress” (as cited in McNamara, 2000, p. 48). White and Wyn (2008) saw young people as social actors who have resources and actively negotiate how to deal with everyday stresses. In doing so, these authors advocated for an understanding of young people as actively coping with the stresses of their lives. According to Seiffge-Krenke (1993), when a young person faces challenges in their lives and they are unable to fulfil their goals and aspirations, they employ various coping strategies. Some actively seek advice and take specific steps to address the problem, while others tend to avoid the problem, refraining from seeking advice and withdrawing themselves from the situation.

The implementation of coping strategies is influenced by various factors such as societal attitudes, policy, values (Leobrera, 2019) and culture (Aldwin, 2004; Oláh, 1995). In Indian culture, coping strategies include self-control and understanding (Gala & Chaudhary, 2004). Indians have traditionally utilised yoga and meditation to manage

stress, as it was believed that stress stemmed from one's internal desires, including among youth (Gala & Chaudhary, 2004). Yoga typically comprises the practice of gentle physical postures, breath work, relaxation techniques, and mindfulness meditation.

In the search of an understanding of various coping strategies, several theories have been discussed (Rothbaum et al., 1982). Nonetheless, Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theory has been widely used due to its emphasis on key aspects of coping, such as problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies. Problem-focused coping strategies include acting on the stressor and trying to change the relationship between the individual and the environment, i.e., trying to take total control of the situation. Emotion-focused coping strategies, on the other hand, focus on an individual's emotions and comprise ignoring the situation, rather than acting on it to try and change the circumstance.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) provided a transactional model of coping. The model states that stress is a dependent variable that consists of interactions between the person and the environment. They provided a contextual model of stress and coping as well. According to them, there is a five-stage process in the model:

- When an individual recognises the occurrence of a stressful incident.
- Individual's categorisation of an incident as a threat.
- If a threat is recognised, an individual determines to access the resources to resolve it.
- The individual selects a coping strategy to deal with their emotional reactions to the issue.
- The outcome of the strategies chosen will impact their wellbeing.

(Jose, 2006).

Studies have suggested that if the coping strategies are weak, then maximum acculturative stress is experienced. However, if an individual seeks action and talks with someone about their challenges, it helps in reducing the stress (Torres & Rollock, 2007). A comparative study of Asian and European students was conducted by Chai et al. (2012) to gain an insight into various coping strategies preferred by international students in New Zealand for dealing with stress. Surprisingly, no significant differences were found between the nature of stressors among both groups. Asian students tended to employ religious coping methods and self-distraction strategies, in contrast to European students who sought social support for enhancing their psychological wellbeing. Researchers have indicated

that various cultures possess distinct cultural coping scripts or beliefs about which coping strategies are considered effective, reflecting their unique cultural values (Aldwin, 2004; Avasthi et al., 2013; Chun et al., 2006; Kuo, 2011).

Research with Asian youth has shown that emotion-focused and avoidant coping strategies are more common and associated with positive outcomes in coping with stress such as everyday stress, family conflict, and racial discrimination. The studies done on coping strategies in New Zealand included the Asian population (Jose & Schurer, 2009) where the authors found associations among idiocentrism, externalisation and problem solving with maladjustment. Although the literature on how Indian youth living in a Western country cope with stress is relatively limited, some preliminary themes may be drawn from the available research. However, the results should be interpreted with caution due to variations in the samples studied (area of birth, length of stay in the Western country), and the stresses experienced. Consistent with the literature, quantitative studies have shown that Indian youth employ a range of coping strategies. These include problem-solving (e.g., connecting with their ethnic culture, engaging with the dominant culture), distraction (e.g., exercise, socialisation), adjustment (e.g., keeping a journal, thinking positively), avoidance (e.g., withdrawal, trying to forget), and seeking support. Studies have shown that Indian youth predominantly use an emotion-focused coping approach.

However, these studies only focused on an individualistic coping approach, overlooking the importance of systemic influences on young people's lives. It is imperative to consider these contextual factors, as they significantly shape an individual's ability to manage their stressors and the strategies available to them. Moreover, acknowledging these potential implications is essential for providing adequate support, intervention, and policies aimed at improving the wellbeing of young people.

Gender Differences

Even though the coping strategies adopted by youth might be similar, studies have reported gender differences in the coping strategy used. For instance, females use more support-seeking coping strategies and use interpersonal relationships for their support (Eschenbeck et al., 2007), while males tend to adopt a distraction-based coping strategy (Liu et al., 2011). Furthermore, it was found that females exhibit a greater variety of coping strategies than males (B. E. Compas et al., 2001), actively engaging in religious, social, and cultural activities (Thomas & Choi, 2006).

A survey-based study was conducted by S. M. Kim et al. (2014) among Korean youth (14-19 years), which found that females employ emotion-focused coping mechanism, such as venting emotions through communication and/or music. Conversely, males in the same study were more likely to engage in activities like sports, online gaming, or reading. In contrast to the findings of the above study, research by Som et al. (2019) involving Indian youth in India indicated that females tended to rely on denial as a coping strategy, while males displayed a stronger inclination toward emotion-focused coping strategies.

The above variations in coping strategies between males and females suggest the inconclusive nature of gender-related differences in coping mechanisms, which may be attributable to a variety of factors. For instance, certain studies failed to identify any gender differences (Thomas & Choi, 2006). Conversely, some studies found that females employ a problem-focused coping strategy more prominently (Lawrence et al., 2006), while other studies reported that males exhibit a greater tendency for emotional coping mechanisms than females (Eschenbeck et al., 2007).

Social Support to Reduce Stress in Youth

Youth do not function in isolation; rather, as highlighted above, social, and cultural factors influence their understanding of their world. Bronfenbrenner's theory of ecological systems helps in understanding how the immediate interactions of an individual with various people in their environment affect them (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Urie Bronfenbrenner developed an ecological theory that emphasised the environmental factors impacting the individual. The theory includes five environmental systems, namely the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). The microsystem depicts the place and setting where the individual lives, including the individual's family, peers, and school, i.e., where the individual can have direct interactions. The mesosystem includes the relationships with the context, such as relating a family experience to their school experience. The exosystem includes a link between a social setting where the individual does not play a significant role with their immediate situation. For instance, a family situation may influence a parent's work experience, even though the parent is not directly involved in the family situation while at work. The macrosystem comprises the culture in which the individual lives, which depicts the individual's behaviour and belief system. The chronosystem involves the linkage of the transitions that the individual goes through with events in the broader environment (Santrock, 2011). Among youth, the context of family

and school environment plays a crucial role in constructing the meaning, responses, and the impact of stress on health and wellbeing (American Psychological Association, 2002; Hartas, 2019; Ling et al., 2014). Moreover, research indicates that youth turn to both friends and family for support (Barker, 2007; Flynn et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2004; Ringdal et al., 2020). Some research findings indicated that youth are more likely to turn to family with a first call for support (Lindsey et al., 2010). Other research found youth are more likely to turn to peers (Camara et al., 2017; Rowe et al., 2014).

When an individual migrates from one culture to the other, they require support from the society to adjust themselves in a new culture (Bhugra & Becker, 2005). Studies have reported that acculturative stress can be minimised through social support (Lee et al., 2004; Thomas & Choi, 2006; Wei et al., 2007). Social support can reduce the negative impact of acculturative stress on an individual's mental health (Sirin et al., 2019). A study drawing on Bronfenbrenner's theory was undertaken by Thomas and Choi (2006) to examine the acculturative stress among Asian immigrant adolescents, specifically Korean and Indian adolescents in the United States. They also studied the relationship between social support and coping among youth. The social support included five areas such as support from friends, parents, religious organisations, social organisations, and cultural associations. The primary reasons for stress were the expectations of parents and society. There were no significant gender differences found in the study. Participants in the study prioritised their preference for social support, i.e., peers first and then parents. Regarding social support, female respondents had more social support than male respondents. A significant relationship was observed between acculturative stress and social support. The findings indicated that the greater the level of stress experienced by an individual, the lower the amount of social support they received.

Social support can help people cope with stressful situations by providing them with beneficial interpersonal tools. A recent meta-analysis, on the other hand, found that social support is adversely connected to drug use, bullying, and internalising difficulties including depression, anxiety, mental distress, and emotional problems (Heerde & Hemphill, 2018).

Parents and Peers

Family is an important component of a youth support system and has the potential to influence youth outcomes (Chadda & Deb, 2013). Positive family functioning, such as high levels of family support, clear parent–youth communication, and family attachment,

have been found as determinants promoting family wellbeing. Parenting methods (i.e., punishment and monitoring) and family connection traits such as cohesion, views about the value of family, and organisational structure are the fundamental principles of family functioning (Chadda & Deb, 2013; Ganapathy-Coleman, 2013; Sahithya et al., 2019).

Youth in the age group of 14–18 years seek autonomy or independence concerning the decisions in their lives and in building relationships (Pillai & Singh, 2015). However, the degree of autonomy depends on the cultural and social background of the family. It also depends on the relationship shared between parents and the young person, and the quality of communication between them. For youth, in particular, the family contributes immensely to helping young people develop their identity and inculcate values and beliefs (Stuart et al., 2009). A study done by Singh et al. (2015) revealed that among Asian American youth, huge support from family resulted in a decreased level of stress.

On the other hand, parent–child conflict can occur due to differences of opinion and disagreements, primarily stemming from generational differences. Studies conducted by Buchanan et al. (1992) during early and middle adolescence indicate there is a high probability of a stressful period between adolescents and their parents due to a lack of control and autonomy within the family environment. Indian youth have to negotiate between two value systems, traditional Indian and mainstream Western, and, as a result, youth may have a different value system to their parents as they have grown up in a mixture of cultures.

Youth fluctuate between seeking autonomy and family attachment during decision making (Eccles et al., 2009). Parents are often worried about the social exposure their child may indulge in and, hence, try to monitor their activities. According to Fletcher et al. (1995), parents who worry about their children’s social exposure generally avoid alcohol and drugs use themselves (as cited in Stattin & Kerr, 2009).

Sapru (2006) studied parents of Indian descent in New Delhi and Geneva, and their cultural influences on acculturation. The study found Indian parents hold onto their ancestral cultural beliefs despite migrating into other cultures. Furthermore, they pass on these beliefs to their children, for example, a high emphasis is placed on academic achievement and a low preference is shown for social interactions with peers.

Peer connections are also seen as a main source of emotional support in social environments, providing youth with a sense of belonging (Flynn et al., 2017). Indian

youth who are accepted and encouraged by their peers are less depressed over time because such interactions reduce negative feelings about themselves. On the other hand, youth perceptions of their peers' negative reactions to their behaviours have been highlighted as a significant effect on the development of aggressive behaviour.

Parenting Styles

Parenting styles are influenced by cultural beliefs and values (Lee et al., 2006), and they impact the development of the child (Aunola & Nurmi, 2005). Parenting styles are classified as authoritative, authoritarian, or permissive (indulgent and indifferent) (Baumrind, 1971; Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Authoritarian parents are very strict and do not approve of or encourage autonomy. Authoritative parents are a combination of warmth and strictness. They set rules for the young person but at the same time give them a proper explanation and communicate with them. Indulgent parents do not have expectations, nor do they set rules or boundaries. Indifferent parents have very minimal knowledge about the daily activities of their children and spend very little time with them (Coleman & Hendry, 1999). In Indian culture, generally, mothers are considered to adopt an authoritative or permissive style, whereas fathers are viewed as using an authoritarian parenting style (Barnhart et al., 2013).

Studies have reported that, following migration, there is a high probability of conflict between the young person and their parents, due to different approaches towards acculturation (Farver et al., 2002). However, with flexibility and effective communication with their children, the experience may lead to high self-esteem and confidence, and better adaptability skills among youth (Geldard et al., 2019).

Counsellors

While trying to manage their stress using various coping mechanisms, youth may indulge in maladaptive coping strategies such as drinking alcohol, smoking, self-harm, and drug use (Amirkhan & Auyeung, 2007). Seeking support from a counsellor can help them identify effective ways to handle stress and enhance their wellbeing (Ministry of Education, 2017). Youth seeking counselling can consult a counsellor easily when the counsellor develops a good rapport with them (Leobrer, 2019), listens intently, and avoids judgements (Ray et al., 2011). Through seeking counselling support, youth can overcome their anxiety and low self-esteem, and face their emotions without feeling

overwhelmed. Counselling can help change one's perspective on a problem that eventually may resolve (Leobrera, 2019).

In India, in ancient times, a young person was dependent on seeking advice from social relationships, such as the *guru–shishya* (teacher–disciple tradition) (Raina, 2002; Sriram, 2016). Due to the rapid change in lifestyles and attitudes, and modernisation, the prevalence of people seeking counselling has increased manyfold in the last couple of years in India (Sriram, 2016). Awareness of professional help from counsellors has increased worldwide and youth are less likely to approach their immediate family members for guidance (Sriram, 2016). However, help-seeking is still a taboo in India (Kishore et al., 2011).

A study was conducted by Bulkeley (2010) to understand the perspective and knowledge of school counsellors about depression among youth. The counsellors recruited for the study were dealing with students aged nine years old and above from schools in New Zealand. In the study, the counsellors reported that depression was very prevalent among youth. Despite that, they believed that depression among young people of Asian heritage was not completely understood by teachers, and that parents would not take it seriously. Counsellors identified depression as behavioural change and sadness, and as expressed by the young person. According to them, the causes of depression among youth included relationships, conflict with parents, abuse, or migration. The study also mentioned that the myths and belief system of the society about labelling an individual as a depressed person can harm the young person. In that study, counsellors expressed the view that barriers, including language and cultural differences, and lack of awareness about depression, was prevalent among Asians. Therefore, the present study explores the understanding of stressors among Indian youth from counsellors' perspectives, and the ways in which support can be provided to youth who may feel overwhelmed by their circumstances.

In summary, literature on coping has been criticised for focusing on an individualistic approach to coping and for failing to recognise the importance of systemic influences on young people's lives and the specific role of social support in youth coping. The literature also informs us that young people with mental health problems are unlikely to seek professional support and are more reliant on social networks. It is therefore important to understand perceptions of Indian youth on seeking help and the specific barriers that need to be addressed in order to support youth in distress.

Barriers to Help-Seeking

Research suggests that youth experience significant degrees of mental health problems, but only a minority seek professional help. There are several barriers to accessing professional help and/or mental health services. Some of the barriers include language, poor mental health literacy, stigma, embarrassment, a preference for self-reliance, and internalising mental health struggles as a personal weakness as opposed to illness. Cultural beliefs and attitudes influence the understanding of help-seeking behaviour. Within many traditional Indian communities, for instance, there exists a belief that mental health issues are a curse, and a result of one's past karma, and that individuals have no power to change their destiny (Leung et al., 2011). A study by Islam et al. (2017) of Asian youth in Toronto, Canada, found that there were various barriers to help-seeking behaviour among them. This included not being aware of the importance of mental health issues and the resources available to them, family and community stigma, lack of professionals of the same ethnic background, long queues to consult a professional, and fear of being treated with psychotropic medications.

The New Zealand Government has categorised sub-groups that are vulnerable to mental health issues, including Indian youth, Asian refugees, Chinese older people, and Indian female youth. They have found that the Asian population does not rely on seeking professional help for mental health concerns and prefers self-help measures, spirituality or seeking support from the social environment (Te Pou, 2010). For Asian students, counsellors claimed that parents of Asian students had low awareness of depression and the counsellors observed notable barriers, such as language and cultural barriers (Blignault et al., 2008), specifically for Asian students who migrated recently. Asian families have a stigma about seeking professional help regarding mental health issues. It is considered a shame, a sign of weakness, and expressing such a need in society is discouraged (Te Pou, 2010). Through this study, perceptions of all the stakeholders, i.e., youth, parents and counsellors, are explored in regard to seeking professional help, to discuss issues and concerns, the potential barriers to seeking external help, and measures that can be taken to minimise those barriers.

While studies have been conducted to explore whether New Zealanders seek professional help for mental health issues during their youth (Mariu et al., 2011), mental issues and help-seeking among the Indian population from the youth perspective have not been studied.

Overall, the literature I have drawn from suggests that the experiences of stress and responses have individual discourses, as well as being influenced by cultural (Aldwin, 2004), and environmental factors (Camara et al., 2017). Parents and counsellors have an important role to play in enhancing the wellbeing of youth (Geldard & Geldard, 2012).

Culturally Appropriate Services to Mitigate Barriers to Help-Seeking

The disparity in the utilisation of mental health services among Asian youth is attributable to the divergence in perceptions of mental health among Asian and Western cultures (Gilbert et al., 2004; Kwan et al., 2018). As emphasised earlier in this chapter, Asian communities place a strong emphasis on collectivism, which can overshadow individual needs, making it difficult for youth to prioritise their own wellbeing. Additionally, research has suggested that language barriers (Costigan et al., 2010), confidentiality issues (Blignault et al., 2008), and a lack of culturally competent mental health services (Kwan et al., 2018) further contribute to the disparity in mental health service use among Asians.

A research study conducted by Islam et al. (2017) in Canada with mental health service providers who work with South Asian youth found that amidst the various barriers to seeking help, including stigma, the lack of culturally safe mental health provision was one of the significant barriers to help-seeking among youth.

Culturally appropriate approaches can enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of the support services among Asian youth (Ho et al., 2003). Moreover, there has been advocacy for services that are more culturally sensitive and appropriate, including increased community support such as support groups, peer-led programmes, and the development of culturally proficient professions, including interpreters and healthcare professionals with cultural competence training (Blignault et al., 2008; Kwan et al., 2018; Wong et al., 2005). However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the hybridisation of traditional and new cultures may impact the help-seeking process, particularly for long-term Indian migrant youth or New Zealand-born Indian youth who have been exposed to Western cultural values. These are lacking in the existing mental health support services in New Zealand (New Zealand Government, 2018). Hence, there is a need for cultural awareness in supporting the mental health issues among young people (Health and Disability Commissioner, 2018). In New Zealand, there is a dearth of research exploring these issues

for the Indian population, particularly from the perspectives of Indian youth themselves, indicating the need for more qualitative research.

Moreover, recent studies have demonstrated that many young people perceive a lack of agency or influence in addressing the challenging impacting their lives and enhancing their mental health and wellbeing (Sutcliffe, Ball, Clark, & Fleming, 2023; Te Hiringa Mahara - The Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission, 2022). Youth articulate a sense of exclusion, emphasising an absence of individuals with similar backgrounds and experiences in leadership positions, thereby recognising the potential disconnect in accurately representing their perspectives on wellbeing and effective solutions and strategies. Consequently, recent studies have suggested that those in positions of power need to enhance their receptiveness and responsiveness to the vision, values, and ideas out forth by the youth, and recognise young people as experts on their own wellbeing (Hawke et al., 2018; Larsson et al., 2018; Sutcliffe, Ball, Clark, & Fleming, 2023).

Quantitative studies have provided insight into how Indian youth manage stress. However, the majority of the research has been conducted using self-report questionnaires developed from Western literature that require young people to tick off responses they prefer or use when confronted with certain stressors. Researchers have argued that these questionnaires are limited because they pre-determine coping responses and narrow the range of options to those represented in the measurement, thereby constraining an understanding of coping from young people's own perspectives. They also ignore the context in which coping takes place and therefore limit a deeper understanding of the processes and nuances of coping, including how young people negotiate coping across various stresses, contexts, and times (B. E. Compas et al., 2001). Researchers argue that if we are to understand young people's experiences, we need to provide them with opportunities to express their experiences from their own perspective. Therefore, qualitative methods can offer a way to approach coping research with youth in a way that allows them to describe experiences in their own words, within their social and cultural contexts, in greater detail.

Conclusion

This literature review highlights the need to explore the experiences of youth of Indian descent in New Zealand. Moreover, the literature suggests that stress is a social construct and what causes stress for young people and how they manage their stress is influenced

by social and cultural factors. In addition, the literature indicates the need for youth to be considered as experts of their own lives. The studies advocate for their active involvement in planning, design, and execution of interventions aimed at enhancing their wellbeing, moving beyond their recipient role. However, given that much of the literature is based on international and quantitative studies, it is important to explore and further understand these issues within the context of New Zealand, particularly from the perspectives of Indian youth, their parents, and counsellors, in order to gain in-depth insights.

The next chapter described the theoretical framework social constructionism and analytical approach of intersectionality, the narrative inquiry methodology, and the methods used in this study to capture the voices and perspectives of the participants.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Underpinnings and Methodology

This chapter describes the theoretical viewpoints, methodology, and analysis approaches used in this study. In this chapter, I explain why I chose a social constructionist theoretical framework and applied it via the lens of intersectionality. The goal was to investigate the complexities of the power relationships that shape social identities and perceptions. Individual narratives were used to investigate the lived experiences and understandings of stress in this study, which used narrative inquiry methodology. The elements of the theoretical framework, their significance in the study setting, narrative inquiry methodology, ethical considerations, the data collection methods of narrative interviews, focus groups, and mediated dialogue are examined in this chapter, followed by an explanation of critical thematic analysis. The final section of this chapter discusses the factors that were taken into consideration to attain maximum trustworthiness, credibility, and validity, as well as to ensure ethical research practice.

Theoretical Approaches

This thesis is underpinned by the theoretical framework of social constructionism, employing intersectionality as a method of analysis to study stress as socially constructed and as intersecting with multiple categories of identification. The justification for the framework adopted is discussed next.

Social Constructionism

The study adopts a social constructionist paradigm. Constructionism is an epistemological perspective accepting that reality is subjective (Burr, 2003). It views all knowledge and reality as “contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interactions between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context” (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). Essentially, social constructionism posits that the reality we perceive is not inherently objective but is shaped through social processes, interactions, and cultural norms. It is rooted in the belief that meanings constructed are contextual (Lincoln et al., 2011), and fluid and dynamic (Gergen, 2008). Furthermore, this paradigm addresses not only individual experiences but also the influence of the social environment that determines the way people express their understanding (Willig, 2013). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), social

constructionism is “the philosophical belief that multiple social realities exist, and people construct their understanding of reality based on our interactions with surroundings” (Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 103). The construction of one’s understanding is “mediated by the social force fields of power and knowledge in which they are produced, reproduced, or challenged” (Pfohl, 2008, p. 645). The social constructionism paradigm has been influenced by various perspectives, such as psychological, philosophical, and social viewpoints, including the sociology of knowledge (Gergen, 1985, 2008). It focuses on the process of construction, i.e., how the meanings are created by individuals (Burr, 2015).

This study adopts the social *constructionist* paradigm and not the social *constructivist* paradigm because constructionism highlights the idea that knowledge is interpreted and embedded within context, culture, language, experiences, and understandings (Burr, 2015). By contrast, constructivism emphasises the notion that an individual interprets the world through their personal belief system, wherein the reality is conceived as a mental construct rather than through social interaction (Amineh & Asl, 2015). In this study, it is argued that stress is a social construct and various social categories, including culture, social environment, and migration, intersect with each other and influence an individual’s experience.

In a constructionist approach, knowledge is constructed through language and social interaction (Gergen, 2008), not discovered (Ab Rashid et al., 2016). The way an individual understands the world and the beliefs that person holds are influenced by cultural and historical factors (Burr, 2003). Language enables reality to be described and explained (Burr, 2015) and provides people with meaningful experiences (Burr, 2003). It emphasises how meanings are derived socially through language and not by individuals (Allen, 2005; Willig, 2013). Through the constructionist approach, the researcher discovers how individuals interpret and develop the meaning of the world. According to social constructionism, “humans construct the world through social practices” (Allen, 2005, p. 36). These interpretations are influenced by social and cultural experiences (Gergen, 1985). Meanings derived from the experiences of individuals are influenced by “families, groups, nations, and other collectivities that make up their social world” (Collins, 2019, p. 13). The current study aims to gain a deeper understanding of experiences in social contexts (Guerrero & Brenner, 2013; Jones, 2004). Through this perspective, an individual’s experiences and interpretations are connected to cultural values and social norms, rather than as just their way of thinking. As explained by Diener

and Suh (2000), “culture provides form and shape to the self, which in turn influences how individuals feel and think about various aspects of their lives” (p. 63).

This approach aims to understand how experiences of stress and impacts on wellbeing are socially produced (Gavey, 1989). In current times, COVID-19 is recognised as a major stressor among youth (UNICEF, 2020), due to lockdown, isolation and drastic routine disruption due to the closure of schools and lack of engagement with peers in the school environment. However, this research did not consider its impact specifically because the aim of this study was to understand the range of stressors that youth of Indian descent experience being an ethnic minority in New Zealand, and to inform efforts to address and mitigate these stressors. Nevertheless, it is possible that the pandemic is one of the contributing factors affecting the experiences of young people.

Intersectionality as an analytical approach

Ethnic minorities have multiple identities, which lead to unique individual and collective experiences. Intersectionality provides a lens through which we can examine the overlapping of numerous identities and relationships among groups (Roy et al., 2020). The interconnection of social and cultural aspects is important in how minorities view their reality. Ethnic minority youth face a variety of stressors, including discrimination, prejudices, and racism. These experiences, however, are not isolated; rather, they overlap with one another. The term ‘intersectionality’ was coined by Crenshaw to study the oppression faced by African American women and the ways in which systems of oppression intersect (Crenshaw, 1989). It is a framework that examines individuals’ experiences in relation to different social identities such as ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and social class (McCall, 2005). These identities interact with the broader socio-cultural and political environments in which individuals live. Therefore, intersectionality, which originated in black feminist scholarship (Crenshaw, 1989), has increasingly been recognised as a valuable approach to analyse the power structures that contribute to ethnic minority stress. By encompassing the vast heterogeneity in an individual’s lived experiences, this lens addresses the multiple disadvantages faced by underrepresented populations (Kapilashrami & Hankivsky, 2018). However, despite advancements in applying an intersectionality lens, there remains a notably scarcity of research focused on ethnic minority youth.

The framework also highlights the complexities of oppression and privilege, such as racism and sexism, at social-structural levels that intersect with evolving identities (Cole,

2009b). This emphasises the notion that individual identities transform over time and are not just shaped by single dimensions such as race or gender but rather are influenced by a combination of factors, such as cultural background, geographical location, and personal relationships. These factors may change or develop as societal and personal contexts evolve. However, the intersectionality approach is used in an interdisciplinary manner to study social phenomena (Choo & Ferree, 2010) – for example, to explore the stress caused by acculturation in the context of identity issues and adjustment to a new culture (Sattler & Zeyen, 2021). An intersectional analytical method argues that studies focusing on the effects of individual characteristics in isolation rather than in combination fail to fully capture social inequities in youth wellbeing (Cole, 2009a). There is a growing body of research aimed at understanding the interplay of multiple intersecting identities and its impact on the living conditions of people affected by prevailing social structures (Mehrotra, 2010).

The intersectionality approach allows us to examine the effects of adjustment and settlement on identity development in a new culture and their interaction with the social environment. Furthermore, this approach helps to examine how social identities are configured through power and oppression (Azmitia & Mansfield, 2021). It is employed in migration studies to examine the inequalities faced by migrant groups as ethnic minorities and gender differences in attitudes towards migration (Berg, 2010). This approach also helps identify possible conditions of inequality or discrimination faced by migrants (Choo & Ferree, 2010; Kaushik & Walsh, 2018). The current study also explores the intersectional issues that may affect Indian youth born in New Zealand. An intersectional approach helps us to understand, highlight, and analyse how social categories such as gender, ethnicity, age, and migration background can intersect to shape youth experiences and constructed meanings of stress. Furthermore, the cultural and social influences, peer pressure, role of family, and the navigation of social boundaries intersect with the way youth perceive their reality.

Intersectionality scholars have faced critiques that an overemphasis on identity categories might overlook how individuals perceive themselves and choose to identify (Phoenix & Pattynama, 2006). In response, the 'constructionist' approach to intersectionality addresses this by considering both the complexity of identities and the significance of social structures, providing a more nuanced understanding of identity (Prins, 2006).

Another critique of the intersectionality approach is that it hasn't clearly distinguished between the challenges faced by marginalized groups and the dominance of powerful groups. Identities are not merely individual self-reflections; they involve the natural relationships and interactions individuals have with their environment. This creates a sense of collective identity based on these voluntary and natural relationships. Additionally, this approach may sometimes overlook individual agency and the unique ways in which people navigate their intersecting identities (Nayak, 2023).

Essentially, the critics of intersectionality do not reject and disregard the different forms of power that can exploit, discriminate, and even kill based on people's identities. They argue that identities are not just about individuals thinking about themselves; they are also about how individuals interact with their surroundings and other people. People form relationships with others to fulfill their desires and needs, which gives meaning to their lives (Nayak, 2023).

Despite these critiques and complexities, the intersectional approach allows for a nuanced understanding of the diverse ways in which various factors such as ethnicity, gender, culture, and migration intersect and interact with one another. By employing this approach, I aim to uncover the cumulative effects of how various power structures intersect and how youth are simultaneously positioned and position themselves within multiple categories influencing stress levels uniquely experienced by Indian youth in New Zealand. It enables a deeper exploration of how factors like discrimination, cultural identity conflicts, educational pressures, and familial expectations intersect to impact their mental health and wellbeing. By critically analysing these intersections, this approach aims to facilitate a more comprehensive assessment of the underlying causes and implications of stress within this Indian youth.

Methodology

This study was conducted using a qualitative research approach appropriate for developing a deeper understanding of participants' narratives about their experiences, their interactions with society, and knowledge of different situations in the real environment in which the participants live (Creswell, 2013; Willig, 2008). Krauss (2005) said that qualitative research "is based on a relativistic, constructivist ontology that posits that there is no objective reality. Rather, there are multiple realities constructed by human beings who experience a phenomenon of interest" (p. 760). After understanding the

experiences, one tends to interpret them. The stories narrated and the creation of meaning by individuals are retrospective, and the interpretation made now may differ from what it actually was at the time of the experience, as the individual may have gained a new perspective over time (Kim, 2016). According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), “The interpretive practice of making sense of one’s findings is both artful and political” (p. 15). It is a useful approach as it offers a diversity of data collecting methods to help people open up about sensitive issues (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) defined qualitative research as:

a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

As emphasised in Chapter 2: Literature Review, there is a paucity of research exploring the perspectives of young people in the areas of mental health and the support they require to manage their stressful circumstances. A qualitative research approach was used in the study because “it captures the complexity, mess and contradiction that characterizes the real world, yet allows us to make sense of patterns of meanings” (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 10). This approach helps the researcher understand multiple realities and does not adopt one version of reality. This study focuses on the meaning of stress interpreted by youth through their lived experiences, their understanding of stressors in their lives and the coping mechanism they use to cope with stress. Utilising qualitative research has facilitated a deeper exploration of the complex dynamics of stress among Indian youth living in New Zealand, offering insights for more effective intervention and support.

Narrative Inquiry Methodology

I employed a narrative inquiry methodology in this research to allow youth of Indian descent to share their experiences and understanding of stress from their viewpoint. The term ‘narrative’ comes from the verb to ‘narrate’, meaning to tell a story in detail, as storytelling is at the core of many cultures and is a natural expression of everyday life (Bruner, 2004; Clandinin et al., 2007). Narrative inquiry methodology places emphasis

on how individuals construct meaning through their stories which are influenced by social contexts (Sharp et al., 2019). Rather than obtaining responses to pre-structured questions, hearing about each person's unique journey through their own stories gives a more comprehensive representation of their experiences and positions in life.

Reality is increasingly constructed in a narrative manner, influenced by cultural nuances and language usage (Bruner, 2004). As previously stated, constructionism is based on the premise that reality is created by individuals as they interpret their experiences through their own worldviews. Narrative inquiry enabled me to investigate how the participants comprehend their subjective realities (Bruner, 2004; Polkinghorne, 2007). The use of narratives in constructionist research is becoming increasingly important as it provides meaningful context to an experience. Furthermore, narratives facilitate an in-depth exploration of how social constructions, for example, whiteness as a 'norm', affect the lives and wellbeing of young people. Since humans are inherently storytellers, exploring their experiences of the world implies exploring their stories (Clandinin et al., 2007; Creswell, 2013). In other words, people's lives are made up of stories. Storytelling plays a significant role in the constitution and interpretation of the self and the social world. Therefore, narrative inquiry focuses on the social constructed nature of stress and its impact on youth wellbeing.

Narrative inquiry methodology was appropriate for this study for several reasons. First, narratives allow people to relive and share their experiences in a series of events. Narratives are linked to language as people share their stories (Clandinin & Huber, 2010; Moen, 2006) which helps in gaining a better understanding of an individual's perspectives, experiences, and beliefs. Second, the narrative approach provides the flexibility to understand multiple layers of context and extract rich data from participants' stories (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This flexibility allows people to give meaning to their words and narratives (Given, 2008). Furthermore, human life is said to be storied, and narrative is an ontological condition of social life, implying that we live in story-shaped worlds. Narratives play a crucial role in shaping our realities and the way we live (Lock & Strong, 2010).

Using the theoretical framework of social constructionism and intersectionality as a method of analysis, narrative inquiry helps in identifying the nuances of the participants' stories, thereby understanding the various factors influencing people's understanding. Prins (2006) and Buitelaar (2006) argues narratives as an important methodological

approach in intersectional analysis as it informs how individuals draw on different factors in the construction of their reality.

Narrative inquiry methodology is compatible with social constructionism because it highlights the influences of the social and cultural nuances, which proves valuable for several reasons. First, individuals use narratives to give meaning to their lives, and their meaning-making activities are profoundly shaped by their cultural influences. Second, knowledge is itself considered valuable in a narrative approach, even if it belongs to just one person. Third, narrative research provides a method for sharing personal stories, amplifying the voices of marginalised groups, and allowing individuals to reflect on their experiences and social interactions, facilitating deeper insights and fostering both personal and collective understanding. This is grounded in the social constructionist view that knowledge and understanding are constantly negotiated and reshaped. Fourth, narrative inquiry acknowledges the situational, partial, contextual, and contradictory nature of storytelling (Brown, 2017; Kim, 2016; Sharp et al., 2019).

Therefore, to collect and analyse the stories of the stressors faced by Indian youth from the perspective of youth, parents, and counsellors, and to highlight how their experiences are shaped by the social and cultural context, narrative inquiry methodology was used.

According to the social constructionist viewpoint, the researcher and interviewee actively share during the interview process. In this perspective, both the researcher and the interviewee engage in a dialogue, share their perspectives, and collaboratively construct an understanding of the topic. This viewpoint recognises that the knowledge produced is shaped by the perspectives, biases, and experiences shared through social interaction, and further emphasises the importance of acknowledging the social context that shape a person's worldview (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008; Sharp et al., 2019). Furthermore, the interview is focused on social and cultural ties because people actively and continuously develop language and understanding (Gergen, 2008). Throughout the interview, the interviewee's meanings are actively discussed and challenged by the researcher. The researcher's and interviewee's understandings and meanings are the result of social processes and interactions in which individuals are continually engaged with one another, resulting in a plethora of different social constructions of the world. Bloomberg and Volpe (2018) explained that "the narrative researcher is immersed in the complexity of the multiple layers of stories human beings live day to day" (p. 97). In order for participants to share their potentially sensitive experiences, the researcher must establish a

relationship by presenting both the research and the research process. This is particularly important because narrative researchers generally do not view narratives as solely produced by the participants (Moen, 2006). Instead, the production of narratives in research is seen as a collaborative and interactive process between researcher and participant (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). As the participant narrates their story, it is important not to intervene, but to take notes for further questions and further investigate to gain a deeper understanding of specific aspects of the narrative that need to be highlighted.

Research Questions

There were four questions that guided my inquiry towards fulfilling the rationale for the research:

1. What are the lived experiences and understandings of stress among New Zealand youth of Indian descent?
2. How do NZ youth of Indian descent understand and/or experience support available to them?
3. How do parents and counsellors involved in supporting youth of Indian descent understand the stress experienced by this group in New Zealand?
4. How can support be enhanced and/or improved to reduce stress and promote wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand?

Recruitment and Data Collection

I received ethics approval to conduct this research from the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) on November 26, 2020 (reference number 20/348).

Sampling

Purposive and snowball sampling were used to recruit participants. The study was conducted in three phases, i.e., with youth, parents, and counsellors separately. To recruit youth, I put up flyers across Auckland in places like temples, universities, and dance/social clubs. However, after receiving no response, I began contacting my personal networks, people from the Indian community in Auckland, New Zealand. I met with community groups and explained the study to them, and they also asked me questions about the confidentiality and the time required from each person. I started receiving calls

from participants who heard about the study through word of mouth. Interested participants had to contact me directly via email, text, or phone call. On contact, I asked them short questions to assess whether they met the study criteria (defined in the following section on ‘participants’), such as their age, place of birth, and their parents’ birthplace. If they met the criteria, I emailed them the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix F) to provide more information about the study. They had two weeks to express their interest. If I had received no contact from the prospective youth participants after two weeks, I contacted them to see if they were still interested in participating. For youth in the age range of 14-16 years, the information sheet was provided for parents of youth participants (see Appendix G).

In recruiting parents, flyers were posted on social networking sites such as Facebook and sent to personal contacts. The interested participants contacted me directly via text or phone call. The Participant Information Sheet, available in both English and Hindi (see Appendix L) was emailed to them, and after verbal agreement over the phone, a date and time was scheduled to conduct the interview.

To recruit school-based counsellors, a flyer was placed in the New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC) Auckland branch monthly newsletter. The flyer was also sent to personal contacts. Interested participants were asked to contact me through the details given on the flyer. After receiving their interest, a Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix P) was emailed to them, and the focus group was scheduled, taking into consideration the availability of all participants.

Participants

Participants were recruited from the Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) region as it is the city where the second largest sub-group of Asian Aucklanders identified as Indians resides (Auckland Council, 2021). The recruitment criteria for the participants in this study consisted of three phases. First, youth of Indian descent aged 14–18 years, who were either born in New Zealand or migrated from India at any age and had both parents born in India. Second, both parents of Indian descent who migrated from India, excluding those of Indian heritage who have migrated from other regions. This was because the experiences and challenges faced by different groups can significantly differ due to the distinct social contexts associated with various countries. Moreover, given the paucity of research pertaining to the Indian population in New Zealand as highlighted in Chapter 2: Literature Review, it is significant to first understand the stressors experienced by one

group of Indian heritage, before subsequently exploring into the distinct sub-groups within the broader Indian community. The third recruitment phase addressed school-based counsellors in Auckland who had experience in counselling Indian youth in stressful situations. This criterion was developed in response to the rationale and research question discussed in the previous chapters. Because stress and coping constructs from all three groups have a substantial influence on how youth understand and experience their reality, it was necessary to collect their narratives in a staged approach. Furthermore, in order to facilitate mediated dialogue (Nakhid, 2003), a method wherein the perspectives of one group is shared with others by the researcher in order to mitigate the power dynamics between the groups (as discussed in Chapter 2: Literature Review), the summarised findings obtained from youth were shared with the parents and counsellors in order to elicit their responses. To maintain participant confidentiality, no participant had any relationships with one another in any manner.

In qualitative research, the sample size tends to be smaller than quantitative studies because of the emphasis on thorough interactions with participants rather than generalised observations (Bradshaw et al., 2017). No further interviews took place once the data saturation occurred, i.e., when no new themes emerged from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Fourteen youth (eight female and six male), and 10 parents (four single and three couples) were interviewed, and a focus group discussion took place with three school-based counsellors. See Tables 2, 3 and 4, below, for participant demographic information. However, for reasons of confidentiality, specific participant details are not included.

Table 2

Youth – Demographic information

Group 1: Youth		
Gender	Male	Female
	6	8
Place of Birth	India	New Zealand
	7	7
Age at Time of Migration from India		
0-5 years	5-10 years	10 years and above
3	2	2

Table 3*Parents – Demographic information*

Group 2: Parents			
Parents Interviewed	Count of Parents	Single child	Two children
One Parent	4	5	2
Couples	3		

Table 4*Counsellors – Demographic information*

Group 3: Counsellors			
Years of experience	0-2 years	2-4 years	4 years and above
Count	1	1	1

Data Collection

Data was collected through one-off narrative interviews and focus groups conducted either face-to-face with the individual or via Zoom, depending on participant preference. Interviews and focus group discussions took place between January 2021 and August 2021 and lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. I used a digital voice recorder to record the interviews and focus group with participant permission. The audio was then transferred to my laptop for data transcription.

Ethical Considerations

When human participants are included in research, it is critical to address essential ethical issues. In qualitative research, ethical considerations include gaining informed consent, voluntary participation, the right to withdraw, confidentiality, and the principle of doing no harm (Braun & Clarke, 2013). I sought professional guidance and thought about a number of ethical issues involving the participants. My supervisors and I reviewed any potential ethical concerns with the current study. This section highlights the ethical issues that were deemed important in order to ensure the safety of the participants while performing this study.

The approval to conduct interviews and focus groups was sought from AUTECH in alignment with their guidelines and procedures. As noted earlier, the ethics approval was granted on November 26, 2020 (see Appendix A). Ethics approval included the Participant Information Sheet for each group (see Appendices F, G (parents of youth participants), L (for parent participants), P), and Consent Form (see Appendices I (youth consent form for 16-18 years), J (youth assent form 14-16 years), K (parent/guardian consent form of youth participants 14-16 years old), N, and Q). For parents', consent form was provided to them in both English and Hindi. The AUTECH process prompted me to consider issues such as the possible risks to participants and myself as a researcher, data confidentiality measures, and the inclusion of consent forms and support services in the materials provided to the participants. To safeguard their anonymity, pseudonyms were used for all the participants.

Bearing in mind the sensitive and deeply personal nature of the research, I consulted a registered psychologist at AUT to ensure that the potential for psychological harm to participants was minimised. Together with the psychologist, I prepared a safety protocol as a guiding document, should any situation arise where the participant and/or myself got overwhelmed by expressing and/or hearing about the stressful experiences. The safety protocol (Appendix R) included scenarios where the interviewee might experience emotional distress, and if they exhibit any distress, how I as an interviewer should assess their mental health status and decide whether or not I should continue with the interview. Furthermore, if the interviewee demonstrated distress, information on support services available for them to consult were also provided.

The ethical considerations in this study ensured that the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Partnership, Participation and Protection), as derived by Te Tiriti (Archives New Zealand, 2020), were considered while designing the research. To ensure that cultural practices and concepts were acknowledged, I consulted with the representatives of the Indian community in Auckland to ensure cultural sensitivity was maintained throughout the research process. I met at length with the counsellor at the Asian Family Services, the CEO of Aap Aur Charitable Trust, and a representative from The Art of Living Group, discussing the relevance of the research design and recruitment. Issues discussed were the power imbalances between parents and youth of Indian descent, strategies of recruitment, such as through social networking sites, personal contact, and the NZAC.

Informed and Voluntary Consent

All participants who participated in this study received the relevant Participant Information Sheet after their initial contact, which outlined the aim of the study, possible discomforts they might experience, and the benefits they might gain after participating. After confirming that they wished to participate in the study, signed informed consent was obtained prior to commencement of interviews and focus groups. The consent form included information such as the participants' ability to ask questions, to withdraw at any time, their interviews being audio-recorded, and their interviews being transcribed. Even after signing the consent form, I explained the whole process completely by reiterating the information mentioned. There was no form of coercion, however each participant was given a small koha (gift) as a token of my appreciation for their time.

Vulnerability

Given the nature of the research topic, I was aware that talking about their stressful experiences could lead to psychological distress for some participants. To manage this, I closely monitored any negative emotional reactions during the discussions and repeatedly referred to the safety protocol created for this study to inform me when (if any) action was needed. In addition, youth participants were given details of the various free counselling platforms they could access. Parent and counsellor participants were informed and given details of AUT Health Counselling and Wellbeing's free counselling services on AUT campuses. Each participant had the option to withdraw from the study at any time if they felt uncomfortable. Participants were also told that they could choose not to answer any questions and to submit as little or as much information as they wanted, regardless of the questions they were asked.

Whenever I, as a researcher, felt overwhelmed by the participants' responses, debriefing with supervisors was scheduled to minimise any negative after-effects of the interview, including stress and confusion.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All audio voice recordings and the transcribed files were stored in a secure electronic database on the AUT server. I informed the participants that their original names will not be used in the study, and therefore I asked them to choose a name for themselves so they would not be recognised, especially considering that the Indian community is a close-knit group in New Zealand. Since I speak both languages, i.e., Hindi and English, all

transcriptions were done by myself, which also ensured that their information will be confidential to me and my supervisors. In the Participant Information Sheet, the participants were informed about the nature and possible consequences of participating, and the measures taken to ensure confidentiality. I further informed them that their identities would be kept confidential in all written documents by removing identifying information.

To protect the anonymity of the responses, youth, parents, and counsellors were not linked in any way. Additionally, I was aware that some youth participants might not want their parents to know about their stressors, which might have influenced their willingness to share their stories. Youth might not have disclosed the real information if their parents had been aware of the experiences they had shared. Parents were informed that the responses from youth were not from their own children. Therefore, parents and youth participants were not from the same family. Furthermore, no personal information was disclosed between the groups during the mediated dialogue session.

Insider vs Outsider

‘Outsider positioning’ occurs when a researcher is not a member of the community at the centre of the research. On the other hand, a researcher is termed an ‘insider’ when they share some characteristics with the study’s participants (Sherif, 2001). At first glance, being an Indian would immediately assign me an insider status when interviewing youth and parents of Indian ethnicity in New Zealand. However, not being born and raised in New Zealand, I could be considered as an outsider because of a lack of awareness about the social context that Indian families might be exposed to.

There are advantages and disadvantages to being an insider or to being an outsider (Sherif, 2001; Suwankhong & Liamputtong, 2015). Because of enhanced familiarity, insider status typically permits researchers to get greater acceptance from their participants. As a result, participants are more open with researchers, providing additional depth to the data acquired. Although insider status is advantageous since it provides access, entry, and a common ground to begin the research, it also has the ability to obstruct the research as it proceeds. It is probable that the researcher’s perceptions are influenced by personal experience and that, as a member of the group, they would struggle to separate their perceptions and experience from those of the participants. As a result, I was conscious of not making assumptions about participants’ experiences and therefore I posed questions

to the participants about what they meant through their narratives and the context behind them.

Despite the similarities, I had trouble gaining access to the participants due to the stigmatised topic of stress and coping, as well as apprehension about trusting a stranger. Youth participants approached me multiple times to express their interest. However, after receiving the Participant Information Sheet, they refused to participate in the study for fear of their parents learning about their experiences. Furthermore, in this study, there were complexities researching within my own (and my supervisors') communities. Because one of my supervisors is of the same ethnicity, to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants we came to the conclusion that she would not help me in reaching out to and recruiting participants from within her direct contacts.

To overcome the difficulties in gaining access, I predominantly approached participants through social media and personal contacts, assuring them of confidentiality. Moreover, once I entered the field and interviewed one participant, it became easier to approach other participants as well, because of snowball sampling. After gaining trust from one family, they willingly shared information about this study with their contacts and, eventually, getting participants became easier.

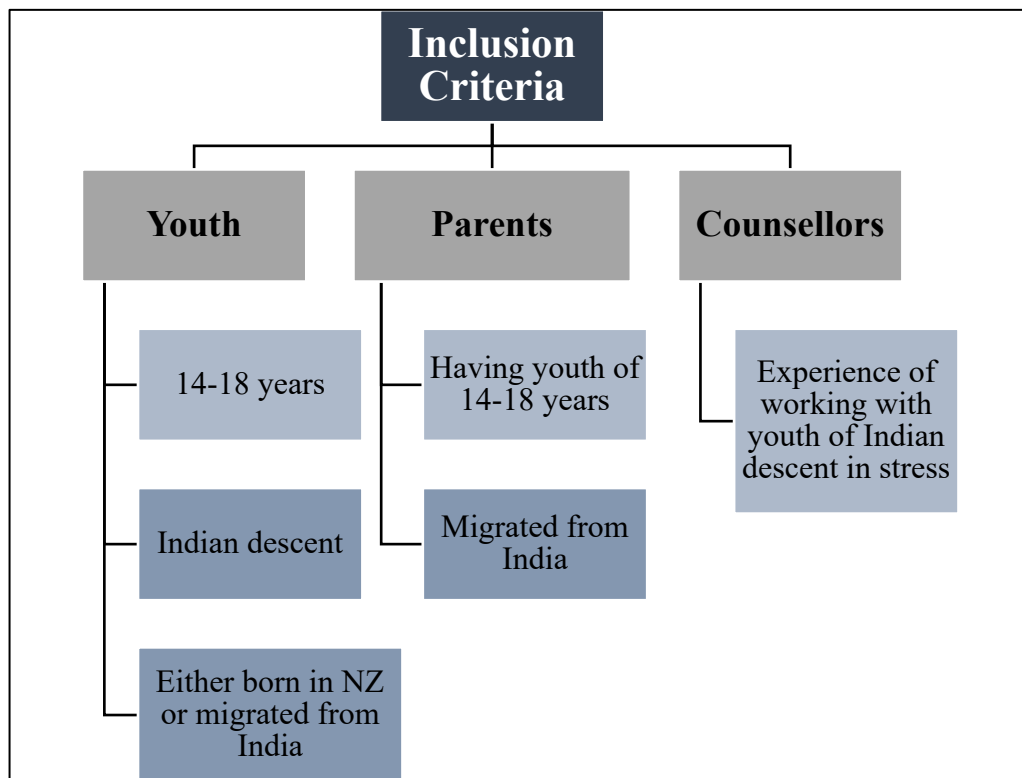
Research Methods

Interviews and focus groups were used as the main data collection methods in the study. The narrative inquiry methodology involves listening to peoples' stories in varied forms including interviews, focus groups, and/or formal or informal conversations (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). In social constructionist research, interviews explore the social and cultural conditions of possibility for individuals' perceptions and experiences. It highlights that the meanings generated by individuals are influenced by their culture and therefore there might be different social constructions of their experiences (Gubrium & Koro-Ljungberg, 2005). Through in-depth interviews, an understanding of the experiences and perceptions of stress among youth and parents was gained. Focus group discussions were used to collect data from three school-based counsellors to identify how counsellors construct stress and coping for young people of Indian descent, and how they construct their role in helping youth cope with stress. Focus groups provide an opportunity to share opinions and for various perspectives to be heard (Morgan & Fellow, 2008). Focus groups are used to explore different viewpoints in a social context (Massey,

2011), and have the ability to generate the data based on the interactional synergy of the group (Rabiee, 2004). The data gathered through group interaction helps in providing insight into deeper and richer information about a specific topic, more than might be obtained from a one-to-one interview (Stewart et al., 2007).

Figure 5

Inclusion criteria for each cohort in the study



The inclusion criteria for each group are shown in Figure 5. The inclusion criteria were based on the significance of understanding how youth in the age group of 14-18 years construct stress and coping through their experiences. As highlighted in Chapter 2: Literature Review, youth during this phase experience heightened stress. Therefore, coupled with living in a Western country, this stress adds to the complexity of their experiences and meaning generation. Furthermore, family and school context play a significant role in influencing youth in shaping their experiences. Therefore, it was crucial to understand the perspectives of parents and school-based counsellors as well.

Interviews in Social Constructionist Research

From a social constructionist perspective, the interview is particularly relevant as a way of gathering data because it can guide the researcher in understanding an individual's experience. Because the interview is contextual, resulting from information gathered in

an interaction between the researcher and the participant, in this study it can assist in understanding the participants' experience of stress, an important consideration in the context of this research.

A compelling reason for the use of interviews as a method of data collection is that, because interview participants are also actively involved in the construction of their own subjective experiences, interviews have the potential to provide deep insights into the participants' experiences. Denzin and Lincoln (1994); Denzin and Lincoln (2011) suggested that the experiences of the participants might include their values, beliefs, and aspirations.

Qualitative interviews are best suited to explore sensitive issues (Elam & Fenton, 2003) and help to probe into hidden issues (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In this study, in-depth narrative interviews were conducted with youth and parents. The use of in-depth interviews was chosen because it provides insights into participants' experiences and understandings of stress and its coping mechanism. In particular, narrative interviews allow the interviewer to understand the interviewee's comfort level and modify the questions accordingly (Fielding & Thomas, 2016).

Schütze (1977) proposed the technique of conducting narrative interviews in five phases. This systematic technique helps to reconstruct social events from the participants' perspective (as cited in Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000):

1. Preparation – This phase of narrative interviews is considered crucial as it is important for the researcher to become familiar with the field. In this study, I met with people of Indian descent who worked directly with the Indian community in Auckland to discuss the various stressors youth experience. In addition, it allowed me to focus on the immanent issues and outline the structure of the interview questions.
2. Initiation – During the initiation of the interview process, I discussed the entire interview process, including the audio recording, and the topic of the conversation. Before beginning the interview, I built rapport with the participants by talking about their interests and hobbies to make them feel comfortable.
3. Main narration – To ensure there was no interruption during the interview, I did not comment, except for non-verbal cues to show careful listening and explicit encouragement to continue the narration. Active listening helped me to develop

further questions to ask, to explore the experiences shared by the participants in depth.

4. Questioning phase – This phase emerges when the participant stops narrating the story and there are some gaps in the story. Therefore, I asked questions such as “What happened” or “How did it happen?” to get their understanding and opinion. This phase is intended to produce additional information beyond the self-generating scheme of the story. After the participants’ storytelling, I referred to their words to get more information about the context of the experiences they had shared. Also, the list of questions prepared was altered according to the story narrated by the participants, to ensure the relevance of the questions.
5. Concluding talk – Following the interview process, it is important to engage in conversation with the participant to ask if there is anything else they would like to share alongside the recorded narration. This could help the researcher get more data that the participant might not be comfortable sharing while the audio recording was under way. I made sure that when I turned off the audio-recorder, I made the environment a little more relaxed and checked to see if the participants wanted to share anything they did not want to record.

The interview process followed a list of questions; these are referred to as interview guides. However, these questions may or may not follow the same sequence in each interview, as the interview approach is flexible and responsive to the interviewee’s direction, generating significant views, and providing the interviewer with rich and in-depth answers (Bryman, 2008).

Specific to sensitive issues, interviews can delve deep into the participants’ experiences, perceptions, feelings, and opinions (Braun & Clarke, 2013), seeking in-depth information that is generally difficult to explore through focus groups (Johnson, 2001). Especially in Indian culture, talking about mental health is a taboo and people often face challenges when attempting to express themselves in front of others (Kishore et al., 2011). Therefore, a one-on-one interview gives them a platform to express themselves.

Face-to-face interviews involve human interaction (Creswell, 2007). The researcher can capture the interviewee’s body language, make eye contact with them, and respond to any apprehensions or questions the interviewee might have. Also, the researcher builds a rapport with the interviewee so that they feel comfortable and can share their experiences

and perceptions without discomfort (Guest et al., 2013), which would otherwise prove difficult to explore via other methods such as questionnaire or survey (Creswell, 2007).

Interviews were conducted face-to-face either in-person or via Zoom due to lockdown and/or fear of COVID-19. As commented by Adams-Hutcheson and Longhurst (2017), online interviews pose challenges related to lower engagement levels due to the physical separation of participants. Additionally, given the sensitivity of the subject matter, where youth shared their experiences potentially in the presence of their parents and/or family members, it might restrict the free flow of the conversation during these interviews. This circumstance may discourage participants from sharing the deeper nuances of their lived experience. To mitigate these challenges, I built rapport with the participants by first having casual conversations about their day, how they were feeling because of the pandemic, and about their family and siblings. Also, I confirmed with them whether or not their parents were around them during the interview, to ensure the participants were not intimidated by the presence of their parents. Despite these challenges, this study has demonstrated the importance of being creative, adaptable and flexible, to align with the circumstances of the participants and the field. A narrative interview lasting approximately 60-90 minutes was conducted with each participant in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' lived experience and perspectives. All participants were interviewed about the main issues guiding the interviews, which enabled answers to the research questions to be sought.

Mediated Dialogue

Interviews and focus groups are ways for framing group conversations. However, power must be considered in context because it influences dialogue between groups. In Indian culture, hierarchy is highly prevalent, whereby young people are discouraged from voicing their opinions to adults. This results in a gap in communication between the groups. Mediated dialogue (Nakhid, 2003) is a method through which the perspectives of one group can be communicated to the other group. The researcher acts as a mediator between the two groups, facilitating reflective conversations. This process is grounded in the social constructionist idea that understanding and knowledge are continuously negotiated and reshaped. Mediated dialogue empowers participants to share their views openly without any control or authority. The mediated dialogue method allows for rich and nuanced data to emerge through exploring multiple perspectives, delving into shared meanings, and uncovering insights that may not be accessible through individual

interviews (Nakhid, 2003). Additionally, mediated dialogue emphasises the collaborative creation of shared understanding, which aligns with social constructionist perspective that reality is constructed through interaction. However, the disadvantage of using this method is that, as the mediator, I may not be able to convey with the same emphasis and tone of the words used and comments made by the participants (Nakhid, 2003).

During the interview process with youth, the participants were asked what they would convey to parents and counsellors regarding the stressors they face, the support required, the changes needed in parents and counsellors' approaches, and ways to create a supportive environment for them. Youth responses were summarised and discussed with my supervisors. These reflections were conveyed to the parents and counsellors in interviews and focus groups respectively. This allowed participants to hear, rather than assume, the stressors that youth experience. It further gave parents and counsellors the opportunity to respond to the youth responses, based on their understanding and perspective. I asked the groups specifically "What do you think about the experiences shared by youth?" and "What are your views on the support youth require to cope with stress?" This method embodied an ongoing mediated dialogic opportunity to learn across the groups, with an aim to bridge the gap in the understandings of youth stress and coping, and to find ways to enhance youth wellbeing.

My role as a mediator-researcher was to examine the differences in understanding between the groups, not to reconcile the differences in perspectives. In addition, my role was to highlight the experiences of youth to the other groups, since they might not have been aware of them. There were a number of reasons that made me choose this method. Since the researcher is of the same ethnic background, there may be some advantages and limitations in having an insider perspective. Being of Indian ethnicity from India enabled me to understand relevant cultural nuances (e.g., appropriate ways to meet and greet) and cultural mindsets. I was also able to understand the vocabulary used by both youth and parents. Such an insider perspective makes it is easier to connect with participants and create a trusting environment in which the participants can share their experiences (Elam & Fenton, 2003; Suwankhong & Liamputtong, 2015), potentially leading to the discussion of sensitive issues through shared language and culture (Elam & Fenton, 2003). However, as stated in the "Insider vs Outsider" sub-theme in the "Ethical Considerations", being an insider could have limitations such as experiencing role conflict, making assumptions about the meaning that will be derived from a particular

situation, and bias in interpretation (Sherif, 2001). To mitigate these limitations, the researcher consciously chose to understand the participants' interpretations from an outsider's perspective. The dynamics of insider/outsider research issues were explored through the course of the study.

Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussions were conducted with the school-based counsellors. Focus groups involve a small group of people expressing their views and perceptions on an issue defined by the researcher (Cronin, 2016). A focus group is a data collection method in which the researcher studies how people respond to the opinions and viewpoints of others and gains insight into group interaction (Bryman, 2008). Furthermore, this method is used to study social interaction and the negotiation and construction of social norms (Robson et al., 2001). Focus groups are conducted to assess the collective perception of a common problem (Smithson, 2008). In this study, counsellors participated in the focus group discussion and shared their views on the causes of stress in youth, the coping mechanisms youth use and, when a young person seeks their help, the different measures or strategies they use to help the young person cope with stress.

The benefit of using focus group discussions is that the researcher develops an understanding of an individual's point of view and gathers different views on a concept or topic. In addition, individuals may question other people's views or opinions (Bryman, 2012). It could lead to a realistic approach to the issue, reflecting on the arguments of others and developing a new understanding of the concept (Bryman, 2008). Focus group discussions with counsellors allow their experiences and opinions to be shared (Bryman, 2012) and further built a discussion on the government's adopted strategies for dealing with youth mental health issues and how they can be improved. As a researcher, I conveyed the viewpoints of the youth participants to counsellors through focus groups which allowed the counsellors to share their opinions and ideas, and also focus on viewpoints for policy development for young people of Indian descent in New Zealand.

Focus group was conducted in-person which lasted approximately 90 minutes in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' lived understanding gained through first-hand experience of dealing with youth facing stress.

Data Analysis

All recordings of the interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed verbatim by me. I used Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines for thematic analysis to highlight key ideas emerging from the interviews and focus group. In the thematic analysis, codes were assigned to each theme in the data. The objective of coding is familiarisation with the raw data (Seal, 2016). The themes were generated by the inductive approach, in which the themes were determined from the data and not from pre-existing themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Braun and Clarke (2006) have highlighted five steps for conducting thematic analysis, i.e., familiarisation with the data, generating codes, constructing themes, refining themes, and constructing stories. Therefore, steps for conducting thematic analysis were adopted for this research study. For step 1, the interview transcripts and focus group discussions were read multiple times and the ideas that emerged from them were noted, and in step 2 codes for the same were generated. For steps 3 to 5, the construction of themes and the assignment of codes was based on the research questions, and relating the themes to the experiences and perceptions of youth on stress and coping mechanisms, as well as the perceptions of parents and counsellors.

The coding was done through a social constructionist lens by taking into account how societal norms, values, and beliefs may influence youth experiences. Moreover, the social constructionism lens was employed in identifying various social constructs by analysing the language used in the data. To gain deeper insights into the social dynamics influencing youth narratives, I revisited and refined the codes. I have chosen a thematic analysis based on the social constructionist lens as there are no studies in New Zealand exploring the understandings and experiences of the stress of youth of Indian descent and how they speak about it. The participants' accounts as shared in the context of the interview/focus group were not taken as evidence of what 'really happened' or what they 'really think/feel/do' about stress. Rather, the language people used when creating accounts of their experiences or impressions of stress/coping provided insight into the social and cultural factors that shape experiences of stress. The themes were then generated and subsequently analysed.

It has been noted earlier in this chapter that intersectionality is used as a method of analysis in this study. Scholars have supported the view that, in examining

intersectionality, it is crucial to analyse individual experiences relating to daily life (Christensen & Jensen, 2012). The intersectionality analytical approach posits that people inhabiting social categories of identity, migration, and environment experience the simultaneous and interlocking systems of oppression of each of their identities. After generating themes using a social constructionist lens, addressing those themes through an intersectional approach, provides a richer understanding of how the themes developed are interconnected with one other rather than being isolated. This was done on the basis of intersecting features of norms within culture and society, community interactions, and the intersecting experiences of stress and coping in youth of Indian descent.

The themes were discussed with my supervisors. As qualitative research can involve a large amount of data in the form of transcripts and observation notes (Zamawe, 2015), thematic analysis was carried out using NVivo software to increase the effectiveness of the collected data and minimise the time needed to organise the data (Seal, 2016). Analysis with NVivo is useful in many ways, such as organising data and tracking all the data collected, managing and accessing ideas generated during research to query the data, using the database to retrieve applicable evidence to answer those questions and present ideas through various stages of data interpretation, including the information generated in the database, and reporting the answers as an outcome (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013).

Researcher Reflexivity

An essential part of qualitative research is the ongoing personal reflexivity of the researcher (Mortari, 2015). This process informs the researcher about the process and how the study is shaping up, and, furthermore, about any changes that are needed while conducting the research, in order to answer the research questions. As a researcher, I recognise the influence of my personal thoughts and positioning in initiating and completing this research. To capture my thoughts, I kept a journal throughout the course of the research. This allowed me to go back to my journal during the analysis phase, to better understand the context of the conversations I had had.

Moreover, the reflexive journal ensured that the research process remained introspective and adaptive, thereby enhancing the credibility of the study findings. I monitored my emotional response to participants' narratives, tracked my evolving understanding of the social and cultural nuances, including how sociopolitical factors influenced youth stress.

I also consciously analysed the impact of my own identity on the interpretation of participant narratives.

I think it is appropriate to emphasise that I identify myself as an Indian and that I migrated to New Zealand. As a youth, I experienced various stresses such as academic pressures, relationship issues with my friends and parents, striving for autonomy, and expectations from people in society to achieve the best results in every aspect of my life. I wanted to talk to someone regarding things going on inside me but seeking professional help was considered a taboo. With a limited awareness of mental health, it was considered normal to face such situations and cope with them myself.

In this study, I held multiple roles: a female researcher, a migrant, a mediator between groups, an individual of Indian ethnicity, and an insider/outsider. These diverse perspectives enriched my understanding and interpretation of the narratives, ultimately contributing to the depth and rigor of the research. Acknowledging my facilitated roles, I consistently reflected on my potential impact on the interpretations of participant narratives. I engaged in regular discussions with my supervisors and peers to maintain transparency in the data and prioritise narratives over my own biases.

Quality in Qualitative Research

In qualitative research, demonstrating rigour and trustworthiness is very important (Given, 2008). The quality of qualitative research has often been questioned as it involves the subjective interpretation of information. However, researchers have proposed various strategies to ensure quality and rigour in qualitative research. The strategy most commonly adapted by qualitative researchers was proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), who emphasised four key components of rigour, namely credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Amankwaa, 2016).

Credibility

Prior to data collection, I reviewed the literature and consulted with various Indian community groups and stakeholders to familiarise myself with the area under study. Furthermore, the consultations enabled me to shape the study design, especially with respect to mediated dialogue between groups to reduce power imbalance between youth, parents, and counsellors. I used the narrative inquiry methodology and narrative interview

and focus group methods to ensure the participants narrated their stories without any hindrance and to encourage openness among participants.

To ensure credibility, I conducted pilot interviews to evaluate the method chosen to answer the research question. As discussed by Pratt and Yeziarski (2018), “the use of pilot study to test the method and interview guide further adds credibility and dependability to the study” (p. 417). A pilot study is conducted to ensure appropriateness of an interview guide and to self-assess one’s promptness, ability, and dedication as a qualitative researcher. Therefore, a pilot study can increase the credibility of a qualitative study. In this study, two pilot interviews were conducted, and after analysing the narratives, several questions were added to the interview guide. These questions included how youth identify themselves, the support they need from their families, counsellors, and society, and their motivations for participating in the study. These additions were crucial for gaining a comprehensive understanding of the participants’ perspectives.

During data collection, I also occasionally checked the accuracy and interpretation of the data with participants by asking them questions about what they meant by their statement, or repeating the story they narrated to me, to ensure that I was capturing their experiences. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility in narrative inquiry is represented through internal validity, which is exemplified by the “truth value” (p. 296) of the participant narrative. Drawing on this standpoint, Moon et al. (2016) stated that “credibility refers to the degree to which the research represents the actual meanings of the research participants, or the truth value” (p. 2). In line with this, I have emphasised on the participants’ voices in the findings chapter by providing a comprehensive description of the participants’ quotes, context, background, and their subjectivities which represent the ‘actual meaning’ of their narratives.

Also, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility could be further enhanced by the triangulation of data collection methods. Therefore, in this research I have included three methods of data collection, i.e., interview, focus group, and mediated dialogue method. Furthermore, including the perspectives of multiple groups, i.e., youth themselves, parents, and counsellors, provided both breadth and depth in the study. Moreover, the mediated dialogue method provided a window into the social construction of relevant factors that parents and counsellors may not be aware of from within their own positionality.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be generalised (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Because the data were collected with participants of Indian ethnicity, this study is small in size and only looks at youth of Indian descent who were either born in New Zealand or were born in India and migrated at some point in their lives. It is not intended that the understanding be generalised to ethnically diverse youth in New Zealand, but it may be helpful in understanding their experiences and interpretations.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), researchers should ensure that the reader is provided with sufficient contextual information to determine the study's transferability across different situations. In line with this, background and contextual information about the participants is provided to the extent that the participants' confidentiality was not compromised.

Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability refers to data consistency that is strongly sought in qualitative research (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). To ensure the dependability of this research, I have provided the detailed descriptions of the theoretical framework and methodological understanding to allow the study to be repeated. Rigour in the data was achieved through a comprehensive, open-ended interview guide that allowed for flexible immersion into participants' experiences. Also, the data was continuously referred to throughout the process of data analysis and writing.

Confirmability refers to the acknowledgement of the steps taken to ensure that the participants' understanding is conveyed, rather than the researchers' perspective (Nowell et al., 2017). To ensure confirmability, I kept a reflexive researcher journal to record field notes, in order to raise awareness of my biases and values and how these may have influenced the research process. Furthermore, throughout the research process, I regularly challenged my point of view through extensive exchanges with my supervisors.

Trustworthiness

The concept of trustworthiness was used by Guba and Lincoln to replace the terms reliability and validity (Nowell et al., 2017). Issues of trustworthiness are embedded in several aspects of narrative research, such as ownership and the context surrounding the stories, the plurality of voices and their impact on the stories (Moen, 2006). Within the social constructionist paradigm, truth is constructed and has multiple realities. Therefore,

the research was not about the truth of the stories, but about the meanings constructed by the stories. Polkinghorne (2007) stated the following:

Storied evidence is gathered not to determine if events actually happened but about the meaning experienced by people whether or not the events are accurately described. ... [S]toried texts serve as evidence for personal meaning, not for the factual occurrence of the events reported in the stories. (p. 479)

The data were collected from three groups, i.e., youth, parents and counsellors, which ensured the triangulation of the data (Padgett, 2012). In addition, the description of the research process was provided to the participants to ensure transparency. My reflexivity as a researcher was documented by maintaining a journal throughout the research process to record my thoughts, feelings, biases and reflections (Olmos-Vega et al., 2022). Frequent discussions with the supervisors helped in gaining additional perspectives on my reflexivity as a researcher, to ensure that personal biases and assumptions were addressed.

To ensure consistency in the analysis of the data, including in the themes and codes generated, three interview transcripts were analysed by both the researcher and the supervisors. Incorporating different perspectives helps in mitigating a researcher's biases. Moreover, having multiple individuals independently analyse the interview transcripts can help establish reliability, and the development of a more robust analysis, which further enhances the trustworthiness of the research. All these aspects ensured that the inferences generated were reflective of the participants' experiences.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the theoretical underpinnings of my research, social constructionism and intersectionality as a method to analyse how youth of Indian descent in New Zealand gave meanings to the stress experienced by them. Participants' experiences and understanding of stress, coping, and help-seeking were collected using the narrative inquiry methodology. I discussed ethical issues and how rigour and trustworthiness were achieved. I described the research process and the method of analysis, emphasising the importance of young people's voices and making their experiences more visible to present their understanding of stress and coping, as well as how they socially construct their meaning and understanding of stress and coping. The

following three chapters describe the findings obtained from the analysis of the data through the social constructionism lens.

Analysis

The focus of the following three chapters is on highlighting the social construction of stress and its management among youth of Indian heritage, as articulated by youth, parents and counsellors, and examining the impact of mediated dialogue in gaining a deeper understanding of youth stress. To achieve this, the study goes beyond describing participants' accounts and delves into the intersectional aspects of identity, migration, and wellbeing. The three chapters cover stress, coping, and mediated dialogue. In keeping with the social constructionist lens (Burr, 2015) and giving voice to those who are not often heard, Chapters 4 and 5 on the constructions of stress and coping begin with the accounts of the youth participants. Chapter 6, on the mediated dialogue, involves exploring adults' reactions and responses to the summaries of the youth participants' constructions. Furthermore, I draw on the narratives of parents and counsellors to identify points of similarities and differences between their perspectives and those of youth.

The findings from these chapters are interpreted using an intersectional approach, which emphasises how stress and coping is influenced by various factors such as gender, ethnicity, age, and socio-economic status. Intersectional analysis was crucial to examine how social realities were constructed through social interactions and cultural norms, while also considering how social identities intersect to influence youths' experiences of stress. This approach is particularly important for analysing participant narratives. The following chapters begin by examining narratives, considering various factors that influence youth experiences. At the end of each chapter, the intersections between multiple factors, including Indian identity, social status, power dynamics, migration, sociopolitical factors, and stress—factors that shape individual experiences—are highlighted.

Chapter 4: Constructions of Stress

This first analysis chapter focuses on how the participants constructed the stress experienced by Indian youth. Four major constructs of stress embedded in the lived experiences of the participants were identified through thematic analysis of the interviews and focus groups, as illustrated in Figure 6, below: a) *whiteness*; b) *belongingness*; c) *dual personality*; and d) *cultural expectations and restrictions*. While the constructs of ‘whiteness’ and ‘belongingness’ were primarily constructed by youth, ‘dual personality’ was emphasised by both youth and parents, and the construct of ‘cultural expectations and restrictions’ was emphasised by all three groups: youth, parents, and counsellors. Each stress construct encompassed various intersecting aspects, which are further explored within each theme.

The concept of ‘negotiating whiteness’ as a theme of stress encompasses various interrelated issues, including racial stereotypes, systemic racism, and the desire to conform to prevailing societal expectations. This refers to the psychological and social challenges faced by people as they deal with the negative stereotypes and institutionalised discrimination associated with their racial identity. The stress of negotiating whiteness involves a dynamic interplay between individual experiences and broader social structures, which profoundly impacts the mental health and wellbeing of Indian youth.

Stress as loss of ‘belongingness’ encompasses the experience of positioning oneself and being positioned as an outsider. This involves a complex interplay between personal identity, social identity, and the socio-cultural contexts in which individuals live. Youth described being positioned as ‘outsiders’ within New Zealand schools, Indian community events, and during visits to India. They experienced a profound sense of disconnection, isolation, and disorientation, which could have negative consequences for their mental health and wellbeing.

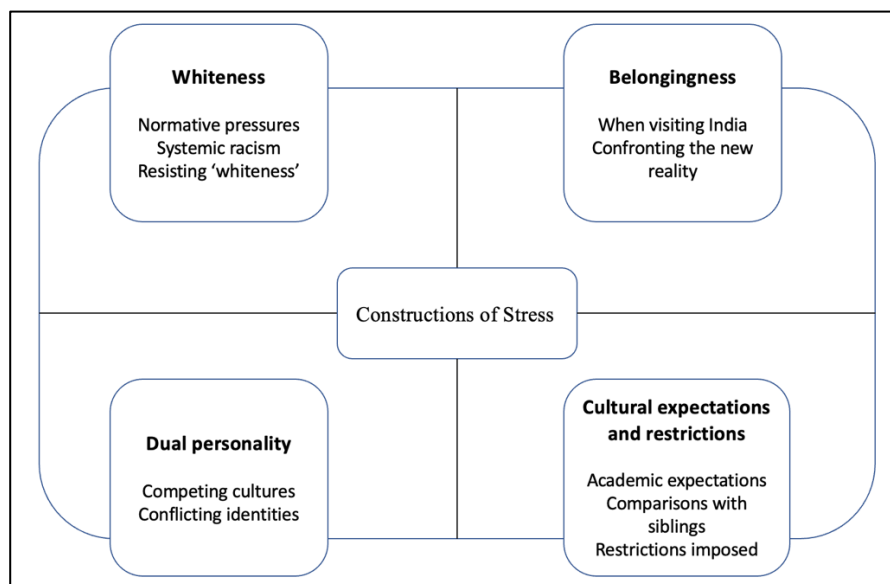
Stress as a ‘dual personality’ encompasses the experience of conflicting identities and competing cultures. This concept describes the coexistence of two distinct cultural identities, wherein youth strive to maintain a connection with their Indian heritage while also adapting and integrating into the dominant culture. The dilemma and struggle arising from this process results in stress among ethnic minority youth.

Stress as ‘cultural expectations and restrictions’ pertains to the set of expectations placed on youth by their Indian parents, leading to heightened stress. This concept positions Indian parents as having a strong focus on academic achievement for their children, with a particular emphasis on pursuing STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) professions, which are considered to be ‘stable’. Moreover, these careers were associated with gaining societal status and financial benefits. Simultaneously, this concept highlighted some gender-based restrictions placed on youth. The rigorous expectations placed on youth create a stressful environment, leading to negative mental health outcomes, such as anxiety, and also leading to suicidal ideation, as mentioned in youth narratives. Additionally, these expectations contribute to feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt among youth, resulting in lasting impacts on their wellbeing. This identity, and the positioning as ‘tiger parents’ used by youth, were resisted by parents who emphasised the misunderstandings that can result between them and their children where these expectations are assumed and not discussed.

Although I present each theme independently, in the data they were all interconnected.

Figure 6

Constructions of stress



Stress as ‘Negotiating Whiteness’

The majority of the youth accounts obtained in this study indicated that ‘negotiating whiteness’ was the primary source of stress affecting their wellbeing. According to Helms (2017), *whiteness* is defined as “the overt and subliminal socialisation processes and

practices, power structures, laws, privileges, and life experiences that favour the White racial group over all others” (p. 718). Dominant whiteness produced a range of denigrating behaviour from overt racism to more subtle forms of exclusion.

The theme of ‘negotiating whiteness’ is further divided into two sub-themes – ‘Normative Pressures to Gain Acceptance’ and ‘Systemic Racism in Educational Settings’. Youth narratives in this study indicated their inclination to conform to prevailing New Zealand societal norms in order to fit in and gain acceptance within their white peer groups. These accounts also demonstrated acts of overt racism can and do take place in New Zealand schools. These aspects are explored within the respective sub-themes of ‘negotiating whiteness’.

The following sections explore how these acts were made possible by a broader system of social and institutional norms prioritising whiteness. The narratives of youth in this study highlighted how normative pressures and racial stereotyping could be supported by systemic racism in New Zealand schools and other spaces which prioritise whiteness and white people. This issue is further explored in the subsequent theme.

Normative Pressures to Gain Acceptance

The youth participants in this study narrated their attempts to conform to norms of whiteness in order to gain social acceptance and how they were met with racial stereotyping and bullying when they did not adhere to those dominant white standards. Most of the youth participants in this study expressed their desire to be accepted by their peers, particularly emphasising befriending white people. For instance, Aashvi (youth) initially wanted to be friends with a popular group of white girls from her school because she perceived them as “cool”. Although, she eventually became part of the group, she still felt a lack of acceptance and connection with them:

I really wanted to get into that group of white girls because they were so cool. Everyone knew them ... they were a bunch of popular people ... [when entered the group, I thought] people know me now ... [eventually] that’s not what like made me satisfied when I was in their group, I was almost like I felt left out like I didn’t really feel accepted. I felt like I was in the group of a bunch of popular people ... I had fun with them but I never felt that connection and [I] was not comfortable ... that you know when you feel with your friend, you are like that’s the one ... so then slowly through years I left that group. (Aashvi, youth)

Aashvi's account provides insight into the complexities of how racial minorities in predominantly 'white' societies may aspire to fit in with the dominant group due to perceived privilege and social status. This further highlights how the young people in this study not only attempted to conform to the norms of whiteness but were also aware of the power dynamics and hierarchy that existed between them and their white peers. Despite growing up in New Zealand from a young age (one year old), Aashvi was still made to feel inferior to her white counterparts and sought acceptance from the dominant group, who were considered more "cool" and "popular", highlighting the intersection of race and social status. This further indicated that racial hierarchies are deeply embedded and persist regardless of one's cultural integration or upbringing, emphasising how ethnic minority youth navigate a complex social landscape where race intersects with social status to influence their experiences of acceptance and belonging.

Moreover, Ana's (youth) account highlighted that she often hid signs of her own interests and identity to be accepted by white peers, leading her to engage in activities and hobbies, such as playing badminton, that were popular among her white peers.

That's how we make friends like oh you've got to like playing badminton ... in school you have to be like similar to other [white] kids to make friendship ... just interest in like the way they are and you follow the same. ... I wanted to be friends with the white girls basically ... I wanted to be accepted by them, so I tried to do the same things they did ... it's hard that like you can't just be yourself. ... Also, whenever we had rakhi (Indian festival where the sister ties a thread to her brother), I would wear the [thread] and everyone would be like what is that, that's weird ... I said it's a cultural thing and I still kept on [wearing the thread] but I tried to hide it under a jumper. (Ana, youth)

This indicates that youth aspire to develop friendships with 'whites' without compromising their own identity. Although this represents an ideal scenario, it does not seem to be realised, resulting in youth compromising aspects of their own identity. Furthermore, Ana emphasised that conforming to social norms "was important" to her and that she was "trying to teach [her younger] brother the similar thing". Ana conformed to the dominant standards, was always "conscious", and ensured that she exhibited similar interests in front of her peers.

Ana's involvement in badminton serves as an example, as the sport has historically been associated with white culture and social status. Badminton was introduced into India by British army officers in the 1860s and has been predominantly played by wealthy and

privileged individuals (Guillian, 2004). Moreover, badminton requires specialised equipment and courts, which makes it difficult for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds to participate. Therefore, Ana's participation in badminton reflected her alignment with white people of higher social standing. This conforming to social norms made Ana's life 'easier' by reducing feelings of victimisation and exclusion. However, it also imposed an additional burden on her to manage her conforming behaviour, such as having to come to terms with adhering to the dominant norms, and the need to hide or alter her identity to gain acceptance. This also highlights the significant influence that social environments have on young people and their interests.

Embracing whiteness as the norm may involve denigrating one's own culture and, at times, actively contributing to the continued acceptance of whiteness. Nimit (youth), born in New Zealand, shared his experience of being made fun of at school for his appearance and being referred to as a "curry muncher". To gain acceptance, he resorted to making fun of himself and mimicking his Indian accent. Nimit felt like an outsider and wanted to be "accepted as a New Zealander". Nimit expressed his belief that it would be easier to fit in if "you sound like a white person or a Kiwi person". Initially, he felt happy when everyone in his environment accepted him as a comedian, but later, he questioned himself for initiating this act and expressed unhappiness for not respecting his own culture:

They were like, oh, you're ISIS because the way I look and stuff. And then curry muncher, you know, those words. But over time I developed, like, for fun an Indian accent. So, I would do that and just play around and make fun of myself, and be like, because I kind of got accepted [by social group] by doing that ... but at the same time when I thought about it, like I am not really respecting myself and the culture. (Nimit, youth)

Nimit's narrative highlights the complex and conflicting dynamics of conformity and identity preservation. Nimit also recognised that his actions contributed to maintaining the stereotype he upheld against his own cultural identity. Nimit's experiences were shaped by the interplay of identity and social acceptance. While conformity may offer temporary acceptance, it often comes at the cost of suppressing one's own identity and feeling disconnected with one's own cultural heritage (Balidemaj & Small, 2019). Nimit's internal conflict between the desire for acceptance and the preservation of his identity and cultural heritage had a negative impact on his wellbeing, resulting in feelings of sadness and unhappiness.

Moreover, Nimit's strategy of using 'humour' to gain acceptance can be understood within the prevailing cultural context dominated by whiteness, as discussed earlier. Despite being born and raised in New Zealand, Nimit still faced a lack of 'acceptance' from his environment due to his ethnicity and experienced stereotyping from his peers at school. His narrative illustrates the multiple layers of oppression he experienced based on his ethnicity and the pressure to assimilate for social acceptance. Nimit's account highlighted his strategy for employing humour which allowed him to gain acceptance from his social environment while minimising the likelihood of encountering further stereotyping, prejudices, and discriminatory experiences. It seemed that humour was the primary and, perhaps, the most accessible approach for Nimit to cope with his stressors. However, the use of humour to address his challenges led to the suppression of his own identity, resulting in a feeling of loss of belonging, perpetuating negative self-perception, and reinforcing stereotypes of himself in his social environment.

Consistent with previous research (Calvete et al., 2011; Graves et al., 2021), the narratives of youth in this study highlighted gender differences in ways of coping. From the narratives, it was observed that Nimit (male youth) tended to utilise humour more, whereas the female youth in this study seemed to utilise the diversion of their attention to other activities, such as journal writing or engaging in walking, as ways to address stress. This is further explored in Chapter 5: Constructions of Addressing Stress.

The dominance of white norms in schools was also evidenced by youth experiences of not wanting to wear Indian outfits, speak native language, and eat Indian food in those settings. Ana (youth) expressed feeling "embarrassed to be Indian" and "started to not like being Indian". Ana and Aashvi expressed receiving strange stares from their peers because of the food, its odour, and the clothes they wore during school cultural days. This contradicts the intended purpose of cultural days, which are meant to foster an atmosphere of inclusivity and acceptance. Aashvi expressed feeling "humiliated" and "embarrassed" because of the teasing she received due to the smell of her food. Consequently, they adapted their behaviours to conform, such as Ana switching to sandwiches instead of Indian food for lunch and Aashvi throwing away her food. Ana stated that those incidents occurred because she was in a white-dominant school. Furthermore, Ana mentioned that her grandparents picked her up from school when she was a child, but she never liked that because her grandparents wore Indian clothing that none of the other people wore:

I was really embarrassed of it [grandparents Indian wear] because like they [grandparents] would always pick me up from school 'cause the school wasn't very far. So, you know, they always wore like [commonly worn Indian ethnic wear known as salwar kameez] suits and stuff, and no one else like wore that. Well, I'd always be embarrassed of them like coming to school to pick me up in these clothes. (Ana, youth)

Ana's account highlights how the dominant culture's norms and values have constructed the idea of what is acceptable or normal in terms of clothing. In this case, Ana felt "embarrassed" by her grandparents' traditional clothing and was afraid of being judged by her peers, which demonstrates the pressure to conform to the dominant cultural norms and values, so as to be accepted. This pressure is reinforced by the systemic power dynamics that privilege and normalise white cultural expressions, while marginalising other cultures. Khushi shared a similar sentiment to Ana and mentioned that she "tried to like do the same things they did", even though it never satisfied her.

Furthermore, Ria (youth) and Ana (youth) stated that Indian youth were hesitant to be identified as Indians because they wanted to fit in with white people. Ana stated she was too "self-conscious" when speaking her native language, saying "I would say no mumma I want to speak English and I just refused to talk in Hindi". Ria expressed that Indian youth do not prefer to speak in their own language because of the strange facial expressions they would receive from their peers:

I know a lot of other Indian people who ... don't even accept themselves as Indians who are actually even ashamed of you know, calling themselves an Indian ... there was this one [Indian] guy in my class who when me and my friend ... [my friend] was talking in Hindi and he's like why are you talking in Chinese. (Ria, youth)

The accounts of Ana, Khushi, and Ria demonstrate how language, clothing, and food serve as visible markers that differentiate groups, leading to exclusion and marginalisation. This suggests that denying one's heritage can result in feelings of shame and disconnection from one's cultural identity (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). This shame is produced by the social environment, where youth are seen as strange and outside the norm of the dominant culture. It also suggests that the notion of normality and what is accepted by the social environment is white-dominated. The desire of youth to be accepted by the dominant culture was also noted by other researchers who discussed 'respectability politics' in relation to the queer/rainbow community (Dazey, 2021; Nakhid, Tuwe, et al., 2022). Respectability politics refers to the process whereby

individuals from marginalised groups conform to the prevailing dominant social norms established by the dominant group (Dazey, 2021). In this sense, youth seem to view themselves through the lens of the dominant discourse that prioritises whiteness, constantly comparing themselves to their European counterparts.

Nimit and Ria's accounts indicate that youth tend to speak English, the dominant language, to avoid standing out and facing judgement from their European peers. This illustrates how speaking a minority language is associated with feelings of shame and being considered backward. It also indicates that conversing in one's native language may be constrained in situations where being white is valued so highly. Despite New Zealand being a diverse country with more than 160 languages spoken, it remains one of the most monolingual worldwide, with over 95 percent of New Zealanders speaking only English, according to the 2018 census (Royal Society of New Zealand, 2013; Statistics New Zealand, 2018b), although this percentage might have decreased in the recent times owing to the increased migration in Aotearoa. Consequently, youth attempt to hide their identity with respect to the language spoken, reflecting the powerful influence of social environments on identity formation, as discussed in Chapter 2: Literature Review. The excerpts further imply that racial and ethnic disparities persist within the school context, reflecting broader societal behaviours.

Racial Stereotyping and Bullying in New Zealand Schools

In addition to language and cultural identity, the youth participating in this study also encountered instances of racial stereotyping. For instance, Nimit discussed the stereotypes he experienced as an Indian living in New Zealand, including being referred to as "an ISIS" (a member of a terrorist organisation) and a "curry muncher" (as highlighted in the 'normative pressures' theme). Additionally, he expressed that usually Indians were assumed to be confined to work as Uber drivers and/or own a dairy. While Nimit acknowledged that some Indians did indeed "work in similar fields", he expressed sadness and frustration about these perceptions:

So, people just guess like, they didn't even know if he was doing Uber or not. But they were like, oh, your dad must be an Uber driver or a dairy owner. (Nimit, youth)

Expanding on Nimit's account of racial stereotyping, Dhairya (youth) shared his encounters with misconceptions related to his interests and academic abilities due to his Indian ethnicity. Dhairya also mentioned that people often assumed he played cricket

because of his Indian background. Moreover, he felt the pressure to excel academically, especially in mathematics and science courses. He stated, “people would always ask me questions [about] maths and science. ... I mean, I am good at maths but like they [schoolmates] just assume that I was good” based on stereotypes about Indian students. Dhairya was aware and accepted these assumptions and expectations tied to his Indian ethnicity:

Dhairya (youth): People expected me to like cricket. A lot. I was never really into cricket. I ... played football, basketball, [which] wasn't expected. Some people did expect me to be smart. ... I never felt pressure to live up to [their expectations].

Researcher: So, you had already accepted that this is what's going to happen?

Dhairya: Yes, I knew ... because I was Indian and a boy.

The accounts of Nimit (youth) and Dhairya (youth) indicate the pervasive nature of racial stereotypes and discrimination in New Zealand society, particularly in the school environment. Ethnic minority groups were often stereotyped and discriminated against based on society's preconceived notions about their preferences and occupations. In this case it indicates that the stereotypes related to their academic achievements and hobbies also persisted in this study. This supports work documenting the ongoing persistence of the model minority image of Asians as excessively competent and studious, particularly in science and maths (Asher, 2008; Louie, 2004). The stereotypes discussed by youth in this study seemed to negatively impact their sense of self. These youth experienced feelings of sadness and frustration, often accepting these stereotypical comments as “normal” aspects of their lives, possibly stemming from a sense of powerlessness to challenge them.

The youth narratives mentioned above were indicative of the fact that their white peers employed stereotypes to position Indian youth in limiting categories, influenced by racial prejudices and reinforcing preconceptions about them. These stereotypes extended beyond social implications and had an impact on academic performance by inducing stress. This highlights the socially constructed and reinforced nature of racial stereotypes.

Dhairya's (youth) narrative illustrates how expectations and stereotypes are shaped by multiple intersecting identities, including ethnicity and gender. This is exemplified by the association of Indians with a specific sport traditionally played by males. Despite their upbringing in New Zealand, Indian youth had constant pressure to conform to

stereotypical images imposed by the dominant group (Asher, 2008). This illustrates the differential treatment faced by Indians and others who do not “look” to have white ancestry, even if they have been born and raised in New Zealand, compared to migrants who may “look white”, even though they may have just arrived in New Zealand. Society’s perception of individuals is shaped by outward appearances, which continue to be associated with preconceived ideas and prejudices. This aligns with research undertaken by Simon-Kumar et al. (2022) involving ethnic minority youth (13-17 years). The study found that youth belonging to minorities who were perceived as ‘white’ experienced comparatively less discrimination and had more privileges than those from visibly racialised groups.

Parents also identified the prevalence of racial stereotyping in schools. For instance, Saanvi, a parent, mentioned that her daughter was questioned by her peers about her religion, which caused significant stress for her daughter. Saanvi expressed that her daughter, in response to the negative perception of her religion, began questioning her own religious Muslim beliefs. Consequently, her daughter became reluctant to identify herself as a Muslim and “would go to lengths to hide the fact that she was a Muslim”. For instance, Saanvi’s daughter refrained from observing religious practices like “not keeping [the] fast [during] Ramadan” to avoid her classmates discovering her Muslim identity and being subjected to discrimination and prejudice. This resulted in a clash of opinions between Saanvi and her daughter, as Saanvi encouraged her to resist such situations, asking her daughter “how are you going to deal with that [discriminatory situation]?” However, her daughter wanted to distance herself from her religion in the face of social pressures. According to Saanvi, her daughter was not vocal about her feelings; however, her daughter stated that “I don’t want to follow Islam”:

Saanvi (parent): She [her daughter] asked why [was] she Muslim? ... I think there was the shooting in one of the cities in America at that time, I think going back five or six years, in one of the clubs. And you know, so they [daughter’s friends] said, ‘Oh we never knew you were a Muslim.’ [Friends asked,] “So you are a Muslim?” So, she [daughter] said yeah and they [daughter’s friends] were like, “Oh, how can you do that? How could you follow that religion?” And, yeah, those were just insensitive things that kids say.

Researcher: What did you do in this situation?

Saanvi (parent): I said, today it will be this, tomorrow it will be that you are a brown woman ... third day it will be something else. It will always going to be something that you are going to [be] challenged with. ... So

I said, how are you going to deal with that? Are you not going to be who you are?

Saanvi's (parent) account illustrates how language and discourse can shape identities, particularly regarding racial stereotypes affecting youth wellbeing. Saanvi's daughter faced questions about her religion due to negative societal narratives, leading her to hide her faith and question her identity. This highlights the impact of dominant discourses on the sense of self of young people. Moreover, the media-driven terrorism discourse intensifies discrimination against Muslims, complicating youth bicultural identity development (Kassaye et al., 2016; Mourad, 2022). Intersectional identities, influenced by societal views and peer responses, experience multiple layers of discrimination, affecting sense of belonging of youth (Forrest-Bank & Dupper, 2016).

The complexity of balancing authenticity with societal expectations is evident, as Saanvi encourages her daughter to resist stereotypes. There seems to be an additional pressure from the parent to conform to the culture and religion, despite being aware of the existing stereotypes. However, Saanvi may not be completely aware of the social pressures and consequences her daughter might have experienced among her peer group, as her daughter did not explain the reasons behind her reluctance to embrace her Muslim identity. Despite this gap in understanding, Saanvi likely draws from her own experiences to empathise with her daughter's struggles. This suggests that parents and youth may face difficulties in bridging their understanding due to differing social contexts, which can create friction between them.

Similarly, counsellors echoed the parents' concern regarding the pressures to 'fit into the norm'. Due to the need to navigate between two cultures, "they do not want to face their culture, because it does not fit in with their peer group", according to Sara (counsellor). This suggests that culture and normative pressures intersect for these youth. However, while the consequences of not fitting in (brought about through overt and covert acts of racism, discrimination, and exclusion) were emphasised in the narratives of youth and parents, the school counsellors participating in the focus group did not identify these factors. In fact, when brought into contact with the lived experience of youth, they even dismissed such occurrences. The dismissal of these encounters may result in the individualisation of issues, placing the burden on youth to resist societal pressures. This complex dynamic will be further discussed in Chapter 6: Mediated Dialogue. Therefore,

further investigation and careful consideration of the gap in awareness among counsellors of these incidents occurring in the school environment is required.

The accounts of parents referred to above reinforce the notion of ‘negotiating whiteness’ discussed by youth in this study, particularly peer acceptability. This aligns with the findings discussed by Thomas and Choi (2006) and Tummala-Narra et al. (2016), highlighting that youth encountering stereotyping and discrimination because of their perceived lack of peer acceptance experienced considerable stress. Increased acceptance and popularity among peers led to an increase in youth self-esteem (Birkeland et al., 2014; Verkuyten, 2003). The accounts of Saanvi (parent) and Sara (counsellor) highlight the significant impact of the dominant norms, which expect certain behaviours from youth in order to be accepted and treated well, result in young people not wanting to “stand out” or “face their culture”. The implications of this are further explored in Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion.

The following sub-theme focuses on another facet of whiteness, systemic racism, as identified by the participants in this study.

Systemic Racism in Educational Settings

Youth accounts were suggestive of systemic racism in operation in New Zealand schools. Systemic racism is defined as “racially discriminatory policies and practices embedded in social institutions such as the government, the economy, the education system, the healthcare system, religious institutions, the family, and the media” (Neblett & Neal, 2022, p. 1280).

Ana (youth) reported receiving an overt form of racism through a comment “fuck off you Indian” during one of the school games by her white counterpart:

And the guy [classmate] comes up saying, “Oi you’re cheating”, like, “You were out ages ago” ... and I was, like, “No I wasn’t out” ... so we’re just waiting on the rules of the game and then all of a sudden, he goes. This is harsh language. Can I say? [Researcher: Yes] He goes, “Fuck off you Indian”. And it felt like a slap in the face. We were just debating about the rules of the game and for him to just go like “Indian”, you know and it just felt really bad. (Ana, youth)

Dominant whiteness marked Ana out as ‘other’ and subjected her to racial hostility. The shock of being marked by her race in the context of ordinary negotiation of the rules of a game stayed with Ana. The example above demonstrates that acts of overt racism can and

do take place in New Zealand schools, as was also indicated by some of the youth participating in this study. Ana's account highlighted this construct as she shared that, despite her friends filing complaints with higher school authorities, no action was taken against the student who made the remark. Ana stated, "my friend ... she went up to the teacher and said he [the white counterpart] did [make the comment] ...[but] the teacher let him go." The youth narratives reflect the broader pattern of racial discrimination embedded in the structures and practices of the education system of New Zealand, leading to unequal treatment for individuals from different racial backgrounds. Taken together with other examples where the institution disregarded the severity of the situation by not finding it significant enough to be addressed, this suggests systemic issues of racism prevailing in Aotearoa New Zealand's school systems.

Eventually, Ana communicated the incident to her parents, and after Ana's parents reported the incident to the Dean, the student was called to the Dean's office. However, Ana noticed no difference in his behaviour. Ana's account emphasises her personal form of resistance in response to the incident she experienced, as she asked her parents to speak with school authorities. Additionally, Ana's account also highlights how institutions, explicitly or implicitly, can either sanction or allow mistreatment of youth through their action or inaction.

When asked about her thoughts at that time, Ana expressed her anger and said:

I felt like slapping him [white counterpart]. ... I was so mad ... I wanted to change what he thought [about Indians] ... [Researcher: What stopped you?] ... It's just, like, the way he [white counterpart] was looking at me like you Indian ... but then I just ran out. (Ana, youth)

This illustrates the deep impression left on Ana, as she sensed hatred from the white counterpart, and feeling she was being looked down upon due to her ethnic background. Despite Ana's urge to slap the person, she chose to withdraw from the situation, potentially influenced by the prevailing systemic racism being apparent through the inaction of the school authorities. This lack of responsiveness from school authorities likely led Ana to believe that her actions, such as slapping a white student as a person from Indian ethnic background, might yield significant consequences or punishment for her. This, in turn, may have prompted her to suppress her emotions. This highlights the additional challenges faced by minority youth in addressing and confronting acts of discrimination due to power imbalances and emotional turmoil caused by such

experiences (Roy et al., 2020). This further demonstrates a prevailing sense of helplessness, disempowerment, and apprehension that her actions could fall back on her, ultimately leading to frustration.

Ana's (youth) account also suggests that youth of Indian descent were acutely aware of the incidents of racism and bullying they had witnessed and/or experienced. Some of the youth participants in this study were able to discern when they were treated differently from their European peers, which caused them to feel frustrated and stressed. For instance, Daksh (youth) explained, "No one says it openly, but [it] is understood that [there] is a difference [in expectations and treatment] ... nobody says it, but we know [it]." This also reinforces the construct of whiteness that these youth of Indian descent had to continually navigate and negotiate in their social environment, particularly within the school context. It also emphasises that while anti-bullying policies are intended to apply to all children within every educational setting, irrespective of their racial background, the accounts provided by Ana (youth) and Daksh (youth) demonstrate a disconnect between policy and practice.

This divergence in implementation emphasises the concept of whiteness and the inherent privilege accorded to white students by the system/society. While the school may not overtly acknowledge or endorse such disparities, the systemic bias becomes prominent through the school's actions and responses. Despite the existence of formal policies, it becomes apparent that when confronted with instances of racism, these policies are often not put into practice or effectively enforced. The youth participants' accounts also indicate that the school systems are designed to favour the 'white' group as they fail to identify the persistence of racism, addressing it as a small matter among students that does not necessitate their involvement.

Similarly, parents also shared instances of systemic racism in New Zealand schools. For instance, Saanvi (parent) stated that her daughter was physically assaulted by her schoolmates, an act linked with making fun of Indian food. Despite reporting the incident to the school principal, Saanvi stated that no action was taken, as the principal was unwilling to investigate the matter. According to Saanvi, the principal's attitude shifted when she expressed her intention of "taking this to Ministry of Education", and "all of a sudden" she saw a "change in her [principal's] attitude". Sarah, another parent, also shared a similar experience where her daughter was treated unfairly at school. Despite both her daughter and a white student making a similar mistake, her daughter faced

different disciplinary action. Sarah's daughter explained that the white student's behaviour went unrecognised and unaddressed, while she was denied the opportunity to provide an explanation and instead was punished:

She [Sarah's daughter] wasn't given the time of day to explain herself, when she did explain it, wasn't received well, or accepted. ... And then she said that she saw every other day others [white classmates] in wrong shoes and doing the same things that she's been pulled up for. (Sarah, parent)

The above parents' accounts emphasise the disparity in disciplinary measures taken when addressing incidents involving a white student versus those involving an ethnic minority youth. The above accounts suggest that the school systems have prejudices, and when Indian youth speak up, they may be seen as aggressive. These perceptions may stem from the cultural stereotypes and model minority myth, with an assumption that Indian youth are less likely to engage in arguments or question school authorities due to hierarchical structure typically followed in Indian culture. Consequently, when Indian youth do express themselves or stand up for their rights, it may be viewed as a deviation from the expected behaviour and therefore potentially lead to disciplinary consequences that are disproportionate to their actions.

Saanvi's account reinforced Ana's experience of systemic racism evident in school and anti-bullying policies not implemented equally for all students. Sarah's (parent) narratives further elaborated this, as her daughter faced consequences for wearing the wrong shoes, while her white counterpart did not receive any punishment and was let go for the same mistake. These instances reveal the presence of systemic racism in the school environment. The prejudice and the preconceived notion about ethnic minority youth being problematic compared to white students seem to be embedded in the school system.

Wilkinson (2005) study with Indigenous and non-indigenous Australian students discussed how the presence of systemic racism within the education sector is a consequence of the complex interweaving of institutional racism and interpersonal prejudice demonstrated by teachers and students of non-indigenous heritage. According to this viewpoint, systemic racism emanates from both institutional dynamics and the day-to-day interactions within the classroom environment. This encompasses the effects of deeply embedded stereotypes and negative beliefs about minority groups, which persist at individual, institutional, and societal levels.

Sarah's account aligns with the study by Simon-Kumar et al. (2022), which delved into the persistent challenges experienced by ethnic minority youth in Aotearoa New Zealand. The study indicates the persistent inequalities confronted by these youth, shedding light on the pervasive nature of racism embedded at both structural and systemic levels. For instance, youth in this study described facing differential treatment from school authorities based on their racial and ethnic backgrounds. Even when these instances of racism were escalated to different levels of authority, such as teachers or the Dean, the concerns raised by youth failed to receive appropriate attention. Similarly, Simon-Kumar et al. (2022) study highlighted a higher incidence of discrimination faced by ethnic minority youth compared to their white peers.

Amidst conforming to the norms associated with whiteness and confronting systemic racism, these participants also resisted the prevailing dominant norms and found a sense of pride by embracing their ethnic identity, and I now focus on how they did so.

Stress as Loss of 'Belongingness' and 'Outsider' Status

Some of the youth participating in this study experienced stress due to their positioning as 'outsiders' and the feeling of not 'belonging'. This feeling was prevalent whether they migrated to New Zealand or visited India as expatriates ('expats'). The youth participants expressed how they were perceived as outsiders by both Indian-born people and/or those living overseas. This sense of being an 'outsider' caused stress for them, regardless of whether they were in India or New Zealand. For instance, youth of Indian descent born in New Zealand were considered to be Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) while in India, and Indian migrant youth were looked at differently due to their ethnic background in New Zealand. Parents also highlighted this aspect when discussing their migration to New Zealand, stating that their children had to step out of their comfort zone, away from the support of extended family and friends.

The three sub-themes in this section further explore the above-mentioned issues: 'New Zealand-Born Indian Youth: Disconnected and Perceived as Foreigners in India', 'Migration Stress and Discrimination', and 'Feeling Out of Place within New Zealand Indian Communities'.

New Zealand-Born Indian Youth: Disconnected and Perceived as Foreigners in India

The youth participants in this study shared their experiences of feeling like ‘outsiders’ when visiting India, due to their lack of familiarity with the Indian culture and language. Youth expressed being “disconnected” from people in India and felt “judged”, particularly due to their language and accent. The term NRIs was used to categorise expat youth and their families visiting India.

The youth participants in this study expressed the challenge of navigating the perceptions of expat Indians as ‘foreigners’ who might be ‘whitewashed’ and exhibit a sense of superiority. These perceptions were painful and had a significant impact on their ability to establish and maintain connections with their families and communities in India. Aashvi (youth) shared how her relatives in India believed that expat Indians often develop an attitude of dominance when living overseas:

I feel like for me, I don’t know why making friends that’s hard as they are like, oh she is a girl [who] speaks English, ‘cause some people like Indians who are whitewashed, some of them, they tend to feel superior, so they [relatives in India] might have thought I felt superior to them and they don’t really talk to me ... felt kind of awkwardness what they think about you as ... I didn’t find that connection with them ... kind of like distancing themselves almost [from me]. ... I even watched videos [YouTube] on whitewashed Indians or Indians that come from a foreign country and what they [locals] might think of us. (Aashvi, youth)

In India, NRIs may be perceived as privileged people who may be unable to comprehend the challenges faced by youth living in India. Additionally, people in India may believe that NRI youth do not respect their Indian heritage and may be unwilling to adapt to the Indian environment, displaying a sense of superiority. This perception is often influenced by how NRIs are portrayed in television shows and social media, emphasising their higher living standards and English accents (Gottschlich, 2011). Consequently, Indian youth may feel fascinated by the perceived lifestyle of NRIs. However, it seems likely that to cope with their own feelings of inferiority, Indian youth may resort to making fun of NRI youth.

Nimit (youth) stated that he was labelled as an NRI and an outsider by his classmates in India as “I was very fair compared to everyone in my class, ... I had strong New Zealand accent”. In response to how he dealt with not getting accepted, Nimit stated that he “really kept quiet and did my work”. The outsider label attached to Nimit by his classmates served as a barrier to forming friendships, leaving him with the impression that the best

option for him was to remain quiet. Such perceptions reflect societal norms and expectations favouring certain physical features and cultural backgrounds, ultimately impacting Nimit's ability to connect with others and feel a sense of belonging.

The loss of belongingness was not just experienced by Indian youth born in New Zealand but, conversely, the same was observed among migrant Indian youth. This is further explored in the next theme.

Migration Stress and Discrimination

Migration to New Zealand posed various challenges for Indian migrant youth, including feelings of isolation, negotiating identities, challenges at school, and cultural disparities. Among the immigrant youth of Indian descent in New Zealand in this study, both Hardik and Aayush (youth) expressed feelings of confusion and insecurity upon moving to New Zealand.

Aayush, who migrated to New Zealand at the age of 13, remarked that the unfamiliarity with the country, where he “felt a bit ... insecure ... about the new place, don't know anything at all. Bit unsure about what am I doing”, caused him stress. Aayush also observed contrasting patterns of friendship between India and New Zealand. In India, friends engaged in frequent conversations and shared common interests, while in New Zealand, youth tended to prefer being alone. These differences made it exceedingly challenging for Aayush to build friendships in New Zealand:

I do miss my friends. Because they were part of me. In my young childhood and all and people don't do like that in here. Like in India how it was like after exam [and] before holidays just right after the exam we should go and play instead of going home. Here [in New Zealand] it's not like that. They [New Zealand youth] just don't come out [to play], and [are] just by themselves. Yeah, not that much of interaction with friends, which I do miss. (Aayush, youth)

Aayush's sense of insecurity and stress when migrating to New Zealand is a result of loss of physical contact with his friends in India. It is also linked to New Zealand peer group norms around structured after-school activities and playing at home – making it difficult to make new friends. In contrast, friendships in India tend to be close-knit, creating a sense of camaraderie and belonging. Within this cultural context, the importance of social bonds and collective experiences is emphasised, with active communication and shared activities as the foundation for nurturing friendships.

Furthermore, Aayush's contrasting experiences with friendship dynamics in India and New Zealand highlight the profound impact of cultural backgrounds on social interactions and the formation of friendships. The cultural disparity observed by Aayush in New Zealand can be attributed to various factors, including individualism, cultural norms, and the influence of the local social environment. In New Zealand, particular importance is placed on personal space, independence, and self-expression. The difference Aayush observed in how friendships were approached and nurtured in the two countries shed light on the intersectional nature of identity and its influence on interpersonal connections.

Expanding on Aayush's narratives, Nimit, who was born in New Zealand but migrated to Australia and India for periods of two years and one year respectively, described the stress he experienced in his studies, forming friendships, and the instability due to migration. Consequently, he faced challenges in cultivating friendships:

Nimit (youth): It was quite difficult. Because I could never make friends or like, be stable in my studies. And extra curriculum was not in the story anyway ... never in my life did [I] ever think [that] I could actually be in a stable place.

Researcher: What was going on in your mind then?

Nimit: It was really cluttered. I was just going with the flow. So, my parents were like pack your bags, we are going.

Researcher: Did you ever question them and asked for reason?

Nimit: Their reasons were really weird ... which I couldn't really understand.

Nimit's account highlights the impact of not participating in extra-curricular activities in a social context like New Zealand, where social norms are often centred on active involvement in organised extra-curricular activities. These social norms can lead to exclusion and feelings of isolation when participation is not an option. Furthermore, the narrative also emphasises the prevailing notion among Indian parents about placing greater emphasis on academic rather than extra-curricular engagements. This tendency is further explored in the theme on "Stress as Cultural Expectations and Restrictions", below. Furthermore, Indian parents tend to keep their challenges hidden from their children, believing it acceptable not to provide explanations. Despite Nimit's attempts to seek reasons for their frequent relocations, his parents did not provide him with justifications, resulting in confusion and frustration. This lack of explanation could stem from their desire to protect Nimit from concerns or their perception that he may not comprehend the complexities associated with their relocations. This cultural perspective

illustrates how Indian parents often treat their children as children even when they are considered adults in other contexts. Indian parents may tend to adopt a protective approach, offering guidance and shielding their children from the uncertainties of migration. However, in their efforts to do so, they may inadvertently overlook the importance of open communication and fail to address Nimit's need for clarity.

Similarly, Sarah (parent) highlighted the challenges her daughter experienced in establishing friendships because of moving places and attempting to familiarise herself with the new culture. Sarah observed that forming friendships was relatively easier when her daughter was younger in India. However, during high school, the difficulty increased significantly. Most students had already formed their social circles, making it difficult for her daughter to integrate into these well-established groups:

When we moved to Auckland, New Zealand in 2017, she was already almost 15 years old. And then the process just got a lot harder of her finding and making new friends ... it's you get a little more set in your friendships, you get a little more closed to letting new people in as you know, if you've spent your high school years together last five, six years together with the same group of friends. (Sarah, parent)

Sarah's narrative highlighted how age, ethnicity, and migration intersect to influence the experiences of young people. In this case, Sarah's daughter, being a teenager of Indian ethnicity and a migrant, faced unique challenges in forming social connections, particularly when integrating into established social groups within a new school environment. During the youth stage, social and emotional development is crucial, and peer relationships play a significant role when an individual is seeking social support and identity formation (Para, 2008). The convergence of these factors makes it difficult for youth to establish a sense of belonging and social connectedness in a new environment, potentially impacting their mental health and wellbeing as they grapple with feelings of isolation.

Furthermore, Deepak (father) expressed his own fear about adapting to a new culture, "how to find job", establishing a social circle, which the entire family had upon migrating to New Zealand:

Every change you typically go through a bit of anxiety, right, you know, how will you adjust to a new place ... making social circle, friend circle, and most important leaving your family back in India. (Deepak, parent)

Similarly, Meera too described how her daughter experienced instability when migrating. This was because she had to step out of her comfort zone of being surrounded by friends and family. Meera further stated since the transition was a significant change for her as well, she found it challenging to spend sufficient time on her daughter's transition and adjustment period. Consequently, Meera observed that her daughter became "quiet and withdrawn":

Although it didn't strike to us so much at that time because we were so busy getting used to a new culture, new country, thinking of jobs etc. But now when I look back, I feel she would have had to make the most [difficult] transition ... she would have been quite withdrawn in the first few years ... just kind of looking inwards and making her own adjustments. We did notice that she had become much more quieter here. (Meera, parent)

The accounts of Deepak and Meera highlight the impact of migration on the emotional wellbeing of young people. The process of migrating to a new country exposes youth to a range of unfamiliar cultural norms, expectations, and social dynamics, leading to feelings of instability and uncertainty as they navigate these new environments.

Meera observed that her daughter became quieter, indicating a lack of someone to share her feelings with, as she felt her parents might not fully understand her experiences because they would have encountered different situations. This divergence in experiences creates a communication gap between parents and youth, intensifying the feelings of isolation and disconnection, resulting in heightened stress among youth.

Furthermore, the migration process might be challenging for the parents as well, and both parents and youth can experience immense stress. Parents, occupied with finding jobs and adjusting to a new country, may be unable to provide adequate support to their children during this transitional period. Meera's statement, "it didn't strike us so much at that time because we were so busy getting used to a new culture, new country, thinking of jobs, etc.," reflects the overwhelming nature of the migration process, leaving little room for addressing the emotional and psychological wellbeing of youth.

Some of the issues raised by this sub-theme on "Migration Stress and Discrimination" are further explored in the later theme of "Stress as Managing a 'Dual Personality'".

Feeling Out of Place within New Zealand Indian Communities

Youth accounts indicated that acceptance within the New Zealand Indian communities was not guaranteed, but rather depended on their level of involvement and engagement. For instance, Ria (youth) described encountering a sense of unease through the “strange stares” she received from individuals within her own ethnic community when she visited Indian temples in Auckland. Ria elaborated that this was a result of her preference for Western clothing, which contrasted with the traditional clothing worn by others in those religious places. Consequently, she experienced apprehension about other peoples’ judgements of her, stating that she was “affected by what they are going to think of me when I did this, I did that, or they saw me”.

Ria’s experience of receiving stares when wearing Western clothing in temples can be attributed to a combination of cultural, social, and personal factors. Temples are often regarded as sacred places where cultural traditions and practices are valued and maintained, and where wearing traditional clothing is considered appropriate and respectful. Deviating from these norms may cause a person to be subject to scrutiny and judgement. The above narrative of Ria highlights that youth of Indian descent tend to conform to prevailing norms of whiteness (as discussed in the sub-theme “Normative Pressure to Gain Acceptance”, above), while also aspiring to adhere to traditional Indian norms (which is discussed in the sub-theme “Don’t Forget Your Roots”, below). For instance, Ria found comfort in Western clothing despite the fact that Western clothing may be a way of conforming to the dominant norm. This emphasises how her choices in clothing intersect with powerful societal norms, impacting her acceptance within multiple social contexts, and contributing to her experience of stress.

Furthermore, some of the youth participants in this study highlighted being unable to establish a connection with New Zealand-born Indian youth. They expressed their feeling that these youth were ‘whitewashed’, meaning that they were heavily influenced by Western culture, and preferred not to be associated with their Indian roots:

Some [New Zealand-born] Indians are whitewashed ... they tend to feel superior ... and they didn’t really talk to me. ... [New Zealand-born youth parents] are not as strict ... [youth] parents didn’t want them to have [an Indian] cultural background [post-migration]. (Aanya, youth)

The above passage highlights how Indians who were born in New Zealand have adopted Western culture to the extent that they have distanced themselves from their Indian

cultural heritage, making it difficult for the Indian youth who migrate to New Zealand to relate to their New Zealand-born counterparts. This indicates that despite both migrant and New Zealand-born Indian youth belonging to the same ethnic group, there existed notable differences in their social environment that shaped their perspectives on their own cultural heritage. Additionally, the above passage also emphasised the pivotal role of parents in shaping youth behaviour. Aanya, for instance, mentioned that parents of New Zealand-born youth often discourage their children from embracing Indian culture, possibly to protect youth from discrimination and help them to fit into New Zealand society. This parental behaviour and mindset were reflected in the actions of Indian youth as they, too, demonstrated reluctance to talk with Indian people.

The above account of youth in this study therefore suggests that gaining acceptance within the Indian community is not guaranteed and can be a complex dynamic, often requiring negotiation in order for youth to become and feel part of the community.

Stress as Managing a ‘Dual Personality’

The sense of having a ‘dual personality’ was a source of stress for most of the youth participants in this study. Their narratives, exemplified by statements such as “never stick to one side” (Aashvi) and “should never cut out one culture” (Nimit), shed light on the difficulties they faced in balancing conflicting cultures, identities, and cultural hybridity. Parents also highlighted this concept, as evidenced in statements like “suddenly the accent shifts” (Meera). Similarly, counsellors noted that youth were often perplexed by the difference between cultures. Consequently, these accounts collectively contributed to the socially constructed idea of a ‘dual personality’. This theme is further divided into two sub-themes, “Don’t Forget Your Roots! Parents as Guides” and “Parents’ Limited Understanding of the Social Constraints in Schools”, in exploring the youth narratives further.

Don’t Forget Your Roots! Parents as Guides

Youth in this study described parents’ emphasis on maintaining cultural roots, irrespective of living overseas. For instance, youth highlighted that their parents expected them to adhere strictly to the values and traditions of their heritage culture, while the prevailing society encouraged assimilation into the dominant culture. This issue was also addressed earlier, under the theme of “Stress as ‘Negotiating Whiteness’”. Youth in this study

believed that their parents raised them similarly to how they would have been raised in India:

If I go to India, I perceive my cousins there, I don't really see a big difference in the way their parents treat them ... it's basically the same. ... I do have a very Indian upbringing, such as food, [watching] Bollywood movies. (Khushi, youth)

Consequently, youth found it difficult to form connections with peers who do not share their cultural background. For instance, Khushi explained that "I am not very close with Kiwis ... but I am pretty close to Asian friends like Chinese, Indian ... because I feel Asian mindsets are similar ... so that's where my comfort zone is."

The above account suggests that there was a continuity of cultural values and parenting practices followed by the parents of Indian youth in New Zealand, despite geographic separation. This continuity implied an active transmission of cultural heritage and traditions from one generation to another. Khushi's perception of not "a big difference" in her cousin's upbringing in India indicates that parents in both locations adhere to similar cultural norms and expectations. This continuity fosters a sense of familiarity and cultural identity for youth but also reveals a potential disconnection between cultures. This disconnection may contribute to the feelings of not belonging experienced by Indian in New Zealand, as discussed in the "Stress as Loss of 'Belongingness' and 'Outsider' Status" theme.

Moreover, in order to embrace both their cultural heritage and the societal norms of New Zealand, youth in this study develop a cultural hybrid identity as "Kiwi Indians" by drawing on both their Indian and New Zealand identities. This was expressed by both youth who were born and raised in New Zealand, and those who were born in India and raised in New Zealand. As Aashvi stated, she could "never stick to one side":

if someone asked me, I would be like I'm Indian but ... I was born in India and brought up in New Zealand ... I am Kiwi Indian. (Aashvi, youth)

Nimit and Hardik, like Aashvi, stressed the importance of maintaining a balance between both cultures and stated that "[we] should never cut out one culture". Both Nimit and Hardik discussed their conscious efforts to interact differently with people from both cultures. For instance, when engaging with Indian peers, Nimit would find common ground and speak in Hindi to connect with them. On the other hand, when talking to New

Zealanders, Nimit would adapt his behaviour and speak like a Kiwi and “keep that balance”, and not “mix it up”. However, constantly navigating between these two identities caused him stress as he had to modify his personality every time, and he “couldn’t be [him]self”. This indicated that cultural hybridity was hard work, rather than an easy incorporation of cultural elements as suggested by previous research (Ip & Pang, 2005). Consequently, Nimit started consciously merging his dual identities, feeling that he was “slightly turning into like just one person”. Initially, Nimit tried to conform to the stereotypical image of an Indian boy, but he later embraced a more integrated identity:

They [Indians] don’t express themselves and that is a lot because of our culture as well as like if you are a boy, [people] tell you to not cry. They really [put] pressure [that] don’t tell anyone your problems, keep it with you and just show a happy face. (Nimit, youth)

The above excerpt reflects how cultural norms and stereotypes influence individual experiences and shape identity formation. It emphasises the role of power dynamics in shaping cultural identities and experiences. When in an outside environment, Nimit behaved “kind of white kid”, while also trying to merge his dual identities at home. Dhairya stated, “at home, we have to be more like respectful”, whereas with friends “[we] don’t really have to do that.” These accounts indicate that youth seemed overtly conscious of the different environments, except that the home environment required them to be “respectful” and “disciplined”. This positions Indian parents as adhering to strict and hierarchical family structures (Sondhi, 2018). The conscious efforts made by youth to please everyone by adjusting their behaviour according to the surroundings led to stress.

The gender differences were linked to societal expectations that boys “don’t cry” when faced with challenges, as expressed by Nimit (youth). This corresponds with existing research that investigated the pressures experienced by boys to conform to masculine norms, which often emphasise emotional control and self-reliance (Iwamoto et al., 2010; Sileo & Kershaw, 2020).

The above accounts also suggest that youth actively engage in negotiating their cultural identities. They perceive themselves as constantly fluctuating between two cultures, expressing varying degrees of identification with one culture in different contexts over time. Through this process, most of the youth participants in this study developed a hybrid “Kiwi Indian” identity, which enabled them to sometimes navigate smoothly across contexts but could be challenging due to conflicting positionalities. Developing a ‘cultural

hybrid' identity as a "Kiwi Indian" meant developing a new culture from a set of cultural traits derived from both Indian and Kiwi cultures. Hybridisation, in contrast to integration, involves developing interdependencies rather than altering antecedents such as language, customs, traditions, values, and beliefs (Dear & BurrIDGE, 2005). Despite forming a hybrid identity, youth find it stressful to negotiate their identities according to different environments. Nimit, for instance, expressed feeling that he "couldn't be myself", suggesting that youth wear a 'mask' in different contexts to conform to the expectations of each setting. This experience of constantly adjusting their identity seemed to be exhausting and distressing for youth, leading Nimit to feel like he needs to be "turning into like just one person", a process that demands the sacrifice of one part of their heritage.

Similar to youth narratives, parents too emphasised the significance of cultural roots. Deepak described how he had to make additional efforts such as fostering connections with other Indian families in New Zealand to ensure his children remained connected to their heritage. Pallavi, Deepak's wife, stated that cultural association was a "matter of self-confidence" and that for youth, it "begins from their [culture]". Deepak further explained that youth often learn by observing rather than receiving instructions on how to conduct themselves. He and his wife made a conscious effort to exemplify the values they believed in, demonstrating them in various contexts, to ensure their children adopted those values:

If we are together, it is one comfort, but also somewhere they [youth] will see us and learn how to be in this [Indian] culture ... we cannot comment good or bad ... it is all their culture, but somewhere they [youth] get to see how we live in [New Zealand], but yet continue [living with our] culture. ... So, these things you just cannot tell them [youth], if they see you following our culture to be very clear on what are our priorities, despite being in their [host] culture ... we were very particular that yes, our value system and our culture is something that should continue, and while taking best from here [New Zealand] as well. Quite a few things to learn, but certainly not to forget our core values ... which will help them in overall life. (Deepak, parent)

In this account, Deepak suggested that one of the primary concerns of Indian parents living in New Zealand was preserving a connection to their cultural roots and imparting cultural knowledge and values to their children. Culture is not static or fixed, but rather constructed and negotiated through social interactions and practices (Lee & Anderson, 2009). Therefore, Deepak's emphasis on demonstrating cultural values rather than telling

his children about them aligns with the idea that culture is learned and reproduced through social practices and experiences.

Adhering to traditions and values, celebrating festivals together, and fostering “a sense of family” helps forge a strong “bond” among individuals. Deepak and Pallavi believed that instilling these principles would benefit youth by teaching them adaptability, togetherness, and connectedness, all of which are essential to being able to “build on that ... foundation”. Deepak’s emphasis on the idea that “our culture is something that should continue” indicates he and his wife’s desire to pass on the cultural beliefs and practices they were raised with to the next generation.

The above account also highlighted that these parents were aware that youth may experience stress due to the constant emphasis on following Indian culture and values. However, they believe that this adherence is important for youth to “help them in overall life”. In addition, they expect their children to embrace both Indian culture and select the “best” values from New Zealand. Youth seem to have a clear sense of these expectations but find it challenging to navigate and fulfil them in the context of competing pressures, resulting in stress.

Furthermore, Saanvi (parent) emphasised the significance of understanding and speaking the native language, as a means of communicating with people from one’s own culture. Saanvi expressed her deliberate effort to teach her daughter Hindi and Malayalam, irrespective of her own difficulties with speaking those languages. Saanvi said that she wanted to ensure that her daughter remained connected with her grandparents’, as extended families were an integral part of Indian families, and conversing in the same language was important:

It was very difficult to understand, you know, when she [daughter] was trying to speak in Hindi. And she was clear, for some reason in English, maybe the twisting of the tongue was different. So, we’ve always spoken to her in English, but now after she turned 13-14, my mother pointed out that even now she never replies in Hindi. ... So, we are trying really hard, at least at home, she should be able to understand ... and hold a conversation with people. (Saanvi, parent)

Diksha (parent) shared a similar sentiment and stated that if she “goes extreme [in requiring her daughter to speak in her native language], the child would be thoroughly confused”, causing stress for her daughter.

Saanvi drew the connection between speaking the native language and connecting with extended family in India. Saanvi's daughter, being a second-generation Indian migrant in New Zealand, who grew up in a different cultural context, was always surrounded by English-speaking peers. However, the "pointing out" by Saanvi's mother about her granddaughter's inability to converse in Hindi resulted in Saanvi making purposeful efforts to ensure her daughter could at least comprehend conversations held in Hindi. Saanvi's account suggests the pressure she encountered as a parent living overseas, as well as the persistent questioning regarding her daughter's connection to her cultural heritage. As a result, parents frequently exert pressure on their children to speak their parents' native language and maintain their cultural roots. This aligns with Gupta (2020) portrayal of Indian parents' expectations for their children to speak their native language in Jakarta.

Parents' Limited Understanding of the Social Constraints in Schools

Parents' accounts in this study indicated a limited understanding of the social constraints experienced by Indian youth in school settings. Saanvi's (parent) narrative on wanting her daughter to speak in Hindi and her idea that "she should be able to understand ... and hold a conversation with people" sheds light on the complex and dynamic nature of negotiating cultural identities and practices. Parents of Indian descent in New Zealand are seen to place a high value on preserving their cultural heritage, including language, and imparting it to their children, as they view this as a positive influence for their child's wellbeing. However, it seems that parents may not appreciate the lived experience of social interactions in a school setting where white norms dominate. This divide between youth and parents, stemming from the parents' insistence on speaking the native language, aligns with the findings of Cunningham and King (2018) and Müller et al. (2020). These studies discussed how ethnic minority youth often choose to prioritise the dominant language over their ethnic language due to their higher popularity and the desire to blend in with their peers without being perceived as distinct (as also highlighted in the "Stress as 'Negotiating Whiteness'" theme, above).

Meera (parent) also discussed the language changes she noticed in her son, both at home and at school. She stated that her son aspired to be perceived as a "white kid":

I think that's reconciliation of identity. I think that was a big thing my son went through ... he doesn't even see himself as a brown kid. He thinks he's a white man, he doesn't think otherwise. (Meera, parent)

Meera's son even preferred to engage in sports that were popular among his white peers, which aligns with the sub-theme of "Normative Pressures to Gain Acceptance" discussed earlier. The dilemma of Meera's son's ethnic identity and how he sees himself as a white person are shaped through social interactions. The desire to be perceived as a white person may stem from the societal construct associating 'whiteness' with power, privilege and superiority, and/or the desire for a sense of 'sameness' and not appearing different from the majority. This highlights the ongoing negotiation of identity among young people being determined by situational acceptability.

Counsellors, similar to most parents, expressed the significant emphasis parents placed on instilling the native culture in young people out of fear of losing culture and values. Amrita (counsellor) highlighted that parents, who often exert excessive pressure on their children to conform to these values, are often unaware of the stress it can cause for youth. Sharon (counsellor) noted that parents were the first point of contact with the culture for most of the young people. Because youth observe cultural differences between the cultures experienced at home and at school, youth were perplexed. For instance, Sharon stated:

One of the biggest stresses I notice in the young Indian people I work with is they notice these differences in the way their family functions and the way their New Zealand friend[s'] families function, and that creates messaging about ... a lot of them [Indian youth] come to me with "My parents just don't care about me". (Sharon, counsellor)

In addition, Amrita (counsellor) recognised the dilemma faced by parents as they navigate their own transition to a new environment:

There's almost this worry when you go to another country with a new culture, so different, there's almost this worry that you'll forget about your Indian culture. That becomes additional pressure. (Amrita, counsellor)

Sharon's (counsellor) account highlights the contrasting cultural norms in India and New Zealand concerning family dynamics, roles, and expectations. The differences in expectations and observations among youth often result in feelings of confusion, disappointment, and conflict. These observations by youth create narratives about their own value and the level of care they receive from their parents. The societal norms and expectations surrounding family functioning contribute significantly to shaping these narratives.

Furthermore, Amrita (counsellor) talked about the dilemma parents experience of navigating ‘competing cultures’, which was also discussed by Saanvi and Diksha (parents) in the aforementioned accounts. Adapting to a new culture might be a stressful experience for parents as they strive to balance embracing the new culture while preserving their heritage, leading to chaos and confusion. Amrita’s narrative reflects how cultural identity is shaped through social interactions and experiences.

Amrita (counsellor) recognised the crucial role of parents in determining whether the transition for youth into the new culture is smooth or not. Amrita also emphasised the complexity of navigating multiple identities, including cultural identity, when transitioning to a new environment. She acknowledged that the transition for parents is not an easy one either, as they endeavour to rebuild their lives post-migration. The negotiation of cultures often results in conflict in the identity of youth, as discussed in the subsequent sub-theme.

This theme of stress as managing a dual personality captured the conflicts rooted in cultural differences experienced by both youth and parents. The primary source of conflict could be attributed to parents adhering to traditional Indian culture, while youth adopted a more mainstream Western culture, as previously highlighted in the theme of “Stress as ‘Negotiating Whiteness’”. I now turn to another aspect of stress experienced by youth of Indian descent, cultural expectations and restrictions.

Stress as Cultural Expectations and Restrictions

This theme explores the set of expectations placed on youth by their Indian parents, leading to heightened stress. This concept positions Indian parents as ‘tiger parents’, which was identified as a significant source of stress for most of the youth participants in this study, which had a consequential impact on their wellbeing. To explore the impact on youth wellbeing of cultural expectations and restrictions, this theme is divided into three sub-themes: “Academic Expectations”, “Comparisons with Peers”, and “Gender-Specific Restrictions Imposed on Youth”.

Youth, in their narratives, addressed aspects of parental control and academic expectations, as evidenced by their statements such as “the most strictest parents” (Aashvi), “expectation to, like, get high marks” (Ana), and “respectable job” (Hardik). Similarly, parents and counsellors also emphasised the “pressure to perform ... academically [for youth]” (Diksha, parent) and “trying to make their parents happy”

(Sharon, counsellor). The narratives of the majority of the participants emphasised the concept of ‘tiger parenting’, as defined by Chua (2011).

This resulted in feelings of dissatisfaction and unhappiness among youth. The concept of ‘tiger parenting’ was also highlighted by parents and counsellors as one of the key stressors experienced by youth of Indian descent. Coined by Chua (2011), the term ‘tiger parenting’ characterises a strict form of parenting among Asians, with the intention being to bring up children who must be successful in their lives.

Academic Expectations

Youth in this study positioned Indian parents as extremely strict, especially when compared to European parents. They reported that their parents had high expectations for academic achievement, which was one of the most stressful factors in their lives. They felt that their parents had unrealistically high expectations for them to excel academically, which included obtaining excellent grades in school and attending prestigious universities. Although these expectations could serve as a route to better employment opportunities, they also resulted in mental health concerns such as anxiety and low self-esteem due to high levels of pressure to succeed, as evident from youth narratives.

For instance, Aayush’s (youth) account highlighted his parents’ academic expectations and their dissatisfaction with his results, constantly asking him to study harder. As a result, Aayush started feeling “pressurised”. Aashvi (youth) further elaborated on this sentiment, explaining that, due to her parents’ dissatisfaction, she developed feelings of “guilt” for making them unhappy. In addition, she developed the notion that she was not “doing enough” because she was underappreciated for her efforts:

The thing about Indian or any Asian parent for that matter ...even if you get [achieve] something big, they won’t show that they’re happy about it because they know that when they show their excitement, you [youth] probably will stop working. ... This feels sad like I work so hard and they [parents] won’t show ... I even had thoughts about suicide. ... I was so sad that my parents were not acknowledging me. (Aashvi, youth)

The above accounts of Aayush and Aashvi indicate that their feeling of being “pressurised” stemmed from the societal and cultural norm that prioritises academic excellence, which is considered a measure of one’s intelligence, potential, and future success. This emphasis might be attributed to the prevailing norms in India, characterised by a large population, limited resources, and fierce competition. Consequently, people

often feel compelled to excel academically to secure a stable and successful future. This is congruent with the findings of Arora and Khoo (2020), Kwan et al. (2018), and Tummala-Narra et al. (2016), who examined the cultural emphasis placed on academic success among Asian youth and the role of parental involvement in promoting academic achievement. Similar to this current study, these studies suggested that parental pressure, cultural values, and beliefs regarding education play a significant role in shaping the academic expectations and success of Asian youth.

Furthermore, Aashvi (youth) expressed her desire, saying “I wish they [parents] would just say ... just acknowledge me ‘cause my other friends, their parents do acknowledge them.” Indian parents tend to be less expressive and encourage their children to remain grounded by not displaying their emotions (Sahithya et al., 2019). Moreover, the cultural norm suggests that excessive parental appreciation might lead to a sense of complacency among youth, potentially affecting their motivation and effort (Sondhi, 2018). Additionally, Indian culture places a strong emphasis on humility and parents avoid vocalising their children’s achievements. Furthermore, parents’ lack of appreciation could be linked to the comparisons they make with youth of similar age, which is further discussed in the next sub-theme, “Comparison with Peers”.

The accounts of young people set out above highlighted that the detrimental effects of the lack of recognition of their hard work in studies within the New Zealand context, which could lead to self-doubt, shame, and dissatisfaction, negatively impacted their wellbeing. Aayush and Aashvi, for instance, reported feeling “pressurised” and “sad”, with the latter having “thoughts about suicide”. Therefore, youth narratives indicate that they seek their parents’ appreciation to feel motivated and valued, aligning with the normative parenting practices in New Zealand. However, the interviews with parents indicated that they were unaware of the desire of young people for affirmation and celebration. This is discussed further in Chapter 6: Mediated Dialogue.

Counsellors too acknowledged the academic pressure placed on young people by their parents. In addition, despite the desire of young people to challenge their parents’ belief system, they are often unable to do so due to the emotional strain. Sharon (counsellor), through her experience of conversing with Indian youth, stated that Indian parents indirectly pressurise their children by sharing the stories of their migration struggles and the sacrifices they made by coming to New Zealand to secure their children’s career and

lives. Sharon further observed that youth who expressed anxiety about meeting their parents' expectations were often labelled as "ungrateful" towards their parents:

Parents sort of being, like, we've sacrificed so much that we picked up our whole lives and moved to this country [New Zealand], just so you [youth] could have a better future, just so you can go to university, so you can become doctor and make us proud. And even when they're [youth are] sort of trying to have conversations about feeling stressed, or being you know, depressed, it's like we've [parents] sacrificed everything for you. (Sharon, counsellor)

Sharon's account seemed to be attributable to the sacrifice Indian parents made when they relocated to a new country. Parents often had to restart their lives by seeking new careers and working their way up in a new country to provide their children with better opportunities. As a result, their objective appeared to be that youth should not struggle as they did and that they wanted to ensure that their children have a secure financial future. However, from the perspective of youth, the weight of these high academic expectations and the emotional baggage of fulfilling their parents' dreams caused immense stress for them. This pressure stems from the intergenerational transmission of values and expectations (Kapadia, 2008; Warikoo et al., 2020). Parents tended to draw comparisons with respect to communicative traditions, highlighting their own respectful and obedient behaviour towards their parents and expecting their children to conform similarly from an early age, as they instilled similar values. Furthermore, counsellors' accounts of youth being labelled as "ungrateful" by parents when expressing their stress and anxiety about meeting parental expectations stem from navigating the collectivist and individualist understandings of wellbeing. This dynamic further reinforces the stress associated with meeting parental expectations.

Parents also recognised that academic success was a major source of stress for youth. Nonetheless, they observed that youth often assume that their parents had high expectations for their academic performance, even though that might not be true. For example, in the following extract, Diksha (parent) talked about a particular experience where her daughter made that assumption:

She did have the feeling from our Asian friends that Asian parents, they'll have a lot of pressure on her to perform at a minimum level of academically. That stressed her out. That was she was stressed out on that, she did come and ask this if we expect, she started crying and said you have so much expectations. ... I said we never told you this. Someone else said that their parents, and not only that, all Asians think

like that. ... So, then we clarified, no, this is their version that all Asian parents expect this. We never told you this and we don't have it [such an expectation]. (Diksha, parent).

The excerpt above indicates that divergent perceptions exist between youth and parents regarding academic expectations. Diksha's account identified how the stereotype of academic expectation, as discussed in the "Racial Stereotyping and Bullying in New Zealand" sub-theme, above, is upheld by Asian youth in the school environment. This suggests that youth often endorse this notion as an unspoken truth, conforming to the norm and consequently experiencing internal pressure, resulting in stress.

By contrast, counsellors felt that Indian youth tend to be stressed due to parental expectations:

Your whole life is like you have to do everything that your parents say ... it's [a] volcano, it's like they [youth] have been trying to make their parents happy and putting everything for them. (Sharon, counsellor)

Sharon's narrative highlighted that Indian youth were like a "volcano" by suppressing their emotions in order to satisfy their parents. They try to be "obedient" and make additional efforts to gain excellence grades in their studies. This behaviour might be due to the cultural values which place strong emphasis on respect for elders, where children are expected to obey their parents and their expectations, even if it means sacrificing their own desires (Chadda & Deb, 2013). If youth question their parents, they may be viewed as disrespectful towards their elders. In contrast, these youth were also coming in contact with social and cultural norms in New Zealand which emphasise self-expression. Consequently, youth may feel trapped between parents' expectations and the societal norms they live in (as discussed in "Don't Forget Your Roots" sub-theme), leading to frustration and resentment. Furthermore, youth may feel they have limited control over their lives, as they are expected to follow a pre-determined path set out by parents with little room for deviation or exploration.

However, counsellors also stated that Indian youth were "very emotionless ... it's actually hard for them [Indian youth] to be able to connect to the emotion that they may be experiencing". As a result, counsellors reported that youth tend to experience physical symptoms of stress, such as "headache" or "feeling sick", without realising the underlying emotional cause. This meant that counsellors used the term "emotionless" as a choice of

expression to indicate a disconnect between the experiences of emotions and the ability to recognise or articulate them, rather than a complete absence of emotions.

Another aspect highlighted by youth in this study was the power imbalance in decision-making regarding career choices among youth and parents. Hardik (youth) explained that his “parents want me to be a doctor or something in the medical field”. This is because Hardik’s parents believed it would allow him to obtain a “respectable job” and eventually “earn a lot of money”. He further described how the same was inculcated in him since childhood and his parents did not ask him about his preference. Similarly, Dhairya too, stated that his parents had a strong desire for him to pursue engineering, even though he was not sure. The counsellors echoed comparable sentiments, stating:

Parents have high level of control ... they [parents] say, if you become a doctor or accountant or lawyer ... you’re gonna generate money. ... When I ask them [youth], are you interested in it ... [youth say] oh no, my dad wants me to be a pharmacist or whatever. (Amrita, counsellor)

Despite being aware of their impact, some parents still insist on their children “doctor banna hai (you have to become a doctor)” (Ashish, parent). In the following excerpt, Dhairya (youth) described the constant pressure he experienced:

I don't really have a goal in mind, really. And parents have said to go for, like, engineering or like doctors. ... They want me to get a good job, get a good salary, I guess, have some respect. (Dhairya, youth)

Dhairya, in the above passage, described how Indian parents may prioritise careers in specific fields such as medicine, engineering, and law because they are considered stable, respectable, and well-paying. Indian culture places significant importance on social norms that recognise these professions as prestigious and noble. To conform to these societal expectations, Indian parents are socially conditioned to align their children’s career aspirations to these professions. This alignment is not only driven by the pursuit of financial security but also by the desire to gain their social status. This is influenced by the societal and cultural expectations surrounding career success and financial stability. Asian parents often view education as a key determinant of future success, as a lack of education is often linked to failure (Pong et al., 2010). However, the parents in this study contested the notion of adhering strictly to a specific career path, instead placing greater emphasis on the importance of pursuing opportunities. This is further elaborated in Chapter 6: Mediated Dialogue.

The above account highlighted the significant influence and control parents have in determining their children's career paths. Historically, previous generations had to struggle to secure basic necessities for survival, and an office job was a symbol of pride, authority, and financial security. This mindset and attitude have been passed down through generations, shaping parents' decisions about their children's career and employment opportunities (Inman et al., 2007). Additionally, the inequality of power and wealth is a major issue in current times, evident in the intergenerational class system prevalent within the New Zealand context (Rashbrooke, 2021).

I now turn to the comparisons parents make with other youth of a similar age, which causes stress among youth.

Comparison with Peers

In addition to the academic expectations set out by parents for youth, parents tend to compare their children with youth of similar age. Youth narratives in this study indicated that comparison with siblings, cousins, and others creates stress for them. Youth in this study reported that their parents consistently evaluated their accomplishments in relation to people of a similar age, leading to perpetual dissatisfaction. Ana (youth) described how continual comparison with other youth caused her to doubt herself:

It just makes you feel like you're not working hard enough. You know, like I remember I got like and I got a 6 on it. So, it's basically 90%. And then 'cause it's like all of the exams like for the whole year. So, then my parents are friends with someone else's daughter parents and so I got a 90 and she got like a 94 or something and they were like 'cause I was proud of my result and they were like she got a 94, like you should have gotten that you know. (Ana, youth)

The above account indicates that young people's perceptions of their academic achievements is constructed through social interactions with their parents and peers, who provide the context of their accomplishments. Furthermore, it suggests that the continuous comparison by parents creates a culture of perpetual comparison and dissatisfaction among youth. This constant comparison leads to feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt among youth (Farver et al., 2002; Jacob, 2017), as evidenced by Ana's comment that "it makes you feel like you're not working hard enough". Khushi's account also suggests that constant comparison often served as a demotivating factor for youth. The enormous pressure from the comparison instils self-doubt. Youth narratives in this study demonstrate the role of social comparison in shaping perceptions of success and

failure. This seemed to be rooted in the collectivistic values that parents from India may bring with them.

Parents and counsellors in this study also acknowledged that persistent comparison leads to stress among youth. However, they believed that such comparisons were more prevalent in India than in New Zealand. For instance, Deepak (parent) stated that, in India, extended families and friends often discuss their children's achievement, which directly or indirectly increase stress among youth. He further explained that the intention behind such comparisons was to motivate youth rather than to cause them stress:

I hardly see, you know, talking about what are my kids doing, back in India, very typical. Whatever time you spent, you know, kind of talking and asking about what's happening with the kids and siblings. But that brings an indirect or direct pressure, here [in New Zealand] it is not there. (Deepak, parent)

Deepak's account indicates the cultural difference between collectivistic societies like India, and individualistic societies like New Zealand. In India, there is a strong emphasis on close-knit relationships and interconnectedness among people, including extended families. This dynamic leads to greater social engagement and a deeper involvement in each other's lives. On the other hand, New Zealand being an individualistic country, European people tend to be more focused on their own lives, resulting in little to no involvement with others. Moreover, the cultural expectation of academic excellence in India, driven by the desire for a comfortable life, reinforces a culture of comparison. As mentioned in the "Academic Expectations" sub-theme, above, parents begin comparing and judging their children's achievements based on the exam scores of other children. Beyond parents' comparisons, societal expectations prompt parents to measure their children against others, creating a "standard" that young people are expected to meet.

I now address the gender-specific restrictions imposed by parents on youth, which differed by gender and resulted in stress among them.

Gender-Specific Restrictions Imposed on Youth

This theme emphasises the prevalence of gender-related expectations and limitations imposed by Indian parents on their children. It was noteworthy that youth of Indian descent did not perceive gender differences as a key source of stress for them, whereas the narratives of other groups, parents, and counsellors indicate that youth experience stress in relation to their gender.

Parents in this study expressed “fear” for the safety of their daughters, leading them to impose additional restrictions on them. Sarah (parent), for example, had such concerns and stated that, despite being cautious, she was “unable to develop trust” with people in her environment. As a result, she prohibited her daughter from “interacting with others”, leading to her daughter feeling isolated and distressed. Despite her daughter questioning these restrictions, Sarah firmly asserted to her daughter that she, being a “more experienced person”, insisted that her daughter had “no choice” but to comply with the restrictions imposed. Moreover, Sarah emphasised the significance of being vigilant about potential threats from and intentions of others, “particularly as a young girl”:

She needs to develop sensibilities on her own, you know, awareness and her reflexes on any situations where she could potentially get into trouble. So, it is very important living in India, you have to teach your daughters, especially these things from the age of three, I’ve been talking to her about good touch, bad touch, and who she should be umm talking to, where she should be sitting. (Sarah, parent)

Diksha expressed a similar sentiment as Sarah. Diksha, however, refrained from using the term “restriction”, and instead preferred to use the term “ground rules”, which she considered essential for ensuring her daughter’s safety. This caused some friction between Diksha and her daughter:

I got a text one day saying, can Diana [daughter] come and hang in the city? So, I was like okay, and doing what? I didn’t like the concept of kids hanging in the city ... we’ve seen so many kids do that, and then they get into trouble ... they [youth] get into fights with other kids, then do unwanted drugs or alcohol, and it happens. We’ve heard it, we’ve seen it. (Diksha, parent)

Sarah and Diksha’s (parents) accounts highlight the lack of communication between parents and youth. Sarah’s approach to parenting involved imposing restrictions on her daughter without explaining the reasons behind them, reflecting an authoritative parenting style, as discussed in the literature review chapter. Likewise, Diksha, by using “ground rules” attempted to strike a balance to justify her decisions and emphasising that she was not as restrictive as some other Indian parents. It seems that parents choose the seemingly convenient approach of imposing restrictions on their daughters instead of openly and honestly communicating the factors shaping their decisions. This fear may be rooted in their own upbringing and cultural experiences in India, where they might have personally witnessed or encountered instances of female abuse or harassment. Growing up in such an environment, parents might develop a heightened sense of protection

towards their children, particularly their daughters, with the intention of safeguarding them from potential harm.

In addition, India is not considered as one of the safest countries for females, with daily reports of crimes against women (Sharma, 2015). Consequently, parents find it difficult to change their mindset after living in India and experiencing an environment that poses risk to girls, leading to parental stress. As a result, parents end up imposing restrictions on youth. It was noteworthy that despite residing in New Zealand, which is recognised as one of the safest countries (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2018), these parents continue to harbour safety concerns for their daughters. They seem to retain preconceived notions without fully assimilating into the new culture. The parents believed that these restrictions, justified by concerns for safety, became a source of stress for their children.

However, youth, being unaware of their parents' background and the social context in which they were raised, might perceive their parents' mindset and action as rooted in orthodox beliefs and backward thinking. Consequently, this disconnect between parents and youth causes conflict and friction, ultimately leading to heightened stress and tension among youth.

Moreover, Meera and her husband Deepak stated that they were less worried about their son as compared to their daughter, as Meera was concerned about being the "mother of a girl". Although Meera imposed restrictions on both her son and daughter, the implications were, however, different. For instance, they were worried about their son being attracted to "vape", "drinking", and his "social group". If their son did not adhere to his curfew time, he faced consequences such as "taking away his PlayStation or laptop", and/or being barred from participating in extra-curricular activities at school. Conversely, for their daughter, Meera and Deepak were mainly concerned about her safety. As a result, they ensured that their daughter adhered to curfew timings (different from those of her brother) and that she was "picked up and dropped off when visiting friends".

The above narrative indicates the restrictions imposed on youth were influenced by their gender. Gender norms, as discussed by Ram et al. (2014), and in Chapter 2, encompass deeply ingrained concepts regarding gender-specific societal roles and practices which are firmly embedded within social structures. This study highlighted how boys and girls faced contrasting norms and limitations. Boys were given more independence than girls, for example, determining their "curfew times" and "attending parties", while girls faced

more constraints. Meera, acknowledging her role as a “mother of a girl”, expressed the need for “extra precautions” to ensure her daughter’s safety. Sarah and Meera’s fear for their daughter’s safety is a social construct shaped by prevailing social norms, beliefs, and structures, which influence their perception of what it means to be a young girl in India. This stems from Indian culture, where a societal taboo persists, reinforcing the notion that females must be safeguarded. Such notions are further strengthened by the presence of patriarchal norms in Indian society.

In contrast, counsellors expressed the difference in the “treatment” given to youth based on gender in Indian families. Sara (counsellor) felt that boys were given more privileges than girls and that girls were expected to perform household chores. This resulted in lower self-confidence among females, leading them to perceive themselves as inferior to males:

Stress with the girls is that boys are treated better and [girls] feeling like they’re not good enough, because they were born a female in comparison to their brothers. So, the brothers are given more freedom, they’re given more opportunity ... [get] more attention. ... I think that’s very ingrained in Indian culture is that boys are more superior than females ... [Giving an example] this poor young girl [who came for counselling], she’s made to do everything. And her grandmother puts the brother on a pedestal, he can’t do anything wrong. He gets given your iPads etc, but she’s not. (Sara, counsellor)

Sara’s account discussed how gender stereotypes and the inherent patriarchy prevalent in Indian culture can suppress girls (Rani & Hassan, 2020). The cultural context in India assigns power and authority to men, both within the family and society at large. This power dynamic often results in boys receiving more leniency for their mistakes, while girls face stricter rules and higher expectations. Traditional gender roles reinforce the notion that boys should be the breadwinners and carry forward the family name, while girls are expected to prioritise domestic responsibilities. This highlights the unspoken permissions and privileges that boys enjoy, in contrast to the deeply ingrained expectation that girls bear the burden of domestic duties. Sara’s excerpt draws attention to the differential treatment and favouritism prevalent within Indian families, causing stress among female youth. It reveals the complex interplay of cultural norms, family dynamics, and societal expectations that can perpetuate gender inequalities in Indian society.

Intersectional analysis

From the interpretation of the narratives, intersections of migration, identity, power dynamics, and gender norms were apparent in participants' accounts of their experiences of stress. The narratives shared by youth in this study echo the struggles of by many youths who feel caught between the world of their parents, with its strict requirements for compliance and academic success, and the world of the dominant culture (Chen et al., 2014). This dominant culture may not fully recognise or value their cultural background and reinforce the perception of model minority youth.

Moreover, the narratives highlighted how racialised identities acted as a barrier to social inclusion, exacerbating feelings of exclusion and marginalisation. The additional stress of being perceived through the lens of racialisation made social integration more challenging, as these youth had to constantly navigate a landscape wherein their ethnic and racial identities were considered as a source of 'otherness', rather than being considered as a New Zealanders.

It is important to consider some other aspects of identity that intersect with ethnicity and race, which have important interpersonal implications for identity development among Indian youth. Youth in this study found themselves in a bind of intersecting identities where their ethnicity, skin colour, and religious identification relegated them to marginalised positions. The lightness and darkness of skin colour were associated with a sense of belonging to an ethnic group. For instance, youth who appeared 'white'/'fair' were seen as outsiders to their ethnic group, even if their cultural identifications were similar. From the narratives, the youth experienced marginalisation due to their association with the Muslim religion, compounded by their positioning as Indian young females in the New Zealand context. Studies have found that a Muslim woman who appeared 'white' was easily overlooked for their religion as compared to those who are 'non-white' (Amthor, 2017). Being Indian and female contributed to the feelings of inferiority and less privilege both at home and school. Simultaneously navigating multiple layers of expectations and discrimination intensified the experiences of stress among female youth. Moreover, skin colour and power structures served to determine greater punishments in school for Indian youth in comparison to the 'white' counterparts, as indicated by youth in this study and the systemic racism they experienced.

Parental and societal expectations significantly compound the stress experienced by these youth. Amidst youth struggling with power dynamics prevalent in the dominant culture, youth had to grapple with expectations of cultural adherence. While parents aim to instil cultural values and expectations, their understanding of the pressures their children face in a multicultural environment was often limited. This disconnect led to misunderstandings and a sense of 'guilt' among youth who felt they were not meeting parental expectations adequately. To fit into both cultures, youth often felt compelled to wear a metaphorical 'mask' constantly.

Academic pressure from multiple sources, including parents, peers, and societal stereotypes, further intensified the stress experienced by Indian youth. While parents may focus on diligence rather than specific grades, the unspoken pressure to excel persists due to communication gaps between parents and youth. This pressure was compounded by societal expectations that view these youth through the lens of model minority myth, adding to their already heavy burdens.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have highlighted the various constructs of stress expressed by youth. The findings presented in this chapter clearly demonstrate the intricate and often challenging dynamics that youth found themselves involved in, resulting in increased levels of stress. The stress experienced by youth participating in this study emphasises how they navigate and try to strike a balance between the host (New Zealand) and the traditional (Indian) culture. Moreover, this chapter highlighted the sense of unbelonging among youth in both the cultures because of being positioned as 'outsiders' in both the countries, adding a layer of complexity to their identity formation.

In the next chapter, I outline the strategies employed by the Indian youth participating in this study to manage their stress.

Chapter 5: Constructions of Ways to Address Stress

This chapter focuses on addressing stress and help-seeking behaviour among Indian youth in New Zealand. It explores how these youth constructed options around managing or living with their stress. The accounts of youth are followed by the narratives of parents and counsellors, aiming to identify each group's understanding and the similarities and contrasts between the constructions of all three groups. Through a thematic analysis of the interviews and focus groups, five major themes on addressing stress emerged from the participants' narratives: a) *resisting whiteness/embracing Indian identity*; b) *distraction and avoidance*; c) *self-harm and suicidal ideation*; d) *seeking social support*; and d) *help-seeking behaviour*. The youth participants emphasised 'distraction and avoidance' and 'seeking social support' as means of addressing stress. Parents also acknowledged the relevance and significance of 'social support', while counsellors highlighted the 'self-harm' observed among the young people.

The ways to address stress identified by Indian youth encompassed various approaches, such as attempting to resist whiteness by surrounding themselves with people of colour, embracing their ethnic identity, engaging in "extra-curricular activities", actively "avoiding" distressing situations, displaying "aggressive behaviour" as an outburst of their emotions, and self-harm. Parents highlighted their children engaging in internalising the stressor, "communicating" with family and friends, and utilising "distracting" techniques. Counsellors, in their accounts, highlighted youth addressing stressors themselves, as well as the presence of "suicidal ideation" and engagement in "self-harm" behaviours.

Furthermore, most of the youth participants in this study stated they were not willing to seek a counsellor's help in school when experiencing stress, for various reasons. Four primary themes emerged regarding the barriers to help-seeking among youth:

a) *family/friends finding out*: Youth expressed their concerns about their parents and peers discovering their struggles and that they were seeking help. This fear was a common apprehension among all three groups.

b) *stigma and cultural barriers to help-seeking*: The cultural stigma contributed to feelings of shame and embarrassment among youth, discouraging them from seeking help.

c) *lack of cultural sensitivity among counsellors*: The lack of cultural competence contributed to the hesitancy in seeking help, as youth desired support that considered their unique cultural background.

d) *previous negative experiences over confidentiality concerns*: The confidentiality breach between youth and counsellors contributed to the negative perception of help-seeking among youth.

All three groups in this study expressed diverse perspectives on the potential barriers faced by youth of Indian descent in New Zealand when seeking help. The only commonality shared by all three groups was the apprehension that their stress-related experiences might be discovered by friends and family.

Table 5 provides an overview of the themes that emerged related to addressing stress and help-seeking behaviour among Indian youth in New Zealand.

Table 5

Youth addressing stress: Key themes identified

Youth strategies to address stress	
I.	Resisting whiteness/embracing Indian identity
II.	Coping through distraction and avoidance
III.	Self-harm and suicidal ideation
IV.	Seeking social support
V.	Help-seeking behaviour • Family/friends finding out of youth stress and seeking help • Stigma and cultural barriers in help-seeking • Lack of cultural sensitivity among counsellors • Previous negative experiences over confidentiality concerns

Resisting Whiteness/Embracing Indian Identity

Despite the oppression faced by Indian youth in this study, including a desire to fit in with the dominant culture, they found ways to resist, embrace and celebrate their ethnic identity, although this was a gradual process. Youth experiences suggest that pride was made possible when they were surrounded by more youth of colour at school. Such diversity was reflected in schools where everyone brought different lunches that reflected their native cuisine, and they all enjoyed sharing their food with each other:

Then college... everyone was so accepting. There was no like oh, you're Indian, I don't like you, you know. Oh, and so I was like everyone was so sweet and so accepting they didn't like make fun of me, of my culture, or my food for that matter. And so, I was very... open, and I started opening myself up to more people. (Aashvi, youth)

Similar to Aashvi, Ria described how her school ensured it celebrated “cultural days” and encouraged every student to wear their traditional clothing, which helps students to understand and respect different cultures and celebrate their uniqueness. These events helped Ria to respect and take pride in her own culture, especially since she was born in New Zealand:

When I was in primary school like feeling that left out. ... In New Zealand we [schools] have a day called culture day. So, you come as wearing your cultural dress. And I could tell you that ... almost like 100 percent that there will be like one in 10 or like three in 10 people that come just as Indian like [wearing] a saree or like [wearing a] lehenga (Indian traditional clothing) ... we also have a night cultural night for parents and family coming to the dances of each cultural group ... so they're [white students] always like, oh my gosh, I love your dress, where did you get it from. ... This makes me happy and I like it. (Ria, youth)

The youth accounts highlight that their school environment was not influenced by the dominant norms of whiteness. Aashvi's account emphasised that her experience in a more diversified and inclusive school had a positive impact on her sense of identity. Both Aashvi and Ria's exposure to diversity in their school environment allowed them to resist dominant norms and feel proud of their ethnic identity. This indicates that community involvement can equip young people with the necessary support and resources, leading to a positive impact on their sense of belonging and wellbeing (Deane & Dutton, 2019).

Similar to youth narratives in the study, parents also expressed a similar sentiment, acknowledging the stress and pressure their children experience in seeking acceptance from their social environment. For instance, Saanvi described her daughter's unwillingness to wear Indian clothes in order to fit-in with her friends:

There was a time, she [her daughter] was very reluctant to wear Indian wear. In Mission Bay, when she was around 14-15, she wouldn't want to be seen wearing salwar kameez (Indian ethnic wear). And you know how we all dress up for our Diwali and Eid and all of that, she didn't want to do that. You know, because I stand out, I look silly, you know, that attitude. (Saanvi, parent)

Saanvi's account also highlights the conflicting viewpoints of parents and youth. In this excerpt, the refusal to wear Indian clothes suggests that her daughter perceived conforming to dominant social norms as a way to avoid negative consequences and to be able to fit in. Moreover, the excerpt indicates that Saanvi herself felt the pressure to conform to the societal standards placed on Indian mothers when she insisted on her daughter wearing traditional outfits to celebrate Indian festivals. Saanvi's adherence to traditional clothing likely stems from a sense of responsibility to pass on cultural values to the next generation and to display her own adherence to cultural norms. Nevertheless, the conflict between cultural traditions and contemporary social norms can lead to stress for both youth and their parents.

This theme of "Resisting Whiteness/Embracing Indian Identity" highlights the methods utilised by youth to embrace and celebrate their own ethnic identity. For instance, Ria (youth) stated, "a diverse class [in school] ... I think that made a difference." This demonstrates that community involvement and exposure to diverse environments are crucial for young people to develop a sense of belonging and pride in their cultural heritage.

Coping Through Distraction and Avoidance

This theme captures the fact that youth in this study tended to hide their stress, suppress the unpleasant feelings, and avoid communicating with anyone in their environment. Their initial coping response involved distancing themselves from distressing situations to divert their attention. All three groups – youth, parents, and counsellors – highlighted that Indian youth tended to deal with their stress themselves and internalise their problems. These youth described managing stressful events through various means, such

as avoiding the situation, distracting themselves, or engaging in self-motivation to believe that things would improve.

These stressful events, as identified in the analysis of stress constructs in Chapter 4: Constructions of Stress, primarily related to “Normative Pressures to Gain Acceptance”, which included dealing with negative stereotypes and societal expectations, ‘systemic racism’, such as youth confronting acts of discrimination occurring due to power imbalances, and ‘academic expectations’, with the high pressure to succeed in their careers and constant comparison with youth of the similar age.

This study found the majority of young people attempted to ‘detach’ themselves from the stressful situations. This coping strategy was reflected in the accounts of Aashvi (youth) and Ria (youth), who stated ignoring the problem or talking to themselves was a means of distraction. They attributed this coping behaviour to the lack of appreciation from their parents regarding their academic efforts. Additionally, Aashvi expressed difficulty in articulating her feelings to her parents, as she believed her “parents would not understand” the stress she was experiencing:

I just stop. I stop everything. I stop, I sit down, sometimes cry myself to sleep and I just like trying to distance myself and I'm supposed to do. ... I start like ... go to my bed and [telling myself] Aashvi you were fine. You are fine, everything is fine and so I tried to reassure myself it's OK, you're getting through it, you're almost there. I just have to push a little bit more. And then, so I just try to like stop what I'm doing.
(Aashvi, youth)

Aashvi's narratives reiterate that there is a communication barrier that exists between youth and their parents, making it challenging for them to express themselves. As a result, youth often resort to self-assurance to compensate for this lack of understanding and support from their parents. Aashvi's account also suggests that due to her experiences, she became more resilient, by “reassuring” herself that “everything is fine”. Furthermore, youth may choose not to disclose their stressful situations to avoid the potential emotional burden that might come from their parents, who might inadvertently impose it by sharing their own personal struggles. This aspect was discussed by counsellors in particular, in the construct of “Stress as Cultural Expectations and Restrictions” discussed in Chapter 4.

Ana and Nimit shared similar sentiments as Aashvi and Ria, with Nimit stating that he found it “too difficult to say” about his experience of family discord and had chosen to

keep it to himself since childhood. Nimit further said that he wanted to protect his younger sibling from the stress of their parents' separation while simultaneously dealing with racial stereotyping. Despite facing racism and stereotypes, Nimit was determined to maintain his composure, stating that he would say to himself "it's all right, cut it off":

I actually didn't (laughs) [deal with stress]. Yeah, I was just like, what was happening, it's happening. I've given my whole, so every time [I would] have to start from zero again, making new friends, start studying again, start your fitness or classes, whatever. But like it was always from zero. So, like, okay, I'll give it my all again. I'll give it my all. ... But there was no time that it was like, okay, let's sit at home and do nothing. I always wanted to progress. But yeah, [my life] wasn't stable. (Nimit, youth)

Nimit's account indicates his tendency to internalise his emotions rather than express them. This implies his recognition and acceptance of his external circumstances, which seemed unchangeable. Consequently, he tended to push himself every time to succeed, potentially entering a vicious circle of constantly striving. This behavioural pattern indicates Nimit's sense of powerlessness, created by the power imbalances and systemic nature of racism and whiteness. Moreover, the above account highlights Nimit's perception that certain aspects of his life were beyond his control, leading him to focus on what he could control, that is, his constant pursuit of personal growth.

Additionally, Nimit, as an elder brother, took responsibility for protecting his sister. This sense of responsibility may have resulted in him being preoccupied with looking after his sister's wellbeing, and potentially neglecting his own stress and emotional needs. The above account also suggests that the youth participants in this study feel that the strategy of distraction might be the sole viable option to cope with stressful circumstances, highlighting the power imbalance experienced by these youth. This coping style might be associated with their perceived lack of control over stressful situations, particularly within the family and school domains.

Statements such as "I stop everything" (Aashvi) and "cut it off" (Nimit) suggest that the Indian youth in this study preferred to redirect their attention away from the distressing circumstances and find other things to focus on. This coping strategy can be viewed as effective when confronting stressors over which they have little or no control. Youth narratives also indicate the presence of powerful forces, leading them to feel that their actions and efforts do not have much significance. This sense of powerlessness might be influenced by various factors, such as societal expectations, family dynamics, school

environment, and academic pressures. For instance, as discussed in Chapter 4: Constructions of Stress, experiencing systemic racism or parental expectations to conform to cultural norms limits their autonomy, leaving them with limited options to influence their own circumstances. This leads them to view problem-solving as an unattainable endeavour. This feeling of powerlessness and reliance on distraction and avoidance as a coping mechanism may have significant implications on their wellbeing, including the accumulation of unaddressed emotional burdens over time.

Similar to youth accounts, parents also highlighted the coping strategy of distraction and avoidance adopted by youth of Indian descent. Meera (parent), for instance, stated that her daughter preferred to “keep it to herself” and to “internalise” her stress rather than share it with others. Meera further expressed that it was “impossible” to determine if her daughter was experiencing distress unless she explicitly communicated it. Meera expressed her understanding that her daughter might refrain from discussing her stressful situation with her, driven by the notion that “parents do not understand”. This perception is particularly aligned with the construct of stress as “Normative Pressures to Gain Acceptance”, which contributed to Sarah’s daughter feeling isolated. Sarah (parent) voiced a similar sentiment, stating that her daughter immersed herself in her studies and work, leaving little time for contemplation on her problems:

Sarah (parent): One of [the stresses] she [daughter] faced was in free time [in school], she used to sit in the library [alone], which bothered her quite a bit ... she didn’t enjoy her high school.

Researcher: How did she cope with it?

Sarah: She [daughter] was then suddenly busy [doing] new things, there was work. This was the first time she was actually working. And the new subjects that she was, again the thing was, if you have signed up, if you enrolled [in school], you have to do the assignments, you have to do them.

Researcher: So, she had other things to do?

Sarah: Yes, she got distracted.

Similar to Sarah, Diksha talked about youth resorting to extra-curricular activities to cope with stress. Diksha (parent) described her daughter’s inclination for “keeping a journal”, writing, and performing songs, and watching movies. These activities assisted her daughter in coping with stress:

She’s [daughter] into singing, so she writes her songs as well. ... I think that’s a de-stressor for her. Then she writes. So that used to be like if we

had a fight she would write, I am sure her laptop have some strange stories against me. (Diksha, parent)

The above accounts from Sarah and Diksha (parents) emphasised the tendency of youth to divert their attention as a coping mechanism, leading to their self-isolation. This behaviour indicates that youth tend to escape from the situation by not acknowledging their stress. By keeping themselves occupied with various activities, they divert their focus, thereby hindering their ability to effectively address or deal with the underlying stressful event. Consequently, youth might experience psychological fatigue and find it challenging to reflect on or confront their stressors.

Furthermore, Aashvi's (youth) account, mentioned above, underscores the belief held by some youth that they were not heard nor understood by their parents. This perception could lead to youth building emotional barriers and withdrawing into their own personal space as a means of self-protection.

The counsellors also emphasised the significance of youth engaging in various activities such as art and craft, meditation, music, and exercise as coping strategies for dealing with stress. According to the counsellors, these activities provide an environment for young people to express their distress and become physically exhausted. This, in turn, promotes better sleep at night as they were fatigued, and reduces the likelihood of enduring anxiety. Amrita (counsellor) particularly emphasised the effectiveness of these coping strategies for youth and suggested appropriate ways of engaging in these activities in a beneficial manner:

Tweaking and helping them [youth] to fine tune what they already using. So, a lot of them talk about how music helps. ... So I talk about, we have to remember that music has about influence [on] our mood, especially when we're already feeling stink, if we're listening to music that makes us feel more stink, we'll get stuck there. So, you know, let's create focus playlist. (Amrita, counsellor)

Amrita's (counsellor) emphasis on the influence of music on mood highlights the prevailing perspectives on addressing stress, which primarily focuses on individual psychological approaches rather than focusing on fostering inclusivity within schools and society, which appears to be the root cause of the stress. Individual psychological approaches to addressing stress often overlook the underlying systemic factors that contribute to stress, such as societal norms, power dynamics and social inequalities, as explored in Chapter 4: Constructions of Stress.

Furthermore, existing research suggests that employing distraction and avoidance coping strategies heightens the risk of suicidal ideation, as youth may resign themselves to the problem without taking further steps to reduce stressors (Blankstein et al., 2007; Woodhead et al., 2014). This aligns with the findings of the present study and is further explored in the following theme.

Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation

Some of the youth accounts in this study were suggestive of them having thoughts of suicide and self-harm, which were caused by the stress.

The accounts from youth participants emphasised that due to parents' lack of recognition for their sincere efforts and hard work (as explored in the "Stress as Cultural Expectations and Restrictions" theme in Chapter 4), they developed a belief that they were not good enough, leading to thoughts about self-inflicted harm. For example, Aashvi (youth) voiced her suicidal thoughts after receiving parents' criticism regarding her academic performance and comparison with her peers or youth of her age group. Aashvi experienced suicidal thoughts when she saw no way out, but she managed to prevent herself from attempting suicide by convincing herself that those thoughts were negative and should not be acted upon:

I even had thought[s] about suicide and stuff ... but I am like no, snap myself out of it, [and I say to myself] stop it, I don't want to think about it. [Researcher: What was your reason of having thoughts about suicide?] For some reason it was kind of like I was so sad that my parents like not acknowledging me ... it was more like other people [youth] have gotten stuff better in like smaller things, have like that's what my parents would like. You know, push out like oh, she's got excellence in this and that [different subjects]. ... And I'll be like stop comparing me, [parents said] it's not comparing it is constructive criticism. That's not constructive criticism like constructive criticism is like when you're actually helping them [individual] in a way of like telling that you could improve in this [area]. It wasn't that, it was, oh, she's [another youth is] better than you in this [area of study]. (Aashvi, youth)

Aanya (youth), in addition to the Aashvi's account, indicated that she had attempted to leave home a few times "I've nearly run away from home a couple of times" since she was distressed due to family conflict. She further stated that "it got really overwhelming, and I didn't think that I was calling someone ... a help ... 'cause I didn't think my

situation was that bad because other people had it worse”. However, Aanya did not escape because, she said, “my dad still cares for me”.

The above excerpt indicates how Aashvi and Aanya addressed feelings of sadness and frustration caused by a lack of recognition and constant comparisons made by their parents. The factors contributing to Aashvi’s suicidal thoughts were complex and multifaceted. Aashvi’s experiences were likely influenced by a combination of factors such as family dynamics, societal expectations, cultural norms, and personal vulnerabilities. In the context of stress caused by ‘tiger parenting’, Indian culture places significant emphasis on academic success, which places immense pressure on youth to excel academically. Aashvi’s account also emphasises how communication patterns within the family can impact the self-perception and emotional wellbeing of youth. For instance, parents may sometimes focus more on their child’s shortcomings rather than acknowledging and appreciating their accomplishments, contributing to a negative self-perception among youth. Consequently, youth may develop feelings of inadequacy, failure, and worthlessness, leading to emotional distress and, in some instances, thoughts of suicide.

Despite experiencing distress, Aashvi demonstrated resilience by actively challenging negative thoughts and attempting to “snap out” of her thoughts immediately. This demonstrates her ability to question and resist the negative narratives imposed on her by external factors. Furthermore, Aashvi’s desire to seek “constructive criticism” and concrete strategies to improve her academic performance demonstrates her proactive approach to addressing challenges. However, despite her efforts to seek constructive feedback, Aashvi was constantly subjected to comparisons, leading to a negative impact on her wellbeing and the development of a sense of inferiority and self-doubt. This aspect of comparison was also discussed with parents in their interview and is further explored in Chapter 6: Mediated Dialogue.

Aanya’s account indicates that, for youth, running away from home or self-harm were perceived as easier forms of escape from their feelings of hopelessness in their situation. This implies that, for some youth, running away might seem like the only available options when they feel powerless. Aanya’s narrative expressed empathy for her father’s feelings and also emphasises the influence of parental “care”, which provided her with the strength to resist such impulses.

Furthermore, Aanya's statement that her situation was not "that bad" reflects how external forces, such as societal norms and expectations, can shape her perception of her own circumstances. For instance, Aanya explained, "[compared] to the stories I have heard of ... stories of abuse ... they [others] have had it much worse [than me], so I thought that I didn't have a reason to complain." Aanya was comparing her situation to what she believed others experienced or what she perceived as more severe situations. This demonstrates how societal expectations and social norms contribute to the way she constructs and evaluates her own distress.

Counsellors in this study described the prevalence of self-harming behaviour among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand. They identified the challenges faced by the young people in expressing their emotions and/or seeking acceptance from their social group. During routine safety inspections, the counsellors were able to identify indications of potential self-harm. Sara (counsellor) described an incident in which young people made "pacts" with their peers in self-harming activities:

I was counselling these two girls [in the school]. They came in as a group, and they were being bullied, they were Muslim girls. So, they wear hijab. So, there's been like a string of just random Instagram accounts, telling them to kill themselves. And so, they had almost made this pact that if one of them did it, the other one would also as well. So, it's like, like, you know ... shocking that, you know, yeah. Self-harm is one thing, but making, you know, pacts within your friends are, you know, if she's gonna kill herself, then I'm gonna kill myself as well, you know? Because we know, we're both going through this together.
(Sara, counsellor)

Sara (counsellor) further articulated two explanations as to why self-harm had become a 'normalised' behaviour among young people. First, the feeling of exclusion, and "feel like I'm [youth] left out because nobody is listening to them". Second, the desire to 'fit in' with the social norm and not wanting to be different from their social group. For instance, Sharon described an incident where "one of them [youth] said that a friend of hers who had been self-harming ... made a comment about 'Oh, you haven't done it [self-harm]? You can't be my friend. You're not one [of] us in our group'". This illustrates the powerful influence of social dynamics on youth behaviour.

The above account indicates a negative portrayal of Muslims, as highlighted in the analysis of the "Racial Stereotyping and Bullying in New Zealand Schools" sub-theme in Chapter 4. The act of forming a "pact" for suicidal thoughts and self-harm demonstrates

the emotional support, comfort, and solidarity among these youth, who likely perceive themselves as facing similar struggles and may find solace in the idea that others understand and empathise with their pain. This emotional bond can provide comfort and reduce feelings of isolation. Moreover, forming pacts might serve as a way for youth to conform to their social group and avoid exclusion. It could also function as a way for them to demonstrate loyalty to their peers.

In the context of Indian culture, where young people often experience significant parental influence on their lives, engaging in such acts could be an attempt to assert a sense of control and rebel against the lack of the autonomy they desire. However, existing literature suggests that self-harm and suicidal ideation tend to have a negative impact on the wellbeing of young people (Liang et al., 2020; Ong & Thompson, 2019).

Additionally, this study indicates that peers have a significant impact on how youth confront stress, prompting a further exploration of the role of social support in the context of stress management among young people.

Seeking Social Support

Another way of addressing stress highlighted in youth narratives in this study was seeking social support from friends and family members. Social support is often regarded as a safeguard against emotional distress and a facilitator of overall wellbeing (Camara et al., 2017). Although it is important to create inclusive societies and environments, it is imperative for youth to actively express their need for support (Camara et al., 2017). Without such expression, the challenges faced by youth may remain unaddressed. According to youth narratives, their choice to seek support depended on diverse situational factors when confronted with stressful situations. For instance, Dhairya (youth) described confiding in family members and “keep[ing] it in the family” when dealing with stress stemming from familial matters, while turning to friends for support when facing academic or school-related stressors.

Dhairya’s account highlights the collectivistic nature of Indian culture, where family and community hold significant value, and preserving the honour of the family is prioritised over individual needs (Nakhid, Yachinta, et al., 2022). Sharing personal problems with people outside the family is generally considered a last resort or is discouraged in Indian culture, as it may be seen as bringing shame or dishonour to the family. Additionally,

maintaining a positive image in the community is crucial in Indian culture, and airing family problems publicly may be seen as a sign of weakness and vulnerability.

The majority of the youth participants in this study described seeking help from peers who had similar ethnic backgrounds, cultural values, and experiences. For instance, both Aayush and Ana (youth) mentioned that they found it easier to confide in other Indian youth due to their similar upbringing, comparable restrictions, and shared expectations:

‘Cause like there’s, you can connect on more things ‘cause like a lot of Indian parents have like the same values and like same type of upbringing. So, you can talk about that stuff basically ... like they compare like kids like. “Unka like beta dekho like vo kitna yeh kar rahe hain, vo kitna padhta hai” (“look at their son, what all he is doing, how much does he study”), and like you don’t do this so like you can relate on that level with other kids. (Ana, youth)

They [peers] do come from a similar background which I have come from, like middle class, are having troubles and all ... so we can relate with each other. (Aayush, youth)

The above accounts shed light on how Indian youth in New Zealand, being an ethnic minority in a white-dominated country, navigate a complex process of identity formation. Their perception of ease in confiding in other Indian youth is influenced by the shared values and upbringing they have experienced within their Indian community, creating a common ground for connection and understanding among Indian youth. This shared cultural context creates a sense of comfort and familiarity.

Furthermore, peers who share a similar ethnic background can relate to the challenges faced by Indian youth, such as cultural adjustment, discrimination, or conflicting identities. This mutual understanding helps in alleviating feelings of isolation, forging a support network wherein they can share their struggles and experiences without fear of being judged. For instance, peers do not have to contend with questioning or judgement regarding the restrictions imposed on them by their parents, as these restrictions are more likely to be culturally understood and accepted within the shared community. This absence of external judgement, coupled with the empathetic understanding, contributes to a sense of validation and support for Indian youth in dealing with their stressors. The presence of such a support network helps youth in building resilience and improving wellbeing as they navigate the complexities of their identities in different cultural contexts.

The above findings suggest that youth drew emotional support primarily from friends of similar ethnic backgrounds. This implies the significant role peers play in the lives of young people (Flynn et al., 2017). This aligns with the study on Asian youth by Chen and Graham (2017), who found that 96% of youth preferred to form friendships within same ethnic group (same race and ethnicity). Additionally, 51% indicated a preference for inter-ethnic friendships, defined as friendships with individuals of the same race but different ethnicity, as per the authors' definition in the study. This preference stemmed from their ability to relate to others, fostering comfort in communication and facilitating discussions about similar experiences. Additionally, the findings highlighted the influence of the school environment on young people's way of addressing stress. A culturally and ethnically diverse school enables youth to embrace both similarities and differences among different ethnicities, fostering positive attitudes towards one another (Özdemir et al., 2021). This aspect of youth being comfortable with friends of similar backgrounds was not highlighted in the narratives of parents or counsellors.

In contrast to the narratives of youth, parents believed that their children prefer seeking support from them during difficult times. For instance, Saanvi stated that her daughter "approaches her first" when faced with difficulties. Diksha shared the same sentiment as Saanvi. Furthermore, Pallavi felt that reconnecting with family and friends from their home country helps youth to deal with their stress associated with migration. Pallavi also emphasised that parents made additional efforts to spend more time with youth, engaging in activities like going for walks and having discussions with them. However, Pallavi also said that when youth form their social circle, they tend to discuss their stress with their peers. Youth ensure they remain "connected to social groups" through video conferencing, which serves as a means for youth to address their stress.

Saanvi (parent) emphasised that parents play a crucial role as the primary support system for youth, highlighting that the "onus" falls on parents during the youth years. Saanvi further expressed the view that the way parents manage problems determines whether the conditions improve or worsen for youth. However, Saanvi also acknowledged the potential risk of imposing an emotional burden on youth. This burden arises when parents reference the sacrifices they have made and the expectations they hold for their children:

One thing as parents, and especially Indian parents that we – I, hopefully – that we won't do now is the emotional baggage that we leave with our children, that emotional blackmailing that we tend to do, you know, like we have done so much for you. So, you have to do for

us that sort of thing. That I think is just ingrained in our culture so hard.
(Saanvi, parent)

Existing research has shown that positive family communication and support can play a protective role in maintaining psychological wellbeing during stressful situations (Tummala-Narra et al., 2016; Zimmer-Gembeck & Locke, 2007). Seeking social support aligns with the collectivistic values ingrained in Indian culture, which emphasise the interconnectedness of immediate and extended family networks (Areepattamannil et al., 2018; Chadda & Deb, 2013).

Saanvi's account indicates that parents may be aware that they tend to exert pressure on youth; however, they view this as the normal way of parenting. Thus, parents may not necessarily perceive their actions as burdensome or overwhelming but rather as an inherent responsibility in shaping their children's lives. While parents have good intentions and believe that their approach is beneficial for their children, this approach inadvertently hinders youth in seeking parental support during distressing situations.

Help-Seeking Behaviour

Barker (2007) defined help-seeking by an adolescent as:

any action or activity carried out by an adolescent who perceives herself/himself as needing personal, psychological, affective assistance or health or social service, with the purpose of meeting this need in a positive way. (p. 2)

Most of the youth participants in this study displayed reluctance in seeking help from counsellors at schools for their personal concerns. For instance, Jay (youth) stated that "counsellors [are] a random person, I wouldn't be comfortable in talking to a stranger." Instead, Jay expressed his preference for talking with his siblings or friends he was familiar with. However, despite their reservations about seeking help from counsellors, youth emphasised the importance of peers who might be experiencing feelings of stress and depression actively seeking such support. While youth were receptive to the notion of others reaching out to counsellors for help, they exhibited reservations about doing so themselves. For instance, Keerti (youth) said that "counsellors are great, I know they help people with their problems ... but I wouldn't be comfortable [in] talking to them about my personal things."

Furthermore, youth highlighted the barriers for them to seeking a counsellor's help. Four themes emerged prominently from youth accounts: family/friends finding out about youth stress and help-seeking; "Stigma and Cultural Barriers in Help Seeking"; "Lack of Cultural Sensitivity among Counsellors"; and "Previous Negative Experiences Over Confidentiality Concerns".

Family/Friends Finding Out About Youth Stress and Seeking Help

The primary barrier faced by youth in this study pertained to the potential risk of their parents or peers finding out about their stress and the fact they are seeking assistance from school counsellors. Particularly concerning was the potential for parents to become aware of their involvement with such services. The youth participants in this study expressed their apprehension at being judged, primarily by their peers, if they were to seek help from a school counsellor. They shared instances of experiencing stigma associated with consulting a counsellor and observed how their peers had been subjected to judgement for doing the same. While some of the youth participants acknowledged their willingness to seek help from a school counsellor if necessary, many of them believed that although it was deemed acceptable for others to seek help, it was not considered appropriate for themselves.

Nimit expressed his awareness of the presence of school counsellors; however, he exhibited a reluctance to engage with or seek their help. This hesitancy stemmed from his apprehension that his peers would become aware of his interactions with the counsellor and subsequently inquire about the reasons for his visit. Consequently, Nimit felt discomfort when contemplating the idea of seeking help within the school environment:

You go to a counsellor at school, other people [schoolmates] start to find out, and then you like yeah. ... It is like you just walk in there. I know, like, 500 people I see, like, 10 people on the way just walk into the counsellor. So, [schoolmates would ask] where are you going? What are you doing? (Nimit, youth)

Parents and counsellors expressed a similar sentiment as youth. Meera (parent) stated that youth were unwilling to be perceived as someone with problems:

[They may be afraid] that somebody will find out what you are going through. That could be one [fear], then maybe, will this go back to my parents, that could be another fear. Who else will find out about this, could be another thinking. (Meera, parent)

They [youth] are constantly afraid that if their parents find out, it's going to be a backlash for them. (Amrita, counsellor)

From the accounts of youth, parents, and counsellors, 'finding out' about seeking a counsellor's help was construed negatively, primarily attributed to feelings of fear and judgement. This perspective could be due to the prevailing social stigma surrounding mental health issues in Indian culture, where the act of seeking counselling or therapy is often perceived as a sign of weakness, resulting in feelings of shame and embarrassment. Moreover, youth might perceive reaching out to a counsellor for help as a personal failure, indicating their perceived inability to effectively manage their stressors. Such apprehension is further compounded by worries about disappointing their parents or falling short of their expectations. Additionally, youth might worry about the potential consequences of their parents' reaction upon discovering their involvement with counselling, such as restrictions, punishment, or loss of trust.

The youth participants in this study also highlighted concerns regarding confidentiality, which served as a significant factor that dissuades them from seeking counselling within a school setting. This aligns with previous research that has identified barriers to seeking counselling among youth, including the fear of breaches in confidentiality and feelings of embarrassment (Corley et al., 2022). To address these barriers, counsellors should focus on establishing a strong rapport and building trust with young people, as suggested by Meera (parent) in her narrative. She further stated that youth want counsellors who are "relatable" and trustworthy, instilling "confidence" in them that their discussions would be kept confidential. Additionally, youth "want to be heard" and understood, emphasising that they do "not want to be told what to do":

I think kids don't naturally talk to adults straight away at that [young] age, unless they are very relatable ... for the children to have confidence that you have this person really cares about, what I am going to say, it is going to stay there. (Meera, parent)

Meera's account emphasised the crucial role of a counsellor being "relatable" for young people, to foster an environment where they feel comfortable expressing themselves openly. This emphasis stems from the belief that adults may not fully comprehend the specific challenges faced by youth. The generation gap between adults and young people may contribute to this perception. Furthermore, establishing trust appears to be crucial in removing scepticism among youth about whether counsellors genuinely care about their

wellbeing. This is intertwined with the stigma attached to mental health issues in Indian culture, which is further analysed in the following sub-theme.

Stigma and Cultural Barriers in Help-Seeking

The youth participants in this study expressed their reluctance and hesitation when considering the option of pursuing professional help, primarily due to the fear of being perceived as weak for relying on counsellors. This sub-theme focuses on the significant impact of the stigma attached to help-seeking behaviours among young people. The stigma, which originates from both external sources, such as the school environment and the parental belief system, and their own internal beliefs, served as a barrier for them.

Some of the youth participants in this study expressed the belief that seeking counsellors' help was associated with being perceived as "weak", "mentally ill", and "depressed". They associated help-seeking with a sense of vulnerability. Furthermore, the stigma attached to help-seeking was often attributed to concerns about how others would perceive and judge them if they were aware of their engagement with counsellors:

The only help I seek is Google 'cause sometimes it's like I feel like people judge me, almost when I'm like seeking help 'cause I want to keep that ... like Aashvi, she's smart. I don't want to think, I don't want them to think "Oh my gosh, the smart girl's asking you for help."
(Aashvi, youth)

Furthermore, Aanya expressed her parents' reluctance to seek help from a counsellor to address family conflicts. According to her, her parents firmly held the belief that external sources could not offer help in managing stressors faced by them:

Two years ago, I talked to my dad [about therapy] and he shut me down immediately because he said our home situation wasn't bad and other people would just come, listen for gossip and ruin our families' image in the community. (Aanya, youth)

Sarah (parent) similarly positioned the stigma associated with seeking help among the Asian community in general. She expressed the view that youth often do not prefer sharing the stressors faced by them with a counsellor, or discussing the challenges they face in managing their problems:

Very few people are actually willing to say that I have a problem. Or you know I am not being able to cope. So, there's peer pressure. You don't want to be that person. Mental illness has a huge stigma in Asian population. So even if I am not mentally ill, if I am just not coping with

something, and I want to see a counsellor, I do not want someone to think that oh, she's got issues. She is mentally unbalanced or she needs help. You do not want a stigma attached to it. So, you do not want to openly express that you need help. You do not want to be seen as that weakling. (Sarah, parent)

The above accounts demonstrate the negative perception of help-seeking, that seeking support for mental health issues was seen as a sign of weakness. This fear of stigma and judgement aligns with findings from the Education Review Office (2013) in regard to a government initiative aimed at improving the mental health of young people aged 12-19 years. The report focused on evaluating counselling services in high schools across New Zealand.

Aashvi feared being “judged” and labelled as someone who needs help, especially because she was considered “smart” in her school and has high academic expectations from her peers. This sheds light on the social pressure and stigma surrounding the stereotype that Indians excel in academics, as explored in the sub-theme of “Racial Stereotyping and Bullying in New Zealand Schools” in Chapter 4. This stereotype creates the perception and expectation that either “smart people” do not seek help and rather deal with situations independently or that smart people do not face challenges. Additionally, parents believed that the issues faced by youth were not of a magnitude serious enough to necessitate professional help. Parents, in particular, ingrained in their children the notion that their concerns were insignificant in comparison to other “bigger problems”. Consequently, this mindset contributes to reluctance among young people to seek support.

Furthermore, Aanya's narrative emphasised Indian parents' concern with regard to the perception of their family within the community, highlighting the importance they attach to upholding a positive image within their social context. It might stem from fear about being subjected to judgement or loss of control over their family matters.

Counsellors in this study believed that Indian youth were raised to be reticent people. Within Indian culture, discussing stress and mental health was not encouraged, and there seems to be a lack of encouragement for youth to express their feelings and emotions openly in front of their family and friends:

When you are asking them to explore the way that they are feeling, it is a lot of the stories, then it is okay, well, you know, can you tell me what you are feeling, but it is actually hard for them to be able to connect to

the emotion that they may be experiencing. I just feel sick, or you know, sort of mess or headache. (Sharon, counsellor)

Nobody in the culture has talked about feelings, nobody sat to conversation saying, I feel upset when you do this. Parents, which is probably the first examples, they will be accusing rather than saying, I feel upset when you do that, so why have you done that. (Sara, counsellor)

The above accounts of counsellors shed light on the cultural perspective on counselling in India, which is rooted in the belief that mental health stains a family's reputation or dignity. Sara (counsellor) talks about Indian youth being "very emotionless" since they find it challenging to "connect to their emotions" and struggle to express their feelings, which is connected to their "self-esteem", suggesting that cultural factors influence how emotions are understood and dealt with.

The lack of emotional expressiveness among Indian youth can be linked to the parenting style prevalent in Indian families, as explored in the theme on "Stress as Cultural Expectations and Restrictions" in Chapter 4. Indian parents believe that everything should be kept within the family, with no interference from strangers. Moreover, Indian culture places a strong emphasis on interdependence, where parents and adults play a paramount role in advising and making decisions for young people. Indian parents often fail to grant autonomy to their children, treating "adult children like the children" rather than as adults. Moreover, youth behaviour is guided by the value of obedience, which is deeply embedded in the social conditioning of Indian culture.

Furthermore, Sara (counsellor) positioned boys as often reluctant to talk to a counsellor and discuss their problems with them. Even when they were distressed, it was unlikely that they would seek assistance. This was because they were raised with the belief that it was not appropriate to express their emotions. Sara described an incident in which a young person had lost a family member and was referred to her. This person was confused and did not understand why he had been referred. Even during the conversation, he kept repeating, "We don't talk about feelings." Furthermore, it was shared that no-one discussed their feelings of losing a loved one at home. Girls, on the other hand, were more likely to converse and openly share with their peers and counsellors if they were referred to them. Amrita (counsellor) also noted that some Indian youth expressed their inability to share their problems due to their apprehensions about their emotional capability to manage the aftermath of such disclosure:

Indian students have said, they don't want to talk about things because they're afraid that if they open it up, they're not going to know how to handle it, and how to close that box again. So, there's this idea that it's gonna be way too much to handle. And that's why we don't talk about it. (Amrita, counsellor)

Amrita positioned youth as having a “volcano brewing among them” because although they have a lot of things to share, they are often hesitant to express their emotions. This reluctance to talk about their feelings and emotions is rooted in the fear that they might not be able to handle the intensity of their own emotional reactions. This idea was also explored in Chapter 4: Constructions of Stress.

The above accounts likely suggests that counsellors' perception is that the Western construct of expressing one's emotions openly is more beneficial than dealing with emotions internally. This is because it gives the individual the ability to comprehend their own emotions; however, for a reticent person, this is a new concept which they are unable to grasp. Furthermore, the Western approach claims that repressing emotions has detrimental psychological and social impacts (Dijkstra & Homan, 2016; Haga et al., 2009).

Moreover, the lack of cultural sensitivity among counsellors prevents youth from actively seeking help from them. This aspect is further explored in the next sub-theme.

Lack of Cultural Sensitivity Among Counsellors

Some youth in this study expressed their view that a lack of cultural awareness and sensitivity among counsellors posed a significant barrier to seeking help. Nimit expressed his belief that counsellors “don't really solve anything, but they listen to you, what a lot of people don't do.” He further emphasised that he would be willing to discuss his stressor with either a spiritual organisation he follows or an Indian person, as he felt a sense of belonging in “both those communities”.

Aayush echoed a similar perspective, expressing that he felt more comfortable confiding in a counsellor who shared his ethnic background. He believed that this shared cultural identity would enable him to communicate about his stressors in his native language, enhancing his ability to express himself more effectively:

It's like if a person [is] of my ethnicity, then I would be able to say it like properly like in Hindi or something language which can make me comfortable about sharing stuff. (Aayush, youth)

The above youth accounts highlight the importance of feeling a sense of connectedness when sharing their stressors with the school counsellor. Youth in this study expressed their belief that counsellors who share a similar ethnic background possess a better understanding of the cultural nuances, values, and beliefs specific to Indian youth. This understanding fosters a sense of trust and comfort, as these counsellors are more likely to comprehend the unique challenges and stressors faced by Indian youth in New Zealand. Furthermore, as highlighted in the previous sub-theme on the stigma associated with seeking help, youth may feel more comfortable discussing their concerns with counsellors who can navigate the cultural dynamics and provide support that aligns with their own cultural background, alleviating any fear of being misinterpreted or judged.

Moreover, Aayush's account emphasises the significance of language in facilitating effective communication and expressing emotions. Indian youth feel more comfortable sharing their stressors in their native language with counsellors who speak the same language. These counsellors can better grasp the intricacies of their stressors, leading to a more accurate understanding, meaningful conversations, and support. When communicating in their native language, youth can articulate their emotions and experiences more precisely, enabling counsellors to provide more targeted and effective support. This linguistic alignment fosters a deep connection between youth and counsellors, creating an environment where youth feel heard, understood, and supported in the process of managing stress.

Similarly, Saanvi and Pallavi (parents) also expressed the importance of counsellors having cultural awareness while helping youth in distress. This awareness would allow counsellors to comprehend the contextual factors and address the cultural values that significantly impact the lives of Indian youth. By doing so, parents believed that counsellors would be better equipped to "understand the ecosystem" and establish a sense of trust and connection with young people. Pallavi expressed the belief that cultural differences would pose a challenge for youth to form a meaningful connection with counsellors:

It is difficult for them [youth] to connect [with counsellors] due to culture. They [counsellors] will not be able to, you know, connect, and give that kind of real help, I feel frankly. (Pallavi, parent)

The above accounts of parents emphasised the importance of counsellors establishing a strong rapport with youth and creating a comfortable environment that encourages open

communication about their concerns. This necessitates counsellors being cognisant of the cultural backgrounds of youth they are working with. Saanvi's emphasis on "understanding the ecosystem" implies that counsellors must possess a comprehensive understanding of the social dynamics, cultural context, and values surrounding youth to effectively address their concerns. This highlights the vital role of cultural competence in establishing a meaningful connection with youth and providing appropriate support.

By demonstrating cultural awareness, counsellors can effectively "connect" with youth, overcoming potential barriers where youth might assume that counsellors cannot understand their behaviour and the underlying reasons for their stress in certain situations. This notion is aligned with the stress experienced by youth of Indian descent, as explored in the theme "Don't Forget Your Roots! Parents as Guides" in Chapter 4.

Furthermore, negative experiences with counsellors in the past were identified as a significant barrier for some youth in seeking their help. This aspect is further explored in the next sub-theme.

Previous Negative Experiences Over Confidentiality Concerns

Aashvi (youth) expressed her reluctance to seek help from a school counsellor since she said she "don't like the counsellors in school", due to a prior negative experience. Aashvi stated that the conversations she had with the counsellor were shared with everyone in her class, indicating a breach of confidentiality:

Aashvi (youth): See the counsellor's is like the worst place to go to school if you need help. ... I consulted [the counsellor] in Year Seven but I haven't been to [her] since four or five years.

Researcher: Was [consulting the counsellor] helpful for you?

Aashvi (youth): No, not one bit. ... When I went to her, she always said this [conversation] will be confidential, no one's gonna know and it will be hidden. All of a sudden, [the conversation] was everywhere that I was having problems.

Aashvi's account expressed her reluctance to approach school counsellors for assistance, indicating a lack of trust or dissatisfaction with their services. This reluctance stemmed from her negative experience, which contributed to her belief that information shared with a counsellor is not kept confidential. Furthermore, Aashvi's narrative implies that the breach of confidentiality resulted in her personal issues becoming known to others, causing distress, and further leading to feelings of embarrassment and shame. This also

highlights the fear of stigma and potential social judgement associated with counselling support, as explored in the “Stigma and Cultural Barriers in Help-Seeking” sub-theme. Moreover, the chain of information disclosure, as mentioned by Aashvi, suggests a lack of clear guidelines or protocols for maintaining confidentiality within the school system, allowing sensitive information to be shared beyond the concerned person.

Intersectional analysis

The analysis of the narratives revealed a complex interplay between identity, social locations, power dynamics, and parental expectations that shaped how youth addressed stress. These dynamics not only shape how youth perceive and manage stress but also influence their strategies for navigating complex socio-cultural identities within New Zealand's multicultural landscape.

Within the context of Chapter 4, "Constructions of Stress," these youth navigated a multifaceted landscape where various factors converged and influenced their responses to stress. These factors included balancing cultural expectations, systemic racism, and parental expectations. Strict cultural norms and high parental expectations, combined with the experiences of racism in educational settings, further compounded these challenges. Lacking control over these structural and familial pressures, the youth in this study developed resilience by balancing their dual identities as Kiwi-Indians and navigating different social environments.

The narratives shared by youth in this study indicated them being caught in the sense of powerlessness they experienced because of prevailing racial stereotyping and discrimination, leading to social exclusion and marginalisation. This powerlessness was exacerbated by the systemic nature of racism and whiteness when youth were ‘othered’ based on their ethnicity. This sense of powerlessness was further amplified by the parental and societal expectations to protect the honour of the family by not openly expressing their challenges. Expressing struggles was seen as a sign of weakness and vulnerability, even within the supposed privacy of the family setting. Consequently, youth distanced themselves from distressing situations, which seemed the only viable option in managing stress.

The social location of the youth played a significant role in their sense of power and coping strategies. Participants reported feeling empowered when surrounded by people of colour, as opposed to feeling less power when predominantly surrounded by ‘white’

people in the school context, where they experienced systemic racism and felt the need to conform to the dominant standards in order to fit-in and avoid exclusion. Their feelings of being empowered (or lack thereof) determined how these youth found ways to resist, embrace, and celebrate their ethnic identity. Where the school environment was not influenced by the dominant norms of whiteness, it allowed youth to resist these norms, and Indian youth developed a sense of belonging and pride in their cultural heritage. Moreover, Indian youth demonstrated their agency by communicating incidents of systemic racism to their parents, prompting parental involvement to challenge such discrimination.

The narratives highlighted how racialised identities prevented the youth in this study from seeking counsellor's help in school because of the fear that their 'white' counterparts would become aware of their distressing situations. This made it even more challenging for Indian youth to become a part of the dominant group, thereby intensifying experiences of shame and rejection. To avoid exclusion and isolation, self-harm was also considered in the youth narratives.

Language, cultural awareness, and sensitivity were the key aspects for youth in determining whether (or not) to seek help from their peers and counsellors. Due to the feeling that individuals from similar ethnic backgrounds would not judge the restrictions and the expectations imposed by parents, youth in this study found it easier to confide in other Indian youth to avoid shame and exclusion.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have identified diverse approaches employed by Indian youth to manage stress within the New Zealand context. The findings of this chapter clearly illustrated that these youth adopted various strategies in addressing stress. These strategies encompassed distraction, suicidal ideation, or seeking support, primarily influenced by their perceived level of control over the stressful situation they encountered. Additionally, their strategy to cope with stress was influenced by their social and cultural context. By elucidating these multifaceted dynamics, this chapter offered a rich understanding of how Indian youth navigate and manage the challenges in their lives.

In the next chapter, I outline the way parents and counsellors responded to the youth narratives presented to them through the mediated dialogue method.

Chapter 6: Mediated Dialogue

This study seeks to explore understandings of the stress experienced by Indian youth and the strategies they employ to manage it. This third chapter of the findings is focused on the mediated dialogue method, which facilitated the exchange of perspectives between groups. This dialogue aimed to explore the reflections of parents and counsellors regarding the youth narratives on stress, the strategies used to address stress, and the support required to help them deal with stress. Furthermore, this chapter endeavours to highlight the constructs and perspectives of the youth participants that might be unfamiliar to parents and counsellors.

To mitigate the potential impact of hierarchy in Indian culture on youth responses, this study ensured that youth, parents, and counsellors were not related to each other in any manner, creating a platform for youth to express their stress experiences without any apprehensions. Additionally, no adults were present during the interviews with youth, to avoid any power dynamics that could inhibit youth from expressing themselves freely. This allowed the youth participants to freely share their encounters with racism and discrimination, parental expectations, and the support required from parents and counsellors in dealing with stress, without intimidation. For some of the youth participants in this study, it was the first time they had openly expressed their challenges, and the fact that their responses would be heard by parents and counsellors through me as a mediator led to a sense of relief and fulfilment that their voices would be heard.

The mediated dialogue method enabled a focus on the ability of the youth voice to be heard and prompted parents and counsellors to re-view their understanding of youth stress and the support youth required. The youth narratives, summarised and disseminated to both parents and counsellors, highlighted several key concerns. These included the pervasive presence of racism and racial discrimination within schools, experiences of exclusion in the social environment, and parents being unable to adapt to the dominant culture in order to preserve their native cultural values. Furthermore, parental expectations of youth were also a significant source of stress emphasised by the youth participants. Youth expressed their frustration with their parents' constant comparisons with other youth of a similar age, and the pressure to excel academically.

The discussion which follows explores the responses of parents and counsellors to the voices and perspectives of youth. Within this context, several key findings emerged, shedding light on the responses and reflections of parents and counsellors regarding the stress experienced by Indian youth in New Zealand. Parents gained new understandings, recognising the challenges faced by Indian youth in terms of peer acceptance, and the importance of discussing mental health. They also acknowledged the role of parental expectations and the need for open communication to address youth stress. Additionally, counsellors recognised the importance of culturally inclusive training for themselves, and proposed strategies to bridge the communication gap that often exists between youth and parents.

The mediated dialogue contributed to parents gaining new insights about Indian youth stressors; they were able to engage in introspection, reflecting on their own expectations and how these expectations might have adversely affected the wellbeing of youth. On the other hand, while counsellors indicated they were cognisant of the challenges faced by young people, they also contested some of the youth narratives, particularly their experiences of racism.

Through the thematic analysis, eight key themes emerged from the parents' and counsellors' narratives. Table 6 provides an overview of the themes that emerged through parents' and counsellors' responses to the narratives shared by youth and presented in Chapters 4 and 5. These themes provide insights into how, through the mediated dialogue method, parents and counsellors perceived and reacted to the stress experienced by Indian youth in New Zealand.

The theme of "Parental Recognition of the Importance of Actively Listening to Youth" explores the fresh insights acquired by parents into the stress faced by Indian youth, particularly, the social pressures youth encounter, and acknowledged the importance of engaging in conversations with their children about these issues.

The divergent views on youth participants' perception of racism, expressed in the theme "Parents and Counsellors' Responses to Youth Experiences with Racism", encompass the different viewpoints of parents and counsellors regarding youth experiences of systemic racism and racial discrimination within school settings. While some parents acknowledged the occurrences of racism that youth encounter, counsellors invalidated

their experiences, asserting that youth often misconstrued the genuine intentions displayed by their white peers.

The theme “Parents Being ‘Guilty’ of Comparisons and Imposing Expectations Leading to Youth Stress” highlights parents’ contemplation of their methods of conveying academic expectations to their children, and how these expectations contributed to inducing stress in Indian youth. Additionally, parents felt guilty for drawing comparisons between their own children and those of a similar age, even though their intent was to motivate their children.

“Parental Emphasis on Building Youth Resilience to Stress” explores parents’ belief that youth display heightened sensitivity and tend to be excessively self-centred. They asserted that youth should cultivate resilience rather than relying on external support such as counselling. This perspective was influenced by the prevailing stigma associated with mental health issues within Indian communities, where mental health issues are often viewed as signs of weakness and sources of shame.

The theme “Limited Recognition of and Funding for School Counsellors in New Zealand” emphasises the under-acknowledgement of school counsellors and their role in supporting youth. Moreover, counselling was considered a low priority and this resulted in inadequate resource allocation and led to delays in timely assistance to youth.

“Educating Parents and Counsellors on Youth Stress and Cultural Sensitivity” indicates the need to educate parents on youth stress in settings such as religious centres and community gatherings. Moreover, there is a growing need for school counsellors to receive training in culturally inclusive practices. This theme highlights the urgency of equipping both parents and counsellors with the knowledge and skills necessary to support the needs of Indian youth.

The “Need for Proactive Approach and Integration for Migrant Youth” theme underscores the importance of proactive measures within schools, such as the implementation of a ‘buddy system’, to facilitate the understanding and integration of migrant youth into New Zealand’s education system.

The theme on “Collaborative Practice Approach with Parents and Youth” underscores the importance of creating a supportive environment by establishing safe spaces for open communication and bridging the gap between parents and youth. The counsellors’

narratives were suggestive of the significance of collaboration between parents and counsellors in enhancing youth wellbeing.

Table 6

Parents' and counsellors' reflections on youth narratives facilitated through mediated dialogue:

Key themes identified

Parents' and counsellors' reflections on youth narratives facilitated through mediated dialogue	
I.	Parental recognition of the importance of actively listening to youth
II.	Parents and counsellors' responses to youth experiences with racism
III.	Parents being "guilty" of comparisons and imposing expectations leading to youth stress
IV.	Parental emphasis on building youth resilience to stress • Prevalence of stigma associated with mental health issues
V.	Limited recognition of and funding for school counsellors in New Zealand
VI.	Educating parents and counsellors on youth stress and cultural sensitivity
VII.	Need for proactive approach and integration for migrant youth
VIII.	Collaborative practice approach with youth and parents

Parental Recognition of the Importance of Actively Listening to Youth

Most parents in this study stated that the mediated dialogue helped them acquire new insights into the stress experienced by Indian youth in New Zealand. These new understandings included the social constraints experienced by youth in seeking peer acceptability, mental health, and the immense pressure on youth to meet parents' academic and cultural expectations. Conversely, the counsellors believed that they were aware of those challenges indicated by youth in their narratives. However, their awareness was contradictory to the youth narratives, particularly in the youth perspectives on racism. This is further explored in the theme "Parents and Counsellors' Responses to Youth Experiences with Racism" which considers the divergent views on youth perceptions of racism.

Pallavi (parent) stated that listening to the youth narratives was "helping us [parents identify] where we need to improve, we can take conscious effort not to do [things including comparisons and over-emphasis on academics, causing youth stress]."

Furthermore, when Saanvi (parent) came to know that the lack of acceptance by peers at school was one of the stressors experienced by Indian youth, she expressed her surprise by exclaiming, “Oh really, ... I am not aware of [this] ... my daughter never told me that.” Ashish (parent) expressed a lack of awareness regarding the significance of mental health for young people:

I didn't realise that they consider mental health to be a factor [they want to discuss]. So, it has not struck me at all. But possibly, they [youth] are saying it, [so it] is important. (Ashish, parent)

Ashish's (parent) account indicates parents' willingness to learn and help, as well as their readiness to acknowledge the stress experienced by their children. Moreover, parents' accounts demonstrate the lack of awareness among parents of the challenges experienced by their children. This lack of awareness was exemplified by Pallavi (parent), who admitted that she had not “particularly asked my kids about [these] particular [instances]”. The discrepancy between the parents' old and new understanding could be attributed to Indian parents being preoccupied with experiencing acculturation stress themselves and rebuilding their lives from scratch, as explored in the “Stress as Cultural Expectations and Restrictions” theme in Chapter 4: Constructions of Stress. This circumstance was likely to result in less time being available for parental involvement with their children, consequently limiting opportunities for meaningful and in-depth communication. The mediated dialogue method facilitated parents' recognition of the importance of maintaining constant conversations to gain insights into the challenges their children were encountering.

By employing a mediated dialogue approach, parents and counsellors were made aware of the support required by Indian youth. This support included fostering open communication, maintaining a balance between the home and the host cultures without imposing excessive expectations on youth to conform to Indian cultural norms, and refraining from making comparisons among youth. After reflecting on the youth narratives, both Saanvi and Pallavi (parents) acknowledged this and said that “[it] is precisely what parents should do”. Saanvi asserted that parents should allow youth to make mistakes, as they themselves have made mistakes in their lives. However, Saanvi also noted that parents who have grown up in sheltered environments and had no similar experiences might struggle to comprehend this new understanding. Saanvi expressed her belief that some parents, upon becoming parents, “behave as if they have not done anything in their life” and often compare their own upbringing to today's era:

As they become parents, they sort of like, “Humne to yeh kabhi nahi kiya hai” (“We have never done such thing”). That is total bullshit, all of us have done it, do we accept it and do we understand, like, look if I have done it, they’re going to do it as well. And also understanding that, yaar (dear), we grew up 40 years ago, there was no social media, there were no phones, things have changed, these children are living in a more, I think they are living in tougher times than what we, our times were way simpler. (Saanvi, parent)

Similarly, after listening to youth narratives, the counsellors suggested that parents should give their children the opportunity to express themselves, even when there are differing viewpoints:

Give [their] children their time and listening ear, listen to them [youth], even if [parents] don’t agree with what they [youth] say. ... Too often parents are so busy, they haven’t looked themselves and thought ... what am I conveying to my child? ... Parenthood doesn’t come with a manual to say, this is what you do. (Amrita, counsellor)

The above accounts of parents and counsellors highlighted the importance of acknowledging the generational and cultural transition, and the need for parents to adapt to the changing times. For instance, Saanvi (parent) emphasised that parents should accept the evolving environment, understanding that their children might not have the same experience as they did due to differing social and cultural contexts. Similarly, Pallavi (parent) also recognised the significance of embracing and adapting to the new culture while maintaining a balance between cultures. Pallavi felt that when parents fail to adapt to the new culture, it can become challenging for youth to integrate with their peers.

Both parents and counsellors acknowledged youth narratives on the need for parents to change their mindset post-migration and not be rigid in following traditional cultural values. However, due to the parents’ deep-rooted Indian cultural upbringing and influences from their extended families in India, parents continuously strive to strike a balance between cultures. Even though parents recognise the importance of their own and their children’s integration into the dominant culture, they constantly seek a middle ground that can satisfy both cultural contexts. As discussed in Chapter 4: Constructions of Stress, parents encounter a complex situation wherein they are expected to conform to the cultural norms of their extended family in India while simultaneously needing to adapt to the prevailing norms upheld within their immediate social environment.

Differing viewpoints emerged from the accounts of parents and counsellors, particularly concerning instances of racism experienced by youth within the school environment. This is further explored in the next theme.

Parents and Counsellors' Responses to Youth Experiences with Racism

In Chapter 4: Constructions of Stress, the narratives of youth were suggestive of the presence of systemic racism and racial discrimination within the school environment. These narratives were shared with both parents and counsellors through the mediated dialogue method. Some of the parents in this study acknowledged the instances of racism experienced by the youth participants, explaining that their children had faced similar situations. Other parents denied the racism and discrimination experienced by their children within their school settings in New Zealand. Pallavi (parent) stated that “so far, we [the family] have not really experienced discrimination or racism based on [our] background”. Rather, Pallavi (parent) expressed an alternative construction of racism and stated that racism was more prevalent in India:

We go through much more racism, colourism [in India] than we do anywhere else. ... Look at us, we are the ones [who] roam with the bigger shade cards, in our own country [India], who are we to judge others about racism and discrimination? (Pallavi, parent)

Pallavi's (parent) narrative indicates her comparison of the experiences and severity of racism encountered in Indian and New Zealand contexts. Pallavi placed particular emphasis on the ingrained obsession with fair/white skin prevalent among the Indian population, a notion perpetuated through generations, where skin colour is viewed as a determinant of an individual's self-worth (Chattopadhyay & Chattopadhyay, 2019; Nagar, 2018).

Pallavi's comparison of instances of racism in India and New Zealand indicated her experiences in India, where she had faced discrimination based on her appearance, leading her to believe that if individuals were subjected to such bias within their own country, it becomes unfair to solely attribute racism to New Zealand.

Similarly, counsellors recognised the existence of racism; however, they stated that “it's [racism] is very hidden now”:

I grew up when people [said], oh you eat curry, you eat garlic. ... That's changed quite a bit. ... I think the school helps in that [change], it fosters

that diversity ... so, even when [racism] is there, it's not as big as it used to be. (Sara, counsellor)

Amrita (counsellor) invalidated the youth experiences of racism by explaining that Indian youth often misinterpret the genuine interest shown by white youth in learning about Indian culture. Amrita attributed this interest to the growing diversity and the “influx” of cultures in New Zealand:

There have been [Indian] students who have come to see me and [said] ... I'm being bullied because I am of Indian [ethnicity]. ... And then when [I] actually get into [the whole] conversation, that idea of racism, part of it is interpretation [by Indian youth]. ... There wasn't ever a racist intention, it was just a genuine interest. ... This is a problem perception. (Amrita, counsellor)

The minimisation of racism by counsellors in this study may stem from their apprehension at challenging school authorities to implement necessary changes. The counsellors, who might experience a sense of powerlessness, likely exhibited hesitation in addressing the issue of systemic racism, fearing potential conflicts with school authorities. Consequently, counsellors might perceive avoiding or disengaging from the issue as an easier approach.

The next theme explores how parents in this study reflected on the expectations they placed on their children and how these expectations affected youth stress.

Parents Being “Guilty” of Comparisons and Imposing Expectations Leading to Youth Stress

The mediated dialogue method adopted in this study enabled parents to reflect on how they had conveyed their expectations concerning their academic success to their children. Furthermore, it facilitated parents' understanding of how their expectations were discussed and communicated to youth, as well as their impact in causing stress among Indian youth. For instance, some parents in this study expressed the opinion that the constructions and experiences of stress highlighted by youth seemed to affect other children but not their own children.

According to Saanvi (parent), her daughter did not personally encounter the stressors highlighted by youth in this study. However, Saanvi had observed similar scenarios in her friend's families. Specifically, Saanvi mentioned instances where parents were

conservative and imposed strict adherence to Indian culture, resulting in conflicts within the family. Saanvi and Diksha (parents) emphasised the importance of Indian parents being mindful of their behaviour in front of their children, as she believed that youth tend to imitate what they observe. Saanvi believed that it was crucial for parents to create a balanced environment that would allow their children some freedom to adapt to the new culture:

You [parents] have chosen to come to this country, there are some leeway you have to make for them [youth]. You [parents] made the choice you made, so they [youth] shouldn't suffer for your decisions, but at the same time, it is also bringing them up in a way that is balanced and accepting this culture. We can't come here and say ki hum (that we) going to do things we did back home, you know, the way we are or the way we grew up, which will be like 40 years ago. (Saanvi, parent)

Similarly, most of the parents recognised that their expectations could have a negative impact on youth stress. For instance, Meera and Sarah (parents) felt “guilty” when they engaged in comparisons between their children and other young people of a similar age. Meera said that these comparisons occurred “automatically” rather than intentionally, as she had observed similar behaviour from her parents during her own upbringing. However, Meera (parent) went to say, “though I remember as a kid, I didn't like being compared with other kids, you know, but the language comes automatically.” Deepak further explained that the underlying intention behind making these comparisons was to provide encouragement and motivation to children. However, young people often interpret these comparisons differently, leading to stress among youth. Sarah added that these comparisons often arise during conversations between parents, where they share their children's accomplishments, motivated by a desire for others to speak positively about their children and to avoid hearing any negative remarks from others:

The one that straight resonated was the comparison with other kids, even without really meaning to. I think, yeah, we [parents] have definitely done that, where I have said look at so and so [other youth], you know, try to slip in conversations, oh this is what she [other youth] did. And she [other youth] is attending this [course] and doing that [various activities] and doing blah blah. And so, my reasoning would have been to encourage her [daughter] to look at, you know, developing that sort of interest. Whereas she [her daughter] took it as, you know, I am comparing, I am trying to show that she is falling short. (Sarah, parent)

Counsellors in this study also suggested that Indian parents should refrain from comparing their children to others. For instance, Sharon (counsellor) emphasised that, in numerous instances, youth are unable to openly express the stresses they are experiencing because “they can’t actually go to their parents” due to the constant comparisons:

Stop comparison, let your child be. Don’t make that [comparison] as a base to have a conversation, whether it’s about reaching out for counselling, whether it’s about deciding on whether they want to do cricket or dancing ... stop comparing so that you can just be, and your child can just be [themselves] and [both] can [have] a real conversation.
(Sharon, counsellor)

It was interesting to note that both young people and parents engaged in comparisons with their peers and their families. For instance, youth compared their own parents to other European parents, establishing a notion of what is considered “normal” in terms of curfew timings and autonomy (as explored in “Stress as Cultural Expectations and Restrictions” in Chapter 4). In contrast, parents did not describe feeling stressed because of the comparisons drawn by their children. Instead, parents desired their children to draw inspiration from their peers’ accomplishments in academics and other areas. This highlights that while youth and parents employed different reference points for comparison, they both followed a similar pattern of making comparisons in their lives.

Furthermore, counsellors in this study recommended against making comparisons for several reasons. Firstly, comparisons have a negative impact on the self-esteem and sense of worth of youth (as explored in “Comparison with Peers” in Chapter 4). Such comparisons create a sense of competition, insecurity, and a feeling of inadequacy (as highlighted in “Academic Expectations” in Chapter 4). Moreover, comparisons can hinder the ability of young people to explore and develop their individual skills. Constant comparisons place pressure on youth to conform to certain expectations or engage in activities that they may not genuinely excel in. Parents, however, believed that it was important for youth to build resilience when faced with stressful situations. This is discussed in the following theme.

Parental Emphasis on Building Youth Resilience to Stress

Most of the parents in this study emphasised the importance of youth addressing their stressors internally and cultivating resilience, rather than relying on external support. For instance, Diksha (parent) expressed opposition to her daughter seeking the help of a

counsellor, as she believed it could lead to a dependency on counsellors for everything they experience in their lives. According to Diksha, counselling is “temporary”, and youth should manage their stress themselves and not view life’s challenges as a “big thing”:

Don’t make mental health a big thing. [Youth] will have problems in [their] lives. You can’t always run to a counsellor, or you know, someone to depend on, you have to make yourself strong. (Diksha, parent)

Moreover, some parents in this study expressed their view that young people tend to be focused just on themselves. For instance, Deepak (parent) believed that if youth were to observe the challenges faced by other people in the world, it could lead them to gain a better appreciation of their own situations:

Youth are becoming self-centred, just thinking about themselves. ... Look from a longer perspective ... don’t be really sensitive. (Deepak, parent)

The above accounts highlight that parents are positioning youth struggles as something that can be dealt with internally. While parents in this study emphasised resilience-building among youth, it becomes problematic when the stressors faced by youth are not merely individual challenges but are deeply rooted in social and systemic factors, such as racism, as explored in Chapter 4: Constructions of Stress. Confronting and addressing the systemic issues prevalent in society might feel like a burden for parents, prompting youth to deal with the stressors themselves instead.

Counsellors in this study stated that the parents’ belief that youth should not be “sensitive” was primarily influenced by the counsellors’ observation that such parental beliefs were likely rooted in “the [way] parents have coped with [stress]”. Furthermore, according to counsellors, parents’ reluctance to seek counselling services might be attributed to their previous encounters with counselling in India, where the quality of training was perceived to be “not very good ... they [parents] don’t know that it works differently here [in NZ]”:

I think it comes back to that thing about people don’t know much about counselling, how it works [in NZ], so there are these assumptions [not to be dependent on counselling]. ... From my own experience in India, if they [parents] have either been to a counsellor in India or had seen someone go to a counsellor in India ... counselling is so new that it's not very good. (Amrita, counsellor)

Amrita's personal experience in India served as a crucial contextual backdrop highlighting the potential reasons for negative perceptions held by parents towards counselling. Moreover, parents' belief that youth should not be "sensitive" indicates an expectation that their children should handle stress or emotional challenges independently, without relying on external support such as counselling. This viewpoint appears to stem from cultural or generational differences in attitudes towards mental health and seeking professional help.

Moreover, the above accounts also highlight the stigma surrounding mental health issues in India which can be attributed to various factors, such as cultural beliefs, misconceptions about mental health, and fear of social judgement. This aspect is further explored in the following sub-theme.

Prevalence of Stigma Associated With Mental Health Issues

Most of the parents and counsellors in this study acknowledged the stigma that exists in Indian communities around mental health issues, leading to the reluctance of young people to seek counsellors' help. For instance, Sarah (parent) expressed:

Mental health has a huge stigma. So, even if I am not mentally ill, if I am not coping with something and I want to see a counsellor, I don't want someone to think that, oh, she [youth] has got issues, she's mentally unbalanced or she needs help. You [youth] don't want a stigma attached to it. So, they don't want to openly express that they need help. And peer pressure is very big for the younger age group. [They] don't want to be seen as that weakling or person who has got a problem. (Sarah, parent)

Counsellors, too, agreed about the existence of the stigma and stated:

I think our people [Indians], as soon as you say mental, they think there's something wrong with you. And the stigma that you can't solve your own problems is huge because people have never sought help, they kept it in the family. (Sharon, counsellor)

Both parents' and counsellors' narratives reinforce the prevailing stigma, in Indian culture, about seeking help while in distress. As demonstrated in Chapter 5: Constructions of Addressing Stress, the perception of mental health issues as a sign of weakness and shame creates a barrier for seeking help from counsellors, which aligns with the above accounts. As noted in the literature review in Chapter 2, Indian cultures place a high value on reputation, and youth may fear that seeking help could bring shame to their family or

community. This mindset has been passed down and embedded through generations, making it challenging for individuals to break through the barrier and seek help.

Additionally, Sharon's narrative indicates the strategies employed by parents in dealing with stress in their own lives. This belief system concerning mental health is transmitted through generations, emphasising that youth should confide in their family rather than discussing their concerns with outsiders. Amrita (counsellor) explained that Indian families believe that "because we're collectivist and in family someone who can help with something is found [to help]", leading them to believe that outside help is unnecessary. However, the lack of open communication within these families sometimes become a barrier to youth seeking help from their parents.

Limited Recognition and Funding for School Counsellors in New Zealand

Some of the youth participants in this study stated they were unaware of the role of counsellors, despite being aware of counsellors' presence within the school setting. Counsellors in this study, after gaining awareness about perspectives of youth through the mediated dialogue method, acknowledged the narratives shared by these youth and emphasised the lack of recognition of their presence within school environment and their role in helping youth in managing stress. Sara asserted that, for schools, "definitely counselling is a low priority". Sara (counsellor) observed that it is imperative for counsellors to proactively ensure that young people are informed about their role:

What we need to do is address the assembly, [go to] each different person, different class to say, this is what counselling is. (Sara, counsellor)

The above account highlights the under-acknowledgement of counsellors in New Zealand schools and the need for proactive efforts to establish their presence among youth. This situation appears to stem from the relatively low priority accorded to counselling and the insufficient allocation of resources. The lack of funding emerged as a consistent concern among counsellors, who described the insufficient financial support for mental health services despite extensive discussions among government authorities about addressing youth stress. Additionally, counsellors highlighted the long waiting lists at community organisations and the dearth of resources available to adequately support youth in need:

I referred someone for self-harming and they [community organisations] came back stating that the school counselling will be the best option for the school. (Sara, counsellor)

And that's the thing, there's enough people who are already attempting suicide and seeking out more [therapy], there's not enough funding, there's not enough people to meet the needs [of youth]. (Amrita, counsellor)

Moreover, Sharon expressed concern about the negative effects on youth who experience prolonged waiting times for counselling services. Such extended waiting periods often led youth to downplay the severity of their situations, fostering feelings of inadequacy and a belief that they were undeserving of professional support. Additionally, the high cost associated with private counselling services becomes a significant barrier to accessing help. To address these issues, counsellors in this study suggested that government consider implementing subsidised rates for counselling services, which might encourage a greater number of people to seek assistance. This, in turn, could help reduce the risk of self-harm and other harmful behaviours among youth:

There [are] very few resources that are financially accessible and that's the other show in New Zealand. You try and seek counselling. Outside of what's funded by the government or something, that it's a minimum of \$100 or \$120 [per hour]. It's just sad. And given that we have to wait until it's so bad that this young person who's barely seen, like, wants to kill themselves. (Sharon, counsellor)

The above counsellors' narratives indicated the potential explanation for their limited presence, primarily attributed to inadequate funding allocated to mental health services. Sharon (counsellor) said that even though the funding might be allocated, "it hasn't been put into practice yet". Sharon further stated that there was a lack of awareness among mental health professionals regarding how those allocated funds were utilised for youth mental health and wellbeing. The consequences of delayed access to help have a negative impact on youth wellbeing, leaving them feeling unsupported and misunderstood in their struggles. This lack of support and understanding can compound their existing challenges, further intensifying the risks they face. Furthermore, the delayed access to counselling exacerbates the individuals' circumstances and increases the risk of engaging in self-harming behaviours. Amrita (counsellor) expressed her deep concern over the high suicide rates: "New Zealand is the second highest with suicide rates ... quite an alarming thing."

Educating Parents and Counsellors on Youth Stress and Cultural Sensitivity

Parents and counsellors' accounts after reflecting on the youth participants' narratives suggested their need for education about youth stress and enhancing cultural sensitivity, respectively. For instance, Saanvi and Diksha (parents) expressed the need for education for parents on effective communication and demonstrating the conduct they wish to see in their children. They stressed that youth often imitate their parents' behaviour rather than following explicit instructions, in terms of their behaviour and managing stress. Furthermore, parents emphasised the significance of their own learning through social and/or community gatherings about the negative effects of comparing one youth to another, and the importance of embracing the new culture without placing unrealistic expectations on their children to conform strictly to their own upbringing:

I think that religious centres, you know, mosques and temples, they should be a little more focused on educating the parents as well. You know, like they need to also have a bit of classes of how to talk to their children, we've always have it the other way around, how a child's talking to you. But at the end of the day, we've got to realise that they're just picking up from you, they're doing that what they're seeing, rather than being told. (Saanvi, parent)

The above excerpt indicates that Saanvi views religious centres as merely physical buildings; but, as social constructs created and maintained by individuals and communities, these centres serve as places of worship, learning, and social interaction, facilitating the sharing and reinforcement of beliefs, practices, and values.

Furthermore, Saanvi's (parent) account emphasised the influence of parents in shaping the way youth deal with stress. Through the mediated dialogue, Indian parents began to recognise the impact of their actions on their child's wellbeing. However, societal expectations rooted in cultural beliefs lead parents to impose cultural nuances and values on their children, expecting strict adherence. Consequently, this might cause parents to overlook the stressors experienced by Indian youth in a Western society. Additionally, the integration of religious centres as educational platforms was identified as a potential venue for facilitating these positive transformations among parents.

Furthermore, as explored in Chapter 5: Constructions of Addressing Stress, one of the barriers to seeking help for youth was the lack of cultural awareness, and both parents

and counsellors in this study recognised the need to provide training for school counsellors on culturally inclusive practice:

I think we need to have more mental health practitioners that are culturally aware, and we are a multicultural society, we need to sort of accept that, which I think [is happening] but really slowly. (Saanvi, parent)

Amrita (counsellor): There's a lot of talk and readings about [culturally inclusive practice], but there's no actual work on it. ... What we are taught here [in NZ] is all Western theories. Over half the world is not Western ... there's lacking in counselling training. ... I know a lot of counsellors who understand cultural competence, but they don't realise what are things that they are taking for granted. And therefore, they don't understand that cultural difference.

Researcher: What could be done?

Amrita: I think incorporating [it in] the curriculum. ... We learned about Pasifika, we learned about Māori ... but could focus more specifically on Asians.

The above accounts highlight the multicultural nature of New Zealand society, signifying the coexistence of diverse cultural groups within the community. Therefore, it is essential to recognise and respect the unique needs, values, and experiences of youth from various cultural backgrounds. Cultivating cultural sensitivity and awareness would enhance the delivery of more efficient and tailored support to youth, fostering a more inclusive environment. The counsellors placed considerable emphasis on the assumptions and judgement that are often directed towards Indian youth. They recognised the importance of cultural competence and acknowledged that, in theory, counsellors from different ethnic backgrounds could understand this importance. However, during its practical application, the counsellors from different ethnic backgrounds often struggle to effectively apply cultural competence in real-life scenarios involving Indian youth. This discrepancy between theory and practice indicates a gap between their knowledge and their ability to translate it into meaningful actions and interventions.

Need for Proactive Approach and Integration for Migrant Youth

The majority of the parents and counsellors in this study emphasised the need for schools to be proactive in ensuring that migrant youth understand the new educational system in New Zealand and integrate themselves into it. Sarah (parent) stated that mental health was not being addressed in schools "as much as it should". She further voiced the need for teachers to be involved and observant about students' lives, in order to understand the

stressors faced by youth, rather than waiting for them to consult the counsellor, because of the low probability of youth initiating that conversation:

I think schools, especially high schools, the teachers need to be a lot more involved in the students' lives, at least during the time that they are there. It is impossible for a teacher to be present, go through two years and not know that, okay, there is some trouble brewing amongst these students, or this child is not really present in class. The teachers need to be able to pick on these things, rather than waiting for a student to go to them for help saying that I want to see a counsellor, I need help. Nine out of ten kids will not do that. (Sarah, parent)

In the excerpt above, Sarah emphasised the importance of teachers' active involvement with youth at school to ensure the fulfilment of the needs of youth, particularly considering that the majority of Indian youth may not proactively seek help. The above account implies that parents want teachers to be attentive to their children's behaviours, especially when the parents themselves might not be able to recognise changes in their children's behaviours. Moreover, parents want their children to feel safe and comfortable discussing their concerns with teachers, rather than relying on the parents for such communication. This aspect further reinforces the prevailing stigma around mental health issues, and the communication dissonance between parents and their children when parents are unable to perceive and discuss the stress experienced by their children, yet still expect or rely on teachers to do so.

Furthermore, Deepak and Pallavi (parents) emphasised the need for the government to adopt a "proactive" approach in supporting new migrants, particularly within school settings. They proposed the implementation of a 'buddy system', wherein a student living in New Zealand for a longer time could be assigned to assist a migrant youth, fostering regular conversations between them. This initiative would promote a sense of comfort for youth migrants in their new environment, providing them with a supportive individual to confide in and share any challenges they may be facing. Pallavi (parent) further highlighted that assigning a buddy from the same ethnic background would be advantageous, as it would facilitate easier connection and rapport:

I know they [school and universities] have counselling, you know, but they have to go themselves. You know, just to say from the same community, it will be even more helpful because they can help them connect to different communities. (Pallavi, parent)

The above accounts highlighted the importance of establishing a supportive system that specifically addresses the unique challenges faced by young migrants, helping them navigate the unfamiliar education system and culture. All three counsellors emphasised the significance of orienting and familiarising youth who migrate from India to New Zealand with the education system, as the two countries' school systems differ considerably. In contrast to the Indian system, the New Zealand system was seen as more liberal, leading some youth to believe they could do anything without being questioned and, as a result, they unintentionally push the boundaries, which they have perceived to be "normal" behaviour. However, school officials sometimes perceived this behaviour as aggressive, resulting in them referring these youth to counsellors, which could be confusing for them:

It is really strange when you come to school here [in NZ] and your teacher asks you something, and you don't have to stand up and answer. You, you don't have to kind of look down, the teacher wants you to look at them. And there's a little bit of these small things that are a huge cultural shift. (Sharon, counsellor)

The above excerpt highlights the point that, in order to integrate effectively into the educational system and take advantage of their new-found freedom to express themselves, youth create a narrative wherein it is considered "normal" to hold differing opinions from teachers, inadvertently disregarding the boundaries in place. This arises because they have not received appropriate orientation and guidance regarding these boundaries. Consequently, teachers and other senior authorities must recognise the cultural shift that youth would be experiencing, and foster awareness of this among themselves.

According to the parents' accounts, adopting the buddy system approach would facilitate the formation of friendships and social connections among youth, thereby providing a clear avenue for seeking support during challenging times. Feeling connected to peers and having a sense of belonging is crucial for youth (as explored in "Stress as Loss of 'Belongingness' and 'Outsider' Status" in Chapter 4). These elements play a crucial role in mitigating feelings of loneliness and isolation among youth. By implementing the buddy system approach, a supportive and welcoming environment can be nurtured for new migrant youth, which is vital for their successful integration into the new culture. This approach would ensure their comfort and provide them with access to the necessary assistance they may require.

In contrast, Meera expressed the view that the government and school have already provided adequate resources to youth, including school counsellors and telephone support. According to her, it depended on youth to utilise these facilities whenever they deemed it necessary, as she believed that youth were aware of the support available to them:

I don't think government can do much. ... I mean the government has provided so many facilities, you know, if not anything, this so much helps to the kids these days, in terms of counsellors at school, the health system takes care of you if you are under 18. ... So I think the government has done enough, it's about just making use of what resources they have at their hand. (Meera, parent)

Collaborative Practice Approach with Parents and Youth

Through the mediated dialogue, counsellors reported youth experiencing heightened stress attributable to parental expectations and the restrictions imposed on them. The counsellors reflected upon these perceptions and felt that parents often do not elucidate the rationale behind their restrictions, making it challenging for youth to comprehend their actions. Consequently, counsellors in this study emphasised the importance of creating a supportive environment for open communication and bridging the generation gap between parents and youth. They highlighted that, during the phase of youth, there is often a lack of understanding between youth and their parents due to differing social and cultural environments, as well as the transition from youth to adulthood. This lack of understanding creates significant challenges in communicating effectively with one another and comprehending each other's perspectives.

According to the counsellors in this study, it is crucial for both parents and youth to make an effort to understand each other's viewpoints and find a middle ground to resolve communication gaps. Additionally, parents may sometimes struggle to comprehend the difficulties their children may be experiencing and may be unsure about how to address those challenges. For instance, Amrita (counsellor) stated that Indian parents might resort to corporal punishment as a means of enforcing discipline. However, if parents were provided with education on alternative methods, they would have an opportunity to change their approach. Amrita further explained that the problem arises because of the expectation that parents will figure things out on their own, without sufficient guidance or support. Consequently, they may struggle to find effective solutions, leading to the persistence of the problem.

Sharon (counsellor) emphasised that cultural differences often hindered youth of Indian descent from voicing their challenges and viewpoints, especially in comparison to their European counterparts. Additionally, she observed that these youth lacked awareness of a safe space where they could openly express themselves:

Not having the tools or the space to talk about what's going on for them [youth], how they are feeling. Because there will be times where I would see similar issues pop up and young people, you know, say from the European culture, and they just seem to have a lot more self-awareness and a lot more ability to talk. (Sharon, counsellor)

In the above excerpt, Sharon highlights that the Western style of open communication enables youth to express themselves more effectively, as opposed to being discouraged from sharing their thoughts. On the other hand, Amrita (counsellor) emphasised that forming judgements based on hearing only one side of the story could lead to misunderstandings. However, according to Sharon, it was important to recognise that parents might also be experiencing a cultural shift and a phase of integration. Parents often hesitate to share their own stressors with their children, which in turn makes it difficult for youth to open up to their parents. To foster understanding, a collaborative approach is needed where each group shares their perspectives and actively listens to one another's viewpoints:

I've realised we have to kind of acknowledge that at the end of the day, what we hear about the parents is the child's version. It's not necessarily the whole truth. And we have to also acknowledge that it's been a change for the parents as well. It's been an adjustment for the parents as well. And quite often in Indian culture, the stressors parents are going through that they haven't told the child about. Yeah, so we have to acknowledge that, if a child is going through a hard time and they think and they say that it's because their parents are horrible to them. (Amrita, counsellor)

Amrita (counsellor), on the other hand, stressed the importance of understanding the challenges that parents face upon migration. She argued that while both parents and youth have different viewpoints, school-based counsellors can only grasp the stressful situation from the perspective of the child, not the parents. As a result, Amrita believed that counsellors collaborating with both groups would be more effective in supporting youth and improving their wellbeing, as well as helping both groups understand each other's points of view.

Conclusion

The mediated dialogue method was found to be highly effective, as evidenced by the findings, which clearly illustrates how parents and counsellors were able to recognise and acknowledge constructions of stress experienced by Indian youth in New Zealand that were new to them. For instance, parents were unaware of the dominance and adverse impacts of parental expectations and comparisons on youth experiences which significantly elevate the stress levels of the young people. However, parents explained that these comparisons came naturally to them, as they had been deeply influenced by their own upbringing. It was interesting that, even though the youth participants expressed distress resulting from their parents' comparisons, youth participants themselves made comparisons between their parents and European parents in regard to the restrictions imposed upon them. This illustrates the existence of similar patterns of behaviour in making comparisons with different parameters, and highlights the influence of parental actions on the behaviour of youth.

In terms of youth perspectives on racism, some parents partly accepted their perspectives, as they believed that racism was more pervasive in India and, thus, they did not solely attribute racism to New Zealand. Similarly, counsellors, too, contested the prevalence of racism in New Zealand schools and emphasised that Indian youth often misinterpreted the genuine interest of their white counterparts.

Moreover, counsellors acknowledged the lack of awareness about the counsellor's role among youth and emphasised the need to increase their visibility among youth. This would enable youth to seek support when in distress. In contrast, parents refuted the idea of youth seeking counselling in times of distress. Instead, they encouraged them to build resilience and avoid becoming overly sensitive. This indicates a prevalent and powerful social stigma against help-seeking among parents.

Furthermore, both parents and counsellors actively proposed strategies for collaborative efforts aimed at supporting the wellbeing of youth. This outcome demonstrates the effectiveness of the mediated dialogue method in fostering greater awareness, understanding, and collaboration among these groups in addressing the stressors faced by Indian youth in New Zealand.

In the next chapter, I discuss the interconnectedness of the experiences of stress and its management among youth, drawing on the findings that I have presented in this and the preceding two chapters.

Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion

This thesis used social constructionism as the theoretical framework underpinning this study and employed intersectionality to analyse how youth of Indian descent in New Zealand gave meanings to the stress experienced by them. This study also explored the perceptions of the support available at school and the encounters these youth had with that support. Additionally, the perspectives of parents and counsellors were included to enrich the understanding of stress among youth and how support could be improved.

Throughout this study, four primary research questions were addressed and subsequently answered through the analysis of research findings:

1. What are the lived experiences and understandings of stress among New Zealand youth of Indian descent?
2. How do New Zealand youth of Indian descent understand and/or experience support available to them?
3. How do parents and counsellors involved in supporting Indian youth understand the stress experienced by this group in New Zealand?
4. How can support be enhanced and/or improved to reduce stress and promote wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand?

A growing body of research has highlighted the influence of cultural factors on how youth perceive and manage stress (Kuo, 2011). Additionally, extensive research has been conducted on stress and coping mechanisms among migrant youth during their transition from home to host culture (Kuo, 2014). This study contributes to the current knowledge on youth stress, and strategies used by them to address stress, by focusing on a population that has been underrepresented in the youth mental health literature, particularly within the context of New Zealand. A social constructionist theoretical framework proved valuable in examining how a participant's role, cultural perspective, personal experiences, and perceptions about stress influenced the way they construed stress and shaped their responses to the various stressors encountered in their lives.

Little research has delved into the intersection of social and cultural factors impacting the understanding of stress among youth and the way they deal with it. The semi-structured

interview, focus group discussion, and mediated dialogue methods employed with youth, parents and counsellors allowed for an in-depth exploration of the participants' viewpoints, and facilitated a multifaceted understanding of issues, meanings, and experiences related to stress experienced by Indian youth.

To address the research questions, thematic analysis was conducted on the narratives provided by 14 youth, 10 parents, and three school-based counsellors. Through this analysis, the thesis has shed light on the different ways in which youth participants highlighted their experiences of stress. Additionally, parents and counsellors described their understanding of the stress experienced by Indian youth in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

In this final chapter, the experiences, responses, and reactions of the participants are interpreted within the framework of the social and cultural context. Furthermore, the stressful events that the youth participants had experienced, and the emotions expressed, as evident in their language, are taken into account. The responses to the research questions are divided into two sections: the stress experienced by youth of Indian descent; and the support- and help-seeking attitudes of Indian youth. In each section, the findings are discussed within the context of the existing literature. Following this, the key implications of the study are outlined, elucidating the significance of this study. Suggestions for future areas of research are presented, and strengths and limitations of this research are discussed. I conclude this chapter with my final reflections.

Stress as a Social Construct

The theoretical framework of social constructionism (Burr, 2015) has a significant role in this thesis, as this study explores how participants in this study constructed their own understandings and meanings of stress and its management through their shared knowledge, experiences, and contexts. While stress is commonly perceived as a psychological and/or physiological response to challenging situations, existing literature emphasises that its interpretation and the coping mechanisms employed to deal with it are influenced by social and cultural factors (Aldwin, 2004; Birk, 2021; Senanayake et al., 2020). Therefore, stress and the strategies adopted to address stress are viewed as socially constructed, meaning that they are not objective realities to discover; rather, they are ideas and constructs that are produced and sustained through social interactions. The different constructions of stress presented by the participants in this study clearly illustrated that this concept is not solely rooted in individual experiences but is also shaped by social and

cultural influences. These constructions, being socially created and shaped by people, are not permanent; rather, they can be modified.

Participants' narratives in this study revealed that stress is not merely an individual issue but is deeply embedded in social structures and cultural narratives. This study also demonstrated how dominant and marginalising social positions related to identity, belonging, language, social status, and stress intersected in the lives of youth of Indian descent in New Zealand. These intersections create complex and nuanced experiences for ethnic minority youth.

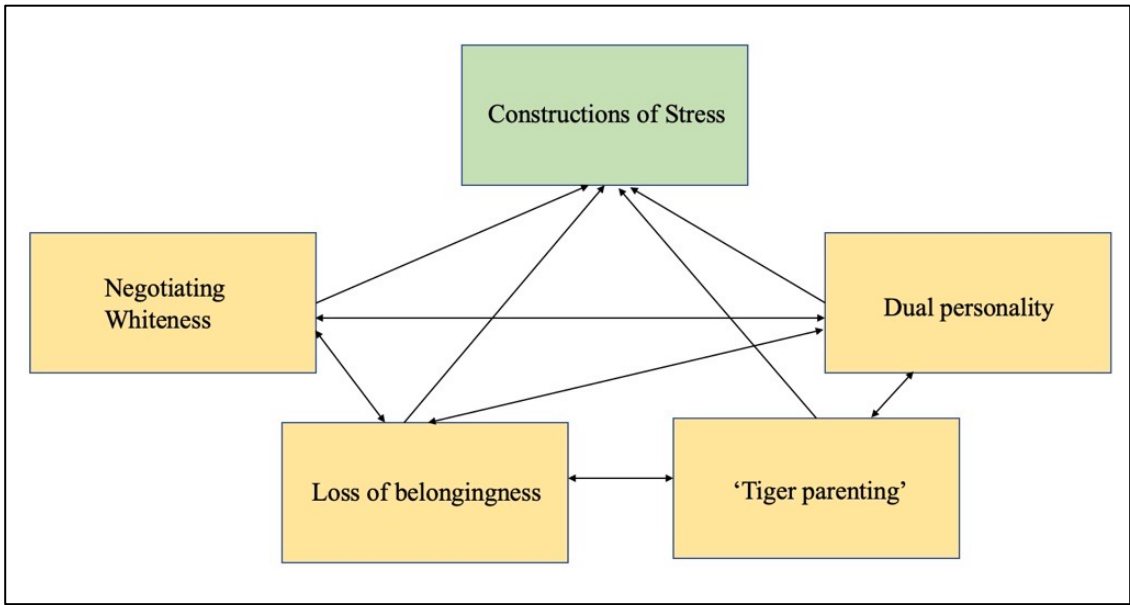
Social constructionism posits that the constructions of stress and coping are formed through the negotiation of every day social life, and this process involves social interaction (Burr, 2015). The data obtained from this study demonstrated how the experiences of three groups – youth, parents, and counsellors – were submerged within their interactions with their social environments, which influenced their construction of reality. Burr (2015) explained that our experiences and contexts provide us with many potential meanings. Cultural beliefs, values, and norms play a significant role in shaping how youth understand stress (Aldwin, 2004). People often unknowingly learn from existing meanings, taking them for granted. For instance, in the context of the current study, social expectations related to excelling in academics were imposed not only by parents but also by the self-imposed standards of young people. These young people appear to internalise the cultural norms of achieving high grades and believe that falling short of this standard is unacceptable. Consequently, this self-imposed pressure contributes to increased stress levels among youth as they strive to meet these expectations. This heightened stress often results in negative mental health and emotional wellbeing, such as developing anxiety.

Through interaction with the research participants and analysing the data, it became evident that stress and ways to address stress were interpreted in various ways by the participants, depending on their social interactions. As emphasised by Stubbing et al. (2023), it is imperative to prioritise the perspectives of young people in order to gain insights into their wellbeing, as these perspectives “cannot be researched or understood solely from an external gaze” (p. 3). Additionally, recognising the social construction of stress can enhance the understanding of how these concepts are shaped by broader societal dynamics. This suggests that youth with lived experience can make valuable contributions towards bridging the gap between mental health practitioners and service providers and

those accessing services, thereby improving mental health outcomes (Byrne & Wykes, 2020). Moreover, research has indicated that lived experience can play a pivotal role in designing mental health promotion strategies to enhance youth wellbeing (Stubbing et al., 2023). This understanding can guide the development of culturally sensitive approaches to addressing stress among youth.

Moreover, the literature argues that ethnic minority youth perceive their reality through the interconnection of social and cultural aspects, and their experiences are not isolated but rather intertwined. Drawing on an intersectional analytical approach, I wanted to explore further the interconnections of stress and coping experiences among Indian youth in New Zealand (as shown in Figure 7, below), focusing on the intersecting features of cultural and societal norms and community interactions. As exemplified in this study, youth experienced conflicting expectations between adhering to Indian cultural values and conforming to the dominant societal norms in New Zealand. This dissonance contributed to heightened stress among youth as they attempted to navigate these dual cultural contexts. However, throughout the narratives of parents and counsellors, it was evident that the stress caused by navigating cultural contexts was not well understood and, in some instances, actively denied by parents and counsellors. This included some parents rejecting the impact of their expectations around preserving traditional cultural values on the stress experienced by youth, and the counsellors' dismissal of racism encountered by youth.

Figure 7
Intersections of constructs of stress



Answering the Research Questions

In the following sections, I integrate the findings from Chapters 4, 5 and 6, and consider how they respond to my research aims, as well as how they sit within the literature. There are two aspects to this discussion: first, the stress experienced by Indian youth in New Zealand; and, second, the support available and the areas where the support could be enhanced to better support youth wellbeing.

Stress Experienced by Youth of Indian Descent in New Zealand

The findings discussed within this section respond to the following research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences and understandings of stress among New Zealand youth of Indian descent?
3. How do parents and counsellors involved in supporting Indian youth understand the stress experienced by this group in New Zealand?

Three key findings emerged, shedding light on the perspectives and understandings of youth, parents, and counsellors regarding the stress experienced by Indian youth in New Zealand:

1. Indian youth in New Zealand experienced a profound sense of conflict between dominant constructions of valued identities within their native and host (New Zealand) cultures, which they found stressful. In their endeavour to avoid exclusion, they often engaged in complex identity work or negotiation which carried a mental load.
2. The presence of overt and subtle forms of systemic racism, discrimination, and racial stereotypes within New Zealand's education system caused significant distress for youth. However, parents and counsellors tended to downplay these socio-political factors, instead emphasising individual psychological aspects of youth resilience. Some youth in this study also demonstrated being proactive agents of resistance despite the oppression and found ways to resist, embrace and celebrate their ethnic identity, fostering a sense of pride in Indian culture. Such empowerment was facilitated by a supportive environment featuring a diverse community, particularly within schools where diversity was visible represented.

3. The social construction of parental aspirations for children's academic success and the notion (and, at times, experience) of being compared to others had a significant impact on stress experienced by youth in this study.

These three key findings are discussed in the following sub-sections, drawing connections with the existing literature.

Negotiating Identities

Youth narratives in this study identified a predominant theme concerning their experiences of stress, primarily linked to navigating conflicting identities, leading to the loss of a sense of belonging. The research findings of this study shed light on the intricate complexities facing Indian youth in New Zealand, irrespective of whether they were migrants or New Zealand-born. This sub-section delves into the intricate web of negotiated identities, the challenge of compromising individual identity to conform to dominant societal norms, the development of hybrid identities, and the influence of parents, society, and culture on shaping these identities. Conflicting identities and cultural hybridity emerge as significant aspects of this web, which sheds light on the multifaceted experiences of these youth as they navigate their diverse cultural backgrounds.

The study's findings highlighted the reality that family and school contexts significantly shape the perception of Indian and Kiwi identities among youth. As discussed in Chapter 2: Literature Review, the process of identity formation, a crucial concern during youth years (Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2009), and is particularly complex for those who identify as bicultural (Cheon et al., 2020), a multifaceted issue with various intersecting layers.

Conforming to the Dominant Culture

Participant narratives highlight the interplay of multiple identities and power dynamics which influence youth experiences. Indian youth are navigating their ethnic and racial identities while being at a developmental age where peer acceptance and social belonging are vital. This developmental age intersects with the pressures of cultural expectations from their parents and society, exacerbating their stress. Additionally, youth perceive institutional power dynamics as favouring white individuals, prompting them to conform to dominant group norms and suppress their identities to avoid marginalisation.

Primarily, to fit in and gain peer acceptance, and appear 'the same', the Indian youth in this study described the need to consciously conform to the dominant white culture, even

participating in activities, such as taking up a new sport, when they did not enjoy it. Such behaviour stemmed from the fear of social exclusion and impacted their emotional wellbeing. This fear was also echoed by parents in this study; for instance, Sara (parent) expressed concerns about her daughter's isolation due to a lack of peer acceptance in her school, a concern which aligns with existing literature (Thomas & Choi, 2006; Tummala-Narra et al., 2016). These studies were conducted among ethnic minority youth in the United States, where youth reported being made fun of in relation to their ethnic attributes, encompassing language and appearance. This challenge made it difficult for them to establish friendships, consequently contributing to increased stress levels.

Furthermore, the findings on seeking peer acceptance for higher self-esteem aligned with previous studies by Birkeland et al. (2014) and Verkuyten (2003) that suggest greater socialisation positively influences self-esteem (Kuang & Nishikawa, 2021). However, while this pursuit may lead to social acceptance and elevated self-esteem, it hinders the ability of young people to embrace their Indian identity, as was evident in the youth participants' accounts in this study.

The pressure to conform to dominant societal norms led Indian youth in New Zealand to question, suppress, and compromise their cultural identity. The narratives of Indian youth in this study who masked aspects of their identity to fit in with the dominant culture highlight the tension between maintaining ethnic identity and integrating into New Zealand norms. Some of the youth participants in this study even expressed a deep sense of embarrassment or shame tied to aspects of their Indian heritage.

It is evident that youth experience constant pressure to conform to prevailing norms in order to gain acceptance within their social circles, which forces them into a continuous process of identity negotiation. This underscores the need for a more substantial emphasis on concepts like "diversity" and "social inclusion", despite their inclusion in various educational programmes (Cowan et al., 2017; Graham & Harwood, 2011). By encouraging and embracing diversity and inclusivity, society can create an environment in which youth can feel accepted for who they are rather than feeling compelled to conform. To better equip students, regardless of their ethnicity, it is imperative to increase exposure to diversity and various cultural aspects from a younger age, enabling them to comprehend and apply these concepts in both educational settings and the broader social context. This can be achieved through conducting workshops for parents within the community, disseminating content that reflects the diversity of the community through

various media channels, comprehensive teacher training, ongoing professional development, and the promotion of critical thinking within educational institutions.

Additionally, within the New Zealand context, recently there has been a strong emphasis on bicultural education programmes aimed at addressing the increasing levels of diversity in schools. However, the educational programmes in place often fail to encompass other minority groups, including Asians, Middle Eastern, Latin American, or African communities (Salahshour, 2021). Given the prevalence of stressors experienced by Indian youth in this study, it becomes imperative not only to cater to the specific needs of certain communities but also to formulate strategies that address the unique requirements of other ethnic groups within the country.

Preserving Traditional Cultural Values

This section highlighted the interconnectedness of multiple social identities, such as ethnicity, age, and migrant status, and revealing the complex dynamics that influence these youth's understanding of stress.

Youth in this study emphasised how parental expectations to uphold cultural values handed down through generations clashed with the prevailing cultural climate in New Zealand, resulting in a struggle to balance these sets of values. This struggle aligns with the acculturative challenges observed in literature (Balidemaj & Small, 2019). Consequently, Indian youth in this study described the need to build and constantly maintain a dual personality, forming a hybrid 'Kiwi Indian' identity to navigate different settings. The accounts of the youth participants in this study highlighted how they modified their behaviour, language, and clothing choices depending on the cultural context they found themselves in, to establish a sense of relatability within their social environment. The study highlighted how they switched between their native language and traditional values at home or with white peers, while conforming to dominant cultural norms in predominantly white settings.

While this cultural hybridity allowed the youth participants in this current study to effectively navigate between these diverse contexts, as previously discussed by other researchers (Asher, 2008; Ip & Pang, 2005). Although the youth's ability to switch between cultural identities demonstrates their resilience, they emphasised that maintaining this cultural hybridity was hard work, and required ongoing and active negotiation, consuming their time and energy, especially when it was conducted with little

support and understanding from their parents and community (Renzaho et al., 2017), highlight the intersection of cultural, familial, and social pressures.

The Indian youth expressed their conscious efforts to integrate into the New Zealand culture while simultaneously preserving their ethnic culture, as also acknowledged by other researchers (Berry et al., 2006; Kuo, 2014; Lee et al., 2006). The desire among Indian youth for integration was often driven by implicit and explicit parental pressure. These parental expectations were rooted in the same societal and familial pressures that parents themselves encountered during their upbringing, as they aimed to fulfil the expectations of preserving cultural values even in the context of living overseas. However, this parental desire led to frustration and conflict for the young people as they felt compelled to conform to Indian cultural norms.

The mediated dialogue method in this study allowed the parents to introspect on their children's experiences, whether their children migrated to or were born in New Zealand. It shed light on the challenges the children encountered in New Zealand, some of which the parents were previously unaware of. One of the parents stated, "I have never thought about it [challenges faced by youth during migration]" (Saanvi, parent). Diksha (parent) similarly said, "This [youth account summary] is very insightful for me. ... I just realised how little I may know my kids ... it makes you think, like, I don't know if I have particularly asked my kids about [their stresses]." Parents reflected on their attempts to encourage Indian youth to embrace and take pride in their own cultural heritage and how they might have neglected the social pressures experienced by youth by expecting them to conform to the dominant norm.

Coping by Avoiding Distressing Situations

Youth narratives in this study emphasised on how social identities, power dynamics, structural inequities, and coping strategies intersected to shape the experiences of youth in dealing with stress.

In order to address stress, youth in this study adopted several approaches, predominantly ignoring stressful situations, including detaching themselves from the situation and resorting to extra-curricular activities to divert their attention. Counsellors in this study also highlighted the significance of youth engaging in activities such as listening to music, meditation, and exercising. However, studies have demonstrated that avoiding stressful situations is often negatively associated with wellbeing (Dijkstra & Homan, 2016) and

can lead to heightened anxiety (Hofmann & Hay, 2018). Moreover, the strategies indicated in the counsellors' narratives highlight the prevailing perspectives on addressing stress, primarily centred on individual psychological approaches rather than addressing the underlying causes of stress (Dijkstra & Homan, 2016). These individual-centric approaches to addressing stress hinder the potential for a collaborative approach aimed at promoting inclusivity within educational settings and society at large, thus failing to address the social inequalities as evident in the responses of the young participants.

Additionally, this approach of distraction emerged from feelings of powerlessness or helplessness, stemming from their perceived lack of control over the situation. Youth participants also assumed that parents and counsellors might not understand some of the stressors they experienced. This perception became apparent in the responses obtained through the mediated dialogue method, where some of the experiences of youth, such as the prevalence of racism within the school environment, were denied by counsellors.

Moreover, some of the youth participants in this study adopted the strategy of internalising their emotions by not sharing them with anyone, due to the perceived lack of control over stressful situations and also due to the desire to not bother their parents with their concerns. This reflects how cultural expectations and individual-centered approaches to managing stress are intertwined in their environment. In such cases, adopting these strategies suggests that distraction seemed to be the only viable option for youth to cope with their stressful circumstances.

These strategies may have appealed due to the immediate short-term relief from distress they provided; nevertheless, research suggests that this often results in an increase in the frequency and intensity of distress in the long term, and has a positive correlation with the development of anxiety and depression (B. Compas et al., 2001; Dijkstra & Homan, 2016). This highlights the importance of recognising and addressing the challenges experienced by youth, and the need to promote their wellbeing.

Sense of Not Belonging in Both India and New Zealand

Youth narratives in this study highlighted navigating multiple layers of identity and belonging. They positioned themselves as 'outsiders' in both Indian and New Zealand contexts and felt a sense of not belonging anywhere. This sense of disconnection arose due to the preconceived notions attributed to these youth in both settings. For instance, in India, there was a construction of youth as NRIs who might have forgotten their native

language, adopted an English accent, and felt themselves to be superior. In New Zealand, Indian youth were also positioned as ‘outsiders’ and were looked at differently based on their appearance and the native language spoken. Through the mediated dialogue approach, parents acknowledged that the process of cultural transition experienced by youth had caused stress to youth.

Moreover, the findings of this study indicate that Indian youth experience heightened complexity at the intersection of their cultural identity, social belonging, and cultural attachment. Youth narratives also illustrated the complexities of their socio-cultural experiences. As discussed in Chapter 2: Literature Review, conflicting identities and a lack of a sense of belonging impacts youth mental health (Kwan et al., 2018; Pyke & Dang, 2003). This is congruent with studies by Thomas and Choi (2006) and Tummala-Narra et al. (2016). Ethnic minority youth in these studies reported that they felt different from people in their environment, resulting in a profound and highly distressing feeling of not belonging. Furthermore, these studies highlighted that these youth neither fully integrated into the dominant culture nor felt a strong connection to their parents’ cultures, leaving them in a state of uncertainty regarding their own cultural identity. Similarly, given these overlapping dynamics, the youth participants in this study also indicated a heightened sense of vulnerability and isolation, grappling with the formation of their own identities. These negotiations within the realm of identity construction consequently contributed to stress among youth.

The findings underscored the significance of comprehensively grasping the complexities of conflicting identities and cultural hybridity, and the need for a nuanced understanding of the experiences of Indian youth in New Zealand. It is crucial to recognise that their identities are not fixed or static but rather shaped by multiple societal and cultural influences. As prior research has indicated, experiences of young people are not isolated from the larger social context but are intricately woven into it (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; van der Zanden et al., 2020). Providing support and guidance to these youth necessitate acknowledging the complexities they confront, coupled with assisting them in navigating the challenges of reconciling their Indian heritage with their experiences in the New Zealand context, both within the home setting by parents and within the school environment.

The narratives of youth participants in this study suggest that addressing the challenges related to identity can be facilitated by creating a more diverse environment which allows

youth to feel comfortable with their own identities. This notion aligns with a study conducted by Wang et al. (2023), which focused on youth of different races in a school setting. Wang and colleagues discovered that the active promotion of racial socialisation and cultural competence among youth resulted in positive relationships among peers, ultimately leading to a heightened sense of belonging. Similarly, the youth participants in this study expressed a sense of comfort in ethnically diverse school settings. In these environments, interactions with peers of various cultural backgrounds fostered an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding.

Overt and Subtle Forms of Systemic Racism, Discrimination, and Racial Stereotyping

Most of the youth participants in this study described encountering both overt and subtle forms of racism and discrimination which had a significant impact on their wellbeing. Some of the parents acknowledged the existence of similar instances, while counsellors held the belief that such instances of racism were “hidden now” and denied its existence in the school settings. Youth in this study reported instances of systemic racism within educational settings where they experienced marginalisation and exclusion due to their ethnic background. This systemic racism persisted at individual, institutional, and societal levels, creating barriers to their sense of belonging.

Suárez-Orozco (2000) argued that negative messages and experiences regarding race and ethnicity in the school setting inhibit psychological wellbeing and the development of a bicultural identity by youth. For instance, Saanvi (parent) described her daughter being questioned by her ‘white’ friends about her religion and facing restrictions from parents for wearing shorts. This situation illustrates how Saanvi’s daughter, as a female Muslim, was perceived by society through the lens of this identity rather than being simply recognised as a New Zealander. These intersecting factors compounded her experiences of stress in relation to her religion. In order to avoid such comments, Saanvi’s daughter distanced herself from her religion and started hiding her religious affiliations. These findings support research from the United States which showed that religious minority groups often face challenging incidents at school due to their religious status (Forrest-Bank & Dupper, 2016). Negative experiences within school settings are significant because they can have adverse effects on the young person’s wellbeing and the development of their sense of identity, considering the significant amount of time spent at school (Forrest-Bank & Dupper, 2016).

The consequences of the negative experiences at school include developing a negative self-perception and feelings of worthlessness. Studies have indicated that prolonged stress and anxiety stemming from negative school experiences can have adverse effects on physical health, such as sleep disturbances, and headaches (Chu et al., 2022, September 12). Moreover, youth often experience feelings of isolation and withdraw themselves from social interactions. Over the long term, these experiences may lead to the emergence of anxiety, depression and a lack of motivation, further undermining academic performance and future career prospects due to a lack of motivation.

Derogatory Comments Directed at Indian Youth

The majority of the youth participants reported being called derogatory names such as “curry munchers” and being associated with “ISIS” (a terrorist organisation). This had a profound impact on their sense of identity as they attempted to be seen as part of the dominant white group. These experiences contributed to the feelings of shame, as they were seen as strangers and ‘outsiders’, which is aligned with the literature (Priest et al., 2013; Trent et al., 2019). These studies highlighted the significant associations between racial stereotyping and negative youth mental health and wellbeing.

Additionally, it was evident that some of the youth participants in this study were aware of the differential treatment they received in comparison to their white peers. For instance, no action was taken when a white person said, “Fuck off you Indian”, or when punishment was given to an Indian youth but not to the white youth committing the same offence. These instances had a profound impact on the youth participants, fostering feelings of disempowerment, helplessness, anger, and resentment. Consequently, a sense of apprehension arose, stemming from the belief that taking action might result in adverse repercussions being directed towards them instead. This highlights that these experiences are not merely individual but are shaped by broader social structures and power relations.

The occurrences of differential disciplinary decisions are aligned with existing studies by Riddle and Sinclair (2019) and Ruck and Wortley (2002) which revealed that, in Canada, black students faced significantly higher rates of disciplinary measures compared to their white counterparts. This further exacerbated the constant pressure on ethnic minority youth to prove themselves, as even a single mistake could result in punishment. It also underscored the influence of normative whiteness in shaping behaviour and the responses (or lack of) by those in authority or power.

Addressing Stereotypes and Fostering a More Inclusive Society

All three groups in this study – youth, parents, and counsellors – acknowledged the stereotyping, discrimination, and prejudices experienced by Indian youth. Such stereotypes and biases often stem from preconceived notions about particular racial or cultural groups and tend to perpetuate negative assumptions and attitudes. Such attitudes have adverse effects on youth, as highlighted in the youth accounts. A study conducted by Simon-Kumar et al. (2022) found the persistent impact of racism and discrimination within contemporary structures and policies, consequently, systematically disadvantaging ethnic minority people. The literature also shows that experiences of racism and discrimination place ethnic minority youth at risk of increased distress, feelings of hopelessness, lower self-esteem, and adverse mental health struggles (Braveman et al., 2022; Crengle et al., 2012; Lambert et al., 2009; Mourad, 2022; Stanley et al., 2019; Williams et al., 2019). This study shows that making the racism experienced by youth more visible and addressing it openly is critical to reducing stress and fostering a more inclusive society.

To mitigate racial disparities and bias in schools, it is important to implement evidence-based, age-appropriate educational programmes. In the United States, recent interventions have proven effective in reducing prejudice (Killen et al., 2022) and enhancing awareness of discrimination and ethnic-racial identity (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2018) in minority youth aged 8-11 years. These programmes utilised web-based curriculum tools, involving youth in scenarios of peer inclusion and exclusion, and encouraging discussions, judgments, and feelings about character actions. The study found that students in these programmes were more likely to consider interracial and same-race exclusion as wrong, a crucial step in reducing prejudice and bias.

By challenging and dismantling stereotypes, we can promote a more nuanced understanding of individuals from diverse backgrounds, leading to more support for those experiencing emotional distress, irrespective of their racial or cultural identity. This can be achieved by engaging in cultural exchange programmes that facilitate understanding and the appreciation of different cultures (Killen et al., 2022; Salahshour, 2021). For instance, the celebration of cultural days in schools, as highlighted by some of the youth participants in this study, allowed all youth to embrace traditional clothing and food associated with their culture. By amalgamating the celebration of cultural days with the

cultivation of critical thinking within educational settings, youth can be empowered to recognise and appreciate the richness of various cultures, traditions, and backgrounds.

Indian Youth as Active Agents of Resistance

Youth participants' responses to systemic racism in this study demonstrate that Indian youth are not always passive recipients of systemic racism but can be proactive agents of resistance. They exhibited their agency in countering instances of racism and discrimination by communicating these experiences to their parents. This act of choosing to disclose these experiences demonstrates their desire to challenge rather than remain silent. Subsequently, the parents escalated the issue to school authorities, compelling them to initiate appropriate actions.

These instances of systemic racism highlight the need for a more proactive approach to addressing such issues. They also draw attention to the importance of empowering marginalised communities and providing them with the tools, such as collaborating with community organisations and leveraging media platforms, to advocate for their rights and demand accountability from those in positions of power.

Furthermore, the findings from this study demonstrated that despite the oppression faced by Indian youth, they found ways to resist, embrace, and celebrate their ethnic identity. Indian youth found pride in their Indian culture when they were surrounded by more youth of colour within their school settings. In such inclusive and multicultural spaces, Indian youth found a profound sense of pride in their cultural roots. This accentuates that community involvement can equip young people with the necessary support and resources, leading to a positive impact on their sense of belonging and wellbeing (Deane & Dutton, 2019; Stubbing et al., 2023).

Therefore, the findings of this study suggest that youth should be provided with inclusive environments within their immediate settings, including from the microcosm of homes and schools to the macrocosm of communities, mental health services, and national policy frameworks. This can be achieved by targeted educational interventions and diversity trainings for teachers, healthcare providers. These interventions can serve as a crucial step toward dismantling biases and fostering a more inclusive society. It was evident from this study that it is not sufficient to solely rely on minority communities and professionals to drive system change. Therefore, to ensure the effectiveness of strategies and

interventions, it is crucial to move beyond sole reliance on individuals from ethnic minority groups and have a collaborative movement with allies working together.

In addition, schools should have increased cultural activities to illustrate the challenges faced by young people. This could be done by depicting role play scenarios with parents being the audience, with students acting out the experiences and stressors experienced by them. This will ensure that the challenges are communicated to both parents and school authorities while also maintaining confidentiality on individual experiences. This strategy will ensure youth to effectively communicate their struggles, fostering empathy and understanding among parents. Moreover, this approach maintains confidentiality regarding individual experiences, creating a safe space for expression and discussion.

Overall, the study indicated that youth agency, community empowerment, cultural pride, and collaborative efforts with allies are essential aspects in addressing systemic racism and promoting a more inclusive and equitable society, regardless of racial or cultural background.

Counsellors' Views on the Racism Experienced by Youth

Contrary to youth and parents' narratives, the perspectives of counsellors diverged significantly, as they did not recognise racism as a prominent stressor experienced by Indian youth in New Zealand. When presented with a summary of the narratives of the youth participants through the mediated dialogue method, counsellors said that "it [racism] is not as big as it used to be", with one indicating that Indian youth often misinterpret the genuine interest shown by their white counterparts. The divergent views on youth experiences of racism raise concerns about the utility and safety of seeking cultural understanding from Indian counsellors, contrary to the expectations held by youth. In their narratives, youth participants had stated that if they were to seek counselling for their distressing situation, they would prefer a counsellor from the same ethnic background to ensure a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural context and the comfort they feel when discussing their circumstances in their native language.

Moreover, the minimising of the prevalence of racism might arise from counsellors' reluctance to challenge school authorities in implementing necessary changes. The counsellors could be grappling with feelings of powerlessness or their inability to understand what racial microaggressions are, leading them to exhibit hesitancy when addressing the issue of systemic racism, fearing potential conflicts with school

authorities. Consequently, counsellors may perceive avoiding the issue an easier approach.

These findings resonate with those from a study by Day-Vines et al. (2022), which found that ethnic minority school-based counsellors exhibited reluctance in addressing issues related to racism and discrimination. This reluctance might have stemmed from their apprehension at facing potential repercussions from school authorities for engaging in discussions concerning sensitive subjects related to race and representation. These counsellors might have also feared that such engagement could have adverse effects on their professional trajectories. This indicates the complex situation of ethnic minority counsellors and further suggests that it may not be advisable to rely solely on minority counsellors to advocate for systemic change.

Nonetheless, the reluctance of counsellors to address these concerns may result in youth being left to cope with incidents of racism and discrimination without adequate support. This situation is concerning, given that prior research illustrates that individuals in their developmental journey frequently contend with stressors influenced by racial dynamics (Lewis, 2005; Trent et al., 2019). Moreover, experiences of racism and discrimination can have a long-lasting impact on youth self-esteem and their sense of belonging (Crengle et al., 2012; Harris et al., 2018; Tummala-Narra et al., 2011). Additionally, not addressing the issues of racism may inadvertently contribute to a culture of silence and inaction, allowing discriminatory behaviour to persist.

Parental Expectations

The third key theme that emerged from the participants' narratives centred around the considerable parental expectations placed upon youth, particularly in the context of academic achievements. All the three groups, youth, parents and counsellors, emphasised that parental expectations were stressful for Indian youth. Indian parents in this study expected their children to be obedient in accordance with their cultural norms and to excel academically. This expectation becomes deeply ingrained in youth from an early age, leading them to anticipate similar standards for themselves. This is congruent with the findings of Arora and Khoo (2020), Kwan et al. (2018) and Tummala-Narra et al. (2016), who emphasised that Asian youth experience immense stress owing to the weight of parental expectations of academic excellence.

Additionally, the youth participants in this study expressed their desire for acknowledgement and recognition from their parents for their efforts, and worked diligently towards achieving this goal. This also resonates with Areepattamannil et al. (2018) and Sekaran et al. (2020), who found that youth engage in additional coaching sessions and devote extended hours to their studies to meet parental expectations of success and bring pride to the family.

All the three groups highlighted the strong push from Indian parents to pursue careers in STEM fields. This career preference is rooted in the perception that these professions offer stability, respectability, and lucrative compensation. Education, according to Asian parents, serves as a powerful predictor of future success, implying that poor education leads to failure (Pong et al., 2010). Moreover, the narratives in this study emphasise Indian parents' adherence to societal norms that recognise STEM careers as prestigious, financially rewarding, and instrumental in gaining social status. Historically, parents grappled with securing basic necessities for survival, and an office job was regarded as a symbol of pride, authority, and financial stability (Inman et al., 2007). This mindset and attitude has been transmitted through generations, shaping parents' decisions about their children's careers and employment trajectories (Inman et al., 2007). Moreover, it was important to consider that Indian parents also navigate social pressures from their environment and their families in order to ensure familial happiness and facilitate their children's integration into a new country, thereby shaping their educational and career choices.

Additionally, the youth participants in this study also indicated the significant stress stemming from comparisons with peers of a similar age. Parents, while acknowledging this aspect, communicated through the mediated dialogue that their intent was to motivate and encourage youth to strive for greater achievements and success. Some parents in this study admitted to feeling a sense of "guilt" regarding making such comparisons, yet they explained that these comparisons often arose automatically due to their own upbringing. However, counsellors in this study believed that persistent comparisons dissuade young people from seeking their parents' assistance when needed, as they fear being subjected to these comparisons every time, consequently fostering feelings of inadequacy. This finding aligns with prior research, which demonstrated that comparisons initiated by parents frequently contributed to feelings of discontentment and self-doubt among youth (Farver et al., 2002; Jacob, 2017).

Confronting Societal Notions of Stigma Held by Parents

The narratives of the youth participants in this study demonstrate the pervasive influence of social stigma on their mental wellbeing, as youth having thoughts of self-harm and suicide. These distressing thoughts are linked to the academic expectations imposed by parents, a perceived lack of acknowledgement and appreciation for their efforts, and familial conflicts. It is crucial to recognise that societal perceptions, particularly within the family unit, significantly shape the behaviours of young people, reinforcing the existing body of literature which emphasises the pivotal role of parental influence in shaping youth attitudes and behaviours (Aunola & Nurmi, 2005; Lee et al., 2006; Sahithya et al., 2019; Warikoo et al., 2020).

Engaging in self-harm might serve as a means for young people to express their emotional distress and challenge or subvert social norms, thereby seeking recognition of their struggles (Dempsey et al., 2023). Self-harm might also be perceived as an easier way and/or the only way for youth to externalise their internal pain and to communicate their stressors to others when they find it challenging to express their emotions through words (Bailey et al., 2017). Additionally, self-harm might be a means of seeking attention from others, especially when they perceive a lack of understanding about their emotional state among those around them (Hetrick et al., 2020; Klineberg et al., 2013).

Moreover, literature suggests there are multifaceted consequences of self-harm and suicidal ideation, encompassing physical, emotional, and social aspects. These consequences include long-term health issues, injuries, anxiety, depression, strained relationships, and challenges in interpersonal dynamics (Hetrick et al., 2020; Mars et al., 2014), collectively contributing to a negative impact on the wellbeing of youth (Liang et al., 2020; Ong & Thompson, 2019).

This study recognised how various identities, such as ethnicity and gender, intersect with social structures, including family dynamics and societal expectations, to influence youth experiences and responses to stress, such as self-harm and suicidal ideation.

Creating an environment in which children can freely express their emotions without any apprehensions becomes paramount. This, in turn, fosters an environment wherein both parents and youth collaboratively navigate challenges. The narratives provided by all three participant groups distinctly underscore the need to establish improved channels of communication between youth and their surrounding social environment, particularly

within parent–child relationships and the school context. This reinforces the importance of gaining a deeper insight into how Indian youth construct and perceive their encounters with stress.

Creating a safe environment involves removing judgement concerning stress and help-seeking, acknowledging that certain individuals may lack exposure to an understanding of mental health and, as a result, may continue to hold on to misconceptions. Therefore, it is crucial to promote awareness and education within families to confront prevailing societal stigmas that parents may hold. Collaborative efforts involving parents, counsellors, and educational institutions can facilitate this process. While it is acknowledged that this process might be gradual, addressing these issues at their root remains paramount.

Support and Help-Seeking Behaviour

The results discussed within this section respond to the following research questions:

2. How do New Zealand youth of Indian descent understand and/or experience support available to them?
4. How can support be enhanced and/or improved to reduce stress and promote wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand?

The majority of the youth participants in this study were aware of the counselling services available at schools; however, they displayed reluctance to seek the help of counsellors when in distress.

Four key findings emerged, shedding light on the perspectives and understandings of youth, parents, and counsellors concerning the existing support available for Indian youth and how the support could be enhanced:

1. Youth in this study were reluctant to reveal to both their parents and peers that they were seeking help and/or experiencing stress. This reluctance stemmed from apprehensions about being judged and the perception of being considered weak.
2. Youth in this study exhibited their inclination towards seeking help from counsellors who shared the same ethnic background. This stemmed from the sense of connectedness, as youth perceived that Indian counsellors could better

comprehend the specific challenges faced by Indian youth, particularly concerning the expectations imposed by their parents and society.

3. Strengthening support for youth can be achieved by counsellors fostering collaborative efforts between youth and parents. This approach would address hierarchical barriers and bridge communication gaps between the groups, facilitating an understanding of each other's viewpoints.
4. Schools could adopt a proactive approach in acquainting migrant youth with new education system through orientation programmes.

Social and Cultural Factors Influencing Youth Help-Seeking Behaviour

The findings in the current study regarding youth help-seeking primarily reflect the findings of previous research. Nevertheless, this current study enhances these findings by delving further into the help-seeking behaviour, as it elicits a more profound comprehension of how social and cultural factors exert influence upon the processes of seeking help, as described by the youth participants. In this section, I first discuss understandings of help-seeking described by the three groups that align with previous research. Next, I explore the key barriers to seeking help from counsellors illustrated in the findings. Finally, I explore how the support can be enhanced and help-seeking encouraged, to promote the wellbeing of Indian youth in New Zealand.

Preference of Indian Youth for Seeking Help from the Same Ethnic Group

The youth participants in this study indicated that they sought assistance from friends who shared the same ethnic background. This is consistent with existing literature that recognises peers as significant sources of support in youth years, where they take on a more central role in the life of young people (Flynn et al., 2017). The majority of the youth participants discussed how they preferred to gain support from their Indian peers, as fellow Indian youth were perceived to understand their struggles better. Nevertheless, their choice to solicit support from either parents or friends was contingent upon the specific circumstances.

When confronted with stressors related to school or peers, they tended to turn to their friends for support. This inclination is presumably rooted in the shared experiences of academic pressures and social challenges that foster a sense of familiarity and understanding. Conversely, when stress stemmed from familial factors, they engaged in conversations with their parents and/or siblings, as there existed a belief that matters

pertaining to the family domain should be confined within the familial unit (Chadda & Deb, 2013). This reinforces the collectivistic nature of Indian culture, wherein family and community hold significant value. Within this cultural context, the preservation of family honour is paramount and is prioritised over individual needs (Gaiha et al., 2020). Consequently, sharing familial problems with people outside the family is perceived as bringing shame and dishonour to the family, and construed as a sign of weakness and vulnerability.

Barriers to Seeking Help When in Distress

Youth in this study expressed hesitancy about seeking help from school-based counsellors. This concurs with previous research that ethnic minority youth rarely seek formal help for distress (Guo et al., 2015). Several barriers were identified by youth in this study, including concerns about their parents/friends finding out about their challenges and help-seeking, the associated stigma linked to mental health issues, and the counsellors' perceived lack of cultural sensitivity. The underlying thread connecting these barriers was the fear of judgement from their social environment. This fear of stigma and judgement was also highlighted by the Education Review Office (2013), which reviewed the guidance and counselling services of New Zealand high schools. The review documented that youth sensed potential judgement from their peers, fearing that they may be labelled as weak individuals, leading to potential embarrassment and humiliation. These findings from the report align with the results of this current study.

The hesitation articulated by the youth participants also stemmed from the belief system upheld by Indian parents. When parents were asked about their perspectives on seeking counsellors' help, some of them stated that youth should not rely or be dependent on the counsellors, but should build resilience and not become sensitive. Parents stated that youth "should look at the larger perspective" and should not "make mental health a big thing". When discussions about youth seeking support for their stressors were initiated with parents through the mediated dialogue, some of the parents remarked that youth were "becoming self-centred ... just thinking about themselves". This emphasised that parents wanted their children to deal with stressors themselves rather than seek external support. However, this becomes challenging for youth who are not merely facing individual challenges but stressors which are deeply rooted in social and systemic factors, such as racism and racial stereotyping.

Conversely, some parents acknowledged gaining fresh insights into the kind of support youth required. For instance, they learned that young people found it stressful when compared with others and wanted appreciation for their academic efforts. Moreover, counsellors highlighted that parents' reluctance to rely on external support was rooted in how these parents themselves addressed stress in their own lives. This underscores the significant impact of social environment and cultural context on young people's understanding of the support available to them during times of stress.

Strategies for Enhancing Support for the Wellbeing of Indian Youth

All the three groups in this study – youth, parents, and counsellors – identified a range of strategies aimed at enhancing the support available for Indian youth, thereby promoting their overall wellbeing. Through the mediated dialogue method, this study revealed that parents recognised the necessity of parental education to comprehend youth stress better. Parents in this study suggested that this could be achieved through religious and community centres, and school initiatives. These platforms could serve as spaces for educating parents on how to foster open dialogue with their children, helping them understand the challenges faced by youth, and how to communicate with youth without imposing their own cultural values upon them. This aligns with the mental health and wellbeing programme implemented within the Pasifika community at a South Auckland school in 2021 ("*Supporting the wellbeing of Pasifika communities*," 2021). This program established a safe platform for youth, parents, and teachers to engage in open discussions about matters related to youth stress and anxiety. Consequently, there was heightened awareness among parents regarding the prevalence of youth stress, and it highlighted the importance of offering support to young people.

This can also be achieved by taking feedback from the students within the school and presenting the aggregated feedback to the parents as findings. This approach helps mitigate the risk of identifying particular individuals and simultaneously raises parents' awareness of the difficulties faced by youth.

Additionally, this study highlighted the concerns of youth regarding the perceived lack of cultural sensitivity among school-based counsellors. This should be addressed by providing culturally sensitive training to counsellors, to equip them with the necessary knowledge to comprehend the unique needs, viewpoints and intersectional identities of youth belonging to diverse cultural, ethnic, and social groups. These factors significantly influence young people's worldviews, identity, and experiences. Prior studies involving

ethnic minority youth have demonstrated their hesitancy about confiding in counsellors, which is often attributed to fears of judgment and the counsellors' potential lack of comprehension of the cultural context within which these experiences unfold (Arora & Khoo, 2020; Auger et al., 2018). Developing cultural awareness and sensitivity will facilitate the provision of more efficient and suitable support for youth, fostering a more inclusive environment.

Counsellors in this study emphasised the importance of cultural competence for those counsellors who do not share the same ethnic background as youth who meet with them. Interestingly, even counsellors of Indian descent participating in the study invalidated the encounters of Indian youth regarding the prevalence of systemic racism. This highlights that relying solely on counsellors of the same ethnic background may not always be the most effective approach for addressing the concerns of youth. These findings contrast with previous studies that suggested counsellors of the same ethnic background were often seen as culturally competent experts in helping ethnic minority youth with issues like discrimination and prejudice (Meyer & Zane, 2013; Stubbing & Gibson, 2022). The current study indicates that cultural competence extends beyond shared ethnicity. It involves a more comprehensive understanding of the complex and diverse experiences of students from various backgrounds. Hence, it is imperative for school-based counsellors, regardless of their ethnic background, to acknowledge and listen to youth voices, eliminate both unconscious and/or conscious biases, and foster inclusiveness within school settings.

Moreover, counsellors can improve support and encourage help-seeking behaviour among youth by assuring youth that confidentiality will be maintained at all times. Both youth and parents described their apprehension stemming from concerns about the confidentiality maintained by counsellors. Aashvi (youth) shared an instance where she sought help from their school counsellor. However, confidentiality was breached, as the challenges faced by her were disclosed to other teachers and school authorities. This further resulted in the whole school knowing about the challenges that Aashvi experienced, subsequently resulting in the loss of trust between youth and counsellors. Concerns around confidentiality were also presented in the Education Review Office (2013) report in New Zealand as one of the factors discouraging youth from seeking help. To mitigate these concerns, schools should implement protocols and staff training on confidentiality. Additionally, any instances of breaches in confidentiality should be

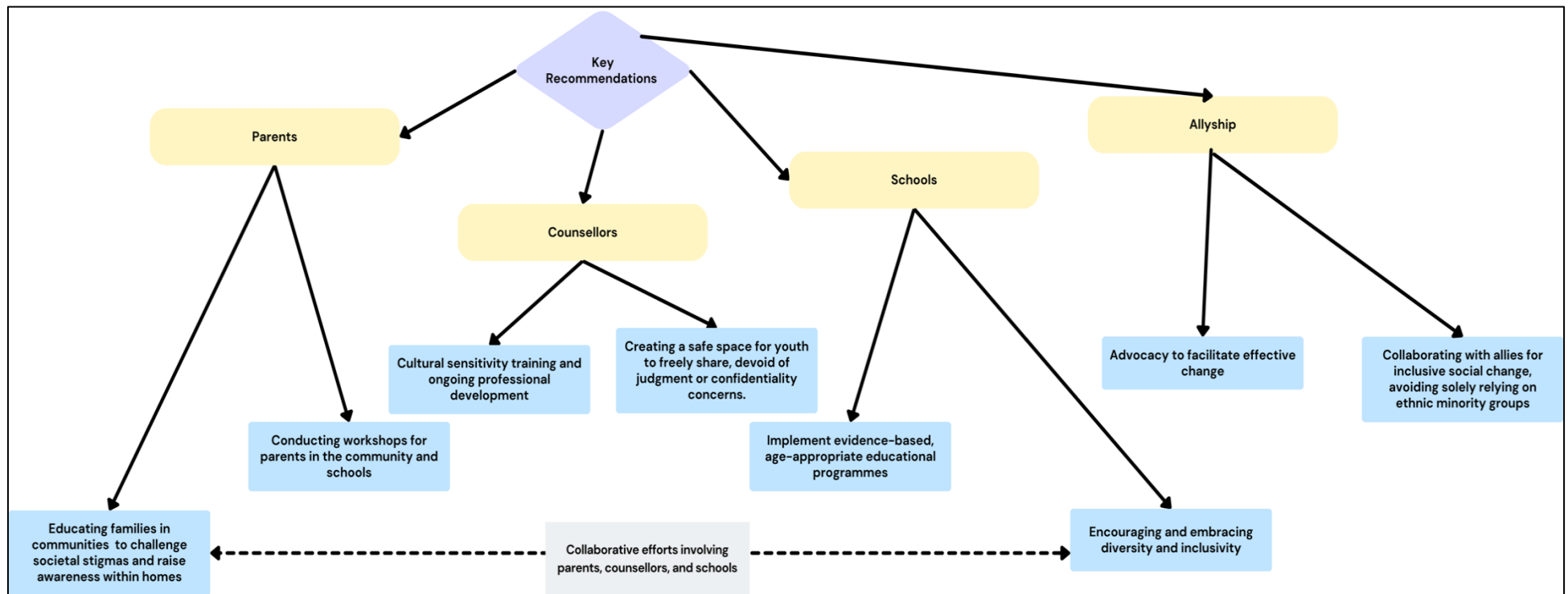
promptly dealt with, thereby fostering a sense of assurance among young people, enabling them to express their concerns without the worry of widespread disclosure.

Key Recommendations

Based on my findings, the steps as illustrated in Figure 8 are recommended for uptake by the immediate and broader social environment of youth to reduce stress, enhance support, and promote wellbeing of young people.

Figure 8

Key recommendations to improve youth services and wellbeing



The findings of my thesis demonstrate that the social environment significantly shapes the experiences and understandings of youth. In particular, given youth spend most of their time either at their home or at schools, making it is imperative for those who engage most closely with them (e.g., parents, teachers and counsellors), to understand the stressors youth face. Therefore, regular workshops for parents and teachers in both school and community settings are recommended. These workshops must be informed by direct feedback from youth and the current knowledge and literature within the context of their particular settings. These workshops should focus on raising awareness of the stressors experienced by youth and empowering families to challenge prevailing societal stigmas, creating a safe space for youth expression and effective support. This aligns with the report by Sutcliffe, Ball, Clark and Fleming (2023) where youth participants indicated the importance of educating adults on destigmatising mental health, promoting help-seeking behaviour, and providing information of how to access support.

The research discovered youth concerns about confidentiality and cultural sensitivity when dealing with counsellors, preventing them from seeking help when in distress. To address this, continuous professional development training for counsellors of diverse ethnic backgrounds is recommended to educate on the importance of diversity and cultural sensitivity, and not hold preconceived biases about the youths' culture.

Schools also play a crucial role not only in fostering diversity and inclusivity in classrooms but also in ensuring equity discourses to mitigate barriers that impede youth wellbeing. Focusing only on diversity discourse, for instance celebrating cultural days, inadvertently reinforce a sense of 'otherness' among ethnic minority youth by implying that these days are exceptions to the norm. This approach fails to address the underlying power structures that perpetuate inequities, thus not ensuring justice and true equity for ethnic minority youth. Youth in this study have expressed that the presence of visible diversity, particularly having youth of colour in the classrooms, facilitated a positive impact on their ability to embrace and take pride in their native culture, which is crucial to health and wellbeing outcomes for youth (Simon-Kumar et al., 2022). Evidence-based, age-appropriate educational programs are recommended to cultivate critical thinking among youth and dismantle preconceived biases, ultimately reducing racial stereotyping and discrimination.

Recognising the significance of home and school environments, collaboration among parents, counsellors, and schools is proposed to ensure comprehensive support for youth, thereby alleviating stress and enhancing wellbeing.

Furthermore, the findings from this study highlight the limitations of solely relying on individuals from the same ethnic background for achieving social changes. Therefore, there is a pressing need for a robust allies' movement that actively engages individuals from diverse backgrounds in advocating for broader social changes, for instance, addressing instances of racism, discrimination, and racial stereotyping faced by Indian youth in this study. This approach emphasises collective societal responsibility in challenging and dismantling systemic inequalities.

Moreover, achieving true inclusivity necessitates diverse representation in positions of power and influence. This includes celebrating and promoting individuals from different ethnicities, backgrounds, and experiences. Having diverse people visible in leadership roles not only provides role models for underrepresented groups but also ensures that the decision-making processes incorporate a wide range of perspectives.

Lastly, a common thread in all the recommendations is the enhancement of youth representation in society. Empowering youth by providing platforms for their active participation in decision-making processes and policy formulation is essential. A youth-led framework is advocated to bring fresh perspectives and innovative solutions to the forefront, fostering a more dynamic and adaptable approach to societal challenges. By amplifying the voices of young people, policies can be better tailored to address their unique needs and concerns, thereby promoting a more inclusive and equitable society.

Challenges of this Study

The current study provides valuable insights into the experiences of stress among young people of Indian descent in New Zealand. However, there are certain limitations inherent in the study that need to be acknowledged and considered when interpreting the findings.

The study's recruitment was confined to Auckland, New Zealand, due to the high percentage of Indian population living in Auckland compared to other parts of the country. A more comprehensive understanding of stress experiences among Indian youth would necessitate including participants from different parts of the country, especially those with predominantly white populations, such as the Southland region. In this area, according to

2018 census, the European population constitutes a substantial 86.5%, whereas Asians make up only 5.5% (Statistics New Zealand, 2019).

This study captured the narratives of 14 young people of Indian descent who chose to share their stories, but it cannot reflect young people who chose not to volunteer to tell their stories. Therefore, the findings cannot be taken to represent the views of all Indian youth experiencing stress in New Zealand. However, this was not the intention of this study; instead, this study aspired to capture the perspectives of Indian youth and to understand how they construct their understandings of stress and ways to manage stress and is therefore valuable in its own right.

The recruitment phase of the study coincided with the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which had far-reaching implications for mental health and stress levels among youth. Therefore, it was very challenging to recruit participants, particularly counsellors, who were likely to be overwhelmed with their own workload during this period. Consequently, the study's ability to capture a diverse range of perspectives, including from counsellors of different ethnic backgrounds, was hindered.

Lastly, it is imperative for me to reflect on my influence on the findings in my role as a researcher (Willig, 2008). Throughout the course of this research, I remained cognisant of my role as a researcher and its impact on the study's outcomes. The acknowledgement of this extended to recognising the collaborative and interactive nature of the interviews and focus groups, emphasising the dynamic interplay between myself and the participants. Furthermore, as I ventured into the analysis phase, I recognised that the narratives shared by the participants would be interpreted through my own perspectives and understandings.

Thus, I acknowledge that the analysis and findings of this research are constrained by my own understandings, with the potential for unintentional emphasis on certain themes while inadvertently neglecting others. As I am aware of my own biases, I constantly reflected on these via conversations with peers, family members and my supervisors, to attempt to ensure my personal understandings of the topics were challenged, and that the narratives of the participants were prioritised.

Contributions of this Study

This research contributes significantly to the understanding of the mental health needs of Indian youth in the New Zealand context. The issue of stress, pertaining to youth of Indian descent in New Zealand, has often been concealed under the broad “Asian” classification. This study has aimed to shed light specifically on Indian youth perspectives and understandings of stress, and the strategies used by them to manage stress.

The current study, which utilised the theoretical underpinning of social constructionism and intersectionality as a method of analysis to explore the experiences of stress among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand, has made a significant impact in various ways. This study has contributed to both academic and practical realms, shedding light on the complex dynamics of stress and the influence of social and cultural factors in shaping young people’s understandings of their experiences. Furthermore, this study offers insights into ways to improve societal support systems for the wellbeing of Indian youth.

First, this study elucidates the interconnectedness of various social categories that shape the experiences of youth, specifically those of Indian descent. As mentioned in Chapter 1: Introduction, it was essential to understand stress from the youths’ perspective and recognise the significant role of the social environment in shaping their experiences. This study informed key aspects discussed by Indian youth that align with their social and cultural context. For instance, being referred to as “curry munchers” because of the distinct fragrance of their curries, in contrast to their peers’ less aromatic food, makes them feel different. Consequently, they either hide their food, avoid eating it, or throw it without informing their parents to prevent upsetting them. Moreover, Indian traditional clothing differs from that of European or other ethnic groups. When youths’ parents and grandparents wear traditional attire, the youth feel uncomfortable around their friends to avoid standing out. In addition, the narratives of the youth in this study emphasised on the presence of systemic racism within institutions, a factor that has not been specifically documented for Indians in the New Zealand context.

Second, this study contributes by exploring how youth of Indian descent in New Zealand navigate complex identity formations beyond traditional acculturation categories (Berry, 2003, 2006). This study revealed nuanced and complex pathways of identity negotiation, especially among youth who navigate multiple identities simultaneously, such as Indian, New Zealander, and migrant, highlighting the influence of socio-political factors such as

systemic racism, discrimination, media representation, and institutional environments. These factors contribute to a dynamic and context-dependent nature of identity development among Indian youth in New Zealand. The study also emphasised the agency and resilience of youth in navigating cultural and societal differences, creating hybrid identities (Kiwi-Indians) that transcend established acculturation categories. Therefore, this study adds to the scholarship of enriching our understanding of how acculturation processes unfold in diverse and evolving cultural landscapes.

Third, the use of social constructionism as a theoretical framework has contributed to a nuanced understanding of how stress is perceived, experienced, and managed by youth of Indian descent in New Zealand. The integration of these frameworks demonstrates the methodological strength of a comprehensive approach to understanding complex social phenomena faced by Indian youth in a Western country. This framework facilitated a deeper analysis beyond the surface description presented through participants' narratives, exploring how the participants really felt/thought about stress. Through an in-depth exploration of how Indian youth interpret stress and interact with support services, this research addresses a crucial gap within the existing literature. These insights not only contribute to the current understanding of youth stress but also lay the groundwork for future research and cross-cultural comparative studies.

Fourth, the narrative inquiry methodology employed in this thesis, which involved integrating the perspectives of youth, parents, and counsellors, allowed for an understanding of individuals' experiences by exploring them through their own narrative and story. A narrative approach provided the flexibility needed to understand multiple layers of context and extract rich and comprehensive data from hearing their voices.

In this thesis, the importance of incorporating perspectives from youth, parents, and counsellors, thus adopting a more holistic approach, is acknowledged. As such, the mediated dialogue method employed in this study enabled the youth voice to be heard, prompting parents and counsellors to reflect on their perceptions of youth stress and the support required from them. Parents were able to introspect into their children's experiences after migrating to New Zealand and/or being born in the country. Counsellors gained perspectives from both youth and parents, allowing them to reflect on their encounters with youth in the school environment. By doing this, the mediated dialogue aimed to bridge the hierarchical structure prevalent in Indian culture, where parental and authority figures' viewpoints are often dominant. This approach promotes a more

comprehensive understanding of how youth perceive and interpret their experiences of stress.

Fifth, the findings from this study offer valuable insights for schools in New Zealand to comprehend the stressors faced by Indian youth. This study highlights how systems are designed to often favour dominant groups, leading to differential treatment for ethnic minority youth. This emphasises the urgency of educational institutions bridging the gap between policy formulation and implementation, and shedding biases and amplifying the voices of youth, thus fostering an inclusive and equitable educational environment. Furthermore, this study also contributes to counsellors gaining a deeper understanding of youth stress. It underscores the necessity of cultivating cultural sensitivity to tailor support and interventions that resonate with the cultural and social contexts of these youth. The literature also strongly advocates for the presence of counsellors capable of delivering culturally sensitive care, underscoring the understanding that insufficient cultural competence among counsellors can exacerbate feelings of isolation and marginalisation within minority communities (Amri & Bemak, 2012).

Sixth, while qualitative studies on the interpretations of stress among ethnic minority youth are limited in number, a more substantial gap exists in the understanding of stress from the standpoint of Indian youth in New Zealand. Prior research with ethnic minority youth has primarily centred on individual psychological approaches to stress and coping. As outlined in Chapter 1: Introduction, this thesis addresses the social and cultural contexts that shape the understandings of Indian youth. This study is a small step towards elevating the views of Indian youth in New Zealand and to bringing an awareness of the challenges experienced by them to their immediate social environment such as parents and school-based counsellors. Additionally, this study highlights the impact on the wellbeing of ethnic minority youth of the systemic issues prevalent in New Zealand, a society predominantly tailored for the dominant group. Therefore, this study makes a substantial contribution towards qualitative studies on stress and its management, in the context of providing support to ethnic minority youth.

Lastly, the study contributes to the body of work on intersectionality as a method of analysis to understand youth stress and coping, particularly within the context of the Indian diaspora in New Zealand, addressing gaps in the literature where specific Indian cultural context have been underexplored. This approach allowed for an exploration of how reality is constructed and how various social categories intersect to shape youth

experiences. Moreover, this approach has contributed to the development of an understanding of stress and its intersection in social categories of cultural identity, ethnicity, gender, and migration. This study further explored the intersections of identity, culture, gender, socio-political factors, and migration, within the individual, familial, institutional, and societal levels, to increase the understanding of Indian youth stress and coping mechanisms to provide them with appropriate support and enhance their wellbeing.

Strengths of this Study

This present study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in various ways. Focusing on the experiences of Indian youth in Western countries, this study embarks on a journey that transcends conventional research boundaries and sheds light on the nuanced realities of the Indian population which are often hidden behind preconceived notions and biases.

Existing research studies have focused on specific facets of the Indian youth experience in Western countries, such as acculturation, migration, or prejudice experiences. While these aspects are important areas of research, they only offer a fragmented view of a much more complex reality. The strength of this current study lies in its comprehensive approach, which takes into account both migrant and non-migrant Indian youth, who have not previously been researched in the New Zealand context.

By employing intersectionality as an analytical approach for understanding stress among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand, my intent was to highlight that social categories including ethnicity, gender, migration, social status, and structurally embedded inequities, intersect with each other to contextualise the discourse around youths' understanding of stress. Most importantly, intersectionality as a method of analysis emphasised the necessity of ethnic minority persons articulating for themselves their complex and interlocking experiences of oppression and marginalisation.

The narrative inquiry methodology used in this study enabled an exploration of the lived experiences and meanings that Indian youth attribute to their encounters, which is unlike quantitative methodologies that primarily capture trends. White and Wyn (2013) emphasised the active role of young people as social actors who are actively navigating and negotiating social and cultural changes in a unique manner. The narrative

methodology not only allowed the voices of youth to be heard but also enabled a deeper understanding of their personal narratives.

Furthermore, the data collection methods, consisting of interviews and focus groups, reinforce this study's credibility and depth. These methods created a contextually rich framework that resonates with the participants' experiences. Moreover, the mediated dialogue method allowed conversations between Indian youth, parents, and counsellors, facilitating a multi-perspective exploration of the challenges faced by Indian youth. The mediated dialogue method effectively draws upon the insights of individuals who hold crucial roles in the social environment of Indian youth, thereby enriching the comprehensiveness of the study's findings. This method facilitated the empowerment of youth in openly sharing their perspectives and thereby mitigating the hierarchy prevalent in Indian culture, which often discourages young people from voicing their opinions to adults.

Beyond this Research

The research findings and discussions outlined above have unveiled significant gaps in the understandings of stress experienced by Indian youth among the three groups – youth, parents, and counsellors. The implications extend beyond the confines of this research, calling for a broader exploration of stress experiences among Asian youth in New Zealand. Such future research endeavours should place particular focus on the intricate interplay of social and cultural factors that contribute to the construction of their perception of stress.

There is significant potential for future research initiatives to explore the experiences of youth in New Zealand whose parents belong to different ethnic backgrounds. This avenue of inquiry can shed light on the multifaceted dynamics that shape the lives of these young people, offering valuable insights into their cultural identity development, social interactions, and overall wellbeing. By examining the challenges and advantages that may arise from such diverse familial backgrounds, researchers can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how ethnicity intersects with the lives of youth.

Further research on the stressors faced by youth of Indian descent in New Zealand could potentially enhance our comprehension by incorporating the perspectives of school-based counsellors from diverse ethnic backgrounds. This inclusive approach would seek to

explore how counsellors, who may not share the same ethnic background as youth they are assisting, perceive and address the unique challenges these young people encounter.

The voices of youth in this research have offered invaluable insights into their encounters with stress, how they deal with it, and the ways in which parents and counsellors can provide support. Building upon this aspect, it is crucial that youth-centred research remains grounded in its foundational principle within the ongoing exploration of the experiences of young people in New Zealand (Wyn & Harris, 2004). By consistently centring the voices of youth in research initiatives, we can gain a more nuanced understanding of their challenges and needs, thereby ensuring that policy recommendations and support systems are tailored to meet their unique requirements.

Furthermore, to comprehensively capture the diversity of youth experiences, it is imperative that future research incorporates youth participants from other parts of the country. This broader inclusion criterion would ensure a richer portrayal of the experiences of underrepresented groups to voice their opinions. By embracing the varied perspectives, a more inclusive understanding of stress experiences can be explored, along with the ways in which these experiences intersect with different cultural, social, and geographical contexts.

This study has endeavoured to bridge the gap in the understanding that exists among youth, parents, and counsellors of the stress experiences of and stress management by Indian youth. Sharing the reflections of parents and counsellors with youth could be a valuable step, as it can facilitate a deeper understanding of the viewpoints and perspectives that underlie their parents' expectations. Sharing the reflections could serve to address any misconceptions that may emerge from differing viewpoints. Facilitating this open exchange of perspectives would foster a more holistic understanding of the support network available to young people, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of youth wellbeing.

Closure

This study has illustrated some experiences of significant stress among Indian youth in New Zealand, shedding light on the pivotal role of social and cultural contexts in shaping their lived experiences. Reflecting on the inception, progression, and learnings from this study, I found it to be a profoundly gratifying journey.

My hope is that this research serves as a catalyst for heightened awareness regarding the specific needs of Indian youth, sparking an open dialogue on systemic and often stigmatised issues. Furthermore, the findings presented herein will facilitate the design and implementation of targeted interventions and educational initiatives aimed at addressing the unique challenges faced by Indian youth. This will actively contribute to the enhancement of the wellbeing of Indian youth.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this PhD thesis has explored the experiences of Indian youth as they navigate the complexities of stress, its management, and help-seeking behaviours against the backdrop of their ethnic culture and dominant societal discourses. Through this journey, it has become evident that stress experiences and their interpretations are inherently shaped by social and cultural constructs, reinforcing the significance of these contextual factors in understanding the narratives of the youth participants.

A central argument of this thesis has been that stress is not an isolated, individual phenomenon but a product of the social environment. The research presented in this thesis underscores the interplay of various social categories, such as gender and migration status, which intersect and influence the experiences of Indian youth. In doing so, it has sought to bridge the hierarchical dynamics embedded in Indian culture, aiming to amplify the voices of youth and bridge the generation gap by facilitating communication with Indian parents and school-based counsellors.

The insights garnered from this study are of paramount importance, shedding light on the challenges faced by Indian youth in a predominantly white society. These voices have provided a critical perspective that can inform strategies and policies aimed at improving the wellbeing of ethnic minority youth. The recommendations put forth in this thesis serve as a roadmap for the imperative task of acknowledging and incorporating the narratives and needs of these young individuals into the broader discourse on mental health and wellbeing.

Moving forward, it is imperative to amplify the voices of youth, allowing them to articulate the challenges they encounter. Establishing a youth-led framework is crucial, providing them with the platform to express the specific support they need to enhance their wellbeing. This approach will ensure that the perspectives and needs of young individuals are actively considered and addressed in efforts to improve overall youth wellbeing. Moreover, there is a need for an allies movement that can drive systems change, emphasising the importance of not solely depending on minority communities and professionals to drive this change. The challenges faced by these individuals, as expounded in this thesis, can only be effectively addressed by tackling their root causes.

Thus, continued research and action are necessary to mitigate these challenges and pave the way for a more inclusive and supportive environment for Indian youth.

In this pursuit, researchers and school-based counsellors play a pivotal role. They must continue to explore and engage with the unique experiences of these young individuals, striving to develop strategies that can best support their wellbeing within the intricate complexities of their social and cultural worlds.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics Approval



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)
Auckland University of Technology
D-88, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316
E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

26 November 2020

Katie Palmer du Preez
Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences

Dear Katie

Re Ethics Application: **20/348 Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 26 November 2023.

Non-Standard Conditions of Approval

1. Remove from each 'An Invitation' section in all the Information Sheets the phrase 'at any time prior to the completion of data collection' as participants can withdraw at any time;
2. Add the benefit of your qualification to the 'benefits' section of the Parents-Youth Information Sheet;
3. Remove the reference to anonymity in the discomforts section of the Counsellor Information Sheet.

Non-standard conditions must be completed before commencing your study. Non-standard conditions do not need to be submitted to or reviewed by AUTEC before commencing your study.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTEC in this application.
2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using the EA2 form.
3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using the EA3 form.
4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form.
5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
7. It is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard and that all the dates on the documents are updated.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management approval for access for your research from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted and you need to meet all ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

For any enquiries please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz. The forms mentioned above are available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEC Secretariat
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: anjali.bhatia@aut.ac.nz; Camille Nakhid

Appendix B: Recruitment Flier (Youth)



TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKĀU RAU



Title: Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent

Participants required for a PhD project exploring stressors in the lives of youth of Indian descent in Auckland, New Zealand

This study will give you a space to share your story of the challenges you face in New Zealand. This will help in bringing awareness about the stress faced by young people. Further, develop supportive space for you and others to share and overcome the challenges efficiently.

Are you...

- A youth aged **14-18 years** and experienced stress in your life?
- Of Indian ethnic background?
- Born in NZ whose parents are from India, or born and migrated from India when you were 10 years or older?

Interviews taking place in Auckland, time and place that suits you.
Please contact Anjali Bhatia (PhD student at AUT University), If you are interested in participating, or would like more information.

E: anjali.bhatia@aut.ac.nz | Ph. 022 xxx xxxx

AUTEC ethics approval number: 20/348

Appendix C: Recruitment Flier (Parents – English)



Title: Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent

Participants required for a PhD project exploring stressors in the lives of youth of Indian descent in Auckland, New Zealand

Are you...

- Parents and/or single parent of **14-18 years** old child (currently or in the last five years)?
- Of Indian ethnic background?
- Migrated from India?
- Interested in taking part in interview to express your perceptions of stressors faced by youth, role of social support in enhancing wellbeing of youth and stress of raising your children in a different culture?

Interviews taking place in Auckland, time and place that suits you.
Please contact Anjali Bhatia (PhD student at AUT University), If you are interested in participating, or would like more information.

E: anjali.bhatia@aut.ac.nz	Ph. 022 xxx xxxx
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AUTEC ethics approval number: 20/348

Appendix D: Recruitment Flier (Parents – Hindi)



AUT
TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKĀU RĀU

शीर्षक: भारतीय मूल के युवाओं में भलाई बढ़ाने के लिए तनाव के अनुभव और समझ और सामाजिक समर्थन की भूमिका

न्यूजीलैंड के ऑकलैंड में भारतीय मूल के युवाओं के जीवन में तनाव पैदा करने वाले पीएचडी प्रोजेक्ट के लिए प्रतिभागियों की आवश्यकता है

क्या आप...

- 14-18 वर्ष के बच्चे के माता-पिता और / या एकल माता-पिता (वर्तमान में या पिछले पांच वर्षों में)?
- भारतीय धार्मिक पृष्ठभूमि के हैं?
- भारत से प्रवास किया?
- युवाओं द्वारा सामना किए जाने वाले तनावों की अपनी धारणा को व्यक्त करने के लिए साक्षात्कार में भाग लेने के लिए, युवाओं की भलाई बढ़ाने में सामाजिक समर्थन की भूमिका और एक अलग संस्कृति में अपने बच्चों को बढ़ाने का तनाव?

ऑकलैंड में होने वाले साक्षात्कार, समय और स्थान जो आपको सूट करते हैं।

कृपया अंजलि भाटिया (पीएचडी की छात्रा, AUT विश्वविद्यालय) से संपर्क करें, यदि आप इसमें भाग लेना चाहते हैं, या अधिक जानकारी चाहते हैं।

E: anjali.bhatia@aut.ac.nz	Ph. 022 xxx xxxx
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AUTEC नैतिकता अनुमोदन संख्या: 20/348

Appendix E: Recruitment Flier (Counsellors)



TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU



Title: Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent

Participants required for a PhD project exploring stressors in the lives of adolescents of Indian descent in Auckland, New Zealand

Are you...

- A school-based counsellor?
- Experienced of working with youth of Indian descent while they were in stress?
- Interested in taking part in focus group discussion to express stressors faced by youth, their help-seeking behavior, and barriers of seeking help?

Focus groups taking place in Auckland at AUT Campus.
Please contact Anjali Bhatia (PhD student at AUT University), If you are interested in participating, or would like more information.

E: anjali.bhatia@aut.ac.nz | Ph. 022 xxx xxxx

AUTEC ethics approval number: 20/348

Appendix F: Participant Information Sheet (Youth)

	
Participant Information Sheet	
Youth	
Date Information Sheet Produced:	
01/10/2020	
Project Title	
Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand	
An Invitation	
My name is Anjali Bhatia. I am a PhD student at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) supervised by Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, Dr. Rita Krishnamurthi, and Dr. Camille Nakhid. You are invited to take part in a study exploring stressors faced by youth between 14-18 years in Auckland, New Zealand. I am conducting this research for my PhD thesis. Please remember that:	
• Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary (i.e. your choice). • If you do agree to take part you are free to withdraw at any time prior to the completion of the data collection, without having to give a reason.	
This information sheet will explain the research study.	
What is the purpose of this research?	
Youth of Indian heritage in New Zealand may be at an increased risk of experiencing mental health issues and have, for example, reported a high prevalence of depression. This project aims to develop an understanding of the various stressors faced by youth of Indian descent in New Zealand. It also aims to explore the importance of social support in helping a young person cope with stress. This study will contribute to expanding the understanding of stress from an ethnic minority perspective in New Zealand and highlight strategies through which wellbeing among youth can be enhanced. The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.	
How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?	
You will be identified through advertisement placed on various locations such as public spaces, e.g., temples, dance/music and sports club, and/or social media forums. You will be self-identified to participate based on your response to the advertisement. I would like to talk to youth who live in Auckland area and who:	
• are aged 14-18 years • Are of Indian ethnic background • are either born in India and migrated to NZ at 10 years or older, or born in NZ whose parents are from India • are able to converse in English or Hindi	
20 November 2020	page 1 of 5
This version was edited in November 2019	

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you would like to participate in an interview, please phone or email me (Anjali- details below). You will be asked to sign an assent form before the interview.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

An assent form has been provided for you to review, and a physical copy will be provided for you to sign before the interview. In case of online interview, you will be requested to sign electronically or sign and send it via post. Consent form for your parents have been provided for your parents to review. Their consent is also required for to participate in the interview. Please contact the researcher or the project supervisor if further explanation is required.

What will happen in this research?

If you decide to take part in this study, this will involve taking part in a one-on-one interview with me either in-person or online (for example via Skype or Zoom). The interview will last between one and one and a half hours. If the interviews are held in-person, it will take place at a time and place that suits you. If it is held online via zoom/skype, it will take place at a time that suits you. You can do the interview in either Hindi or English, as per your convenience. While parents are providing their consent for the interview, the information gathered from the interviews will be completely confidential. Also, your parents will not be interviewed.

The summary of the findings as common themes will be shared with parents and counsellors to bring awareness about stressors that are faced by young people. No personal information will be shared to anyone.

After I have written up my thesis, I would like to talk about the findings at conferences and publish journal articles. Any potentially identifying information will be confidential, in the publications arising from this research. Small transcribed extracts of your interview may be used in my thesis, publications arising from it, and in presentations at conferences.

What are the discomforts and risks?

You may find that taking part in an interview could bring up events that are upsetting to you and you may find answering some of the questions difficult due to their sensitive nature.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

I aim to take every step possible to ensure your safety and confidentiality. In any written work that comes out of these interviews, any identifying information will be removed.

If you choose to participate in an interview and become upset about recalling your experiences, you may choose to end the interview at that time, or you may wish to take a break or reschedule for a later time.

If you would like to seek further advice or support regarding your experiences, please let me know so that I am able to refer you to other youth support groups as appropriate. You will be provided with online or phone counselling services such as YouthLine or Lifeline Auckland Helpline contacts. I will give you a prepared list of such contacts.

In severe situation of self-harm or harm to others, the researcher will break the confidentiality for the safety of young people.

What are the benefits?

You may benefit by telling us your story. Sometimes it just feels good to be heard. You may get a sense of empowerment from telling your story, and from contributing to understandings of stressors faced by ethnic minority youth in New Zealand. Since the summary of the findings will be shared with parents and counsellors, you will be able to bring awareness about the issues young people face. This will help you to put across your understanding and share the support you expect from your immediate surrounding to help you cope with stressful events. No personal information will be shared to anyone. Also, both the parents and counsellors will not be directly related to youth in any way.

The information I gain from this study will be used to develop analysis of the stressors faced by youth of Indian descent in New Zealand, and the role of social support in helping youth cope with stressful events and enhance youth wellbeing, as part of my doctoral degree.

I hope that the findings from the study will address a gap in the understanding of stressors of ethnic minority youth and may contribute to develop supportive environments to share their feelings and enhances their health and wellbeing.

How will my privacy be protected?

During the interview, you may choose to be identified by a name of your choice (that is you may choose a name for me to refer to you by that is different to your name). This will protect your privacy as it will be used in the transcripts as well as in any publications or conference presentations that I will produce from the findings of the study.

Your interview transcripts will be only be accessible to myself and my supervisors. All copies of the interview tapes and transcripts will be stored in computer files with restricted access at AUT university for six years. After this time, they will be destroyed. Any material that may identify you will be deleted from the transcript.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The main cost of participating will be your time. The interview will last between one and one and a half hours. You will receive a food voucher as koha (\$20) in recognition of your time and any travel costs incurred.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have at least two weeks to think about this invitation. If you do wish to be interviewed, please let me know by phoning or emailing me, or I will contact you again after two weeks to see if you are interested.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

You will be provided with the summary of the findings via email should you wish to receive it.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 Ext 7640.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Assent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Anjali Bhatia, AUT University, anjali.bhatia@aut.ac.nz, 022 390 6981

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, Senior Research Fellow, Gambling and Addictions Research Centre,
katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 Ext 7640

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 26th November 2020,
AUTEC Reference number 20/348.

Appendix G: Participant Information Sheet (Parents of Youth – English)

	
Participant Information Sheet	
Parents- Youth	
Date Information Sheet Produced:	
13/11/2020	
Project Title	
Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand	
An Invitation	
My name is Anjali Bhatia. I am a PhD student at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) supervised by Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, Dr. Rita Krishnamurthi, and Dr. Camille Nakhid. Your child invited to take part in a study exploring stressors faced by youth between 14-18 years in Auckland, New Zealand. I am conducting this research to write up my PhD thesis. Please remember that:	
• Your child's participation in this study is entirely voluntary (i.e. their choice). • If you do agree to let your child take part, they will be asked if they want to participate, and they are free to withdraw at any time prior to the completion of the data collection, without having to give a reason.	
This information sheet will explain the research study.	
What is the purpose of this research?	
Youth of Indian heritage in New Zealand are regarded as highly vulnerable to mental health issues and have, for example, reported a high prevalence of depression. This project aims to develop an understanding of the various stressors faced by youth of Indian descent in New Zealand. Also, the importance of social support in helping youth to cope with stress. This study aims to contribute to expanding the understanding of stress from an ethnic minority perspective in New Zealand and highlight strategies through which wellbeing among youth could be enhanced. The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.	
How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?	
Your child will be identified through advertisement placed on various locations such as public spaces, e.g., temples, dance/music and sports club, and/or social media forums. Your child will be self-identified to participate based on your response to the advertisement I would like to talk to young people who live in Auckland area and who:	
• are aged 14-18 years • are of Indian ethnic background	
20 November 2020	page 1 of 4
This version was edited in November 2019	

- are either born in India and migrated at 10 years or older, or born in NZ whose parents are from India
- are able to converse in English or Hindi

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you would like your child to participate in an interview, please phone or email me (Anjali-details below). You will be asked to sign a consent form and your child will be asked to sign an assent form before the interview.

Your child's participation in this research is voluntary (it is their choice) and whether or not they choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage them. They are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If they choose to withdraw from the study, then they will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to them removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of the data may not be possible.

A consent form has been provided for you to review, and a physical copy will be provided for you to sign before the interview. In case of online interview, you will be requested to sign electronically or sign and send it via post. Please contact the researcher or the project supervisor if further explanation is required.

What will happen in this research?

If you decide to let your child take part in this study, this will involve taking part in one-on-one interviews with me either in-person or online. The interview will last between one and one and a half hours. If the interviews are held in-person, it will take place at a time and place that suits your child. If it is held online via zoom/skype, it will take place at a time that suits your child.

The summary of the findings as overall themes will be shared with counsellors and parents about stressors that are faced by young people.

After I have written up my thesis, I would like to talk about the findings at conferences and publish journal articles. Any potentially identifying information will be changed or anonymised, in the publications arising from this research. Small transcribed extracts of your child's interview may be used in my thesis, publications arising from it, and in presentations at conferences.

What are the discomforts and risks?

Your child may find that taking part in an interview could bring up events that are upsetting to them and they may find answering some of the questions difficult due to their sensitive nature.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

I aim to take every step possible to ensure your child's safety and anonymity. In any written work that comes out of these interviews, any identifying information will be removed.

If your child chooses to participate in an interview and become upset about recalling their experiences, they may choose to end the interview at that time or may wish to take a break or reschedule for a later time.

If they would like to seek further advice or support regarding their experiences, I will be able to refer them to other youth support groups as appropriate. They will be provided with online or phone counselling services such as YouthLine or Lifeline Auckland Helpline contacts. They will be given a prepared list of such contacts.

In severe situation of self-harm or harm to others, I will break the confidentiality for the safety of your child.

What are the benefits?

Your child may benefit by telling us their story. Sometimes it just feels good to be heard. They may get a sense of empowerment from telling their story and contributing to the understandings of stressors faced by ethnic minority youth in New Zealand. Since the summary of the findings as overall themes will be shared with counsellors and parents, your child will be able to bring awareness about the issues young people face. No personal information will be shared with anyone. Also, both counsellors and parents will not be directly related to youth in any way.

I hope that the findings from the study will help in understanding of stressors of ethnic minority youth and may contribute to develop supportive environments for youth to express themselves and enhance their health and wellbeing.

How will my privacy be protected?

I will ask your child to choose any name they want. This will protect their privacy as it will be used in the transcripts as well as in any publications or conference presentations that I will produce from the findings of the study.

The interview transcripts will be only be accessible to myself and my supervisors. All copies of the interview tapes and transcripts will be stored in computer files with restricted access at AUT university for six years. After this time, they will be destroyed. Any material that may identify your child will be deleted from the transcript.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The main cost of participating will be your child's time. The interview will last between one and one and a half hours. Your child will receive a food voucher as koha (\$20) in recognition of their time and any travel costs incurred.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have at least two weeks to think about this invitation. If you do wish your child to be interviewed, please let me know by phoning or emailing me, or I will contact you again after two weeks to see if you are interested.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Your child will be provided with the summary of the findings via email should they wish to receive it.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 Ext 7640.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Anjali Bhatia, AUT University, anjali.bhatia@aut.ac.nz, 022 390 6981

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, Senior Research Fellow, Gambling and Addictions Research Centre, katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 Ext 7640

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 26th November 2020,
AUTEC Reference number 20/348.**

Appendix H: Participant Information Sheet (Parents of Youth – Hindi)

	
प्रतिभागी सूचना पत्र	
माता-पिता- युवा	
दिनांक सूचना पत्रक का निर्माण किया गया:	
13/11/2020	
परियोजना का शीर्षक	
न्यूजीलैंड में भारतीय मूल के युवाओं में भलाई बढ़ाने के लिए तनाव के अनुभव और समझ और सामाजिक समर्थन की भूमिका	
एक निमंत्रण	
मेरा नाम अंजलि भाटिया है। मैं ऑकलैंड यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ टेक्नोलॉजी (AUT) में पीएचडी की छात्रा हूँ, जिसकी देखरेख डॉ। केटी पामर डू प्रीज़, डॉ। रीता कृष्णमूर्ति और डॉ। कैमिल नख्खिद करते हैं। आपके बच्चे को न्यूजीलैंड के ऑकलैंड में 14-18 साल के बीच युवाओं द्वारा सामना किए गए तनाव का पता लगाने के लिए एक अध्ययन में भाग लेने के लिए आमंत्रित किया गया। मैं अपनी पीएचडी थीसिस लिखने के लिए इस शोध का संचालन कर रहा हूँ। कृपया याद रखें कि: • इस अध्ययन में आपके बच्चे की भागीदारी पूरी तरह से स्वेच्छिक (यानी उनकी पसंद) है। • यदि आप अपने बच्चे को हिस्सा लेने देने के लिए सहमत हैं, तो उनसे पूछा जाएगा कि क्या वे भाग लेना चाहते हैं, और वे बिना कारण बताए किसी भी समय वापस लेने के लिए स्वतंत्र हैं। यह सूचना पत्र शोध अध्ययन की व्याख्या करेगा।	
इस शोध का उद्देश्य क्या है?	
न्यूजीलैंड में भारतीय विरासत के युवाओं को मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के मुद्दों के लिए अत्यधिक संवेदनशील माना जाता है और उदाहरण के लिए, अवसाद के एक उच्च प्रसार की सूचना दी है। इस परियोजना का लक्ष्य न्यूजीलैंड में भारतीय मूल के युवाओं द्वारा सामना किए गए विभिन्न तनावों की समझ विकसित करना है। साथ ही, युवाओं को तनाव से निपटने में मदद करने में सामाजिक समर्थन का महत्व। इस अध्ययन का लक्ष्य न्यूजीलैंड में एक जातीय अल्पसंख्यक दृष्टिकोण से तनाव की समझ का विस्तार करने और उन रणनीतियों को उजागर करना है जिनके माध्यम से युवाओं के बीच भलाई को बढ़ाया जा सकता है। इस शोध के निष्कर्षों का इस्तेमाल अकादमिक प्रकाशनों और प्रस्तुतियों के लिए किया जा सकता है।	

मेरी पहचान कैसे की गई और मुझे इस शोध में भाग लेने के लिए क्यों आमंत्रित किया जा रहा है?

आपके बच्चे की पहचान सार्वजनिक स्थानों, जैसे, मंदिरों, नृत्य / संगीत और स्पोर्ट्स क्लब और / या सोशल मीडिया फ़ोरम जैसे विभिन्न स्थानों पर रखे गए विज्ञापनों के माध्यम से की जाएगी। विज्ञापन के प्रति आपकी प्रतिक्रिया के आधार पर आपके बच्चे की पहचान की जाएगी

मैं उन युवाओं से बात करना चाहूंगा जो ऑकलैंड क्षेत्र में रहते हैं और जो:

- 14-18 वर्ष की आयु के हैं
- भारतीय जातीय पृष्ठभूमि के हैं
- या तो भारत में पैदा हुए हैं और 10 साल या उससे अधिक उम्र में प्रवासित हैं, या NZ में पैदा हुए हैं, जिनके माता-पिता भारत से हैं
- अंग्रेजी या हिंदी में समझाने में सक्षम हैं

मैं इस शोध में भाग लेने के लिए कैसे सहमत हूँ?

यदि आप अपने बच्चे को एक साक्षात्कार में भाग लेना चाहते हैं, तो कृपया मुझे फोन करें या मुझे ईमेल करें (अंजलि- नीचे विवरण)। आपको एक सहमति फॉर्म पर हस्ताक्षर करने के लिए कहा जाएगा और आपके बच्चे को साक्षात्कार से पहले एक सहमति पत्र पर हस्ताक्षर करने के लिए कहा जाएगा।

इस शोध में आपके बच्चे की भागीदारी स्वैच्छिक है (यह उनकी पसंद है) और चाहे या नहीं वे भाग लेने के लिए चुनते हैं या न ही उन्हें नुकसान पहुँचाएंगे। वे किसी भी समय अध्ययन से वापस लेने में सक्षम हैं। यदि वे अध्ययन से हटना चुनते हैं, तो उन्हें किसी भी डेटा को चुनने के बीच विकल्प की पेशकश की जाएगी, जो कि उन्हें हटाए जाने या जारी रखने की अनुमति देने से संबंधित है। हालाँकि, एक बार निष्कर्षों का उत्पादन करने के बाद, डेटा को हटाना संभव नहीं हो सकता है।

आपके लिए समीक्षा करने के लिए एक सहमति प्रपत्र प्रदान किया गया है, और साक्षात्कार से पहले हस्ताक्षर करने के लिए आपको एक भौतिक प्रति प्रदान की जाएगी। ऑनलाइन साक्षात्कार के मामले में, आपको इलेक्ट्रॉनिक रूप से हस्ताक्षर करने या पोस्ट के माध्यम से भेजने का अनुरोध किया जाएगा। यदि आगे स्पष्टीकरण की आवश्यकता है, तो कृपया शोधकर्ता या परियोजना पर्यवेक्षक से संपर्क करें।

इस शोध में क्या होगा?

यदि आप अपने बच्चे को इस अध्ययन में भाग लेने देने का निर्णय लेते हैं, तो इसमें मेरे साथ या ऑनलाइन एक-एक साक्षात्कार में भाग लेना शामिल होगा। साक्षात्कार एक से डेढ़ घंटे के बीच होगा। यदि साक्षात्कार व्यक्ति-व्यक्ति में आयोजित किए जाते हैं, तो यह एक समय और जगह पर होगा जो आपके बच्चे को सूट करता है। यदि इसे जूम / स्काइप के माध्यम से ऑनलाइन आयोजित किया जाता है, तो यह उस समय पर होगा जो आपके बच्चे को सूट करता है।

समग्र विषयों के रूप में निष्कर्षों का सारांश काउंसलर और अभिभावकों के साथ साझा किया जाएगा जो युवा लोगों द्वारा सामना किए जाने वाले तनावों के बारे में हैं।

अपनी थीसिस लिखने के बाद, मैं सम्मेलनों के निष्कर्षों के बारे में बात करना चाहता हूँ और जर्नल लेख प्रकाशित करना चाहता हूँ। इस शोध से उत्पन्न होने वाले प्रकाशनों में किसी भी संभावित पहचान की जानकारी को बदल दिया जाएगा या उसका नाम बदल दिया जाएगा। आपके बच्चे के साक्षात्कार के छोटे हस्तांतरित अर्क का उपयोग मेरी थीसिस, उससे उत्पन्न प्रकाशनों और सम्मेलनों में प्रस्तुतियों में किया जा सकता है।

असुविधाएँ और जोखिम क्या हैं?

आप यह जान सकते हैं कि एक साक्षात्कार में भाग लेने से ऐसी घटनाएँ सामने आ सकती हैं जो उनके लिए परेशान कर रही हों और वे अपने संवेदनशील स्वभाव के कारण कुछ प्रश्नों के उत्तर कठिन पा सकते हैं।

इन असुविधाओं और जोखिमों को कैसे कम किया जाएगा?

मैं आपके बच्चे की सुरक्षा और गुमनामी सुनिश्चित करने के लिए हर संभव कदम उठाने का लक्ष्य रखता हूँ। इन साक्षात्कारों से निकलने वाले किसी भी लिखित कार्य में, किसी भी पहचान की जानकारी को हटा दिया जाएगा।

यदि आपका बच्चा एक साक्षात्कार में भाग लेने का विकल्प चुनता है और अपने अनुभवों को याद करने के बारे में परेशान हो जाता है, तो वे उस समय साक्षात्कार को समाप्त करने का विकल्प चुन सकते हैं या बाद के समय के लिए ब्रेक या पुनर्निर्धारण करना चाह सकते हैं।

यदि वे अपने अनुभवों के संबंध में आगे की सलाह या समर्थन लेना चाहते हैं, तो मैं उन्हें उपयुक्त अन्य युवा सहायता समूहों को संदर्भित कर सकूँगा। उन्हें ऑनलाइन या फोन परामर्श सेवाओं जैसे कि यूथलाइन या लाइफलाइन के साथ प्रदान किया जाएगा ऑकलैंड हेल्पलाइन संपर्क। उन्हें ऐसे संपर्कों की एक तैयार सूची दी जाएगी।

स्वयं को या दूसरों को नुकसान पहुंचाने की गंभीर स्थिति में, मैं आपके बच्चे की सुरक्षा के लिए गोपनीयता को तोड़ दूँगा।

क्या लाभ हैं?

आपका बच्चा हमें अपनी कहानी बताकर लाभान्वित हो सकता है। कभी-कभी सिर्फ सुनने में अच्छा लगता है। उन्हें अपनी कहानी कहने और न्यूजीलैंड में जातीय अल्पसंख्यक युवाओं द्वारा सामना किए गए तनावों की समझ में योगदान देने से सशक्तिकरण की भावना मिल सकती है। चूंकि समग्र विषयों के निष्कर्षों का सारांश परामर्शदाताओं और माता-पिता के साथ साझा किया जाएगा, इसलिए आपका बच्चा उन मुद्दों के बारे में जागरूकता लाने में सक्षम होगा जो युवा लोगों का सामना करते हैं। कोई भी व्यक्तिगत जानकारी किसी के साथ साझा नहीं की जाएगी। साथ ही, काउंसलर और माता-पिता दोनों किसी भी तरह से युवाओं से सीधे संबंधित नहीं होंगे।

मुझे उम्मीद है कि अध्ययन से निष्कर्ष जातीय अल्पसंख्यक युवाओं के तनावों को समझने में मदद करेगा और युवाओं को खुद को व्यक्त करने और उनके स्वास्थ्य और भलाई को बढ़ाने के लिए सहायक वातावरण विकसित करने में योगदान कर सकता है।

मेरी गोपनीयता कैसे सुरक्षित रहेगी?

मैं आपके बच्चे को किसी भी नाम का चयन करने के लिए कहूँगा जो वे चाहते हैं। यह उनकी गोपनीयता की रक्षा करेगा क्योंकि इसका उपयोग टेपों के साथ-साथ किसी भी प्रकाशन या सम्मेलन प्रस्तुतियों में किया जाएगा जो मैं अध्ययन के निष्कर्षों से उत्पन्न करूँगा।

साक्षात्कार के टेप केवल मेरे और मेरे पर्यवेक्षकों के लिए सुलभ होंगे। साक्षात्कार के टेप और टेप की सभी प्रतियों को छह साल के लिए ऑटो विश्वविद्यालय में प्रतिबंधित पहुंच के साथ कंप्यूटर फ़ाइलों में संग्रहीत किया जाएगा। इस समय के बाद, वे नष्ट हो जाएंगे। कोई भी सामग्री जो आपके बच्चे की पहचान कर सकती है, उसे प्रतिलिपि से हटा दिया जाएगा।

इस शोध में भाग लेने की लागत क्या है?

भाग लेने की मुख्य लागत आपके बच्चे का समय होगा। साक्षात्कार एक से डेढ़ घंटे के बीच होगा। आपके बच्चे को उनके समय और किसी भी यात्रा की लागत को पहचानने के लिए कोहा (\$ 20) के रूप में एक खाद्य वाउचर प्राप्त होगा।

मुझे इस आमंत्रण पर विचार करने का क्या अवसर मिला?

इस निमंत्रण के बारे में सोचने के लिए आपके पास कम से कम दो सप्ताह का समय होगा। यदि आप चाहते हैं कि आपके बच्चे का साक्षात्कार हो, तो कृपया मुझे फोन करके या मुझे ईमेल करके बताएं, या दो सप्ताह के बाद फिर से आपसे संपर्क करूंगा कि क्या आप रुचि रखते हैं।

क्या मुझे इस शोध के परिणामों पर प्रतिक्रिया मिलेगी?

आपके बच्चे को निष्कर्षों के सारांश के साथ प्रदान किया जाएगा ईमेल के माध्यम से वे इसे प्राप्त करना चाहते हैं।

अगर मुझे इस शोध के बारे में चिंता है तो मैं क्या करूँ?

इस परियोजना की प्रकृति के बारे में कोई भी चिंता पहली बार में परियोजना पर्यवेक्षक, डॉ। केटी पामर डू प्रीज़, katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999, एक्सटी 40 पर अधिसूचित की जानी चाहिए।

अनुसंधान के संचालन के संबंध में AUTC के कार्यकारी सचिव को सूचित किया जाना चाहिए, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038

इस शोध के बारे में और जानकारी के लिए मैं किससे संपर्क करूँ?

कृपया इस सूचना पत्र और अपने भविष्य के संदर्भ के लिए सहमति फॉर्म की एक प्रति रखें। आप निम्नानुसार अनुसंधान टीम से संपर्क करने में सक्षम हैं:

शोधकर्ता संपर्क विवरण:

अंजलि भाटिया, ऑटो यूनिवर्सिटी, anjali.bhatia@aut.ac.nz, 022 390 6981

परियोजना पर्यवेक्षक संपर्क विवरण:

डॉ। केटी पामर डू प्रीज़, सीनियर रिसर्च फेलो, जुआ और व्यसन अनुसंधान केंद्र, katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 Ext 7640

26 नवंबर 2020 को ऑकलैंड यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ टेक्नोलॉजी एथिक्स कमेटी द्वारा अनुमोदित AUTC संदर्भ संख्या 20/348

Appendix I: Consent Form (Youth)

 TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TAMAKI MAKAU RAU	
Consent Form	
Youth	
Project title: Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand	
Project Supervisor: Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez Dr. Rita Krishnamurthi Dr. Camille Nakhid	
Researcher: Anjali Bhatia	
☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated dd mmmm yyyy. ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered. ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed. ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way. ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible. ☐ I agree to take part in this research. ☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐	
Participant's signature:	
Participant's name:	
Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):	
Date:	
Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 26 th November 2020 AUTEK Reference number 20/348.	
Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.	
April 2018	page 1 of 1
This version was last edited in April 2018	

Appendix J: Assent Form (Youth)



TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKĀU RAU

Assent Form

Project title: Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand

Project Supervisor: Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez
Dr. Rita Krishnamurthi
Dr. Camille Nakhid

Researcher: Anjali Bhatia

- ☐ I have read and understood the sheet telling me what will happen in this study and why it is important.
- ☐ I have been able to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that I can stop being part of this study whenever I want and that it is perfectly ok for me to do this.
- ☐ If I stop being part of the study, I understand that then I will be offered the choice between having any information that that other people can know is about me removed or letting the researcher keep using it. I also understand that sometimes, if the results of the research have been written, some information about me may not be able to be removed.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant Contact Details (if appropriate):
.....
.....
.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 26th November 2020 AUTEK Reference number 20/348.

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

April 2018

page 2 of 2

This version was last edited in April 2018

Appendix K: Consent Form (Parents/Guardians)



TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TAMAKI MAKAU RAU

Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Project title: Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand

Project Supervisor: Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez
Dr. Rita Krishnamurthi
Dr. Camille Nakhid

Researcher: Anjali Bhatia

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated dd mmmm yyyy.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw my child/children and/or myself from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw my child/children and/or myself from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to my child/children and/or myself removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of our data may not be possible.
- ☐ I agree to my child/children taking part in this research.
- ☐ I understand that my child is able to refuse to give assent to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Child/children's name/s :

Parent/Guardian's signature:

Parent/Guardian's name:

Parent/Guardian's Contact Details (if appropriate):
.....
.....
.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 26th November 2020 AUTEK Reference number 20/348.

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

April 2018

page 1 of 2

This version was last edited in April 2018

Appendix L: Participant Information Sheet (Parents – English)

	
Participant Information Sheet	
Parents	
Date Information Sheet Produced: 01/10/2020	
Project Title Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand	
An Invitation My name is Anjali Bhatia. I am a PhD student at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) supervised by Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, Dr. Rita Krishnamurthi, and Dr. Camille Nakhid. You are invited to take part in a study exploring stressors faced by youth between 14-18 years in Auckland, New Zealand. I am conducting this research for my PhD thesis. Please remember that: • Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary (i.e. your choice). • If you do agree to take part, you are free to withdraw without having to give a reason. This information sheet will explain the research study.	
What is the purpose of this research? Youth of Indian heritage in New Zealand may be at an increased risk of experiencing mental health issues and have, for example, reported a high prevalence of depression. This project aims to develop an understanding of the various stressors faced by youth of Indian descent in New Zealand. The project aims to explore the importance of social support in helping youth to cope with stress. This study will contribute to expanding the understanding of stress from an ethnic minority perspective in New Zealand and highlight strategies through which wellbeing among youth could be enhanced. The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.	
How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research? You will be identified through advertisement placed on various locations such as public spaces, e.g., temples, dance/music and sports club, and/or social media forums. You will be self-identified to participate based on your response to the advertisement. I would like to talk to parents of youth who live in Auckland area and who: • have children who aged 14-18 years (currently or in the last five years) • have Indian ethnic background • have migrated from India • are able to converse in English or Hindi	
5 October 2023	page 1 of 4 This version was edited in November 2019

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you would like to participate in an interview, please phone or email me (Anjali- details below). You will be asked to sign a consent form before the interview.

You can participate either together, i.e. both parents together, one out of the two parents, or a single parent.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

A consent form has been provided for you to review, and a physical copy will be provided for you to sign before the interview. In case of online interview, you will be requested to sign electronically or sign and send it via post. Please contact the researcher or the project supervisor if further explanation is required.

What will happen in this research?

If you decide to take part in this study, this will involve taking part in a one-on-one interview with me either in-person or online (for example via Skype or Zoom). The interview will last between one and one and a half hours. If the interviews are held in-person, it will take place at a time and place that suits you. If it is held online via zoom/skype, it will take place at a time that suits you. You can do the interview in either Hindi or English, as per your convenience. Your children will not be interviewed for the study and your responses will be kept confidential.

The summary of the findings as common themes regarding the understanding of youth about stressors faced by them will be shared with you by the end of your interview.

After I have written up my thesis, I would like to talk about the findings at conferences and publish journal articles. Any potentially identifying information will be confidential, in the publications arising from this research. Small transcribed extracts of your interview may be used in my thesis, publications arising from it, and in presentations at conferences.

What are the discomforts and risks?

You may find that taking part in an interview could bring up events that are upsetting to you and you may find answering some of the questions difficult due to their sensitive nature.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

I aim to take every step possible to ensure your safety and confidentiality. In any written work that comes out of these interviews, any identifying information will be removed.

If you choose to participate in an interview and become upset about recalling your experiences, you may choose to end the interview at that time, or you may wish to take a break or reschedule for a later time.

AUT Health Counselling and Wellbeing is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centres at WB219 or AS104 or phone 921 9992 City Campus or 921 9998 North Shore campus to make an appointment. Appointments for South Campus can be made by calling 921 9992

- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant, and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on <http://www.aut.ac.nz/being-a-student/current-postgraduates/your-health-and-wellbeing/counselling>.

What are the benefits?

You may benefit by telling us your understanding about youth stress. You may get a sense of empowerment from telling your story, and from contributing to understandings of stressors faced by ethnic minority youth in New Zealand. You may also benefit by sharing what challenges you faced in raising up your child in a different culture and how you managed to strike a balance between both the cultures. Since the understanding of stressful events faced by youth will be shared with you at the end of your interview as themes, you will be able to know the challenges they face, the support they want, which you might be unaware of.

The information I gain from this study will be used to develop analysis of the stressors faced by youth of Indian descent in New Zealand, coping strategies adopted by them and how can parents help youth cope with stressful events, as part of my doctoral degree.

I hope that the findings from the study will help in understanding of stressors of ethnic minority youth and may contribute to develop supportive environments to express themselves and enhance their health and wellbeing.

How will my privacy be protected?

During the interview, you may choose to be identified by a name of your choice (that is you may choose a name for me to refer to you by that is different to your name). This will protect your privacy as it will be used in the transcripts as well as in any publications or conference presentations that I will produce from the findings of the study.

Your interview transcripts will be only be accessible to myself and my supervisors. All copies of the interview tapes and transcripts will be stored in computer files with restricted access at AUT university for six years. After this time, they will be destroyed. Any material that may identify you will be deleted from the transcript.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The main cost of participating will be your time. The interview will last between one and one and a half hours. You will receive a petrol or countdown voucher as koha (\$20) in recognition of your time and any travel costs incurred.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have at least two weeks to think about this invitation. If you do wish to be interviewed, please let me know by phoning or emailing me, or I will contact you again after two weeks to see if you are interested.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

You will be provided with the summary of the findings via email should you wish to receive it.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 Ext 7640.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference.
You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Anjali Bhatia, AUT University, anjali.bhatia@aut.ac.nz, 022 xxx xxxx

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, Senior Research Fellow, Gambling and Addictions Research Centre,
katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 Ext 7640

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 26th November 2020,
AUTEC Reference number 20/348.**

Appendix M: Participant Information Sheet (Parents – Hindi)


प्रतिभागी सूचना पत्र माता-पिता दिनांक सूचना पत्रक का निर्माण किया गया: 01/10/2020 परियोजना का शीर्षक न्यूजीलैंड में भारतीय मूल के युवाओं में भलाई बढ़ाने के लिए तनाव के अनुभव और समझ और सामाजिक समर्थन की भूमिका एक निमंत्रण मेरा नाम अंजलि भाटिया है। मैं ऑकलैंड यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ़ टेक्नोलॉजी (AUT) में पीएचडी की छात्रा हूँ, जिसकी देखरेख डॉ. केटी पालमर डू प्रीज़, डॉ. रीता कृष्णमूर्ति और डॉ. कैमिल नख्खिद करते हैं। आपको ऑकलैंड, न्यूजीलैंड में 14-16 वर्षों के बीच किशोरों द्वारा सामना किए गए तनाव का पता लगाने वाले अध्ययन में भाग लेने के लिए आमंत्रित किया गया है। मैं अपने पीएचडी थीसिस के लिए इस शोध का संचालन कर रही हूँ। कृपया याद रखें कि: • इस अध्ययन में आपकी भागीदारी पूरी तरह से स्वैच्छिक (यानी आपकी पसंद) है। • यदि आप भाग लेने के लिए सहमत हैं, तो आप बिना कारण बताए वापस लेने के लिए स्वतंत्र हैं। यह सूचना पत्र शोध अध्ययन की व्याख्या करेगा। इस खोज का उद्देश्य क्या है? न्यूजीलैंड में भारतीय विरासत के किशोरों को मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के मुद्दों के लिए अत्यधिक संवेदनशील माना जाता है और उदाहरण के लिए, अवसाद के एक उच्च प्रसार की सूचना दी है। इस परियोजना का लक्ष्य न्यूजीलैंड में भारतीय मूल के किशोरों द्वारा सामना किए गए विभिन्न तनावों की समझ विकसित करना है। इसके अलावा, एक किशोर को तनाव से निपटने में मदद करने में सामाजिक समर्थन का महत्व। इस अध्ययन का लक्ष्य न्यूजीलैंड में एक जातीय अल्पसंख्यक दृष्टिकोण से तनाव की समझ का विस्तार करना है, और उन रणनीतियों को उजागर करना है जिनके माध्यम से इन किशोरों की भलाई को बढ़ाया जा सकता है। इस शोध के निष्कर्षों का इस्तेमाल अकादमिक प्रकाशनों और प्रस्तुतियों के लिए किया जा सकता है। मेरी पहचान कैसे की गई और मुझे इस शोध में भाग लेने के लिए क्यों आमंत्रित किया जा रहा है? आपको सार्वजनिक स्थानों, जैसे, मंदिरों, नृत्य / संगीत और स्पोर्ट्स क्लब, और / या सोशल मीडिया मंचों जैसे विभिन्न स्थानों पर रखे गए विज्ञापनों के माध्यम से पहचाना जाएगा। विज्ञापन के प्रति आपकी प्रतिक्रिया के आधार पर आपको स्व-पहचान दी जाएगी। मैं उन किशोरों के माता-पिता से बात करना चाहूंगा जो ऑकलैंड क्षेत्र में रहते हैं और जो: • किशोरों की आयु 14-18 वर्ष है (वर्तमान में या पिछले पांच वर्षों में)

- भारत से प्रवास किया
- भारतीय धार्मिक पृष्ठभूमि के हैं
- अंग्रेजी या हिंदी में समझाने में सक्षम हैं

मैं इस शोध में भाग लेने के लिए कैसे सहमत हूँ?

यदि आप एक साक्षात्कार में भाग लेना चाहते हैं, तो कृपया मुझे फोन करें या मुझे ईमेल करें (अंजलि- नीचे विवरण)। आपको साक्षात्कार से पहले एक सहमति पत्र पर हस्ताक्षर करने के लिए कहा जाएगा।

आप या तो एक साथ भाग ले सकते हैं, यानी दोनों माता-पिता एक साथ, दो माता-पिता में से एक या एकल अभिभावक।

इस शोध में आपकी भागीदारी स्वैच्छिक है (यह आपकी पसंद है) और आप भाग लेने के लिए चुनते हैं या नहीं, इससे न तो आपको फायदा होगा और न ही नुकसान। आप किसी भी समय अध्ययन से हट सकते हैं। यदि आप अध्ययन से हटना चुनते हैं, तो आपको किसी भी डेटा को चुनने के बीच विकल्प की पेशकश की जाएगी, जो कि आपके द्वारा हटाए गए या इसे उपयोग करने के लिए जारी रखने की अनुमति देने से संबंधित है। हालांकि, एक बार निष्कर्षों का उत्पादन करने के बाद, आपके डेटा को हटाना संभव नहीं हो सकता है।

आपके द्वारा समीक्षा के लिए एक सहमति फॉर्म प्रदान किया गया है, और साक्षात्कार से पहले हस्ताक्षर करने के लिए आपको एक भौतिक प्रति प्रदान की जाएगी। यदि आगे स्पष्टीकरण की आवश्यकता है, तो कृपया शोधकर्ता या परियोजना पर्यवेक्षक से संपर्क करें।

इस खोज में क्या होगा?

यदि आप इस अध्ययन में भाग लेने का निर्णय लेते हैं, तो इसमें मेरे साथ एक-एक-एक साक्षात्कार में भाग लेना शामिल होगा या ऑनलाइन या (उदाहरण के लिए स्काइप या जूम के माध्यम से)। साक्षात्कार एक से डेढ़ घंटे के बीच होगा। यदि साक्षात्कार व्यक्ति-व्यक्ति में आयोजित किए जाते हैं, तो यह एक समय पर होगा और आपको सूट करेगा। यदि इसे जूम / स्काइप के माध्यम से ऑनलाइन आयोजित किया जाता है, तो यह उस समय पर होगा जो आपको सूट करता है। आप अपनी सुविधानुसार हिंदी या अंग्रेजी में साक्षात्कार कर सकते हैं। आपके बच्चों का अध्ययन के लिए साक्षात्कार नहीं लिया जाएगा और आपकी प्रतिक्रियाओं को गोपनीय रखा जाएगा।

उनके द्वारा सामना किए गए तनावों के बारे में युवाओं की समझ के बारे में आम विषयों के रूप में निष्कर्षों का सारांश आपके साक्षात्कार के अंत तक आपके साथ साझा किया जाएगा।

अपनी थीसिस लिखने के बाद, मैं सम्मेलनों के निष्कर्षों के बारे में बात करना चाहती हूँ और जर्नल लेख प्रकाशित करना चाहती हूँ। इस शोध से उत्पन्न होने वाले प्रकाशनों में किसी भी संभावित पहचान की जानकारी को बदल दिया जाएगा या उसका नाम बदल दिया जाएगा। आपके साक्षात्कार के छोटे हस्तांतरित अर्क का उपयोग मेरी थीसिस, उससे उत्पन्न प्रकाशनों और सम्मेलनों में प्रस्तुतियों में किया जा सकता है।

असुविधाएँ और जोखिम क्या हैं?

आप या सकते हैं कि एक साक्षात्कार में भाग लेना उन घटनाओं को सामने ला सकता है जो आपको परेशान कर रही हैं और आपको उनके संवेदनशील स्वभाव के कारण कुछ प्रश्नों के उत्तर कठिन लग सकते हैं।

इन असुविधाओं और जोखिमों को कैसे कम किया जाएगा?

मैं आपकी सुरक्षा और गुमनामी सुनिश्चित करने के लिए हर संभव कदम उठाने का लक्ष्य रखती हूँ। इन साक्षात्कारों से निकलने वाले किसी भी लिखित कार्य में, किसी भी पहचान की जानकारी को हटा दिया जाएगा।

यदि आप एक साक्षात्कार में भाग लेने के लिए चुनते हैं और अपने अनुभवों को याद करने के बारे में परेशान हो जाते हैं, तो आप उस समय साक्षात्कार को समाप्त करने का विकल्प चुन सकते हैं, या आप बाद के समय के लिए ब्रेक या पुनर्निर्धारण करना चाह सकते हैं।

ऑटो हेल्थ काउंसलिंग और वेलबिंग एक ऑटो अनुसंधान परियोजना में वयस्क प्रतिभागियों के लिए गोपनीय परामर्श समर्थन के तीन मुफ्त सत्रों की पेशकश करने में सक्षम है। ये सत्र केवल उन मुद्दों के लिए उपलब्ध हैं जो सीधे तौर पर उत्पन्न हुए हैं, क्योंकि अनुसंधान और भागीदारी अन्य सामान्य परामर्श आवश्यकताओं के लिए नहीं है। इन सेवाओं तक पहुँचने के लिए, आपको निम्न की आवश्यकता होगी:

- WB219 या AS104 या फोन 921 9992 सिटी कैपस या 921 9998 नॉर्थ शोर कैपस में अपॉइंटमेंट लेने के लिए हमारे सेंटर्स पर जाएं। साउथ कैपस के लिए 921 9992 पर कॉल करके नियुक्तियाँ की जा सकती हैं

- रिसेप्शनिस्ट को बताएं कि आप एक अनुसंधान भागीदार हैं, और इस जानकारी पत्र में दिए गए अनुसार मेरे शोध और मेरे नाम और संपर्क विवरण का शीर्षक प्रदान करें

आप AUT काउंसलर और काउंसलिंग के बारे में अधिक जानकारी <http://www.aut.ac.nz/being-a-student/current-postgraduates/your-health-and-wellbeing/counselling> पर प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

क्या लाभ हैं?

युवा तनाव के बारे में अपनी समझ हमें बताकर आपको लाभ हो सकता है। आपको अपनी कहानी कहने और न्यूजीलैंड में जातीय अल्पसंख्यक युवाओं द्वारा सामना किए गए तनावों की समझ में योगदान देने से सशक्तिकरण की भावना मिल सकती है। एक अलग संस्कृति में अपने बच्चे की परवरिश में आपको किन चुनौतियों का सामना करना पड़ा और आप दोनों संस्कृतियों के बीच संतुलन बनाने में कैसे कामयाब रहे, यह साझा करके आपको भी फायदा हो सकता है। चूंकि युवाओं द्वारा सामना की जाने वाली तनावपूर्ण घटनाओं की समझ को आपके साक्षात्कार के अंत में थीम के रूप में आपके साथ साझा किया जाएगा, इसलिए आप उन चुनौतियों का सामना कर पाएंगे, जो वे चाहते हैं, जो आप चाहते हैं।

इस अध्ययन से मुझे जो जानकारी प्राप्त हुई है, उसका उपयोग न्यूजीलैंड में भारतीय वंश के एक किशोर द्वारा सामना किए गए तनावों के विश्लेषण को विकसित करने के लिए किया जाएगा, उनके द्वारा अपनाई गई रणनीतियों का मुकाबला करने और कैसे माता-पिता किशोरों को तनावपूर्ण घटनाओं से निपटने में मदद कर सकते हैं। यह मेरी डॉक्टरेट डिग्री का एक हिस्सा है।

मुझे उम्मीद है कि अध्ययन से निष्कर्ष जातीय अल्पसंख्यक युवाओं के तनावों की समझ में एक अंतर को संबोधित करेंगे और अपनी भावनाओं को साझा करने के लिए सहायक वातावरण विकसित करने में योगदान दे सकते हैं, और उनके स्वास्थ्य और भलाई को बढ़ा सकते हैं।

मेरी गोपनीयता कैसे सुरक्षित रहेगी?

मैं आपसे कोई भी नाम चुनने के लिए कहूंगा। यह आपकी गोपनीयता की रक्षा करेगा क्योंकि इसका उपयोग टेपों के साथ-साथ किसी भी प्रकाशन या सम्मेलन प्रस्तुतियों में किया जाएगा जो मैं अध्ययन के निष्कर्षों से उत्पन्न करूंगा।

आपका साक्षात्कार टेप केवल मेरे और मेरे पर्यवेक्षकों के लिए सुलभ होगा। साक्षात्कार के टेप और टेप की सभी प्रतियों को छह साल के लिए ऑटो विश्वविद्यालय में प्रतिबंधित पहुंच के साथ कंप्यूटर फ़ाइलों में संग्रहीत किया जाएगा। इस समय के बाद, वे नष्ट हो जाएंगे। कोई भी सामग्री जो आपको पहचान सकती है, उसे प्रतिलिपि से हटा दिया जाएगा।

इस खोज में भाग लेने की लागत क्या है?

भाग लेने की मुख्य लागत आपका समय होगा। साक्षात्कार एक से डेढ़ घंटे के बीच होगा। आपको अपने समय और किसी भी यात्रा लागत की मान्यता में कोहा के रूप में एक पेट्रोल या उलटी गिनती वाउचर प्राप्त होगा।

मुझे इस निमंत्रण पर विचार करने का क्या अवसर मिला?

इस निमंत्रण के बारे में सोचने के लिए आपके पास कम से कम दो सप्ताह का समय होगा। यदि आप साक्षात्कार करने की इच्छा रखते हैं, तो कृपया मुझे फ़ोन करके या मुझे ईमेल करके, या बताएं या मैं आपसे दो सप्ताह बाद फिर से संपर्क करूंगा कि क्या आप रुचि रखते हैं।

क्या मुझे इस खोज के परिणामों पर प्रतिक्रिया मिलेगी?

आपको निष्कर्षों के सारांश के साथ प्रदान किया जाएगा ईमेल के माध्यम से आपको इसे प्राप्त करना चाहिए।

अगर मुझे इस शोध के बारे में चिंता है तो मैं क्या करूँ?

इस परियोजना की प्रकृति के बारे में कोई भी चिंता पहली बार परियोजना पर्यवेक्षक, डॉ. केटी पामर डू प्रीज़, katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999, एक्सटी. 40 पर अधिसूचित की जानी चाहिए।

अनुसंधान के संचालन के संबंध में AUTC के कार्यकारी सचिव को सूचित किया जाना चाहिए, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext. 6038

इस शोध के बारे में और जानकारी के लिए मैं किससे संपर्क करूँ?

कृपया इस सूचना पत्र और अपने भविष्य के संदर्भ के लिए सहमति फॉर्म की एक प्रति रखें। आप निम्नानुसार अनुसंधान टीम से संपर्क करने में सक्षम हैं:

शोधकर्ता संपर्क विवरण:

अंजलि भाटिया, AUT यूनिवर्सिटी, anjali.bhatia@aut.ac.nz, 022 xxx xxxx

परियोजना पर्यवेक्षक संपर्क विवरण:

डॉ. केटी पालमर डू प्रीज़, सीनियर रिसर्च फेलो, जुआ और व्यसन अनुसंधान केंद्र (Gambling and Addictions Research Centre), katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 Ext 7640

26 नवंबर 2020 को ऑकलैंड यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ टेक्नोलॉजी एथिक्स कमेटी द्वारा अनुमोदित, AUTC संदर्भ संख्या 20/348

Appendix N: Consent Form (Parents – English)



TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKĀU RAU

Consent Form

For use when interviews are involved.

Project title: Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand

Project Supervisor: Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez
Dr. Rita Krishnamurthi
Dr. Camille Nakhid

Researcher: Anjali Bhatia

☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated dd mmmm yyyy.

☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.

☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.

☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.

☐ I agree to take part in this research.

☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):
.....
.....
.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 26h November 2020, AUTEK Reference number 20/348

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

April 2018 page 1 of 1 This version was last edited in April 2018

Appendix O: Consent Form (Parents – Hindi)

सहमति पत्र

साक्षात्कार में शामिल होने पर उपयोग के लिए।

परियोजना का शीर्षक: **न्यूजीलैंड में भारतीय मूल के युवाओं में भलाई बढ़ाने में तनाव और सामाजिक समर्थन की भूमिका का अनुभव और समझ**

प्रोजेक्ट सुपरवाइजर: **डॉ। केटी पामर डू प्रीज़**

डॉ। रीता कृष्णमूर्ति

डॉ। केमिली नखिद

शोधकर्ता: **अंजलि भाटिया**

- मैंने इस शोध परियोजना के बारे में दी गई जानकारी को सूचना पत्र दिनांकित 01.10.2020 में पढ़ा और समझा है।
- मुझे सवाल पूछने और उनका जवाब देने का अवसर मिला है।
- मैं समझता हूँ कि साक्षात्कार के दौरान नोट्स लिए जाएंगे और वे भी ऑडियो-टेप किए जाएंगे और स्थानांतरित किए जाएंगे।
- मैं समझता हूँ कि इस अध्ययन में भाग लेना स्वैच्छिक (मेरी पसंद) है और मैं किसी भी तरह से वंचित किए बिना किसी भी समय अध्ययन से हट सकता हूँ।
- मैं समझता हूँ कि अगर मैं अध्ययन से हटता हूँ तो मुझे किसी भी डेटा को चुनने के बीच विकल्प की पेशकश की जाएगी जो कि मेरे द्वारा हटाए गए या इसे उपयोग करने के लिए जारी रखने की अनुमति के रूप में पहचाने जाने योग्य है। हालाँकि, एक बार निष्कर्षों का उत्पादन करने के बाद, मेरे डेटा को हटाना संभव नहीं हो सकता है।
- मैं समझता हूँ कि अध्ययन के दौरान मेरे स्वास्थ्य और स्वास्थ्य के बारे में कोई चिंता होने पर मेरे जीपी से संपर्क किया जा सकता है।
- मैं इस शोध में भाग लेने के लिए सहमत हूँ।
- मैं शोध निष्कर्षों का सारांश प्राप्त करना चाहता हूँ (कृपया एक टिक करें): हाँ ☐ ना ☐

प्रतिभागी के हस्ताक्षर:।

प्रतिभागी का नाम:

प्रतिभागी का संपर्क विवरण (यदि उपयुक्त हो):

.....

.....

.....

.....

दिनांक:

ऑकलैंड यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ टेक्नोलॉजी एथिक्स कमेटी द्वारा 26th November 2020 जिस पर अंतिम अनुमोदन दिया गया था उस पर AUTEK संदर्भ संख्या टाइप करें (20/348) संदर्भ संख्या

नोट: प्रतिभागी को इस फॉर्म की एक प्रति रखनी चाहिए।

Appendix P: Participant Information Sheet (Counsellors)



Participant Information Sheet

Counsellors

Date Information Sheet Produced:
01/10/2020

Project Title
Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand

An Invitation
My name is Anjali Bhatia. I am a PhD student at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) supervised by Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, Dr. Rita Krishnamurthi, and Dr. Camille Nakhid. You are invited to take part in a study exploring stressors faced by youth between 14-18 years in Auckland, New Zealand. I am conducting this research for my PhD thesis. Please remember that:

- Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary (i.e. your choice).
- If you do agree to take part, you are free to withdraw without having to give a reason.

This information sheet will explain the research study.

What is the purpose of this research?
Youth of Indian heritage in New Zealand may be at an increased risk of experiencing mental health issues and have, for example, reported a high prevalence of depression.
This project aims to develop an understanding of the various stressors faced by youth of Indian descent in New Zealand. The project aims to explore the importance of social support in helping youth to cope with stress.
This study will contribute to expanding the understanding of stress from an ethnic minority perspective in New Zealand and highlight strategies through which wellbeing among youth could be enhanced.
The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?
You will be identified through advertisement placed on the New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC) newsletter, or from personal contacts. You will be self-identified to participate based on your response to the advertisement.
I would like to talk to school-based counsellors who have experience of dealing with youth of Indian descent when in distress.

How do I agree to participate in this research?
If you would like to participate in the discussion, please phone or email me (Anjali- details below). You will be asked to sign a consent form before the discussion.
Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the

5 October 2023

page 1 of 3

This version was edited in November 2019

study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

A consent form has been provided for you to review, and a physical copy will be provided for you to sign before the discussion. In case of online discussion, you will be requested to sign electronically or sign and send it via post. Please contact the researcher or the project supervisor if further explanation is required.

What will happen in this research?

If you decide to take part in this study, this will involve taking part in a focus group discussion. Six counsellors will be part of the focus group. The discussion will last between one and one and a half hours and take place at either AUT campus or online (for example via Skype or Zoom). Your responses will be kept confidential.

The summary of the findings as common themes regarding the understanding of youth about stressors faced by them will be shared with you by the end of your interview. No personal information of any participant will be shared.

After I have written up my thesis, I would like to talk about the findings at conferences and publish journal articles. Any potentially identifying information will be changed, in the publications arising from this research. Small transcribed extracts of your interview may be used in my thesis, publications arising from it, and in presentations at conferences.

What are the discomforts and risks?

You may find that taking part in the focus groups could bring up events that are upsetting to you and you may feel distressed recalling them.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

I aim to take every step possible to ensure your safety and maintain confidentiality. In any written work that comes out of these focus groups, any identifying information will be removed.

AUT Health Counselling and Wellbeing is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centres at WB219 or AS104 or phone 921 9992 City Campus or 921 9998 North Shore campus to make an appointment. Appointments for South Campus can be made by calling 921 9992
- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant, and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on <http://www.aut.ac.nz/being-a-student/current-postgraduates/your-health-and-wellbeing/counselling>.

What are the benefits?

You may benefit by telling us your perspective about ethnic minority youth stress. You will be contributing to the understandings of stressors faced by ethnic minority youth in New Zealand and the stigma (if any) shared by the Indian community in seeking professional help. You may benefit by expressing various measures that the government should take for increasing awareness about mental health issues and how can they create supportive environments for them to share their feelings. Additionally, you will get the summary of the understanding of

stress from young people. This may benefit you to be aware about the challenges faced by youth, and the support they want to help them cope with stressful situations.

The information I gain from this study will be used to develop analysis of the stressors faced by youth of Indian descent in New Zealand, coping strategies adopted by them and the role of counsellors in helping youth cope with stressful events, as part of my doctoral degree.

I hope that the findings from the study will address a gap in the understanding of stressors of ethnic minority youth and may contribute to develop supportive environments to share their feelings, and enhances their health and wellbeing.

How will my privacy be protected?

During the interview, you may choose to be identified by a name of your choice (that is you may choose a name for me to refer to you by that is different to your name). This will protect your privacy as it will be used in the transcripts as well as in any publications or conference presentations that I will produce from the findings of the study.

Your interview transcripts will be only be accessible to myself and my supervisors. All copies of the interview tapes and transcripts will be stored in computer files with restricted access at AUT university for six years. After this time, they will be destroyed. Any material that may identify you will be deleted from the transcript.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The main cost of participating will be your time. The discussion will last between one and one and a half hours. You will receive a petrol or countdown voucher as koha (\$20) in recognition of your time and any travel costs incurred.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have at least a month to think about this invitation. If you do wish to be interviewed, please let me know by phoning or emailing me, or I will contact you again after a month to see if you are interested.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

You will be provided with the summary of the findings via email should you wish to receive it.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 Ext 7640.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Anjali Bhatia, AUT University, anjali.bhatia@aut.ac.nz, 022 xxx xxxx

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez, Senior Research Fellow, Gambling and Addictions Research Centre, katie.palmerdupreez@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 Ext 7640

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 26th November 2020,
AUTC Reference number 20/348.

Appendix Q: Consent Form (Counsellors)



TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKĀU RAU

Consent Form

Project title: Experiences and understandings of stress and the role of social support in enhancing wellbeing among youth of Indian descent in New Zealand

Project Supervisor: Dr. Katie Palmer Du Preez
Dr. Rita Krishnamurthi
Dr. Camille Nakhid

Researcher: Anjali Bhatia

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated dd mmmm yyyy.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that identity of my fellow participants and our discussions in the focus group is confidential to the group and I agree to keep this information confidential.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the focus group and that it will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then, while it may not be possible to destroy all records of the focus group discussion of which I was part, I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):
.....
.....
.....
.....

Date:|

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 26th November 2020, AUTEK Reference number 20/348

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

April 2018

page 1 of 1

This version was last edited in April 2018

Appendix R: Safety Protocol

SAFETY PROTOCOL

While conducting Interviews

If a participant indicates they are experiencing high level of stress or emotional distress, or exhibits behaviours such as crying, anxiety etc., then:

- Stop the interview
- Assess mental health status
 - Tell me what are you feeling?
 - What thoughts are coming in your mind?
 - Ask suicide-screening questions.
- If the participant feels they can carry on with the interview, resume
- If the participant is unable to carry on with the interview,
 - Stop the interview
 - Encourage the participant to consult their GP or mental health provider
 - Provide the participants with the list of mental health services contact details
- When the participant is below 16 years of age and their parents are giving their consent for their participation, their parents will be flagged about the mental health concern, if any. In situations where parents may be the source of stress, or in collision with the source, of violence, then police of mental health services emergency team will be contacted.
- When the participant is above 16 years of age and in distress, they will be encouraged to consult mental health support services. If there is situation is severe, then police of mental health services emergency team will be contacted.
- Follow-up with the participant with a courtesy call (if participant agrees) after 1-2 days

For the researcher

- Possibility of emotional exhaustion and/or psychological impact on the researcher after listening to stressful experiences of participants. In such circumstances, schedule debriefing sessions with the psychologist, a named member of the team, during data collection.



Suicide Risk Screening Tool

Ask Suicide-Screening Questions

Ask the patient:

1. In the past few weeks, have you wished you were dead? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. In the past few weeks, have you felt that you or your family would be better off if you were dead? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. In the past week, have you been having thoughts about killing yourself? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Have you ever tried to kill yourself? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, how? _____

When? _____

If the patient answers **Yes** to any of the above, ask the following acuity question:

5. Are you having thoughts of killing yourself right now? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, please describe: _____

Next steps:

- If patient answers "No" to all questions 1 through 4, screening is complete (not necessary to ask question #5). No intervention is necessary (*Note: Clinical judgment can always override a negative screen).
- If patient answers "Yes" to any of questions 1 through 4, or refuses to answer, they are considered a **positive screen**. Ask question #5 to assess acuity:
 - ☐ "Yes" to question #5 = **acute positive screen** (imminent risk identified)
 - Patient requires a **STAT** safety/full mental health evaluation.
 - Patient cannot leave until evaluated for safety.
 - Keep patient in sight. Remove all dangerous objects from room. Alert parents and encourage them to contact their GP or mental health services.
 - ☐ "No" to question #5 = **non-acute positive screen** (potential risk identified)
 - Patient requires a **brief** suicide safety assessment to determine if a **full** mental health evaluation is needed. Patient cannot leave until evaluated for safety.
 - Alert parents and encourage them to contact their GP or mental health services.

Support Services Sheet

Support Services

The following organizations provide online and telephone counselling services, or other device and information. (Please note: Inclusion on this list does not constitute a personal recommendation from the researcher)

Name of the service	Contact Details
Mental Health Crisis (Auckland City) (24/7 service)	0800 800 717
Counties Manukau Mental Health Intake and Assessment Team (24/7 service)	09 261 3700 0800 775 222
Lifeline Auckland Helpline (24/7 service)	0800 543 354 Free text 4357
YouthLine (24/7 telephone service, 7-10pm Web chat)	0800 376 633 talk@youthline.co.nz
Low Down (24/7 service)	0800 111 757 Free text 5626
What's Up (1-10pm Weekdays, 3-10pm Weekends, 7-10pm Online chat daily)	0800 942 8787
Kidsline (24/7 service)	0800 543 754
Sparx (Online self-help tool)	www.sparx.org.nz