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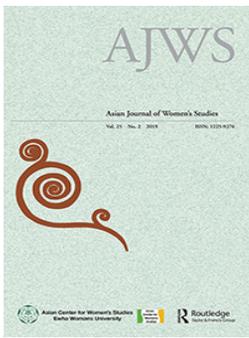


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# Honor-based violence and coercive control among Asian youth in Auckland, New Zealand

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## ABSTRACT

Honor-based violence (HBV) is a type of intimate partner and family violence that rests on patriarchal norms which fall under the parameters of coercive control. However, research has not examined the ways that HBV operates as a form of coercive control. Utilizing small group interviews conducted with 27 adolescent girls and young women, predominantly of Asian backgrounds from Auckland, New Zealand, this study will illustrate how HBV functions as a form of culturally driven coercive control, but one that cuts across multiple ecological or environmental levels, ranging from interpersonal relationships to state systems. Stark's work (2007) on coercive control has been significant for providing a conceptual framework that captures how patriarchal norms perpetuate intimate partner violence (IPV). Policy suggestions include educational programming with migrant Asian youth that explore the positive and negative dimensions of culture, and encourage youth to perpetuate those aspects of their cultures which they view as positive while critiquing cultural practices tied to HBV. For young adult marriage migrants caught in violent relationships, policy suggestions include bolstering of state resources to help legal aid practitioners, social workers and law enforcement recognize the cumulative power of coercive control in families that practice HBV and help young women exit the violent circumstances.

**KEYWORDS** Coercive control; honor-based violence; Asian; migrant; youth; intimate partner violence

## Introduction

During the 1990s, honor-based violence (HBV) began receiving significant international media attention. Loosely understood as a cultural system where family honor is maintained through control over women and girls' sexual behaviors, HBV takes shape through an array of mechanisms. However, the forms of violence connected to HBV which receive the most international press include honor killings, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. In reality, HBV encompasses many forms of coercion, the most common of which, while still highly patriarchal and oppressive, are not lethal and do not have shock value.

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Drawing on small group interviews with 27 adolescent girls and young women from Auckland, New Zealand, predominantly of Asian, migrant backgrounds, this paper has two objectives. First, HBV should be understood as an ecological form of coercive control, where girls' and women's dependency is maintained across several environmental levels; this is especially complex for women and girls from ethnic migrant backgrounds, where extended family (micro-level), the broader ethnic community (meso-level), and the state (macro-level) play key roles in facilitating women's and girls' vulnerability. Second, this study will use an ecological framework to provide policy suggestions relevant to women and girls from Asian migrant backgrounds who cope with HBV, in particular, to offer suggestions on development of culturally inclusive teen dating violence prevention programming in schools, and training for state employees in law enforcement, social work and legal aid on the seriousness of coercive control within migrant families that practice HBV.

In 2007, Stark released *Coercive control: How men entrap women in personal life*, which outlined the ways in which men exercise patriarchal norms in society to control female partners without necessarily relying on physical violence. A significant contribution made by Stark is that when men commit abuse, whether or not it entails physical violence, they are able to do so "not because they are unequal in their capacities for violence but because sexual discrimination allows men privileged access to the material and social resources needed to gain advantage in power struggles" (p. 105). By holding a ubiquitous grip across society's key institutions and because gendered norms emphasizing women's dependence persist, men in heteronormative relationships can more easily maintain authority over their intimate partners without public condemnation. In other words, because social norms support women's confinement to the household and other feminized spaces, the broader public is less inclined to challenge men who coerce female partners into domesticated roles that foster dependency.

### **Honor-based violence**

HBV is a form of gender-based violence associated with the patriarchal family and community in which the protection of honor and familial reputation is the main justification for violence (Begikhani, Gill, & Hague, 2015). HBV is most commonly committed against young women who are perceived as acting against prevailing notions of honor, whereby punishment is meted out by male partners or relatives purporting the removal of shame and restoration of family honor (Begikhani et al., 2015; Kandiyoti, 1987; Sen, 2005; Siddiqui, 2005).

"Honor" denotes a value-system with norms and traditions (Begikhani et al., 2015) wherein its meanings in various societies are constantly subject to contestation (Pope, 2004). Behaviors perceived to be shameful can range from

associating with male friends, having boyfriends, violating dress codes about modesty, choosing one's own marriage partner, choosing to pursue university or work, and leaving the house without a chaperone (Begikhani et al., 2015; Sen, 2005). However, premarital sex and infidelity are considered the most severe violations (Baker, Gregware, & Cassidy, 1999). Family and community honor become highly contingent on the sexual purity of female family members for which strict surveillance of women's sexual conduct becomes crucial (Akipinar, 2003; Begikhani et al., 2015; Kandiyoti, 1987; Sen, 2005; Siddiqui, 2005).

Patriarchy and HBV therefore reproduce each other through strict oversight of women's activities and sexual behavior (Akipinar, 2003; Begikhani et al., 2015). Codes of honor construct what it means to be a woman or man, casting the control over women as the ultimate symbol of male power (Akipinar, 2003; Begikhani et al., 2015). Thus, the preoccupation with proving one's masculinity, in tandem with chronic concerns over its loss, result in the policing of women through threats and violence (Kandiyoti, 1987).

Honor killings serve as a public display for this patriarchal power (Begikhani et al., 2015; Gill, 2006; Sen, 2005; Siddiqui, 2005) and is even regarded as a necessary and heroic restoration of a family's honor (Begikhani et al., 2015; Jafri, 2008; Mojab, 2012). While honor killings receive the most attention in media and literature, HBV encompasses a range of violent or abusive acts committed in the name of honor, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse and other controlling and coercive behaviors resulting in restricted movement and monitored relationships (Sen, 2005). Additionally, honor and shame operate in a way that further constrains women from exiting such conditions, as cultural notions of women's expected self-sacrifice, the fear of losing face and consequential isolation work to render them silent in the face of violence (Kang, 2006; Meeto & Mirza, 2007).

An-na'im (2005) identifies the family as the primary group that regulates women's sexuality, highlighting that this has transpired across cultures throughout history. Harking back to medieval codes of chivalry and nobility, Europe also carries a long history of honor-based norms and traditions, which are then cast through an Orientalist gaze when applied to Asian societies. Sen (2005) suggests that scholarship should acknowledge the specificities of HBV whilst rejecting culture as the primary explanation. In order to reject eroticized understandings of HBV and instead frame these as part of the larger struggle against violence against women (Gill, 2009), it is useful to examine less extreme, insidious forms of HBV present in migrant youth communities. This would be a useful point of departure rather than the uncritical sensationalism in prevailing western narratives.

## Coercive control

Historically, literature and praxis regarding domestic violence are predicated largely on a model of incident specific violence which speaks of abuse as discrete violent acts (Stark, 1995, 2007; Tang, Wong, Cheung, & Lee, 2000). Although there have been unprecedented gains in the form of community-based services for victims of physical and sexual assault, the injury-based definition of abuse has failed many of its victims (Stark, 1995, 2007). Equating abuse with discernible acts of violence and assault would come to inform the application of a “calculus of harms” model to assess severity and ration interventions only if physical violence transpired first. The coercive control framework has been a necessary intervention in the field of domestic violence for reframing abuse as a course of significant behaviors that extend beyond obvious forms of physical violence (Kelly & Johnson, 2008; Stark, 1995, 2007, 2009).

Compared to episodic acts of violence, coercive control is a course of calculated conduct patterned by control and manipulation deployed mostly by men to dominate women via tactics of intimidation, isolation and control (Stark, 2007). It is ongoing with cumulative effects (Johnson, 1995; Kelly & Johnson, 2008; Stark, 2007, 2012). Further, it involves the monitoring and micro regulation of behaviors which are typically associated with women’s default roles as mothers, homemakers and sexual partners, whereby men monitor how women dress, clean, cook or perform sexually through threats, restrictions and deprivations (Arnold, 2009; Kelly & Johnson, 2008; Stark, 2007, 2012). This can take the form of restricting or depriving individual women of food, money, access to communication or transport, and isolation from friends and community (Kelly & Johnson, 2008; Stark, 2007, 2012). Such deprivations constitute a state of political subordination, comprising the key dynamic of coercive control. This type of abuse includes surveillance, and victims are often punished when they fail to follow rules established by the coercive party (Kelly & Johnson, 2008). The scope of the abuse materializes in the interweaving of controlling behaviors into a temporally extended pattern through which obedience to the abusers’ demands are based on fear of consequences on failure to meet demands.

It is well established in the literature that coercive control is a gendered process, disproportionately perpetrated by men against women (Stark, 2007; Tanha, Beck, Figueredo, & Raghavn, 2010), whereby men exploit existing gender inequalities endogenous to patriarchy. The literature points to two ways in which coercive control is enacted in response to perceived threats to male supremacy: first at a structural level, it is enacted as a strategic off-setting of women’s gains in liberal democratic societies like greater access to employment and education (Stark, 2007). As male supremacy appears to crumble at a structural level, so too does it diminish at a personal level,

motivating the patriarchal personalization of dominance. Second, along with the structural economic motivators, the likelihood of men to use coercive control in order to address a threatened or unstable masculinity is also culturally informed. Psychoanalytic theories suggest controllers are more likely than other men to have histories of fragile masculinities rendered unstable by experiences of denigration for being unmanly or effeminate (Anderson, 2008). In contrast, women may comply with the mandates of expected stereotypical domestic behaviors because they recognize that they are held accountable for the performance of femininity for which they will be punished if not performed satisfactorily as per a male standard (Anderson, 2008; Stark, 2007).

Therefore, the patriarchal consignment of women to domesticity, which coercive control depends upon, means the control and regulation in activities identified as women's default responsibilities go unrecognized due to their congruence with normative gender scripts. As overt violence may not be present or visible, coercive control is not always easily distinguishable from voluntary compliance with traditional gender roles, rendering it a phenomenon which comes to be "invisible in plain sight" (Stark, 2007, p. 14, 2012). Case studies and examples of coercive controlling behaviors discussed in the literature are related to married or cohabiting life (Kelly & Johnson, 2008; Stark, 2007, 2012), suggesting coercive control applies primarily to married or cohabiting couples. It would be useful to apply the same model of coercive control to dating relationships among youth who are similarly socialized in patriarchal societies where gendered division of labor and constructions of masculine and feminine identities still prevail. Likewise, it would be useful to explore ways in which HBV in the diaspora of Asian communities can be conceptualized through the coercive control framework.

## Research methodology

This project began as part of a community-based partnership between the first author and a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that specializes in serving women and children from Asian, Middle Eastern, and African ethnic backgrounds from Auckland who are caught in violent partnerships. In recent years, the NGO started a youth unit which aimed to assist adolescent girls and young adult women from these broad ethnic groups. In particular, the organization knew that young people from these ethnic backgrounds, whether or not born in New Zealand, frequently straddled home cultures that prohibited dating, along with school and social lives where teen dating was more normalized. Because parents and extended family members were less likely to discuss dating with their children, if girls and young women began exploring intimate relationships, they would be reticent to discuss them in familial settings, even if elements of intimacy turned violent. Due to these cultural dynamics, the NGO, first author and third author met in

2013 to discuss and propose a research project that would help construct a range of services for adolescent girls from migrant backgrounds.

The project followed a community-based participatory research philosophy, with all research components established collaboratively by the NGO and researchers (development of research questions, participant recruitment, data gathering processes, etc.) (Wallerstein & Duran, 2003). Late in 2013, the third author and NGO staff began contacting young women (under age 30) who had attended advocacy events organized by the NGO, asking them via e-mail and telephone if they would be interested in partaking in a one-time small group discussion that addressed dating violence in their ethnic communities. The age parameters for “young adults” ranged from 18 to 29 years. As potential participants expressed interest, they were scheduled for small group discussions, which took place early in 2014. Prior research with migrant women has used small group discussions to explore intimate partner violence (IPV) (Bauer, Rodriguez, Quiroga, & Flores-Ortiz, 2000; Zannettino, 2012).

The youth sample included adolescent girls attending a high school in Auckland that had a large proportion of students from diverse Asian backgrounds. In March 2014, the first and third author attended a peer mentors meeting at the school for students from migrant backgrounds to inform them of the study and invite their participation. As students expressed interest, group discussions with 16- and 17-year-old girls were scheduled. Males were invited to participate in the study. Unfortunately, due to their low response rate ( $N = 3$ ), male input was excluded from our analyses. Discussions with young adult participants took place at The University of Auckland, NGO offices, and in once case in an NGO safe house. Discussions with adolescents took place in private school areas when classes were not in session. Topical discussions included how young people in migrant communities defined IPV (Tang et al., 2000), justified IPV (Yick & Agbayani-Siewert, 1997), learned IPV (Foshee, Bauman, & Linder, 1999), and how the NGO might establish a continuum of services for young women and girls from Asian, Middle Eastern and African ethnicities.

Small group discussions involved 2–3 participants. These were audio-recorded and facilitated by the first and third authors. The one exception was of a discussion with two young adult participants (one in her late teens, the other in her early twenties) who had taken refuge in an NGO safe house. For this discussion, the first author was present and explained the study to participants and answered potential questions, but being male, only the third author and a supporting female research assistant facilitated the discussion. A trained counselor was on call to assist participants who felt anxious about certain topics, although this service was never required.

Discussions were transcribed verbatim. The first and second authors then followed a grounded theory methodology (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Huberman & Miles, 2002), reading through all nine transcripts while paying extra

attention to quotes that had been coded as relevant to HBV. From there, the first and second authors worked together to identify the ways in which HBV was discussed by participants and spoke to an ecological framework. Drawing on Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological model, quotes pertaining to HBV were classified into micro-, meso- and macro-level systems and analyzed collectively by the first and second authors as potential examples of coercive control. The first author is half-Japanese, half-Caucasian, while the second author is of Korean ethnicity and was previously a member of the organization's youth unit. The third author is also a young adult of Indian ethnicity who grew up in Auckland. Thus, with respect to ethnicity and age both the second and third authors were peers of the research participants, which assisted in developing a rapport with participants and interpreting data. All research procedures were approved by The University of Auckland Human Ethics Committee (for a more robust discussion of the study's methods, see Mayeda & Vijaykumar, 2015). All names presented in the ensuing section are pseudonyms.

## Research outcomes

Twenty-seven participants contributed to the study, with a disproportionately high number identifying as Indian or Fiji-Indian (of Indian ethnicity but born in Fiji). Participants also identified as Chinese, Korean, Pakistani, Afghan, Sri Lankan and Iranian (see Table 1). New Zealand includes "Afghan" as part of the "Asian" umbrella ethnic category; therefore all participants except the one who identified as Iranian would be considered Asian. In spite of not

**Table 1.** Ethnic background of study participants.

Ethnicity	# of participants
Indian	10
Fiji-Indian	4
Chinese	3
Korean	3
Chinese/Indian	2
Pakistani	2
Afghan	1
Iranian	1
Sri Lankan	1
<i>Age</i>	
16–17 (high school participants)	11
18–20	5
21–23	5
24–26	4
27–28	2
<i>Permanent resident or citizen of New Zealand</i>	
Yes	24
No	3
Total	27

being Asian, the Iranian participant's input is included for analysis, as it was aligned strongly with those of the others.

### ***Family/micro-level coercive control***

I'm still the property of my family and all of that connects to the idea that women represent honor (Pakistani young adult participant; Nabila, personal communication, March 4, 2014).

Study participants discussed the prominence of coercive controlling behaviors in their friends' dating relationships and their own. Common behaviors included the monitoring of girls' whereabouts, dress, friendships and interactions. Several women highlighted the common occurrence of digital monitoring such as access to Facebook passwords and regularly checking messages, describing such digital monitoring as "quite common with young people." Participants described boyfriends who were "insanely jealous" and "weirdly possessive," restricting their girlfriends from going to town with friends, demanding them to constantly report on their whereabouts, controlling what they wear, as well as how much time and attention they allocated to their friends. These micro regulatory behaviors were reported across focus groups, along with threats, intimidation and restrictions.

As honor-shame codes relegate premarital dating and sex to the realm of unacceptable practice, it is common for young women to conceal their relationships from parents and wider families. Under a system of honor and shame, which deems a woman's premarital romantic and sexual relations unacceptable, such norms are intensified in a migrant context that attributes dating relations as a compromising form of assimilation to the dominant western culture whereby ties to the home culture are severed. For such reasons, several participants explained they would hide relationships from their parents who "think of western culture as 'loose' or 'slutty'." Aware of being measured in such a way that deems their behavior a disturbance to family honor, young women were said to select the pragmatic secrecy of their romantic relations. Young women from migrant backgrounds then, are more vulnerable as these honor-shame codes impede help-seeking. The threats and intimidation deployed through coercive control relied on this vulnerability, as exemplified by a young Iranian adult participant who discussed how a male instrumentalized cultural notions of honor and shame within the family to keep the girl in an unwanted relationship: "He just threatens her. Or like he will blackmail her. He will say he will, 'come to your house and show your parents [digital] photos of us together and stuff if you leave me'" (Latika, personal communication, April 10, 2014).

Because honor and shame codes hold a formalized salience in many migrant families and incentivize secrecy about premarital relationships,

coercive control is exacerbated through digital technologies. Another participant added that “the fear of parents finding out ... the fear, it’s too intense,” powerful enough to encourage young girls to conform to boyfriends’ controlling standards, and instrumental to the continued concealment of the relationship. Further isolation from potential support networks such as the family is thus achieved by deploying these family codes against young women and girls. Even in relationships known to the family, for example in marriage, abusive relationships are known and tolerated as young women are encouraged to endure in silence for the sake of upholding familial reputation by averting the shame that comes with a failed marriage ending in divorce. Participants discussed how patriarchal gender norms figured in the culture of victim blaming, as perceived inadequacy in domestic labor such as cooking, cleaning and childcare, came to stand as both motivation and justification for violence. Even in cases where women did reach out, blame for provocation and wrongdoing is allocated to them by the family who advise them to accept violence in order to maintain the marriage as a necessary part of upholding family honor. A young adult participant of Fiji-Indian background who was staying in a safe house stated that families “tell the girl to adjust,” illustrating that family reputation takes precedence. A different Fiji-Indian young adult participant added,

... we don’t talk about it, we don’t acknowledge it. It starts from within the family ... we definitely aren’t encouraged to talk about it to anybody else outside of this. Most definitely. Cause yeah, that will bring shame to the family (Jana, personal communication, April 24, 2014).

In this way, HBV through the form of coercive control can be enacted vis-à-vis women by the wider family. Operating under codes of honor and shame, the family draws on notions regarding women’s roles and their centrality for the maintenance of family reputation in order to blame and coerce women into remaining bound to abusive relationships, such that HBV and coercive control operate in tandem at the family level. Coercive control at this level is able to function under the guise of normalized honor-shame codes, whereby coercive controlling behaviors become no different from standard family practice. With regard to familial control, a young adult identifying as Indian and Chinese stated, “a lot of people will be hesitant to label it as violent because it is so common ... because it is a part of parenting” (Gayatri, personal communication, April 15, 2014). Much like coercive control exercised by a male over a female partner is dependent upon and indistinguishable from already existing gender inequality, coercive control enabled by and enacted at the wider familial level relies on what has been accepted as pre-existing standard family practices, from which the meld of coercive control and HBV are seen to be indistinct.

### ***Community/meso-level coercive control***

... you don't get your individuality. Whatever you do is the family's well-being, or the extended family's well-being, or the society's well-being (Fiji-Indian young adult participant; Samantha, personal communication, May 2, 2014).

Prior research with adolescents has suggested that teen resources are necessary at neighborhood and community levels to help young people work through dimensions of dating violence (Banyard & Cross, 2008; Whitaker & Savage, 2014). The present section demonstrates how wider ethnic communities can intensify girls' and young women's vulnerability through the enforcement of honor and shame codes. As explained by a young adult Fiji-Indian participant who had experience working as a community-based women's advocate, familial problems rarely permeate family walls:

It's just the whole thing of not bringing shame to their families. I guess a lot of women are afraid that ... they might be looked down upon from other peers or society members (Ramya, personal communication, February 19, 2014).

Along with concealing family problems from the broader public, participants claimed members of their ethnic communities were prohibited from discussing IPV with professionals, such as school personnel, legal advisors and, in particular, law enforcement. An Afghan participant, for example, discussed a personal story in which one of her female relatives came to her house seeking help, "... beaten up ... bruised ... and bleeding" (Nahal, personal communication, February 19, 2014). While her family consoled both the victim and perpetrator, "Police weren't called." Likewise, an Indian participant from a different group discussion recounted similar sentiments about not seeking professional help, stating: "You can't go to the cops, keep it within the family ... I mean they say, 'Yeah, next time if this person hits this person, then we'll call the cops and we'll do something about it.' But nothing happens" (Gayatri, personal communication, April 15, 2014).

Cultural restrictions in accessing community services were said to further isolate young people who found themselves in violent relationships, as participants were keenly aware of directives not to discuss family problems with external parties. For teenagers, who were already anxious about disclosing intimate relationships to family members, this also translated into not seeking assistance from school personnel. Doing so would be considered something "white people do," as well as something that jeopardized family reputation. Due to the lack of help-seeking resources for girls and young women, male perpetrators were further protected and their control over intimate partners strengthened.

In addition to not feeling comfortable in accessing non-familial help, participants said that members of their own ethnic community monitored girls and discussed their alleged behaviors. As a half-Chinese, half-Indian young

adult participant said, there are the “unofficial media,” or community gossip, which forces young women and girls to “check and balance” their behaviors. Akipinar (2003) and Hague, Gill, and Begikhani (2013) have argued that in societies following honor systems, gossip within the ethnic community functions as a form of patriarchal social control, where men and women may act as watchdogs over women and girls.

Participants expressed great frustration over not being able to associate with boys or young men, even on a platonic basis (let alone date them), because relatives and family friends might see them and question their families’ abilities to raise their daughters properly. Participants also lamented about the ways that some males manipulated girls’ fears of community surveillance by threatening to publicize intimate relationships online. Just as men utilized digital photos within family settings to impede partners from exiting relationships, males reportedly exploited social media by creating a nebulous air of community-wide suspicion. A young Pakistani participant explained how Facebook was used to keep someone she knew in fear about her intimate relationship being publicly exposed:

... putting up a status that is about that girl, like you write something, and it is about that specific person but you won’t [write] that person’s name. Everyone knows about it, and the person who the status is about knows about it. And it affects her, gossiping in the non-cyber world (Nabila, personal communication, March 4, 2014).

Community gossip was said to be such a powerful force that even benign interactions with men or the smallest allegation of infidelity was enough to provoke abuse. A Fiji-Indian participant who had taken refuge in a women’s safe house said, “There are people that come in a relationship and jump in and say, ‘Hey, I saw your wife ... she was in the market talking to this random mate.’ They think the woman is cheating.” Such community-based gossip worked as a tool that kept women compliant, as husbands would then get violent and force them “to say something you haven’t done” (Sarita, personal communication, April 7, 2014).

Finally, young women caught in violent marriages felt compelled to stay in them because of community-level stigmas associated with marital separation. A Sri Lankan participant said, economic independence did not always protect women from wider community stigmatization: “... the stigma against divorce is still there ... Most of the Sri Lankan women I know are employed so it’s not like they need to start from scratch. It’s just that stigma against a divorced woman still plays” (Lochani, personal communication, February 19, 2014). Because wider community attitudes associate divorce with parental inability to raise their daughters correctly, divorce signifies shame not only for the individual woman but also her natal family. As this participant suggests, such culturally-driven shame is so strong that a woman’s economic independence will

not protect her from wider community humiliation. Men can therefore rely on community notions of shame to prevent women from exiting violent relationships.

### ***Macro-level coercive control***

I think their visa was expiring and they were getting their daughter married off just so they could have their residency over here (Fiji-Indian young adult participant; Ramya, personal communication, February 19, 2014).

In an interesting spin, participants explained how violent intimate relationships were complicated by national and international forces. Foremost at this macro-level were concerns surrounding migration. Accompanying adolescent girls and young women in this study who had experienced a significant amount of acculturation were two Fiji-Indian participants who had recently migrated to New Zealand to marry men from their same ethnic background. These women were quite young (one in her late teens, the other in her early twenties). Furthermore, their marital partners already had permanent residency, established occupational security, and were part of social networks that included an array of family members and friends. Both of these women lived with their new husbands and in-laws before securing refuge in a women's safe house. While this study only included two participants who fell under these circumstances, participants across multiple young adult groups discussed similar scenarios where young women in their late teens or early twenties had moved to New Zealand as marriage migrants, only to find themselves extremely isolated, confused and without knowledge of how to escape their newfound violent conditions. Young women's inexperience of living in a new country without supportive networks, their unfamiliarity with English and western cultural norms, and having to live with in-laws reduced their opportunity for escape. Participants in several group discussions spoke of these issues:

... if you migrated overseas, you are in a much smaller community. You don't have as many family and friends around, and the ones that you do have around, might be say if your husband is from here and you are from Fiji, it is your husband's family ... You don't really have people to turn to (young adult Indian/Chinese participant; Samantha, personal communication, May 2, 2014).

... if she's dependent on her husband, then I guess if something does happen she has nowhere to go ... She doesn't know how the legal system works. She doesn't have any friends, and she's like, "If something happens who do I go back to? I have no family but just my husband and my kids. Like what do I do?" It's all about reputation (young adult Indian participant; Harshita, personal communication, March 25, 2014).

While these macro-level problems were not always associated immediately with concepts of honor and shame, as the second participant above signaled,

"reputation" (i.e., family honor) was incessantly on the minds of these women. In such scenarios, violent husbands could count on the women's lack of life experience, poor knowledge of the law, non-existent support systems, and cultural pressure to act for their natal families by staying married. Such factors worked collectively to damage women's mental health and sustain their compliance.

... imagine if you are newly married, you come to a new country and you are living with your husband you have never seen before. And then he starts to hit you, or he forces you to have sex with him. And then you feel like you have failed him somehow, so you start to internalize everything ... You feel ashamed (Pakistani participant; Deeba, personal communication, May 2, 2014).

A disproportionately large number of young migrant Asian women are expected to sacrifice their health and well-being for the sake of their husbands and their families (Chaudhuri, Morash, & Yingling, 2014) and accept the mental health problems that frequently accompany IPV (Akipinar, 2003; Schlytter & Linell, 2010).

Finally, another way in which men exerted coercive control over young migrant women was through manipulation of state policies. Participants with experience in IPV intervention stressed that new migrants were particularly fearful that if they challenged violent husbands, their partnership visas would be revoked, and they would be forced by the state to return to their home countries. In reality, if a marriage migrant is being abused by her partner in New Zealand, she can seek legal help to separate without being deported. Unfortunately, young marriage migrants' unfamiliarity with the law hindered their ability to enter complex legal procedures.

I have a family member in a really abusive marriage ... and I was saying, "No, you don't have to rely on your husband for it, these people will help you get your permanent residency" ... it felt too scary, like she was somehow betraying her husband if she got engaged in that process ... and again, a young woman, in her early 20s, just married (young adult Fiji-Indian participant; Ramya, personal communication, February 19, 2014).

Another participant described a family friend whose daughter had recently turned eighteen who was moving to New Zealand to marry a significantly older man. On further explanation, the participant said that the family's visa was expiring, "and they were getting their daughter married off just so they could have residency over here," thereby using her for the broader family to secure residency. While state policies regarding residency are not meant to intentionally enhance husbands' control over wives, the complexities of migration, including misconceptions about the law and the cultural pressure to make sacrifices for one's family, empower men who wish to control young, migrant Asian wives.

## Discussion and conclusion

This paper deviates from extremist presentations of HBV which may perpetuate simplified, racist Orientalist tropes. Instead, we showcase the complexity that characterizes migratory experiences and examine more insidious forms of violence defined as coercive control, which are common in intimate relationships regardless of ethnicity and religion. In fact, many Asian migrant youth have described their own family situations in which these honor-shame systems were not enforced (Mayeda, Vijaykumar, & Chesney-Lind, 2018), illustrating that within Asian communities, extensive diversity exists. Thus, we reject culture as the sole explanation of IPV and instead contend that dismantling patriarchy and violence against women requires deep cultural knowledge and context-specific sensitivity.

In her analysis of honor killings in Europe, Gzryb (2016) draws on Bourdieu to argue that the “eradication of violence against women will never happen without changing awareness and challenging the existing *habitus* and schemes of thinking about gender and masculinity” (p. 1048). The present study follows this theoretical approach, but suggests that gendered power relations must be reconfigured across three ecological levels: at the micro-level within nuclear and extended families; at the meso-level within neighborhood/school networks; and at the macro-level accounting for migratory influences and state policies. Cutting across all three of these ecological levels are patriarchal cultural norms, not only those embedded in honor-shame systems, but also those endorsed by western host societies.

Study participants declared repeatedly that interventions at the micro-level within families were unlikely to be effective. Most parents and elders subscribing to honor-shame systems were said to be too stuck in their ways to change. Conversely, participants stated overwhelmingly that interventions addressing IPV and HBV in their communities should occur at the meso level within schools and at the macro-level addressing public policy. This section will now turn to such analyses, first concentrating on adolescent girls in school who have undergone substantial levels of acculturation, frequently code-switching between traditional community norms and dominant western society. Secondly, this section will cover macro-level factors that stifle young “marriage migrants,” who have recently moved to New Zealand and find themselves in a violent partnership.

As children of migrants, it is common to straddle two social spheres, nurturing ties to one’s culture and family and acculturating into the dominant society. If honor-shame systems were discussed in education programs, Asian youth may find it easier to relate with the topics at hand rather than feeling alienated from what becomes a culturally limited discourse relevant only to the host culture. Education programs should examine the patriarchal function of honor-based violence delivered on terms relevant to migrant

youth, but in ways that assert the presence of patriarchal violence in all societies including those in the West. Addressing gender-based violence whilst speaking directly to cultural specificities in such a way may combat the isolation and vulnerability many migrant youth experience in dealing with intimacy.

Regarding education for adolescent students about violence in dating situations, Taylor, Stein, Mumford, and Woods (2013) identified multiple lessons combined with practical action-oriented tasks to be effective. Some of these included highlighting the consequences of IPV, laws regarding IPV, and establishing healthy boundaries in intimate relationships. These point to the importance of including practical life skills in preventing violence in such situations, but programs need to be tailored for the realities of Asian migrant youth in meaningful ways. For example, the NGO that partnered our study has implemented practical action-oriented tasks with migrant youth in high schools which aim to offset the loneliness and seclusion they may feel as they move between a western school context and their traditional households. Some of these projects include panel discussions on racism and intergenerational tensions, getting students to organize campaigns to end violence against women, and establishing school networks to expand the students' connections. Programs like these build communities of mutual support, subvert isolation within young people's ethnic communities and protect them from racism in the wider society by expanding their networks. School programming, however, requires multiple levels of support. At the material level, these need to be supported via resources and funding. At the cultural level, youth programming must be supported in ways that ensure the culture is not tokenized or presented as culturally backwards. For instance, migrant cultures cannot be presented as inherently violent. Instead, educators must be equipped to describe how violence can be extended when communities encounter complex disparities caused by migration and racism. Staff must also help migrant Asian youth strike the balance between maintenance of cultural pride and cultural rejection. In other words, youth programming must illustrate how a rejection of HBV does not coincide with turning one's back on one's culture, how all cultures are malleable with positive and negative dimensions to them. Youth can then be empowered to reshape their cultures, maintaining the good parts of family honor while doing away with cultural traditions tied to HBV. Sanderson, Coker, Roberts, Tortolero, and Reininger's (2004) study of Latino teenagers argues that certain culture-specific constructs reduce the risk of dating and partner violence. With Asian migrant youth, family honor can be constructed as a form of cultural resilience by emphasizing pride in language, perseverance through migratory experiences, and interdependence within extended families rather than gendered familial dependence. This tricky process, however, must be led by skilled

educational practitioners who can assist youth in molding healthy ethnic and gendered identities.

For the population of marriage migrants also covered in this study, macro-influences tied to migration and state policy were used by violent partners to sustain and strengthen methods of coercion. As mentioned previously, women in these scenarios were led to believe that if they left their husband and his family, they would be deported by the state to their home country, irrespective of their status as IPV victims. In fact, New Zealand, like many other countries, allows marriage migrants who become IPV victims to gain permanent residency if they leave their marital partner. However, as study participants explained, when young female marriage migrants prepare to move to a host country like New Zealand, their preparation typically does not include scrutiny of immigration policy. Instead, their natal families, too, often prepare them to be compliant wives who will not challenge traditional systems and shame the family. Therefore, young migrant women are typically unaware of their legal rights. Additionally, proving one's status as a victim and subsequently applying for permanent residency independently is arduous, steeped in legal bureaucracy, and costly financially. Thus, while the state may not deliberately enforce dimensions of coercive control on marriage migrants, state power is used as a threat, or what Miller and Smolter (2011) refer to as "paper abuse," to keep battered women captive.

Fu (2015) adds that other macro-conditions connected to the state act more visibly to keep young marriage migrants in violent families. For instance, because marriage migrants have yet to receive permanent residency, they are less able to find suitable work and often find themselves in precarious occupations, under-paid, off the books by exploitive employers. State conditions also inhibit marriage migrants from receiving subsidized health services, meaning without permanent residency, they must pay exorbitant fees for mental and physical harms that often stem from their abusive relationships. Finally, the high cost of living in Auckland impedes marriage migrants from securing safe shelter. Collectively then, "the existence of borders, the costs of housing, precarious labor ... and exchanging money for health care are forms of structural violence that often go unquestioned" (Fu, 2015, p. 54) for women who are still very young, learning English, and lack social support networks.

Stark (2007) contends that coercive control is reliant on a sustained range of behaviors that negate women's citizenship. This is intensified tremendously for marriage migrants in violent families, who are not only disowned by their natal families abroad, but must also contend with state sanctions that add to their marital entrapment in a new country. The state can alter this by providing marriage migrants with trained support persons, skilled in understanding the migrant context, including how HBV can extend across multiple family and community-based levels. Support staff must also be able to work with

law enforcement to identify how abuse and isolation operate along a continuum over time, “paint[ing] a picture of coercive behavior that recognizes the ongoing loss of autonomy the victim suffers” (Hanna, 2009, p. 1462). In fact, it is the accumulation of control and intimidation which vulnerable women endure that makes coercive control so dangerous. In isolation, a single act of coercion may not trap a young migrant woman in a violent partnership, but chronic coercion cutting across multiple ecological and cultural levels does so. As such, personnel working at the meso-level (law enforcement, legal aid workers and social workers) must be able to recognize the gravity of coercive control in migrant ethnic communities and help marriage migrant victims wade through the legal paperwork to attain fair work, health care and eventually residency. This means the state must provide adequate funding for trained staff in meso-level settings (education, legal aid, and law enforcement), while also bolstering funding towards safe, affordable housing. Until this happens, the state remains complicit as an implement of coercive control for young Asian migrant women who are lured into violent families.

While this study's sample size is comparable to prior studies addressing IPV with women from marginalized ethnic communities (Bui, 2003; Carbin, 2013; Chaudhuri et al., 2014; Kang, 2006), its size is relatively small. Additionally, to some degree the study homogenizes a diverse range of young Asian women and adolescent girls. In spite of these limitations, it includes a difficult to reach population and draws on rich qualitative data to extend how coercive control can be understood across three ecological levels while addressing HBV. This study examines its less shock-provoking forms, instead examining those types which are more widespread, thereby illustrating how HBV stands as a culturally-driven form of women's and girls' oppression, but one which carries similarity to forms of violence perpetrated against women in western contexts.

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**ABSTRACT IN HINDI**

सम्मान-आधारित हिसा एक प्रकार का अंतरंग साथी और पारिवारिक हिसा है जो पतिव्रततात्मक मानदंडों पर टिकी हुई है जो कि जबरदस्त नियंत्रण के मापदंडों के तहत आती है। हालांकि, अनुसंधान ने उन तरीकों की जांच नहीं की है जिनमें HBV एक जबरदस्त नियंत्रण के रूप में संचालित होता है। २७ नवयुवक लड़कियों और युवा महिलाओं के साथ जो ज्यादातर एशीआयी पृष्ठभूमि के हैं और मुख्य रूप से औकलैन्ड न्यूजीलैन्ड के हैं, उनके साथ एक छोटे समूह में इंटरव्यू आयोजित किये यह बात जानने की कोशिश करती है कि HBV कैसे सांस्कृतिक रूप से संचालित जबरदस्त नियंत्रण के रूप में कार्य करता है, लेकिन एक कई पारस्थितिकि या पर्यावरणीय सतरों में कटौती करता है, पारस्परिक संबंधों से लेकर राज्य प्रणालियों तक। स्टार्क ने २००७ में यह लिखा है कि जबरदस्त नियंत्रण एक वैचारिक ढांचा प्रदान करने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण रहा है जो यह दर्शाता है कि पतिव्रततात्मक मानदंडों से अंतरंग साथी हिसा जारी रहना होता है। नीति के सुझावों में प्रवासी एशीआयी युवाओं के साथ शैक्षणिक प्रोग्रामिंग शामिल है जो संस्कृति के अच्छे और बुरे आयामों का पता लगाते हैं, और उन्हें अपनी संस्कृतियों के उन पहलुओं को बनाए रखने के लिए प्रोत्साहित करते हैं जिनमें वे HBV से जुड़ी सांस्कृतिक प्रथाओं को समेटते हुए निश्चित मानते हैं। हसिक रशितों में पकड़े गए युवा वयस्क विवाह प्रवासियों के लिए, नीतिगत सुझावों में राज्य के संसाधनों को शामिल करना है ताकि कानूनी सहायता सामाजिक कार्यकर्ताओं और कानून प्रवर्तन अधिकारी उन परिवारों में जबरदस्त नियंत्रण की संचयी शक्ति को पहचानें जो HBV का अभ्यास करते हैं और हसिक परिस्थितियों से बाहर निकलने में युवा महिलाओं की मदद करते हैं।

**KEYWORDS** जबरदस्त नियंत्रण; सम्मान-आधारित हिसा; एशीआयी; प्रवासी; नवयुवक; अंतरंग साथी हिसा