

## ABSTRACT

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OF TELEVISION USE AMONG ASIAN  
INDIANS IN THE U.S.

Indira S. Somani, Doctor of Philosophy, 2008

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This study explored how a cohort of Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago have become acculturated to watching Indian television via the satellite dish. The study used the integrative communication theory and how two concepts of the theory relate to adaptation: enculturation, the process of socialization individuals undergo in their native culture; and acculturation, the process in which newcomers acquire some, but not all, aspects of their new host culture (Kim, 2001).

Oral history interviews were conducted with 10 couples who migrated to the U.S. between 1960 and 1972 in the Washington Metro area to understand their media use over the past 40 years and why they watch Indian television via the satellite dish.

The study produced findings that described how these Asian Indians used American television to acculturate to the U.S.; as well as how this cohort learned the act of watching television. Another finding was that the portrayal of India and Indian

culture in American media was stereotypical. The third finding showed described how these Asian Indians maintained their sense of Indian culture through using other forms of media and cultural practices. The fourth finding demonstrated how Asian Indians discovered a new way to stay connected to their culture, particularly in real time as they watched Indian programming via the satellite dish. The fifth finding was that this cohort used American television as a filter through which they judged Indian television. Overall, these Asian Indians were found to believe Indian programming was copying Western culture.

The study concluded with analysis of how this cohort changed its media habits as media technology itself changed over time. The study showed how diasporic communities form through media use, as well as how audiences also become fragmented and individualized in their choice of media. It uncovered the ways how these Asian Indians became skilled television viewers and could distinguish between good and bad programming.

ENCULTURATION AND ACCULTURATION OF TELEVISION USE AMONG  
ASIAN INDIANS IN THE U.S.

By

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
2008

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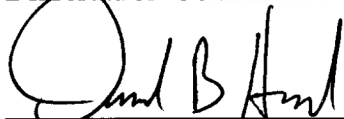
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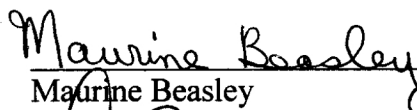
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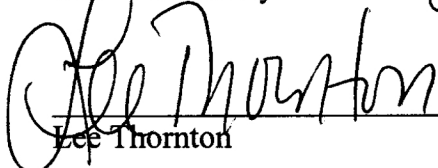
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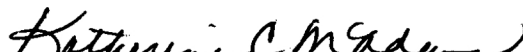
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## **Dedication**

To my dad,

the late Satyanarayan M. Somani,

who spent his whole life in teaching, research, and publishing.

## **Acknowledgements**

Returning to graduate school after working as a television producer for 10 years has been a challenge. While my friends moved on to the next stage in life, such as expanding their families while balancing their careers, I was in school trying to learn how to be a student again. I thought I was mentally prepared for entering a Ph.D. program, but little did I know how challenging it would be. In this program, I worked harder and was pushed harder intellectually than in all my years in TV. I found entering academia to be as rewarding as it was challenging and am grateful to all the people who have helped me understand the process.

First and foremost I thank my advisor, Dr. Don Heider, for his expert guidance with this dissertation. His background is similar to mine as he, too, worked in television for many years before he earned his Ph.D. This common ground made him extremely approachable to discuss how to develop my dissertation. Furthermore, as an accomplished scholar he was able to help me apply my television experience to my research as well as my Asian Indian cultural background. I am truly honored to have worked under his guidance and appreciate his insight and patience in helping me develop the dissertation and my future research, and gain greater understanding of the academic process.

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Thornton, Dr. Kathy McAdams, and Dr. Deborah Cai. I am lucky to have worked with each of them on this dissertation and in the course of my doctoral studies.

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I am grateful to the staff of the Library of Congress, especially David Kelly, who helped me use library efficiently.

The idea of this dissertation was sparked by a conversation among friends—Dr. Amita Vyas, Jitendra Vyas, and Sudha Shuka— four years ago. We learned that we all have something in common: our parents are glued to watching Indian television via the satellite dish. Through these friends and others I was able to develop the idea needed to do the research for this dissertation.

I thank the 10 couples in the Washington Metro area who gave their time for the in-depth oral history interviews. I truly enjoyed talking to each person and appreciate their historical overview of the various kinds of Indian media they have



used since they migrated to the U.S. These interviews would not have been possible without the help of Mr. Raj Boveja and Mr. Murti Pemmarazu. I thank them both for their willingness to connect me to people who are avid watchers of Indian television via the satellite dish.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

“You know it took me time to get adjust[ed] to the Dish, I mean Indian channels, you know. Once I started watching those, you know, I just basically I left the American channels, you know,” Bandita Das said.

“Just to know about your country, I mean what’s going on, how people socially interact with each other and what’s going on in the country. Because there are a lot of changes, which you can visualize through the television,” Balraj Das said.

These are the voices of a few of the thousands of United States immigrants who are able to stay connected to their homeland through satellite television. They are not alone. People from all over the world have been migrating to the U.S. for centuries. People leave their homelands voluntarily or involuntarily. Some leave because of war, natural disaster, or religious persecution; but others leave to improve their quality of life with better economic opportunities or to reunite with other family members in a new country. Currently more people migrate to the U.S. than ever before. In 2006 nearly 1.3 million people became permanent residents in the U.S. (Jefferys, 2007). The Washington Metro area had an increase of about 55,000 (from 2004 to 2006) in new immigrants.

As the migration of immigrants entering and staying in the U.S. continues to expand, the trend for newcomers to try to sustain a connection to their homeland also continues. By staying connected, immigrants are also in touch with their culture. In addition, many immigrants want to be able to pass their culture onto the next generation (Jeffres, 2000). Today immigrants have a variety of ways to stay connected. One of the most instant forms of communication is through satellite



television. With satellite television, immigrants are watching programs imported from their homeland in “real time.” As a result, it is no surprise that the U.S. is experiencing a surge in subscriptions to ethnic television programming through the use of direct broadcast satellite (DBS) (Etefa, 2005).

By staying connected to their homeland, immigrants continue to identify with their place of origin, creating a *diasporic community* (Mooney & Evans, 2007). The diasporic community is the formation of a new community by new immigrants in the new home country. In order to create and maintain this diasporic community, new immigrants maintain language, cultural and religious practices, ethnic food, and clothing, and marrying within their culture. But more importantly, media, such as films, television, radio, newspapers, and magazines help to sustain their identity and culture (Mooney & Evans, 2007).

As Asian Indians have migrated to the U.S. they, too, have tried to keep their cultural connection to India alive. In this dissertation, the main research question asks, what is the historical process that has led Asian Indians, who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago, to become acculturated to Indian television via the satellite dish in the U.S.? The study also explores how Asian Indians have stayed connected to India through various forms of media. The study uses the concepts of enculturation and acculturation to explore the unique patterns of media use developed by Asian Indians in recent decades. This particular cohort of Asian Indians, studied in this dissertation, learned to watch television after moving to the U.S. As a result, they became enculturated into the act of watching television in the U.S. before they learned to watch Indian television.

### ***1.1. Focus***

This study focuses on a cohort of people who have lived in the U.S. for nearly 40 years. This generation of Asian Indians, who migrated to the U.S. in the 1960s, did not grow up watching television in India because television did not arrive in the country before 1959 (Ray & Jacka, 1996). This generation of Asian Indians developed their television viewing habits after moving to the U.S. in the 1960s.

The study also strives to answer the following questions:

1. What were Asian Indians doing, in terms of media behaviors, before a wide variety of media, including movies, newspapers, and cable television, was readily available to this generation of Asian Indians when they moved to the U.S. 40 years ago?
2. What effect did American television have on their acculturation to the U.S. and to Indian television?
3. How did media use affect them in the past?
4. How do they use media now, and how do today's media affect their lives in the U.S.?
5. What would these Asian Indians like to see improved in Indian television, if any improvement is needed?

The present study, through oral histories, reveals how Asian Indians have stayed connected to India for the past 40 years, and how they continue to stay connected to their culture through various forms of media, especially Indian programming available via the satellite dish. The study examines how these connections may have an influence on how culture is passed on to the next

generation. Furthermore, the study examines how changes in media technology over time have led to different media use.

### ***1.2. Purpose***

The purpose of this study is to gain understanding as to why Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. in the 1960s and early 1970s are fascinated with Indian programs imported via the satellite dish. This is a generation of a specific ethnic group that migrated to the U.S. about 40 years ago, and one would think they would have become assimilated to the American culture during that time. But instead they are highly attracted to Indian programming introduced in 1998 via the satellite dish. Their history and patterns of media behaviors raise questions about audience fragmentation, media innovations, and the need for ethnic media.

### ***1.3. Significance***

This study is significant for the following reasons: first, there is no historical compilation of the different kinds of media that have catered to the Indian diaspora in the U.S. between 1965 to 2005. Second, the oral histories included in the present study examine a cohort of Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. more than 40 years ago. These oral history interviews investigate a phenomenon of this particular generation being fascinated with Indian television imported from India. It appears that satellite television is one of the latest technologies that is keeping ethnic groups in the U.S. connected to their homeland (Aksoy & Robins, 2003). This new use of technology by this particular cohort have not been examined in any previous study.

Third, as the U.S. becomes more ethnically diverse, media companies look for ways to sustain programming that caters to everyone. Ethnic-based transnational

audiences are already a niche market and the main target of transnational media corporations (Gillespie, 2000). The kind of programming discussed in this study, however, is programming created in India and imported via the satellite dish to the U.S. As the U.S. becomes more diverse, mainstream U.S. media companies will eventually need to figure out ways to cater to audiences of different backgrounds. For example, New York has the largest Asian Indian population in the U.S. Comcast in New York already has Bollywood movies “on-demand,” which means subscribers can order the movies through their cable operator (Time Warner Cable, Inc., 2007). As more cities throughout the U.S. become ethnically diverse, local cable operators will strive to find programming to satisfy their audience.

Fourth, there is a need for research on the television viewing habits of immigrant families, particularly satellite dish consumers. Studying this particular cohort can provide useful information for media executives on how to plan programming for future generations of Asian Indians, and, perhaps most importantly, for greater understanding of audience behaviors in a new media environment.

Fifth, the study leads to a greater understanding of how a change in technology over time also changes the way media is consumed and how media use can change such ethnic communities. Changes in technology may even increase ethnic communities’ ties to their culture of origin, furthering the “tossed salad” metaphor used often to describe the U.S.

And finally, this study will allow for greater historical understanding as to how Asian Indians have used various kinds of ethnic media, such as newspapers, films, videos, and television, to sustain their sense of community and culture. It

offers information on their patterns of acculturation may be compared to those of other audience subgroups.

#### ***1.4. Role of the Researcher***

It is important to note my role as the researcher as I developed this historical overview and eventually conducted oral history interviews. Below, I describe my background in this study and how my ethnic origin plays a role in my qualitative methods. I reflect on my own role in the research and am sensitive to my own personal history and how it shapes the study (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

My background is of Indian origin. My parents are from India and migrated separately to the U.S. in 1961 (father) and 1964 (mother). After years of watching U.S. television, my parents began watching Indian programming on the satellite dish in 2000, which sparked my interest in this study. As my research looks at both Indian media and Asian Indians, I am aware of how my own biases and background may play a role in developing the historical overview and interpreting the data in the oral histories.

I was born and brought up in the U.S., but my upbringing included Indian culture and values from my Indian parents. I am comfortable with defining myself as Indian-American or American. I was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and raised in Springfield, Illinois. But my parents, like other Asian Indian parents, frequently traveled to Chicago to expose me to the closest Hindu temple, Indian neighborhood, Indian grocery stores and restaurants (Rangaswamy, 2000). My father was instrumental in building the first Hindu temple in Pittsburgh before moving to Springfield. As a result, we took frequent trips back to Pittsburgh to visit the temple

and friends. My childhood included social gatherings with the growing Indian community in Springfield on the weekends. But my exposure to Indian culture started with Indian religious celebrations, daily worship, Indian meals, cultural artifacts at home, and my parents speaking in their native Indian language when they called home via telephone to India. Furthermore, I traveled to India throughout my childhood, which increased my exposure to the culture.

I was also exposed to the different kinds of Indian media throughout my childhood. My father subscribed to several Indian diasporic publications, including *India Abroad*, *India Tribune* and *India Today*. Today, I have my own subscriptions to *India Abroad* and *India Today*, two magazines that cover both the Indian diaspora and India at large. In addition, I have attended Indian social gatherings and participated in Indian cultural events held at University of Illinois at Springfield auditorium. Today I continue to attend Indian social gatherings in the Washington, D.C., Metro region. In my childhood, I also joined my parents in watching Indian movies, shown at the area university movie hall, and joined my parents in watching Hindi films on our home VCR (video cassette recorder), once films (on VHS tapes) became available. Today I am an avid viewer of Bollywood movies. Above all, I have watched Indian programming on the satellite dish with my parents and friends, and I have observed others watch and react to satellite programming from India, all of which initiated my interest in this study.

In addition, I worked in television as a news producer for 10 years prior to making a career change into academia. This experience is another influence on me; as a producer of television newscasts, my job included writing stories, selecting video

to match the stories, deciding what story should lead the newscast, and much more. Therefore, I am familiar with the various components of television newscasts and how to win viewers' attention. Therefore, I may see media as being more important in individuals' lives than it really is.

I realize my cultural background could both create biases and/or enhance my research at the same time. For example, I am very aware of how Indian families are structured in the U.S. and the different kinds of media available to them. This knowledge influenced my research in terms of how to gather information needed in the study. For example, I felt that the oral histories required personal interaction with the participants. My background allowed the participants to feel a certain comfort level when I asked them questions because of my Indian origin. Furthermore, I am familiar with the dual life many Asian Indians try to maintain when they come to the U.S., meaning that their inside world is "Indian," but their outside world is "American." I recognize that my insight into Asian Indians' dual life could have created a bias or even enhanced my perspective when I interpreted the data (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). As I am of Indian origin and my own parents experienced the phenomenon I am studying, my cultural background is especially useful for understanding participants' meanings of events, behaviors and nuances of the culture (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). In addition, my background also offers insight into what prompted me to do the study and why I believe it is a viable study. Qualitative researchers interpret information from their own set of beliefs and feelings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

The drawbacks from my Indian background may have come during the interview process. I was familiar with how these participants talked in broken English. A few of the participants had trouble describing what they were experiencing when they watched television because English words did not come to them instantly. But because I am familiar with the kinds of expressions they used I could easily interpret meaning from their dialogue as well as offer word choices to help them complete their sentences. I was very familiar with their style of talking, perhaps too familiar. If researchers without my background were to do this study, they might struggle in understanding the communication patterns of these participants. However not knowing the communication patterns of these participants may allow them to gain new insight into what the participants are saying as they respond to the questions.

...The point is to be aware of how one's perspective affects fieldwork, to carefully document all procedures so that others can review methods for bias and to be open in describing the limitations of the perspective presented (Patton, 1990, p. 482).

Thus, I have tried to be sensitive to my own personal biography and how it may have shaped the study.

### ***1.5. Definition of Terms***

*Enculturation* is a cultural adaptation process in which individuals adapt to the surrounding cultural forces through years of socialization (Kim, 1988). *Acculturation* is a cross-cultural adaptation process where individuals learn a new cultural system in their new host society but still maintain their own cultural integrity (Kim, 2005).



The term *Asian Indian*, was used to define the cohort studied. The cohort was not called Indian, because this ethnic term can be confused with Native American. The term Asian Indian refers to Asians of Indian origin and is used by the U.S. Census (U.S. Census, 2007). Asian Indian also has been used to refer to Indians who have migrated from India and are now living in the United States (Helweg & Helweg, 1990). However, other scholars may refer to these Indians as *Indian-Americans* (Helweg & Helweg, 1990). The term Indian-American is not an option for this study because Indian-American often implies that the person was born (to Indian parents) and brought up in the United States. Although some scholars refer to the Indians who migrated to the U.S. about 40 years ago and have obtained U.S. citizenship (such as the cohort being studied) as Indian-Americans, for this dissertation the term Asian Indian is more suitable for the cohort being studied.

Also the term *Asian American* is not appropriate for this study because it is too broad. Asian American refers mainly to people from Far East Asian countries, such as China, Japan, and Korea, but also may include people from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh (Asian American Journalists Association, 2000). The term *South Asian* is also not appropriate for this study. South Asian refers to people from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh (South Asian Journalists Association, 2006). This study focuses only on people from India who live in the U.S. Therefore, Asian Indian is the appropriate term to use. However, it is important to note that some of the scholarship the researcher uncovered refers to Indians as South Asians.

It is also important to recognize the phrase *Indian diaspora*. Diaspora means the people, who “sustain cultural continuity and distinct identities through time, while keeping links with their original homeland and with populations of same origin spread across the world” (Georgiou, 2006, p. 2). Thus, Indian diaspora refers to the Indian population that has left India and is now living in various parts of the world, including the U.S. For this dissertation, Asian Indian is preferred, but Indian diaspora may be used interchangeably.

The Indian diaspora has spread all over the world with large concentrations in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, South Africa, to name a few countries, (Kumar & Mishra, 2004). However, the research for this study is specific to the U.S. It does not include Canada or the United Kingdom.

Finally, the researcher defines *Indian television* as programming that is created in India by Indian television companies, such as talk shows, game shows, soap operas, news programs, with Indian actors, anchors, and reporters and exported via satellite to the Indian diaspora around the world.

### ***1.6. Study Objectives***

The main objective of this dissertation is to examine why and how Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago have become acculturated to Indian television in the U.S. In doing this study, the researcher gained a greater understanding for how new technology has affected (or influenced) an ethnic community in the U.S. and what this may mean for media globalization. The researcher first outlines the concepts of enculturation and acculturation in this dissertation, and how they apply to Asian Indians’ television viewing habits.

Important questions addressed include these: What does it mean to become enculturated into watching U.S. television? How is television used by many immigrant groups to acculturate into a new environment?

The literature review addresses how ethnic groups use American media, and are also exposed to the various kinds of stereotypes portrayed in the media. Understanding the influence of the negative images in the media enables the researcher to unfold the story of how Asian Indians become acculturated to their own media. The researcher also focuses on immigrants' use of media in the literature review, and how other immigrant groups in the U.S. use ethnic media to stay connected to the homeland.

In the next section, the researcher gives an historical overview of the kinds of media available to Asian Indians since the 1960s. The researcher describes the arrival of Asian Indians in the U.S. and documents the connection Asian Indians have to their culture. The researcher explains how Asian Indians have strived to build a community through establishing Hindu temples, musical performances, and cultural community events. The historical overview of media use by Asian Indians calls attention to some of the media used by Asian Indians since the 1960s, such as Hindi movies at the local art theaters and universities during the 1960s, programs about India that aired on public broadcasting channels, and the first newspaper to cater to the Asian Indian population in the U.S. As technology developed, Asian Indians expanded their media consumption to include watching Hindi movies on their VCRs, watching Indian programs on cable access channels (only available on Saturday and

Sunday mornings), and eventually watching Asian Indian programming available on the satellite dish.

### ***1.7. Design of the Study***

Historical methods were used for the design of this study. First, the historical base was established by creating the chronology of events and media use by Asian Indians, which gave insight as to why Asian Indians are so deeply connected to their culture. This historical overview created a context for questions about why Asian Indians have acculturated into Indian television. Second, oral histories were gathered from a particular cohort, Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. in the 1960s and early 1970s. The oral history interviews allowed the researcher to gain understanding as to how and why media use has changed over time, specifically focused on Asian Indians' use of satellite television. The method section explains how the researcher conducted the oral history interviews as she interviewed 10 couples in the Washington Metro area.

The final chapters in this dissertation describe the results of the study, which is analysis of the oral history interviews. The analysis includes findings discovered among the respondents and a summary of the findings

The conclusion addresses the main research question as well as other questions raised in the study. It reviews major insights discovered in the study, includes the limitations of the study, and shows how the study can be used by media practitioners today. The conclusion also reviews the theoretical implications of the study and suggests possible future research.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework**

Integrative Communication Theory was developed as part of author Young Yun Kim's interest in understanding the adaptive struggles and successes she and others experienced. Kim's research began in 1976 when she was investigating issues of Korean immigrants, who migrated to the Chicago area. Since then, the author has examined other immigrant groups including Japanese Americans, Mexican Americans, Southeast Asians and others. The theory originally started out with the linear-causal approach using a path model. But over time, Kim (2005) developed the theory using a more interactive and integrative general systems perspective. Kim's main question is not whether individuals adapt, but how and why they adapt when they relocate in a new and unfamiliar environment (Kim, 2005).

In this dissertation, two concepts that relate to integrative communication theory and adaptation will be reviewed: enculturation and acculturation. The researcher will review the definitions of enculturation and acculturation and how various ethnic groups have experienced these processes. The researcher discusses how "television watching" is part of the enculturation process and is also part of the acculturation process. Finally the researcher briefly touches on how audience members become enculturated into watching television through cultivation, how the uses and gratifications approach and diffusion of innovation relate to this study.

### ***2.1. Culture***

Clyde Kluckhohn (1957) referred to culture as, "...the distinctive way of life of a group of people, [and] their complete 'design for living'" (p. 49). This design for living included characteristics, such as explicit patterns of behavior, language, ideas,

and a shared sense of values and beliefs, whether religion-based or custom-based. Culture was also referred to as a point of departure, point of reference, or a point of central emphasis (Kluckhohn, 1957). In addition, ethnic groups in the U.S. were usually recognized by their defined cultural characteristics (Paraskevoudakis, 1984).

Various groups identified with forming a pluralistic society include immigrants, sojourners, refugees, and indigenous peoples. Immigrants voluntarily moved to new countries, and established a permanent residence in their new society. Sojourners had a short-term stay in their new society and arrived with a specific purpose of stay, for example, international students, diplomats, troops stationed in another country, and missionaries (Berry & Sam, 1997). Their transition to the new society was also voluntary.

Overall motivation to migrate to a new country was thought to include many factors, such as better “employment opportunities, education, health and housing facilities, climate, and social and community ties” (Berry & Sam, 1997, p. 303). For refugees and asylum seekers, transition was involuntary (Berry & Sam, 1997). Indigenous peoples and native peoples, however, were residents of a country prior to colonization (Berry & Sam, 1997). Regardless, ethnocultural groups stayed distinct over time while living among one another to form a culturally pluralistic society.

## ***2.2. Enculturation***

Herskovits (1955) defined enculturation as the aspects of the learning experience that mark off man from other creatures, and by means of which he achieves competence in his culture. ...This is in essence a process of conscious or unconscious conditioning, exercised within

the limits sanctioned by a given body of custom. From this process not only is all adjustment to social living achieved, but also all those satisfactions, themselves a part of social experience, that derive from individual expression rather than association with others in the group (p. 326).

As Herskovits explained, every human being goes through a process of enculturation to live as a member of society. The enculturation process started during an individual's childhood by conditioning to fundamental habits, such as eating, sleeping, speaking, and personal hygiene—"whose inculcation has been shown to have special significance in shaping the personality and forming the habit patterns of the adult in later life" (Herskovits, 1955, p. 327). But the enculturation process did not stop there, because as individuals became adults, they continued the process of learning (Herskovits, 1955, p. 327). By the time individuals were adults, the learning process has led them to social stability and cultural continuity within their culture. For example, the early years of enculturation allow the individual to establish daily routine behavior. But as an adult, the enculturation process functions at a conscious level where the individual learns and eventually knows the accepted behavior in a given situation in society. Furthermore, "the difference between the nature of the enculturative experience in the early years of life and later is that the range of conscious acceptance or rejection by an individual continuously increases as he grows older" (Herskovits, 1955, p. 327).

Herskovits (1955) believed individuals went through an "unconscious" stage of learning in the early years of life, he concluded that individuals unconsciously internalized culture. But in the later years, the individual reached a "conscious" stage

of learning. Some scholars argued against this and found that cultural learning did take place in the early years of life at the “conscious” level as well (Brameld, 1957; Linton, 1937).

In 1963 Margaret Mead did not believe Herskovits made a clear distinction between socialization and enculturation. Mead (1963) discussed how the words socialization and enculturation were used interchangeably. Instead, she defined socialization as “learning as a universal process” and enculturation as “the process of learning a culture as it takes place in a specific culture” (Mead, 1963, p. 185).

Shimahara (1970) also wrote about the difference between enculturation and socialization. He described enculturation as an “analytical tool for the understanding of cultural process. Its genesis and application are anthropological” (Shimahara, 1970, p. 143). He described socialization as a sociological tool, but recognized that the two terms were often used interchangeably. Shimahara (1970) defined enculturation as the behavioral process of acquiring the existing culture and the process of socially changing through teaching and learning also in the existing culture.

In 1976 Johannes Wilbert was the editor of *Enculturation in Latin American: An Anthology*. In his book he cited both Herskovits and Shimahara in his definition of enculturation, and called it a “universal process of behavior. It is bound to occur in all societies simply because it is the process by which culture is transmitted from one generation to another” (Wilbert, 1976, p. 9). Wilbert believed that enculturation was not identical with growing up. He stated that “enculturation produces the culture-related changes which occur in the individual throughout his lifetime and which are



only one part of the total changes that occur in the process of personality formation” (Wilbert, 1976, p. 9).

Wilbert expanded on the definition and explained how enculturation has two modes, informal and non-formal education. The informal education was defined as “the lifelong learning process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences and exposure to the environment” (Coombs & Ahmed, 1974, p. 8). The non-formal education was defined as “any organized systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the population, adults as well as children” (Coombs & Ahmed, 1974, p. 8). Wilbert (1976) described how the informal and non-formal learning occurred throughout a person’s life, and how some studies showed that both modes occur simultaneously. Formal education was defined as the “institutionalized, chronologically graded and hierarchically structured educational system, spanning lower primary school and the upper reaches of the university” (Coombs & Ahmed, 1974, p. 8).

Wilbert’s book also gave various examples of enculturation throughout Latin America, and some scholars used Wilbert’s definition as they explained the enculturation process. For example, McCosker (1976) suggested lullabies sung by the Cuna Indians of Panama as a tool for enculturation. While lullabies in most cultures were used as a tool to put children to sleep, the Cuna Indians used the lullabies as a way to prepare the children for the different stages of their lives. In the songs, the Cuna mothers described how their daily activities and responsibilities

related to their family and tribe. As a result, the lullabies became a means of informal education and an effective tool of enculturation because of the social and cultural attitudes they impart to the children. Furthermore, the lullabies provided a clear picture of the child's future roles in life. The lullabies also included social attitudes, such as personal relationships and work duties. This process was a direct result of learning something within one's own culture (McCosker, 1976).

### ***2.2.1. Other Examples of Enculturation***

Little Soldier (1985) defined enculturation as the process in which individuals learn and identify with their traditional ethnic culture. Little Soldier (1985) described the enculturation process where by a child's first exposure to society started with school, and usually the transition was smooth because many of the attributes from home were also reflected at school. When home and school culture were compatible in the enculturation process, the child was secure in knowing how to act and what to expect. But that was not always the case for children from a culturally diverse background. Little Soldier (1985) described how Native American children must acquire new behaviors to succeed in school and participate in mainstream America, and how some of these new behaviors may conflict with the enculturation process that has begun at home.

Enculturation had also been defined as "an experience that occurs within a single cultural group and involves connection to one's cultural background," (Zimmerman, Ramirez, Washienko, Walter, & Dyer, 1998, p. 201). Furthermore, the construct had been defined as "both a process of learning about one's cultural heritage and an outcome to measure the extent to which one is enculturated"

(Zimmerman et al., 1998, p. 202). In this example, a study was conducted among 121 Native American adolescents to measure their level of enculturation.

Zimmerman, et al., (1998) were trying to determine if Native American adolescents identified with their culture, and if they participated in their cultural traditions. They determined that the higher level of enculturation meant Native American youths' cultural traditions had a positive influence on their self-esteem and self-worth.

Furthermore, Zimmerman, et al., (1998) determined that adolescents experimented with harmful behaviors, such as alcohol and substance abuse, because of lower levels of enculturation. Overall, they concluded that enculturation proved to be a useful construct for studying Native American youth. They also concluded that enculturation helped "to focus attention on the social norms and values within a minority group rather than focus on comparisons to mainstream society"

(Zimmerman et al., 1998, p. 216).

Kim (1988) defined enculturation as a socialization process, where children first learned how to live in the company of others. As adults, this internalized learning enabled them to interact easily with other members of their culture, who shared a similar image of reality and self. Thus, the enculturation process had become the process in which individuals adapt to the surrounding cultural forces through the years of socialization.

Kim (2005) further explained how the continuous enculturation process occurs through communication. For example, individuals learn to speak, listen, read, interpret, and understand verbal and nonverbal messages that are recognized and responded to by those with whom they regularly interact.

### **2.3. Acculturation**

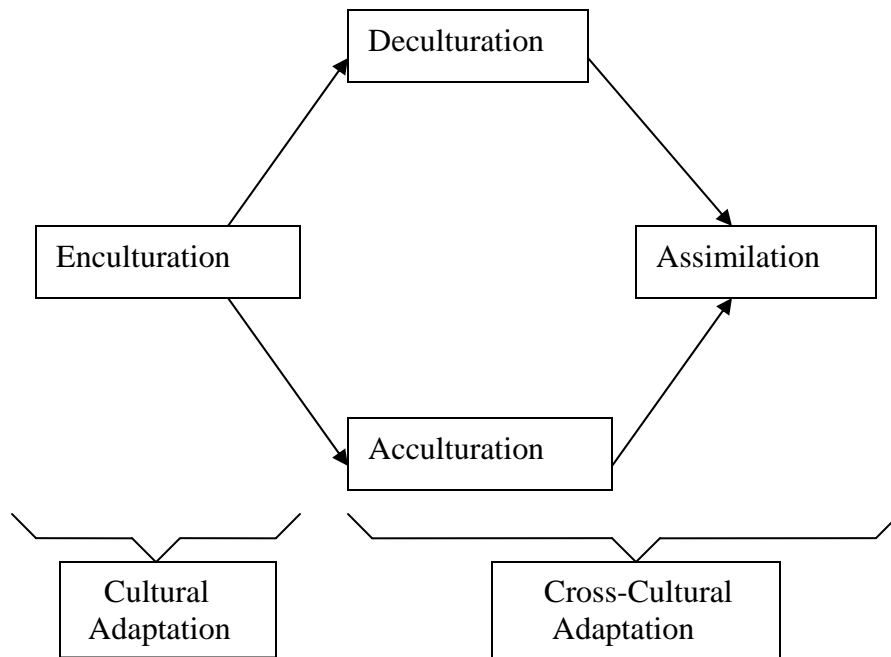
In 1936 the Social Science Research Council appointed a subcommittee on acculturation. The subcommittee included three anthropologists, Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits, who were asked to explain acculturation within the field of cultural anthropology. As a result, acculturation became a new area of study, and was defined as a “phenomena...when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups” (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p. 149).

Since then many scholars have added to the definition of acculturation. In 1965, Shibutani and Kwan defined acculturation as learning a new cultural system or the culture of the host country, in which inner conflicts make strangers susceptible to external influence and compel them to learn new learning. In 1968, Marden and Meyer referred to acculturation as “the change in individuals whose primary learning has been in one culture and who take over traits from another culture” (p. 36).

Young Yun Kim and John W. Berry are two scholars who have been consistently cited by other authors in acculturation research. Kim (2005) used the term *stranger*, which meant individuals who entered and resettled in a new cultural or sub-cultural environment. The term *stranger* also referred to immigrants, refugees, and sojourners, who were people “who resettle for various lengths of time, as well as members of ethnic groups, who cross sub-cultural boundaries within a society” (p. 380-381).

### 2.3.1. Cross-cultural adaptation

Kim's main question was not whether individuals could adapt, but how and why they adapt when they relocate in a new and unfamiliar environment (Kim, 2005). In the figure below, Kim (2001) outlined the cultural adaptation process and cross-cultural adaptation process (p. 53).



*Figure 1.* Relationships among the terms associated with cross-cultural adaptation. (Kim, 2001, p. 53).

In the cultural adaptation process, enculturation occurred. Kim (2001) stated that “culture is imprinted on each individual as a pattern of perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors that is accepted and expected by others in a given society below the level of conscious thought” (p. 48). Furthermore, Kim said that individuals were programmed by culture from the day they are born and largely unaware of the hidden cultural programming that shaped many of their mind-sets and behavioral patterns (Kim, 2001). In addition, Kim (2001) suggested that individuals hardly realize how culture

influenced how they solved problems and how the economic and governmental systems functioned together. As a result Kim (2005) described the enculturation process as cultural adaptation.

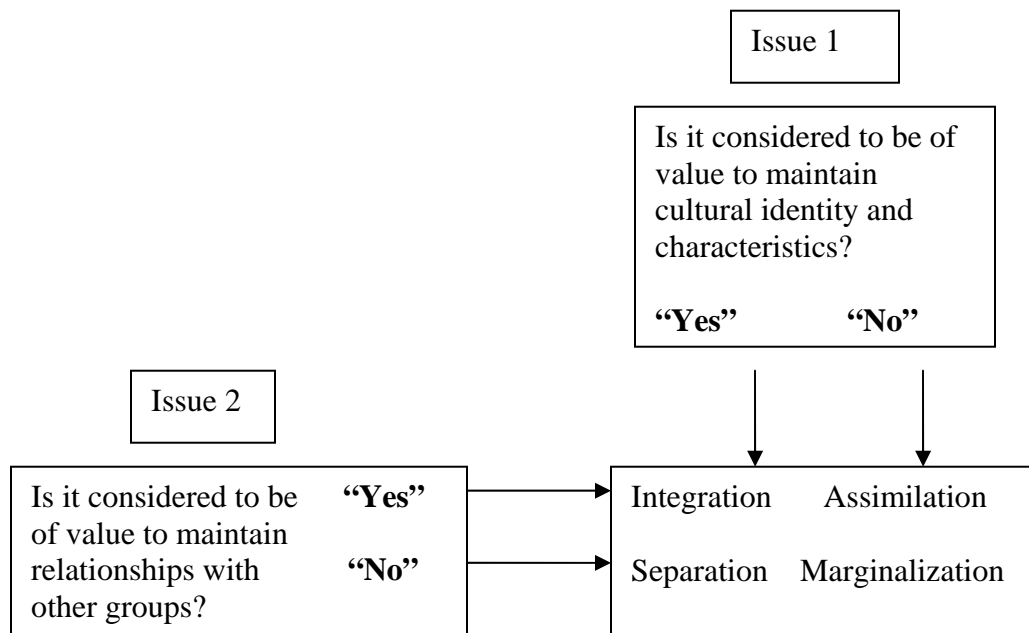
In the cross-cultural adaptation process, strangers were described as compelled to learn a new cultural system; this process of new learning was called acculturation (Kim, 2005). Furthermore, this process of ‘new learning’ was not just adding new cultural elements to prior internal conditions (Kim, 2002). As shown in Figure 1, Kim posits that acculturation could occur, but the process of deculturation or unlearning of the old cultural habits also had to occur. This unlearning was important so that new responses were adopted in situations that previously would have evoked responses from the old cultural habits (Kim, 2002).

Kim (2001) described assimilation as the process where strangers acquired elements of the new cultural system, but also lost some of their original cultural habits. For some individuals, complete assimilation would be a lifetime goal because to change the internalized core values and beliefs would be a slow and difficult process (Kim, 2001). However, assimilation is not what this study is about; this study is about the process of acculturation as it relates to cross-cultural adaptation.

### ***2.3.2. Four acculturation strategies***

Berry (1991), one of the leading scholars in acculturation studies, identified the four different acculturation strategies by asking two questions. One, individuals had to decide if they wanted to preserve their own cultural identity and customs. Two, individuals had to decide if they wanted to form relations with other group members in society. Combining the answers to these questions, Berry (1991)

identified the four modes of acculturation. If individuals answered “yes” to both questions, they reached “integration.” If individuals answered “yes” to the first question and “no” to the second, they reached “separation.” If individuals answered “no” to the first question and “yes” to the second question, they reached “assimilation.” And, if individuals answered “no” to both questions, they reached “marginalization.” See Figure 2 below, (Berry, 1991, p. 27).



*Figure 2.* Four acculturation strategies based on orientation to two issues. (Berry, 1991, p. 27)

The integration mode implies that the stranger wants to maintain his or her own cultural integrity as well as maintain relations with other group members. This course was possible when the dominant culture was open and accepting of the acculturating groups (Berry, 1990). The separation mode meant individuals wanted to maintain their cultural identity, but did not want relations with other group members in the larger society. It should also be noted that if such cultural distinctiveness was required by the dominant society and the acculturating group was

kept at a distance, then it became a situation of segregation (Berry, 1990). The assimilation mode meant the individual did not want to maintain the original cultural identity but wanted to form relations with other group members. When individuals chose assimilation freely, the culture became a “melting pot,” but when assimilation (was) forced by the dominant culture, the culture became a “pressure cooker” (Berry, 1990). The marginalization mode meant the individual did not want to maintain his or her cultural identity, nor form relations with other group members in society (Berry, 1991). Individuals felt marginalized as a result of actions by the dominant society through forced cultural loss and forced exclusion (Berry, 1990).

### ***2.3.3. Psychological acculturation***

Graves (1967) coined the term *psychological acculturation* to refer to changes in individual experiences during the acculturation process. Berry (1990) made the distinction between acculturation and psychological acculturation on two levels, which further expanded the acculturation framework. Berry (1990) described acculturation at the group level, which applied to changes in social structure, economic base, and political organization. However, at the individual level, the acculturation changes occurred in behavior, identity, values, and attitudes (Berry, 1990). Berry (1990) gave another reason for distinguishing between the two acculturation levels. He explained that individuals do not always participate in the collective changes that take place when their group culture comes in contact with another culture. Therefore, Berry (1990) suggested that if scholars wanted to understand the psychological impact of individuals’ contact with culture, acculturation needed to be studied at both the group level and individual level.



Furthermore, Berry (1990) noted that not every person enters into the acculturation process in the same way or to the same degree, and thus studying the individual's acculturation experience was an important aspect of researching psychological acculturation.

An example of acculturation is an immigrant who moves to set up a new life in another country (Berry, 1990). This example is different from psychological acculturation, "because external culture contact is involved, followed by both the cultural and the individual changes" (Berry, 1990, p. 235). Furthermore, the decision to immigrate to a new country may be based upon some prior contact, knowledge, and influence of the new culture (Berry, 1990).

#### ***2.3.4. Acculturation indicators***

Berry (1990) described the process of acculturation as "continuous and first-hand" contact between cultures (p. 236). During this process, individuals and groups are faced with many choices, such as how to live, what to eat, and what language to speak (Berry, 1990). Furthermore, the extent to which the individual engaged in the acculturation process was thought to be determined by various indicators. For example, education suggested how far an individual had gone in formal schooling outside his/her home country, and it could be the leading indicator of how an individual engaged in the acculturation process (Berry, 1990). Berry (1990) also stated that other indicators included the following:

- wage employment: individuals, who entered the work force in the new environment;

- urbanization: individuals, who migrated to urban areas in the new society;
- media: individuals, who were listening to the radio, watching television, and reading newspapers and magazines to learn about their new culture;
- political participation: individuals, who got involved in voting;
- religion: individuals, who changed their religion to be accepted into their new culture;
- language: an individuals' knowledge or use of the language in their new culture;
- daily practices: individuals' change in personal dress, food habits, and more; and
- social relations: individuals who related to those in their new culture as opposed to socializing in their own group.

Acculturation could also result from various factors in a plural society (Berry, 1990). One factor Berry noted was the availability of social and cultural groups that may provide support to acculturating groups. The other factor was a greater tolerance for cultural diversity in the host society (Berry, 1990). Some acculturating groups may be more accepted than others and enjoy higher status in their new host culture, whereas other acculturating groups could become victims of the host societies' prejudice system (Berry, 1990). Another factor cited was the existence of policies designed to exclude acculturating groups from full participation in the larger society (Berry, 1990). For example, not all acculturating groups receive adequate housing,

medical care, or political rights for them to fully function in their new host culture (Berry, 1990).

Berry also found the degree to which acculturation was experienced was affected by many social and cultural factors. One factor was the traditional settlement pattern of a group, such as nomadic peoples (Berry, 1990). Nomadic peoples experienced greater tension during their transition when they acculturated to new authority systems with large populations, because they were used to large territories, small populations, and unstructured political systems (Berry, 1990). Another factor was status. Oftentimes an individual's "entry status" into their new society was lower than their "departure status" (Berry, 1990). This loss of status when entering their new culture could create stress in their acculturation experience (Berry, 1990). Another factor involved social support for the newcomer when entering the new country. Social and cultural institutions, such as ethnic associations, provided support for the acculturating individual (Berry, 1990).

Berry (1990) also noted that prior knowledge of the new culture by the acculturating individual— knowledge such as language and culture—led to more effective acculturation. In addition, prior contact with the new culture, whether positive or negative, would shape the attitude for the individual's acculturative experience. Furthermore, prior expectations and goals in the new culture would be major predictors of how individuals experienced acculturation (Berry, 1990).

#### ***2.3.5. Acculturation studies***

Shoemaker, Reece, and Danielson (1985) studied the use of Spanish-language print media by Hispanics in the acculturation process. The younger Hispanic

generation's use of Spanish language print media was significantly lower than their parents' or grandparents'. This decline in Spanish-language print media use reflected a change in the acculturation level of Hispanics, who used more Spanish language print media. It suggested that the acculturation process occurred slowly over time for the older generation of Hispanics. However, the younger generation of Hispanics became more acculturated.

Khan (1992) studied the "communication patterns of sojourners in the process of acculturation." He used Kim's definition of acculturation as "the process of cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral adaptation to the new cultural system, rather than as 'the process of adapting the cultural values of a new society'" (Khan, 1992, p. 65). Khan (1992) surveyed 190 Pakistani academic sojourners studying in 30 different universities in the Philippines. Khan (1992) found that Pakistani sojourners' participation in inter-personal communication helped them to acculturate and learn about their host society. However, Khan (1992) found that the sojourner's consumption of mass media of the host society was not enough to understand the host society. The study also showed that the sojourner maintained active participation in both Filipino and Pakistani organizations at an early stage.

Shah (1991) also examined the role of communication patterns in the process of acculturation by Asian Indians. He used Kim's theoretical framework of cross-cultural adaptation: "...the process of change over time that takes place within individuals who have completed their primary socialization process in one culture and then come into continuous prolonged first-hand contact with a new unfamiliar culture" (p. 312). Shah (1991) studied the relationship between mass

communication and interpersonal communication in cross-cultural adaptation among Asian-Indians in the U.S. Shah (1991) used a sample of 222 Asian-Indians and found U.S. communication channels contributed to cross-cultural adaptation by Asian Indians, while use of Asian Indian channels of communication did not. Shah (1991) found that Asian Indians who used host communication channels had higher levels of cross-cultural adaptation “as measured by their acceptance of intermarriage between Asian Indians and members of the host society” (p. 317). Shah (1991) concluded that immigrants should prepare themselves when adapting to a new society in such ways as learning language skills, customs, and how to operate in day-to-day activities. Shah (1991) also suggested that members of the host society should prepare themselves for interaction with immigrants, such as initiating conversations and cooperating with immigrants as they try to learn about their host culture.

Woo and Dominick (2003) also examined the role of communication patterns in the acculturation process among international students. Woo and Dominick (2003) studied the effect of watching daytime drama programs on television among international students in the U.S. The students were exposed to the stereotypical views about the host culture by watching the shows. The students wanted to watch these programs to learn about their host society. They did not know the host culture well, had few friends, and were not fluent in the language of the host culture. However, when the students finally engaged in interpersonal communication with the host society, they were exposed to a different view of the host culture. As the international students engaged in interpersonal communication with the host society,

they rejected the extreme portrayals on television and acculturated into their new host culture.

#### ***2.4. Cultivation***

Cultivation theory is not central to this study, however, elements of the theory add to the research in this study. The theory suggests that people who watch a lot of television hold beliefs consistent with the dominant ideologies and portrayals of the “television world” (Shanahan & Jones, 1999). As a result, television has often been thought of as a medium in this socialization and enculturation process (Baran & Davis, 2006). As television became the universal storyteller, challenging traditional storytellers, such as the church, family, and schools, this mass medium produced a more homogeneous view of the world. Hence, television became a focus of cultivation research.

Cultivation theory is also concerned with the way television may help maintain social order. Cultivation was originally conceived as a critical theory that happens to address media issues because the mass media, especially television, serve the function of storytelling. During the 1970s and 1980s, George Gerbner and his associates addressed media’s role in society and developed the cultivation theory. Gerbner’s argument focused on how television content could be studied as a message system. Gerbner also argued that media played an important and reciprocal role in shaping societal directions.

One of the assumptions in Gerbner’s cultivation research that is central to this study is how television’s major cultural function was to stabilize social patterns and

to cultivate resistance to change. Hence, television was suggested as a medium of socialization and enculturation. Gerbner and his colleagues said:

The repetitive pattern of television's mass-produced messages and images forms the mainstream of the common symbolic environment that cultivates the most widely shared conceptions of reality. We live in terms of the stories we tell—stories about what things exist, stories about how things work, and stories about what to do—and television tells them all through news, drama, and advertising to almost everybody most of the time (Gerbner, Gross, Jackson-Beeck, Jeffries-Fox, & Signorielli, 1978, p. 178).

Cultivation has already been practiced by parts of our population. For example, situation comedies from the 1960s, such as, *Father Knows Best* and *Leave it to Beaver* portrayed a very homogeneous and idealized picture of American family life (Baran & Davis, 2006, p. 339). With these images, audiences may have wondered if “there were any poor people, working women or ethnic groups living in the U.S. in 1965” (Baran & Davis, 2006, p. 339).

The point of Gerbner's research described how watching television ultimately led to adopting beliefs about the social world, “which conformed to the stereotyped, distorted and very selective view of reality as portrayed in a systematic way in television fiction and news” (McQuail, 2005, p. 497). The process of cultivation is not the same as a direct stimulus-response effect. Cultivation is a gradual and cumulative process. It first involves learning. Then, it involves the construction of a social reality, which depends on personal circumstances and experiences (such as of poverty, race, or gender). Cultivation is also seen as an “interactive process between

messages and audiences” (McQuail, 2005, p. 497). Furthermore, cultivation is more than just an analysis of effects from television; it is analysis of the institution of television and its social role (Shanahan & Jones, 1999). Shanahan and Jones (1999) conclude by adding that “the development of cable and satellite TV, the widespread diffusion of VCRs and the promise of a convergence of technologies that may result in a much-heralded ‘information superhighway’, all have the potential to change the way we watch television” (p. 48).

### ***2.5. Uses and Gratifications Approach***

The uses and gratification theoretical perspective has also added insight into how acculturation needs can be addressed, but is not central to this study. Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974) describes five elements of the theoretical model:

- 1) audiences are active and media is assumed to be goal-oriented,
- 2) need gratification is linked to a specific media choice, which lies with the audience member,
- 3) media compete with other sources of need satisfaction,
- 4) people are aware of their own media use to be able to provide an information of that use,
- 5) value judgments should be suspended—that is linking audience’s specific needs to specific media (p. 164).

Within this framework, the uses and gratifications approach includes the social and psychological origins of needs from media. Some acculturation studies describe the social and psychological needs of immigrants and acculturation as an active process (Berry, 1980; Kim, 1988). In this study the uses and gratifications approach sheds



light on how American television may have helped these Asian Indians in their process to acculturate to the U.S.

With the uses and gratifications approach, Yang et al. (2004) discussed how acculturation motives were related to TV watching, because it was a “good way to get information about American culture, to adjust to American society and to improve English” (p. 92). During the initial stage of migrating to a new country, newcomers were often not proficient in the new communication to function interpersonally with the host culture (Yang, et al., 2004). Yang et al. (2004) explained that media use was vital in shaping one’s acculturation experience because it offers a chance to improve general language skills and social interaction (Yang, et al., 2004). These researchers suggested that some media use was goal-oriented and not just a diversion, and in fulfilling these goals, strangers were adjusting to life in the U.S. As a result, media use helped individuals to fulfill some of their acculturation goals (Yang et al., 2004).

Reece and Palmgreen (2000) found a strong, significant relationship between need for acculturation and Asian Indian students’ television viewing motivations in the U.S. These authors described how the students used television to gain information about their host culture. The need for acculturation and motivation for watching American television yielded four positive relationships:

- 1) the need to acculturate increased even more, (which means the Indians students had a need to watch television to gain more information about their host culture);
- 2) students’ reflection on values (Indian students compared their own values to the values of their new host culture),

- 3) observation of the culture (the Indian students were motivated to observe the host culture); and
- 4) overall learning increased (the Indian students were motivated to learn about their new host society so they could acculturate) (Reece & Palmgreen, 2000).

In summary, Reece and Palmgreen (2000) stated that the strength of a newcomer's motivation to understand how their host country operates is an important mediating variable between the need for acculturation and media usage.

Johnson (1996) describes how the uses and gratifications theory explores the relationship between television viewing and factors in acculturation. Johnson (1996) states that viewers who actively select and identify with certain television genres like action dramas, talk shows, situation comedies, and soap operas, seem to enhance television's usefulness in the acculturation process. Whereas most research on television outcomes is negative, Johnson's (1996) research focuses on the positive outcomes of television. Johnson (1996) explains how viewers' choice in specific media reinforces how they choose to socialize in their host country. According to Johnson (1996), the "uses and gratifications theory provides solid concepts for exploring the relationship between television viewing and factors in acculturation" (p. 292).

In these studies, the uses and gratification approach provided insight into immigrants' need for acculturation. This theory is particularly useful in understanding why the Asian Indians in this study watched American television after they first arrived in the U.S.

## ***2.6. Diffusion of Innovation***

Diffusion of Innovation is another theory not central to this study, but that has some pertinence. However in the historical overview, the researcher depicted how Asian Indians' media habits change over time through the diffusion of innovation.

Diffusion of innovation, which was noted in 1962 by Everett Rogers, discovered a series of stages people go through before new technological innovations are adopted:

First most people will become aware of them [new technological innovations], often through information from mass media. Second, the innovations will be adopted by a very small group of innovators, or early adopters. Third, opinion leaders learn from early adopters and try the innovation themselves. Fourth, if opinion leaders find the innovation useful, they encourage their friends—the opinion followers. Finally after most people have adopted the innovation, the group of late adopters make the change (Baran & Davis, 2006, p. 173).

This study of the media technology innovations emphasized the evolutionary process of social change. It focused on the accumulation of technology in our culture. It noted the invention of new technology. It followed the transformation of new technology known only to a few to forms that could be used by the masses. As a result new media technology spread through the society and eventually replaced the existing forms of media (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1982).

In the historical overview and oral histories the researcher tried to demonstrate the media habits changed as media technology advanced, and how participants in this study learned about the advancements through diffusion of innovation.

## ***2.7. Summary***

This chapter has explained the process of acculturation and enculturation as they relate to integrative communication theory. Acculturation is defined as a cross-cultural adaptation process where individuals learn a new cultural system in their new host society but still maintain their own cultural integrity. An example of acculturation is the processes that ensue when an immigrant moves to set up a new life in another country. Many social and cultural factors can affect the degree to which the immigrant experiences acculturation. Prior knowledge of the new culture can also lead to more effective acculturation. On the other hand, enculturation is defined as a process where individuals learn and identify within their existing culture. Therefore, it is a cultural adaptation process. Finally, Gerbner's cultivation theory suggests that television is a medium of both socialization and enculturation. The uses and gratifications approach is also explained in this chapter and how it relates to the need for acculturation. The diffusion of innovation also gives insight as to how media habits for the cohort studied in this dissertation changed over time.

The next section, the literature review, begins to unfold why Asian Indians eventually become acculturated to Indian programming on satellite television. It provides understanding into the kinds of ethnic stereotypes of Asian Indians in the media and how media is used by immigrant communities.

## **Chapter 3: Literature Review**

The literature review covers works explaining why or providing context on how Asian Indians became acculturated into watching Indian television via the satellite dish. This chapter discusses Ethnic Stereotypes and how Immigrant's Use of Media. Ethnic Stereotypes outlines how Asian Indians were portrayed in early and contemporary television as well as film and newspapers in the U.S. Immigrants' Use of Media shows why various kinds of ethnic media, such as newspapers, videos, cable television, and satellite television have helped immigrants in the adaptation process to a new host society.

### ***3.1. Ethnic Stereotypes***

For many years television was dominated by the three major networks, ABC, NBC, and CBS. Most of the programming on the main networks catered to the mainstream U.S. audience. When minorities were portrayed, their culture was often distorted and stereotypes were depicted (Browne, 2005). As a result, minorities of all kinds have had little portrayal on television and have struggled for accurate portrayals as well (Browne, 2005). In fact, some studies have shown negative television stereotypes can influence the way minorities perceive themselves and the way minorities are perceived by other members in society (Jacobson, 1995).

#### ***3.1.1. Stereotypes in the media***

Stereotypical images are used “with prejudice to castigate entire racial or cultural groups as inferior and undesirable beings, [and] they do injustice to the basic tenets of American democracy” (Wilson, Gutiérrez, & Chao, 2003, p. 65). The process of stereotyping is when audience members see a character in the media and

judge it against their own value system to determine whether it is a villain or heroine. For example, when African-Americans are portrayed as criminals in the media, this portrayal can create a prejudice in society against African-Americans. Therefore, this portrayal becomes a stereotype or a shortcut to character development when audience members do not have enough background information about the character (Wilson et al., 2003).

The mass media use symbols and stereotypes as an easy way of communicating the diversity of people “through newspaper headlines, movie characterizations, and television pictures” (Wilson et al., 2003, p. 44). As Wilson, Gutiérrez, and Chao (2003) explained the symbols “allowed the entertainment and news media to portray complex personalities and issues with a shortened character or term” (p. 44). For example, the “images of rich bankers, heroic cowboys, or old spinsters were used so that audiences would understand the character the first time he or she appeared on the screen or in the story” (Wilson et al., 2003, p. 44).

Studies show that stereotyped media portrayals and news coverage reinforce racist attitudes. Furthermore, these racist attitudes can “channel mass actions against the group that is portrayed stereotypically” (Wilson et al., 2003, p. 47). The studies also show that bigots who watch television programs ridiculing bigotry “interpret the program to reinforce their pre-existing beliefs” (Wilson et al., 2003, p. 47).

Furthermore, images of people of color in the media, such as “fat Mexican maids, fast-talking Black street hustlers, noble Indian [Native American] chiefs, and karate-chopping Asians have become symbols that trigger stereotypes of the people portrayed and of others who share those characteristics” (Wilson et al., 2003, p. 46).

### *3.1.2. National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*

Until the late 1960s, the American news media continued to report on social confrontations in the U.S. using stereotypes and racial epithets when referring to people of color (Wilson, Gutiérrez, & Chao, 2003). As a result, race-related issues were reported using an “us versus them” perspective (Wilson et al., 2003). People of color were depicted as “adversarial because they were seen as threats to the social order” (Wilson et al., 2003, p. 119).

In 1967 President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed a committee called the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders to issue a report on the civil unrest in the U.S. The committee subsequently became known as the Kerner Commission after its chair, Governor Otto Kerner. The report “sought to analyze and learn from the racial turmoil that defined the civil rights movement occurring in the 1960s” (Wilson et al., 2003, p. 217). By 1968, the report found that much of the civil unrest in the country stemmed from the historical trend of news coverage against people of color,

By and large, news organizations have failed to communicate to both their black and white audiences a sense of the problems America faces and the sources of potential solutions. The media report and write from the standpoint of a white man’s world... the white press’ – a press that repeatedly, if unconsciously, reflects the biases, the paternalism, the indifference of white America (Kerner Commission, 1968, p. 366).

The report explained how non-whites were not portrayed as part of the whole society, and how they were seen as outside the American system.

Along with the country as a whole, the press has too long basked in a white world, looking out of it, if at all, with white men's eyes and a white perspective. That is no longer good enough. The painful process of readjustment that is required of the American news media must begin now (Kerner Commission, 1968, p. 389).

The Kerner Commission provided insight into the values applied to news judgment – meaning the importance of news was based on what was significant to the White majority. The Kerner Commission charged the mass media with perpetuating racial discrimination.

Furthermore, news organizations did not seem to be “aware that a sizeable part of their audiences also happened to be Black” (Gandy, 1998, p. 156). As a result, many newsrooms at that time did not even include people of color. For example, during the 1965 Watts uprising, the *Los Angeles Times* did not have a single African-American reporter and used someone from the advertising department to help them with their news coverage (Jacobs, 2000).

As a result, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Civil Rights Commission and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) paid attention to the hiring practices in the media. Even news media professional organizations began to assess hiring records of media companies (Wilson et al., 2003). The Commission asked that people of color to be hired and integrated into American newsrooms in order to improve the quality of news coverage for all minority groups. For this study the Kerner Commission gives context to the social fabric of America and how all minority groups were depicted in the media during the



1960s. Not only were African Americans stereotyped in the media, but other minority groups, like Asian Indians, and Indian culture were also stereotyped in U.S. media at that time.

### ***3.1.3. Images of India depicted on NET/PBS in the 1960s and 1970s***

Programs about India or about Indian culture first started to air on public broadcasting channels during the 1960s and 1970s through such outlets as NET, National Educational Television, and PBS, the Public Broadcasting System. NET, which began in 1952, occasionally ran programs on India or Indian culture during the 1960s and eventually became a distributor of educational television programming (D. Quayle, personal communication, December 9, 2005; Witherspoon & Kovitz, 2000). In 1970, NET ended when it merged with television station WNDT to form the public television station WNET (New York, NY). PBS began in 1969, and its primary mission was to distribute public television programming nationally (Witherspoon & Kovitz, 2000).

Some of the programs that aired on NET or PBS during that time include *The Population Problem*, *Gandhi's India*, *World Press*, *Indian Experiment*, *A Passage to India*, *India! My India!*, *Train to Calcutta*, *30 Minutes with Mrs. Indira Gandhi*, *Prime Minister of India*, and *Mrs. Gandhi's India*.

After watching these programs and examining their files, the researcher concluded the shows had a Eurocentric point of view and elitist perspective. Some programs described India as a backward country. Also, some producers failed to explain that the country was under British rule for many years, which slowed its overall development.

The images of India in public broadcast media were typically about the poverty in the country. There were rarely stories about India's growing textile industry, sugar cane industry, rich culture, and sense of family. The programs covered former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and the controversy surrounding her leadership practices and India's growing population problem; but the stories presented did not provide much more than an introduction to what was portrayed as a strange land. Some stories made India appear as an exotic, mysterious "land filled with savages" rather than human beings living in a different culture. These early images of India created an early depiction of the "other" on American television (Wiseman, Hammer, & Nishida, 1989).

#### ***3.1.4. Contemporary stereotypes of Asian Indians in television***

As noted in the section on NET and PBS above, Asian Indians have been depicted as the *other* on American television. The media often stereotypes minorities on television reaffirming the white hegemonic culture (Cunningham & Sinclair, 2000). For example, NBC aired an episode of *Caroline in the City* (comedy series from 1995-1999) where Caroline's new neighbor doesn't want to see a doctor who wears a turban (Chan, 1999). Not only is this episode stereotypical, but it perpetuates an image that there might be something wrong with Sikhs, Indians who wear turbans. Typically Asian Indians are also stereotyped as convenience store owners with thick heavy accents, like the character *Apu* in the Fox comedy series, *The Simpsons* (Sen, 1999).

### ***3.1.5. Stereotypes of Asian Indians in film***

For many immigrants, part of the media world has pervasive stereotypes everywhere, not just in television but also in movies and newspapers. Stereotypes of Asian Indians were in film as well as television, which showed the climate of the 1960s. “All the characterizations of people of color in early films projected an attitudinal posture of White superiority. ...movie producers capitalized on... using racial stereotypes to bolster audience members’ self-esteem and reinforce their attitude of racial superiority” (Wilson et al., 2003, p. 76). As a result, these early movies began to institutionalize racial stereotypes (Wilson et al., 2003).

Early films made in the West that perpetuated stereotypes of India include *Gunga din*, *Jungle Book*, *A Passage to India*, *Indiana Jones: Temple of Doom*, *Around the World in Eighty Days*, *Octopussy*, and *The Man Who Would Be King* (Ramasubramanian, 2005). Some of the depictions of India included “huts, jungles, caves, and temples filled with animals,” plus traditional transportation, such as “rickshaws and elephant rides” (Ramasubramanian, 2005, p. 258). Some of the depictions of religious practices included “nature worship and sorcery,” and the portrayal of abused women included references to “sati (Hindu custom in India in which the widow was burnt to ashes on her dead husband's pyre) and dowry (the money, goods, or estate that a woman brings to her husband in marriage).” The films also showed people engaged in stereotypical activities such as “snake-charming, fire-walking, rope-walking.” The characters portrayed in the films were poor with jobs like hunters, magicians and belly dancers and spoke “exaggerated accented English.”

Overall, Ramasubramanian found a pattern of Indian stereotypes in films made in the West.

In more contemporary films, such as *Die Hard with a Vengeance*, Asian Indians were stereotyped as taxi-cab drivers (Kumar, 1999). This perpetuated a stereotype that Indians were not in professional jobs and that they all speak with accents.

### ***3.1.6. Stereotypes of Asian Indians in mainstream newspapers***

Early newspapers strove to attract the largest audience possible; therefore, the content catered to that large audience (Wilson et al., 2003). As a result, coverage of racial and ethnic minorities was considered of “second-class status” because it did not attract a mass audience (Wilson et al., 2003, p. 42).

The coverage in American newspapers included stereotypes of India and Indian culture. For example, in coverage of Mother Teresa’s death, “American newspapers focused on poverty and slums in Calcutta” (Poornananda, 1998, p. 161). In this coverage, both the *Los Angeles Times* and the *New York Times* published photographs of the poor and beggars in the streets of Calcutta. “It is true that Mother Teresa devoted her whole life for the service of the poor but such photographs may create a negative image of India in the minds of readers” (Poornananda, 1998, p. 161). As a result, U.S. newspapers portrayed India as an “overpopulated country of backward and ignorant people, living in conditions of poverty, disease and starvation” (Poornananda, 1998, p. 161).

### ***3.1.7. Psychological impact of negative images in the media***

Upon analyzing the news stories in the *Los Angeles Times* and *The Washington Post*, Poornananda (1998) found that “a majority of the news stories from South Asian countries were about crime, conflict and disaster” (p. 165). Furthermore, *The Washington Post* carried more conflict stories than any other type of news stories. “Stories about crime, conflict and disaster have been categorized as negative stories since these stories tend to create a negative image of the foreign countries in the minds of readers” (Poornananda, 1998, p. 165). In addition, a majority of the news stories analyzed by Poornananda (1998) in *The Washington Post* from 1992 to 1996 were “interpretive,” and the interpretation suggested the “backwardness and failure of the government, institutions and individuals” of India (pp. 165-166).

Ramansubramanian (2005) explains that stereotypes of Asian Indians in films made in the West make it easier to discriminate against them as a group, which eventually leads to “institutional prejudice” (p. 259). In addition, “it is possible that negative stereotypes in media serve as a means of downward social comparisons in order to boost the self-image of Western audiences” (Ramasubramanian, 2005, p. 259). For example, Tan (1981) explains that exposure to television programs that portray Blacks in a derogatory manner or ignore them could lead to low self-esteem among Black viewers.

Asian Indians may also see themselves in stereotypes. It is possible that Asian Indians as a stereotyped group “might re-conceptualize their own identities based on their encounters with media portrayals of their group in the dominant culture” (Ramasubramanian, 2005, p. 260). To explain further, these “stereotypical depictions

in mainstream media might dictate what are expected and acceptable behaviors by members of target groups, especially in terms of interpersonal interactions with members of other groups” (Ramasubramanian, 2005, p. 260).

These portrayals of Asian Indians, India, and Indian culture in the mainstream media give some insight as to how Asian Indians began to see themselves depicted in American culture. The following section of the literature review suggests some of the issues immigrants faced before choosing to use media of their ethnic origin.

### ***3.2. Immigrants’ Use of Media***

#### ***3.2.1. Ethnic media***

The mainstream media coverage has distorted images of ethnic Americans, making it imperative for the immigrant community to develop its own media outlets (Alia, 2003). As a result, ethnic groups started providing relevant home country news, thus creating ethnic media and preserving cultural identity (Lin & Song, 2006). Ethnic media also helps immigrants with their adaptation process by providing local news and information useful in their new host society (Lin & Song, 2006).

Ethnic media includes at least three kinds of television. Ethnic television means local shows focusing on minorities within a country of settlement (Karim, 2003). Ethnic television networks, such as BET, Black Entertainment Television, and JTN, Jewish Television Network, reach mainstream audiences because their programs are in English. This form of ethnic television is called broadcasting (Naficy, 2003). Programs that are partly ethnic reinforce the assimilation and Americanization of that ethnic population (Naficy, 2003).

Transnational television means television programs of a specific cultural group that are either imported or are only partly ethnic (Naficy, 2003). The programs are produced by U.S. or foreign multinational and transnational corporations that import much of their programming (Naficy, 2003). The imported programs are usually filmed outside the U.S. They almost never address problems of acculturation or issues of diversity of various ethnic populations in the U.S. (Naficy, 2003). One of the reasons transnational television is so popular is because it is usually in the language of the home culture; “language is one of the chief markers of nationality and of national identity” (Naficy, 2003)

Diaspora Television means programming created by small-time, individual producers from the host country. They create the television programs suitable for the respective ethnic channels (Naficy, 2003). However, these producers have their own struggles trying to reach authenticity, legitimacy and identity in the programs they produce (Naficy, 2003). For example, the African Guyanese are dissatisfied with television news programs produced by East Indian Guyanese independent producers in New York, because the programs lack accuracy, relevance, and completeness. (Cambridge, 2005). Transnational and diaspora television are examples of *narrowcasting* because the programs air in a foreign language (Naficy, 2003).

### ***3.2.2. Cultural identity***

Ethnic media can help ethnic groups sustain cultural identity by reporting news in the immigrants’ native language (Jeffres, 2000). The need for ethnic television was reached after studies showed that migrant communities were anxious to maintain their identification with their homeland (Aksoy & Robins, 2003). New

media technologies have made it possible for diasporic communities to stay linked to their communities of origin (Aksoy & Robins, 2003).

### ***3.2.3. Becoming connected to the community***

Ethnic media connects people to events and issues in their community. This connection, community building, is why ethnic media are created (Georgiou, 2006). Ethnic media becomes a potential bridge for immigrants, once they move to their new host society, by involving them with what is going on in the neighborhood (Lin & Song, 2006). Ethnic media plays a role in “mobilizing people toward concrete civic actions in the host society” and helps localize their practices of everyday life (Lin & Song, 2006, p. 368). Ethnic newspapers also have something called the bulletin board, which lists “announcements of upcoming events in the community, including festivals, cultural activities, flea markets, and even free medical exams” (Lin & Song, 2006, p. 381). These bulletin boards provide information immigrants can use in the host society and stay connected to their new surroundings (Lin & Song, 2006).

### ***3.2.4. Ethnic newspapers***

Ethnic media operations are usually small community-based businesses with fewer than 10 employees. They are primarily weekly newspapers printed in the immigrants’ native language, and most are free of charge. However, some are becoming multinational operations with more than 100 employees, publishing newspapers on a daily basis, for example, the *Chinese Daily News* and the *Sing Tao Daily* of Los Angeles (Lin & Song, 2006). According to Lin and Song (2006), some of the daily newspapers that serve both the Korean and Chinese communities in Los Angeles have stories syndicated from the home country’s hometown editions. Stories



about the local ethnic community are then added to the paper before distribution.

However on average at least a third of the coverage is stories from the home country.

### ***3.2.5. Video rental***

Lewis and Hirano (2000) discovered that the Australian Thai community rents Thai videos for entertainment and to stay connected to Thailand. The most popular videos included historical drama serials because they stirred patriotic feelings as the stories dealt with the royal court of Thailand. Other videos also included family dramas dealing with personal success and romance. Lewis and Hirano (2000) concluded that Australian Thais rent videos “to stay in touch with their cultural heritage” (p. 214).

Kolar-Panov (1996) examined the role of the video among the Croatian community in Australia. The study focuses on the dynamics of the VCR to foster “re-creation of Croatian national identity” within Australia (Kolar-Panov, 1996, p. 289). Since much of the mainstream media could not provide the latest information on the war in the former Yugoslavia, the Croatian community acquired video tapes with graphic images of the atrocities. As a result these tapes became “precious veils for the symbolic representation of Croatian history, legitimizing Croatia’s quest for independence from Yugoslavia” (Kolar-Panov, 1996, p. 291). These tapes helped distinguish the Croatian diaspora from the larger Western Australian Yugoslav community (Kolar-Panov, 1996).

### ***3.2.6. Ethnic media and the adaptation process***

Immigrants staying connected to the home country through ethnic media may hold back their adaptation process to the host country (Lin & Song, 2006). Some

scholars suggest that ethnic media helps with the initial adaptation process for immigrants; but when immigrants become dependent on the ethnic media for too long, this could produce a damaging effect (Lin & Song, 2006, Kim, 2002). When immigrants become too preoccupied with home country news coverage instead of local ethnic news, ethnic media's "democratic" role in the host society is jeopardized (Lin & Song, 2006, p. 382). Certain kinds of ethnic media can offer immigrants a chance to understand what is happening in their new home country, specifically their community, to help them adapt to their new culture. As a result, if ethnic media maintains a balance between stories from the home country and the local community, it could help first-generation immigrants with their adaptation to the host country (Lin & Song, 2006).

Jeffres and Hur (1980) conducted a study with 13 of the largest ethnic groups in Cleveland and concluded that in ethnic newspapers, the most popular content is the news of the local ethnic community and news from the homeland. In addition, Jeffres and Hur (1980) added that a majority of participants enjoyed listening to both music and news on ethnic radio programs. Moreover, ethnic-oriented programming was a reason for subscribing to cable television. The desire for ethnic television programs related to ethnicity and the use of other ethnic media; and the most desired content was ethnic news and public affairs broadcasts.

### ***3.2.7. Telenovelas***

Univision, originally called the Spanish International Network, caters to a Spanish-speaking audience in the U.S. Much of the programming on Univision includes *telenovelas*, also known as Spanish soap operas, produced in Latin America

(Mayer, 2003). *Telenovelas* are closed soap opera and are broadcast nightly over three or four months. These soap operas are designed to end, and the design and reception of the closed soap opera make it fundamentally different from the “open” soap opera (Allen, 1997). There is growing research on telenovela audiences and how Latino viewers might interpret these programs. Mayer (2003) stated that telenovelas serve “emotional, social, and economic needs in the lives of Latin American viewers” (p. 481). Similarly, Barrera and Bielby (2001) discovered that familiar places and cultures depicted in telenovelas helped Latin American women obtain a piece of their culture at home and, thus, maintain their cultural ties to their homeland. Telenovelas also helped viewers relate to social situations and construct cultural identity (de la Luz Casas Perez, 2005).

De Santis (2003) states that Spanish-speaking audience members preferred local programs or programs imported from the Spanish-speaking world, such as soap operas (telenovelas), comedy shows, and other entertainment programming. These programs contained cultural references that are easily understandable to Latin American audiences (De Santis, 2003).

### ***3.2.8. Korean Americans and video use***

Park (1990) studied the television viewing habits among four Korean groups in Austin, TX. In her study, she found that Korean videotapes provided each Korean group with feelings of pleasure, comfort, and closeness to the Korean culture. The videos consisted of Korean programs imported from Korean broadcasting companies in Korea; community members could rent the videos from the local Korean grocery store (Park, 1990).

### ***3.2.9. Korean Americans and satellite television***

The market for ethnic newspapers and video rentals declined once satellite television penetrated the U.S. Lee (2004) examined the viewing patterns of Korean immigrants watching Korean satellite television. In this study, Lee conducted in-depth interviews with Korean Americans from a “sufficiently affluent” background, who have satellite television, in the Texas cities of Austin, Killen, San Antonio, and Laredo. Lee (2004) specifically studied the role of satellite television in Korean immigrants’ lives, and the results showed that Korean satellite television reinforced the viewers’ ethnic identity, the immigrants’ connection with Korean culture and society. Lee (2004) also explained how Korean immigrants could watch Korean television in “real time” 24 hours a day, providing viewers with the most recent updates of current events in Korea. Watching news in real time through satellite television gave viewers direct access to the homeland (Sinclair, Yue, Hawkins, Pookong, & Fox, 2000). Lee (2004) also noted that satellite television became a vehicle to maintain Korean language and culture for the next generation. In addition, Lee (2004) determined that the older generation of Korean immigrants enjoyed watching the historical dramas and programs because they featured old Korean songs. Korean satellite television also reduced stress and loneliness for many immigrants because it is a form of entertainment. As a result, Lee (2004) concluded that satellite television “may replace ethnic newspapers and videos in the future,” because of its real-time broadcasts (p. 78).

### ***3.3 Summary***

This chapter outlined some of the stereotypes of Asian Indians, India, and Indian culture in U.S. mainstream media. These negative portrayals give insight as to why Asian Indians and other immigrant groups resort to ethnic media.

Asian Indians are like the ethnic groups described in this literature review. They, too, struggled with cultural identity, staying connected to their community, and adapting to their new home country. But this particular ethnic group is unique, because Asian Indians who migrated here in the 1960s achieved middle-class status almost immediately since they came as skilled professionals. However, Asian Indians' growing economic status did not give them social status. By attempting to preserve their ethnic identity and cultural heritage, they too created their own media.

The next section clarifies how Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago stayed connected to their culture through the use of media. The researcher gives a historical overview of the various kinds of ethnic media available to Asian Indians since the 1960s, including newspapers and community programs on independent cable-access channels. The historical overview explains how Asian Indians maintain their cultural connection to India through music, food, fashion, entertainment, religion, family and community. By establishing Asian Indians' strong sense of culture, the dissertation guides the reader in understanding Asian Indians' attraction to watching Indian movies at the local university theaters and, eventually, on the VCR. The researcher subsequently establishes how the growth of satellite television in India has made an impact on the Asian Indian community in the U.S.

## Chapter 4: Historical Overview

The Historical Overview chronicles how Asian Indians have maintained their cultural connection to India through various forms of media. This section also shows how the change in technology has changed the Asian Indian consumers' use of media. In this historical overview, the researcher has tried to establish a timeline to provide historical context, allowing the reader to understand Indian media use by Asian Indians in the U.S. during the past 40 years. In presenting this historical context, the researcher includes references to how media technology has changed over time, leading the reader to conceptualize how Asian Indians have come to use satellite television. The time period described in this section acknowledges important milestones:

- a) 1965, the Immigration and Nationality Act lifted the quotas for Asians to enter the U.S.
- b) 1960s, Hindi movies became available and played at local universities or art theaters.
- c) 1970s, Indian newspapers were produced in the U.S. for the Indian diaspora.
- d) 1980s, VHS tapes (Bollywood films) became available to rent to play on home VCRs.
- e) 1980s, cable programming became available for the Indian diaspora in the U.S.
- f) 1999, Indian programming was imported from India on satellite television and became available to Asian Indians in the U.S.

## ***4.1. Asian Indians in the U.S.***

### ***4.1.1. Immigration***

From 1776 to 1842 there was a period of unrestricted entry into the U.S. Even so, only about 200 people of Indian origin emigrated to the U.S. before 1870.

Between 1899 and 1920, about 7300 immigrants from India entered the U.S., mostly agricultural laborers, who arrived on the West Coast and settled in California. In these first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Asian Indians “encountered widespread hostility and discrimination,” (Hess, 1982, p. 29). The Sikhs, specifically, who wore turbans and had distinct beards, complexion, and speech, easily became targets of violence (Helweg & Helweg, 1990). This anti-Asian Indian sentiment eventually led to the Immigration Act of 1917.

This Act primarily restricted immigration from southern and eastern Europe. This Act stipulated the literacy test requirement. It established the Asiatic “barred zone” prohibiting immigration of laborers from virtually all of Asia except Japan (Hess, 1982). In 1924, the Johnson Immigration Act, established the quota system, also called the National Origins Quota Act, allowing about 100 Asian Indian immigrants per year to enter the U.S. However, this Act denied immigration to people who were not entitled to naturalization. Thus, although India had a quota of 100 immigrants per year, it was used by British and other Europeans residing in India to emigrate to the U.S.

The Immigration Act of 1946 changed the immigration laws to permit Indian immigration to the U.S. The quota for immigrants from India was 100 and applied to all persons from India regardless of the country of birth. Between 1947 and 1965,

nearly 6,000 immigrants were admitted to the U.S. under the quota for India.

Between 1948 and 1965, 1,772 persons of Indian origin acquired U.S. citizenship.

In 1965, the Immigration and Nationality Act ended the quota system, making it much easier for Asian Indians to migrate to this country. With this Act, the Immigration Act of 1917 was withdrawn immediately. But more importantly, a system of selective preference categories was established, which included professional, skilled, and unskilled workers needed in the U.S. (Chandrasekhar, 1982).

“The influx of Indian immigrants to America occurred at a time when the opportunity structures existing within the American society could absorb immigrant skills and professional experiences” (Dasgupta, 1989, p. 189). As a result, when Indian immigrants migrated to the U.S., they were able to attain middle-class status almost immediately in the U.S. because their training afforded them professional jobs (Dasgupta, 1989). This requirement from the 1965 Immigration Act also gave a chance for many upper-middle class Indian professionals to move to the U.S. and “achieve professional and intellectual growth, to enjoy better economic opportunities... [and] to avoid job problems in India” (Dasgupta, 1989, p. 189).

In 1965, 581 immigrants from India immigrated to the U.S. By 1966, that number increased to 2,459 and by 1969 to 5,963 (Helweg & Helweg, 1990). “The 1970 U.S. census recorded 51,000 foreign-born and 25,000 native-born Americans of East Indian descent” in the U.S. (Helweg & Helweg, 1990, p. 63). Today the population of the United States is approximately 300 million. More than 10 million



people are considered Asian, and about 2.3 million classify themselves as Asian Indian (Joseph, 2006).

#### ***4.1.2. Education, income, and buying power***

Seventy-five percent of Asian Indians living in the U.S. are in the workforce, and over 50 percent of Asian Indian women hold at least a master's degree (Jhamb, 2005). According to the U.S. Census (2007), Asian Indians are better educated and more affluent than average Americans. The average family income of an Asian Indian family in the U.S. was nearly \$70,000 in 2004, compared with nearly \$50,000 for all Americans (U.S. Census, 2007). At least 68 percent of Asian Indians hold a bachelor's degree compared with 27 percent of all Americans (U.S. Census, 2007). In addition, "Indian American" women are the most educated group of women in the U.S. because they go to graduate school (Melwani, 2003). Furthermore, 69 percent of all Asian Indians are married in the U.S. (U.S. Census, 2007).

Given this average family income for Asian Indians, their buying power is notable and growing. The buying power for all Asians (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indian, Filipino, and others) in the U. S. climbed to \$269 billion in 2000 and reached \$427 billion in 2006 (Humphreys, 2006). It is estimated that Asian Indians alone in the U.S. have a total estimated buying power of \$20 billion (Ameredia, 2007).

#### ***4.1.3. Asian Indians in the Washington, D.C. Metro area***

The Washington Metro area has always drawn immigrants of different ethnic backgrounds, but more so since the local economic boom of 2001. One out of every five people in the Washington Metro area is an immigrant, with a total immigrant population of one million. These immigrants include highly skilled workers from

India and China (Kang, 2006b). The Asian Indian population in the area has increased by 50 percent since 2001.

There are about 107,000 Asian Indians in the Washington area, and 80 percent are immigrants, according to the 2005 Census Bureau figures (Kang, 2006a). Many members of Indian community say there are more Asian Indians living here because the census figures do not reflect the illegal immigrants (Kang, 2006a). Since 1996, immigrants from India have been settling in the Washington Metro area faster than any other ethnic group except Salvadorans (Kang, 2006a). Many Asian Indians came to work in the growing high-tech sector in Northern Virginia. There are also more than 8,300 Indian-owned businesses in the Washington Metro area (Kang, 2006a). About 8 in 10 Asian Indians have college degrees, and 7 in 10 are in professional and managerial jobs.

In the Washington Metro area, the Asian Indian population has the highest median income of any group. The median household income for the region was \$74,708 in 2005; for Asian Indians it was \$87,369 (Kang, 2006b). That figure includes whites, other Asians, and Hispanics and both immigrants and native-born members of various ethnic groups (Kang, 2006b). With this high income for Asian Indians, many are able to afford a satellite dish and the variety of Indian programming imported from India that comes with it.

#### ***4.2. Asian Indians' cultural connection to India***

Not only have Asian Indians achieved economic status in the U.S., but they have maintained their cultural connection to India. While many Indian immigrants became economically well off as a result of the favorable job market upon

immigrating to the U.S., their economic status did not give them middle-class social status (Dasgupta, 1989). The Indian immigrants lacked the prestige of birth or position of political authority, which determined the social status of an individual in the U.S. at that time (Dasgupta, 1989). Thus the Indian immigrants became socially isolated and turned to their own ethnic group for primary group relations and stronger ethnic identity (Dasgupta, 1989). As a result, the identity needs of the Indian immigrants took form in maintaining their cultural heritage.

#### ***4.2.1. Religion***

For Asian Indians, religious identity is a way of being accepted in American culture while still being different. For years, Hindus carved out a space in their American-designed homes to create “puja” rooms or shrines for worship. Upon moving to the U.S. Asian Indians eventually built Hindu and Buddhist temples, Sikh gurdwaras, Islamic mosques, and Parsi fire temples. In the late 1960s, Sikhism began to spread in the Western part of the U.S. By 1966 the Hare Krishnas were founded in New York. Temples, gurudwaras, and mosques were originally vacant buildings taken over by immigrant congregations before new buildings were constructed. Asian Indians reproduced these temples, gurudwaras and mosques with details to the exterior that were similar to those in India. Workers and building materials were brought from South Asia to build these places of worship (Leonard, 1997).

Hindu temples in the U.S. are not only places of worship; cultural as well as religious activities take place there too. For example, temples often have a multi-purpose room where many second-generation Indians have been taught religious dance, which eventually led to performances held for the whole congregation to see.

Though held in “traditional” temple settings, these dance performances became social events where meals were served afterwards. In Atlanta, Georgia, an Indian cultural and religious center serves in part as a temple and also has non-sacred space (where meat and liquor can be served) for recreational activities (Leonard, 1997).

Not only did centers of worship become established, but religious schools were founded as well. In addition, producers of textbooks, TV shows suited for the younger Indian generation, and institutes producing computer and Internet religious programs sprang up all over the country (Leonard, 1997).

This strong foundation in religious tradition and places of worship led to community activities for Asian Indians in North America. There are about 150 Hindu temples in North America, so not all members of the diaspora have access to a place of worship and instead practice their religion at home. With satellite television, consumers witness religious services daily, regardless of where they live in the U.S. (Leonard, 1997).

#### ***4.2.2. Recreation***

There are various elements that drive the Asian Indian community together to achieve their recreation. Padma Rangaswamy (2000) writes about how Asian Indians get together regularly at private parties and social gatherings in their homes. Indian associations formed as more immigrants migrated to North America and allowed Asian Indians, who are widely scattered geographically, to come together as a community. Many of the early associations were formed in response to loneliness and alienation, and these groups answered the social needs of the Indian population. They were formed in the 1960s and early 1970s, when immigrants eagerly sought

each other out no matter what part of India they were from. They gathered in each other's homes or got together for picnics, and they reminisced about India (Rangaswamy, 2000).

While Hindu ritual activities brought many members of the Indian community together, the numbers of Asian Indian festivals and cultural performances began to grow throughout many of the immigrant communities in North America. Music performance is just one way the Asian Indian community and culture is maintained. Dance is also highly respected. As stated earlier, dance classes were first offered through the Hindu temples. Now many Indian second-generation daughters study Indian classical dance with professional teachers and give big-stage performances (Leonard, 1997).

Cultural events were advertised in the Indian ethnic newspapers and by flyers distributed at the Indian grocery stores (Leonard, 1997). Sometimes when big name performers came to town, such as Ravi Shankar (classical sitar player), the whole community would come together (Leonard, 1997).

#### ***4.2.3. Hindi Films***

One avenue that helped Asian Indians coming together in the U.S. was various kinds of media. The Indian media helped them stay connected as well as maintain their cultural ties to India. Some of the early media included Hindi movies at the local art theaters or universities during the 1960s (Leonard, 1997).

In 1963, for example, the San Francisco Gujarati (people from Gujarat state, a Western state in India) community would attend Indian movies shown in San Francisco or the University of California Berkeley campus. Some family members

would take trips across the San Francisco Bay to see Indian movies on campus (Jain, 1989). “These movies brought India closer to them. As one woman going to a Bengali [West Bengal, Eastern state in India] movie said to me [Jain] once, ‘I know I will not understand the language, but at least I will see something Indian’. Besides movies, Indian music was also something that brought India closer to them” (Jain, 1989, p. 125).

In the late 1960s in Northern California, the Yuba City community sponsored Hindi and Punjabi (Punjab is a Northwest state in India) movies shown once or twice a year as part of a community-wide celebration (La Brack, 1988). Eventually Indian-made movies in the both the Bay area and in Yuba City, California increased. Also in the late 1960s Hindi films rotated from Oakland to Berkeley to all over Northern California and were shown in theaters normally meant for Spanish-language films (La Brack, 1988). The films were attended by the entire community, and for many families they were a major social function (La Brack, 1988). One of the attractions to the films were the songs, a musical form of entertainment (La Brack, 1988). As a result, by the late 1960s, a two-hour Punjabi radio program on KUBA focused on film and folk songs, sponsored by both Punjabi and other local businesses. This radio program also featured local news and a calendar of community events (La Brack, 1988).

In 1970, at the Western Michigan University auditorium, Indian movies were shown once a month for one dollar per person. The India association rented the films from a distributor in Chicago. The auditorium was filled to full capacity by family, friends, and children (Helweg & Helweg, 1990).

By 1975, in New York City, Hindi movies were shown in many theaters in Queens and Manhattan. Some theaters were devoted specifically to a full screening of Indian films only, in Hindi with English subtitles. Some distributors showed Hindi films in public school auditoriums on the weekends (Fisher, 1980).

As Fisher (1980) explained, these films were “a nostalgic link to India” (p. 63-64). One film-goer told Fisher, “This film is as boring to us as it must be to you, but you see it was filmed in our home town; the sights are all familiar to us. And it’s good to hear the language” (p. 63-64). “They also promote(d) the solidarity of fellow language speakers” (Fisher, 1980, p. 63-64).

#### ***4.2.4. Newspapers imported from India***

In the early 1960s the San Francisco Gujaratis also tried to maintain Indian culture by subscribing to Indian newspapers and magazines to keep up with recent events and developments in the country (Jain, 1989). R.V. Smith, a former news editor with *The Statesman*, one of India’s leading newspapers (owned by the British at that time), explained how the newspaper had a weekly overseas edition in the 1960s, called *The Statesman Weekly*. The newspaper published about 2,000 copies for the overseas Indian population (R. V. Smith, personal communication, January 5, 2007). “We had an overseas edition, which was sent to them and it took pretty long to reach them, but they got the news from here and there” (R. V. Smith, personal communication, January 5, 2007). Smith (personal communication, January 5, 2007) explained how the newspaper was mailed to the Indian diaspora in Australia, the U.K. and the U.S. “They used to write letters to the editor and naturally, they were

interested in news from India, from their home country” (R.V. Smith, personal communication, January 5, 2007).

Another former editor with *The Statesman*, Inder Malhotra, described how there was another newspaper in the U.S. during the 1960s, *The Hindu Weekly*. However, “*The Statesman* dominated the English newspaper market” (I. Malhotra, personal communication, January 5, 2007).

Indian immigrants shared a common set of values, experiences, and behavioral and linguistic traits that were different from any other ethnic group. Furthermore, their strong sense of ethnic and cultural heritage became a source of pride and group identification (Dasgupta, 1989). This strong sense of identity is what led to the first Indian newspaper produced in the U.S. that catered to Asian Indians in the U.S.

#### ***4.3. Newspapers that catered to Asian Indians***

Maintaining Indian culture, which brought the Indian community together, was just the beginning of how the diaspora established itself. The Indian community wanted its members to stay connected with each other and also longed for any news from India. Furthermore, like most immigrant populations, Indians were tired of seeing themselves marginalized in the media—hence the South Asian press was born.

*India Abroad* is the first and largest Asian Indian publication in the U.S. and has been serving the community since 1970. Its editorial and corporate headquarters are based in New York and it publishes five separate editions (Eastern, Midwestern, Western, Canadian, and European); it has a more national and global perspective than some of the other ethnic press. Stories from local offices throughout the world are



sent to New York, where the pages are designed based on the relative importance of the local stories. The newspaper has a readership of about 200,000 (Shukla, 2003).

Gopal Raju, the former publisher and editor-in-chief of *India Abroad*, came to the U.S. in 1950 and launched *India Abroad* through his own funds by 1970. He felt there was a “big vacuum” for any kind of news bulletins or newspapers that catered to Asian Indians in the U.S. (G. Raju, personal communication, February 22, 2007).

*India Abroad* was the first medium which I started, which became a forum for Indians living here and to keep them in contact with things back home.

People came from India to here (the U.S.), they literally lost touch with India... so I didn't want that to happen here, (I) wanted the people to be in touch with back home, see what's happening back home, that's why I started (it). There was a need, I met the need (G. Raju, personal communication, February 22, 2007).

Raju (personal communication, February 22, 2007) further explains that as immigration to the U.S. became easier for Asian Indians, the need and demand for such a newspaper increased. Furthermore, Veena Merchant, a former editor for *India Abroad* says the Asian Indian community did not have a “systematic mode of communication at all and that was the primary reason [to start the newspaper], Gopal wanted people connected” (V. Merchant, personal communication, February 22, 2007).

In the early days, the staff was just two or three people covering the local events, and community news. The news from India was reprinted from *The Statesman*, *The Hindu* and *the Times of India* until Raju established his own

connection with the wire services of India. Eventually he opened a bureau in New Delhi with its own staff of correspondents. The newspaper was sold to internet portal Rediff.com in April 2001. Some of the other top newspapers that reach the Indian diaspora include *India West*, *India Tribune*, and *Hinduism Today*.

*India-West*, the largest and most prestigious weekly newspaper on the West Coast in the U.S., with more than 70,000 subscribers, was founded in 1981 and published out of California. The newspaper offers coverage of community and business news, news of Silicon Valley, original coverage on the hottest trends in Bollywood, lifestyles, and entertainment, as well as award-winning coverage of breaking news, science, religion and sports. For over a decade, its “Focus on Youth” section has been written by and for second-generation Indian Americans, which has set a new trend in the ethnic media (India West, n.d.).

*India Tribune* launched in 1977 in Chicago. It is published in three editions - Chicago, New York and Atlanta. *India Tribune* has a national subscription of 61,000 and primarily caters to the Chicago Metro South Asian diasporic population. Its reporting staff is based in India and the U.S. (Rangaswamy, 2000).

*Hinduism Today* was founded January 5, 1979. The magazine is based in Hawaii and caters to families of Hindu faiths. It has about 80,000 readers in North America. (Hinduism Today, 2007).

#### **4.4. Early TV and Radio**

##### **4.4.1. Television**

Although Hindi movies reached the Indian diaspora through movie theaters, in some large cities the movies also made their way into U.S. television. By 1976, New

York aired Hindi movies on Sunday mornings on an ultra high frequency (UHF) channel (Fisher, 1980). In September of 1976, the first weekly television show catering to Indian immigrants in the U.S., called “Vision of Asia,” ran for 90 minutes on that UHF channel (Fisher, 1980). At that time the producer, an Indian immigrant, hoped to expand the show’s format to include interviews on Indian-American issues (Fisher, 1980).

The New York Asian Indian community sponsored a large number of lectures, dance performances, and music concerts. However, according to a survey conducted between 1977 and 1978, Saran (1985) discovered that television and movies were the preferred entertainment choices. “Almost everyone watches American television programs and most tune in at least occasionally to a few Indian programs presented each week on the local television stations (UHF channels)” (Saran, 1985, p. 35).

#### ***4.4.2. Radio***

Before Hindi movies made their debut on the television screen, 13 weekly half-hour radio programs catering to Asian Indians aired in New York in 1975. The shows included interviews with Asian Indians celebrated in the fields of science, fine arts, business, and politics as well as Americans involved in Indian affairs (Fisher, 1980). Leonard (1997) noted that as Indian communities grew, special cultural programs or dramatic musical performances aired on radio or independent cable channels as well.

Saran’s (1985) survey also found that Indian language programs accessible in the New York area were quite popular, and nearly three-quarters of her respondents reported listening to Indian radio programs at least once a month.

In Chicago, *Jhankar* is one AM/FM radio show that started in 1976 and played popular Hindi film songs from the 1950s, '60s, '70s and '80s (Rangaswamy, 2000).

Currently, Anil Srivatsa, the host of radio show *Anil Ki Awaj* is probably the “best known radio personality” on Indian radio programming (Sreenivasan, 2006). Srivatsa started his program in 1997 in Princeton, New Jersey, doing commentary on India’s leading sport, cricket.

I started syndicating *Anil Ki Awaj* beyond Princeton and I bought time in San Francisco. I bought time in D.C., but eventually started finding people who are carrying it anyway without me buying time because they value my programming. So it is my full time occupation to make *Anil Ki Awaj*. So that’s when I started my 24 online Internet radio station (A. Srivatsa, January 6, 2007).

Srivatsa, Saran, and others helped meet Asian Indians’ need to stay connected to India through radio talk shows, music programs and more.

#### ***4.5. Changes in technology create changes in media consumption***

##### ***4.5.1. VCR revolution***

Media consumption by Asian Indians did not just stop with television and radio; changes in technology revolutionized the way the Asian Indian consumes media. In the late 1970s the VCR, [video cassette recorder] added another way for people to watch television.

The first professional video recording machine was built in the U.S. in the late 1950s. By the late 1970s, the home VCR was available for the average consumer.

The VCR became just as important as the home television because it allowed the consumer to watch movies at home (Wood, 1992).

The VCR allowed Asian Indians to rent Indian movies and watch them at home. As Leonard (1997) explains, movies were screened at the area cultural centers, but once the VCR was established in 1980, Hindi movie screening retreated to the home setting. “The Video Tape Recorder not only spelled the death of the ‘Hindi’ and ‘Punjabi’ community theater film industry abroad, but made it possible for Indian television programs as well as films to be shown in the overseas Sikh home” (La Brack, 1988, p. 442). For many Asian Indians, it was cheaper to rent or buy VHS cassettes, so family and friends could share the movie and watch it at home (La Brack, 1988).

In 1980, the VCR had an impact on the Indian movie industry established in the U.S. Many movie houses that showed Hindi films closed down in New York and Chicago (Helweg & Helweg, 1990). People preferred watching Indian movies at home and having video parties, where they invited friends to watch a rented movie (Helweg & Helweg, 1990).

One entrepreneur rents his living room out to an Indian family for a dollar per person, plus popcorn, to watch a video. Every other month, the Rajan Majumdar family drive 150 miles from Kalamazoo to Chicago to watch a weekend of Indian videos with his brother, who has a big 3-by-5 foot television screen (Helweg & Helweg, 1990, p. 129).

The video trade network had become so efficient that some movies reached the U.S. before being released in India (Helweg & Helweg, 1990).

The VCR also transformed the socialization patterns for many Asian Indians. Friends were now getting together to watch a movie instead of sharing the concerns of their lives and their homeland (Helweg & Helweg, 1990).

The prominent distributor of Hindi movies in the VHS format in North America was Atlantic Audio Video in Dallas, Texas (Lal Dadlaney, personal communication, March 19, 2007). They are no longer in business. But another early pioneer was Kishore Lulla of Eros Entertainment, which started in 1977 in the U.K. with representatives in the U.S.: “I always thought that entertainment is the best way to connect back to India, so why not get into entertainment, depict the Indian culture, cater to the South Asian diaspora, and have them connect back to India” (K. Lulla, personal communication, March 20, 2007).

#### ***4.5.2. Return of Indian movie theaters***

Eventually the VCR revolution wore off because pirated films began to be distributed among consumers. The quality of the films was so poor they were not viewable. As a result, Hindi films ended up back in the movie theaters. Lal Dadlaney of Video Sound in Edison, New Jersey, came to the U.S. in 1989, well after the Indian movie market launched with VHS tapes. He was a leading distributor of Indian films in Dubai throughout the 1980s and hoped to do the same in the U.S. But after arriving in the U.S., he learned that much of the Indian diaspora was disgusted with the pirated copies of Indian movies.

A lot of piracy and pirated videos were released even at that time coming in from Pakistan. And they carried a lot of ads, you know, there is some tire floating across [the film] and there is some, you know, clothes being

advertised or whatever out of these cassettes coming out of Pakistan. And I felt that people needed to change (L. Dadlaney, personal communication, March 19, 2007).

By then Asian Indians had been watching Indian movies on VHS tapes for at least ten years. Dadlaney decided to put Indian movies, the actual original prints, back in movie theaters.

The magic of watching on the big screen, with the sound and the clarity and the big canvas which cinema would offer, I thought people had not seen here for a long time, and people were ready to watch that (L. Dadlaney, personal communication, March 19, 2007).

Furthermore, Dadlaney's other motivation for putting Indian films back in the theater was to create another place for Asian Indians to socialize.

I, at that time, felt that we needed a meeting place, you know, some sort of a meeting round where people could meet and interact. So it was partly a business decision. And partly it was also driven by the fact, because I thought a lot of people can come in, you know, have a cup of tea and exchange, you know, have samosas and just meet. And then there is a common plain meeting place, which was not existing at that time (L. Dadlaney, personal communication, March 19, 2007).

#### ***4.5.3. Bollywood films***

The movies watched by Asian Indians are Bollywood films. Bollywood films grew from the success of a film called Mother India, first shown in 1957 (McDaniel, 2004). Bollywood films come from the Bombay-based film industry in India. Hence

the term Bollywood is a play on the term Hollywood and the city Bombay (which is now called Mumbai). Bollywood produces the greatest number of films in the world (Munshi, 2007). The films are mostly in the language of Hindi and are lively, energetic musicals. The music is generally pre-recorded, and the actors lip-sync the songs during production of the film. In general, the movies are about love and turmoil (Gokulsing & Dissanayake, 2004).

#### ***4.5.4. Asian Indians identifying through Bollywood films***

Gillespie (1989) examined the use of the VCR by Asian Indians in a London suburb, who watched Hindi films to stay connected to their country of origin. For the older Asian Indians, “nostalgia” was the key to watching the films (Gillespie, 1989). These parents felt they could “convey a sense of their past in India to their children” (Gillespie, 1989, p. 236). Parents also had specific uses for film, such as linguistic, religious, and socio-cultural learning for their children (Gillespie, 1989).

Many parents believed that by watching these films their children would maintain their Indian language, which became a symbol of culture and identity (Gillespie, 1989). Parents also found the films to be a point of reference to negotiate customs, traditions, values, and beliefs of the Indian culture, especially when second-generation children born and brought up in England resisted Indian traditions and customs shown in films. The films were used for entertainment and as tools for cultural continuity and for reaffirming cultural identity (Gillespie, 1989).

Non-Bollywood films helped create a form of religious education to help the parents pass religion on to their children (Gillespie, 1989). The films were based on the holy books such as the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, and the *Bhagavat Gita*.



The films created the visual images of the Hindu deities and the ritual acts of worship (Gillespie, 1989). Parents also used the films to teach about religious festivals, which were easier to appreciate when seen in an Indian film.

#### ***4.6. Cable television launches in the U.S.***

The U.S. television industry is largely commercial in nature. It is influenced by “general economic conditions, technological developments, its own organizational structures, management/labor relations, the regulatory climate, consumer preferences, and competition in the marketplace” (Jacobson, 1995, p. 47). It is mostly privately owned with a localized distribution structure. Ownership and control in the industry, which includes television stations and production companies, has shifted over the years from independent companies to major corporations. As a result with major corporations running most stations and networks, less diversity in programming is available for the mainstream audience (Jacobson, 1995).

In 1972, the first cable network, Home Box Office (HBO) was established and distributed through a microwave system; by 1975 its programming was distributed by satellite to cable systems. “Cable networks are programming services that deliver packages of information or entertainment by satellite to local cable television systems. The cable systems then redistribute the network programs, through wires, to individual residences in their local franchise areas” (Gross, 1997, p. 265).

In the 1970s, cable systems began to offer public access channels. These channels were meant for groups and individuals to make programs for other individuals in their own communities. Public access reflected the “interests of groups

and individuals usually excluded from mainstream television” (Kellner, 1997, p. 1310).

The rationale for public access television was that, as mandated by the Federal Communications Act of 1934, the airwaves belong to the people, that in a democratic society it is useful to multiply public participation in political discussion, and that mainstream television severely limited the range of views and opinion. Public access television, then, would open television to the public, it would make possible community participation, and thus would be in the public interest of strengthening democracy (Kellner, 1997, p. 1310-1311).

Public access channels grew significantly during the 1980s and 1990s. Many cable systems offered free use of equipment, personnel, and air time, and occasionally even provided free videotapes to people who wanted to create programs on public access channels (Kellner, 1997). The whole purpose of public access channels was to provide a voice for people who are not in the mainstream.

At the same time, Asian Indians who moved to the U.S. 20 years prior were becoming well-established in their professions and able to offer financial support to fund programs about the community on cable access channels. Asian Indians were ready to spread their community news through electronic media. They established both television and radio programs.

*TV Asia* is North America's first entertainment and information channel for the Asian Indian community. It launched in 1993 on cable and satellite, offering programming 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. *TV Asia* offers soap operas, game shows, movies, news, but unlike much of the programming imported from India, *TV*

*Asia* is generally community-based programming. “We cover what is going on in the community [from] coast to coast, city to city, and people are enjoying to see the local thing” (H. Shah, personal communication, March 20, 2007). *TV Asia* is set up with its own studio and production house to produce programs that cater to the Asian Indian community in the U.S. (H. Shah, personal communication, March 20, 2007). In the U.S. the subscribers who watch *TV Asia* are mostly watching it via cable, but at least 25 percent are watching via satellite (H. Shah, personal communication, March 20, 2007). It offers news in several Indian languages including English, Hindi, Gujrathi, Punjabi, and Bengali everyday. Its trademark theme, “Home away from home” is based on providing Asian Indians with programming from their own culture and in their native language (H. Shah, personal communication, March 20, 2007).

*Namaste Television* was established in 1989 with an exclusive reach to South Asians living in America. *Namaste Television* claims to have a higher viewership than satellite channels and South Asian newspapers. Also, the network can broadcast on seven broadcast television UHF stations and on over 500 cable systems. *Namaste Television* reaches approximately 70 percent of the South Asian households in the U.S. and has a high concentration of viewers in New York, New Jersey, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, and Seattle. *Namaste Television* tailors its content specifically to the South Asian American community and does not simply rebroadcast programs produced in India (Namaste Television, 2006).

*Darshan TV Show* started 19 years ago (1987), is an hour-long weekly program created to serve the Washington D.C. Metro area's South Asian community.

It airs on the MHz networks and covers the South Asian community in the region (Darshan TV, n.d.)

*Chitrahaar* is a program that has served the Chicago community since 1985. It started as a live Saturday morning broadcast showcasing local talent in Chicago, featuring song and dance clips from Hindi movies. It uses an established transmitting channel that gives air time to many other ethnic broadcasts (Rangaswamy, 2000).

*Bharat Darshan* (television) is produced by Super Broadcasting in Skokie, Illinois, and offers its cable viewers all over the metropolitan Chicago area current news from India; local news, activities, and community events; talk shows and interviews; cooking shows; movie songs and live concerts; TV serials and sports from India (Rangaswamy, 2000).

Currently there are about 117 forms of South Asian press that cater to the diaspora in the U.S., including radio, television, and print (New America Media, 2004).

#### ***4.7. Satellite Television***

Satellite services first were launched in 1962 to deliver television news and programming between companies and to broadcasters and cable operators (Paterson, 1997). However, the kind of satellite television service discussed in this dissertation refers to Direct to Home (DTH) satellite service also called Direct Broadcast Satellites (DBS). The platform for the Direct to Home (DTH) satellite service took off first in Japan and Europe. The U.S. lagged behind, not because it lacked technological resources, but because it built up an infrastructure of delivery systems such as VHF, UHF, and cable networks so that U.S. consumers had as many as 90

television channels to choose from (Wood, 1992). Furthermore, in the 1970s satellite dishes sold for just under \$10,000, not so affordable for the average television consumer (Paterson, 1997). But since the mid-1980s, satellites have been increasingly used to broadcast programming directly to viewers (Garay, 1997).

By the mid to late 1980s, very few new cable networks were introduced because cable systems had filled all their channels. “By 1992, Congress passed a bill requiring cable networks to sell their programming to services in competition with cable, such as direct broadcast satellite” (Gross, 1997, p. 270).

In 1994, DirecTV delivered an all-digital, high-power, multi-channel TV programming service via an 18-inch satellite dish (DirecTV, 2007a). “DirecTV was the first DBS service to deliver up to 175 channels of digital-quality programming” (Muller, 1998, p. 95). The Dish Network first launched its television satellite services in the U.S. in 1996 (Dish Network, 2007a).

Satellite television transmission has been instrumental in fostering international niche markets (Cunningham & Sinclair, 2000). Members of the diaspora can watch news from their homeland via the satellite dish or cable (in larger cities) (Cunningham & Sinclair, 2000). Direct broadcast satellite (DBS) technology made it possible for subscribers to receive television by installing earth-receiving satellite dishes on or near their homes (Jacobson, 1995). Satellite technology allowed Asian Indians to have easier access to programming produced in their home culture.

#### ***4.7.1. Indian programming available in the Washington Metro area via satellite***

In the Washington, D.C. Metro area, South Asian programming imported from India is available through two satellite dish options: Direct TV and the Dish Network, and through cable television, Comcast and Cox Communications.

Both Comcast and Cox Communications serve the Maryland and Virginia suburbs of the Washington Metro area, and only offer *Zee TV* and *TV Asia* through digital cable (Comcast 2007, Cox Communications 1998). Clearly using a cable service provider as opposed to the satellite dish is more convenient; however, customers are not given as much variety in selection of Indian programming channels.

#### ***4.7.2. The Asian Indian television consumer***

The average Asian Indian in the U.S. spends between \$40 and \$50 per month on television, and that figure is slated to grow (Mozumder, 2005). With fast-paced growth in buying power among Asian Indians, satellite television companies have been adding channels to meet the consumer interests in the ethnic communities in the U.S. (The Gale Group, 2004). Specifically, the Asian Indian audience constitutes the most attractive portion of growth in the ethnic television market (Chhaya, 2005).

According to an article published in *India Abroad* in 2005, approximately 500,000 Asian-Indian households have television access in the U.S., out of which 200,000 are on the Dish (Echo Star) network, a provider of Asian Indian ethnic programming (Mozumder, 2005). However, in response to a request for its latest figures on Asian Indian subscribers, the Dish Network would only report the total

number of customers it has for all ethnic groups, including White Americans in the U.S., 13.4 million customers nationwide. “We do not disclose the breakdown of our subscriber numbers by city, state, or region or by programming packages or equipment” (K. Hubbard, personal communication, August 15, 2007).

The other major player in the satellite market carrying ethnic programming for Asian Indians in the U.S. is DirecTV, which launched its South Asian language programming in October of 2004 (A. Babber, personal communication, August 6, 2007). DirecTV also could not give a specific breakdown of its number of Asian Indian subscribers. However, Anu Babber, the senior manager of international programming with DirecTV, believed that “300,000 homes subscribe to Indian television programming” and that included cable and other satellite services in the U.S. (A. Babber, personal communication, August 6, 2007). Babber (personal communication, August 6, 2007) also said that New York, New Jersey, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Houston, Atlanta, the Washington D.C. Metro area constitute DirecTV’s largest Asian Indian markets. Babber (personal communication, August 6, 2007) believes that 30,000 Asian Indians in the Washington Metro area subscribe to a “pay television” service, but he would not specify if they use DirecTV, the Dish network, or Comcast Cable to get their Indian programming.

#### ***4.7.3. What does DirecTV offer?***

DirecTV is a satellite channel subscription service, whose largest shareholder is Liberty Media (Peers, Vranica, & Kang, 2007). DirecTV offers its customers a premier package called Hindi-Direct, which offers 5 channels of Hindi programming or subscribers can also choose their channels a la carte. The Hindi-Direct service

offers programming from the Satellite Television Asian Region, or STAR Network, which is owned by News Corp. Channels from the STAR Network include *STAR ONE*, programs that cater to young, urban audiences, such as action, thrillers, comedy, drama, lifestyle, game shows, and original movies made for television; *STAR PLUS*, entertainment programs from India; *STAR NEWS*, a news channel from India covering politics, business, investigative reports, consumer issues, crime, and environment; MTV Desi, targeted to South Asian Americans, features various styles of music, including a fusion of Indian and hip-hop sounds, along with Bollywood videos; *NDTV*, which stands for New Delhi Television—another news channel (DirecTV, 2007b).

The a la carte options are primarily channels that offer programming in another Indian language besides Hindi. India is a country with more than 200 dialects, and in certain parts of India not everyone speaks Hindi.

DirecTV also offers *DD India*, which is the 24/7 international service of Doordarshan, India's state broadcaster. Doordarshan was the state television channel that launched in India when television was introduced in 1959 (Thussu, 1998). “The aim of the national broadcasters was to educate, inform and create a feeling of national identity and help maintain national unity” (Thussu, 1998, p. 275). By the mid-1980s, Doordarshan became increasingly commercialized.

For DirecTV customers, *DD India* is part of the South Asian language programming packages. The Doordarshan channel offers news, drama, education, public service, comedy (traditional and contemporary), entertainment and variety programs (DirecTV, 2007b).



#### ***4.7.4. What does the Dish Network offer?***

The other satellite channel subscription service in the Washington Metro area is the Dish Network, which is owned by EchoStar Communications Corp. The Dish package includes a variety of channels, such as *Zee TV*, *Sony Entertainment Television Asia*, *TV Asia*, *Sahara One*, *Sahara Samay*, *Aaj Tak*, *Headlines Today*, *B4U Movies*, *Zee Cinema*, *SET Max*, *B4U Music* and *Asian FM*. This variety of channels offers blockbuster movies, serials, music videos, family-based entertainment, action-packed thrillers, lifestyle programs, cricket matches, national news coverage, and more (Dish Network, 2007).

#### ***4.7.5. Growth of television in India***

In India, “a general policy of economic liberalization in 1990, combined with the growth of unregulated cable television and the introduction of satellite television services” created significant changes in the broadcasting sector (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005, p. 91). These changes involved the government’s recognition of private commercial broadcasting and less financial support for state broadcaster Doordarshan, so the broadcasting sector could raise its own revenues through commercial efforts. The government also eased its restrictions on private broadcasters, allowing them to own and operate commercial satellite systems (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005). These systems were allowed “to uplink directly from India using Indian or foreign satellites,” which allowed foreign investment into the media sector and introduced the Convergence Bill (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005, p. 92). This bill opened up the country’s proposed DTH (direct to home) platform for private satellite television use. “The result has been an explosion in the growth of private

channels that currently number over 40, and reach approximately 42 million cable and satellite homes in the country” (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005).

In 1991, the STAR Network started broadcasting over Asia from Hong Kong using a leased satellite called Asiasat (Thomas & Kumar, 2004). Initially there were four channels: *STAR Plus*, an entertainment channel largely made up of Euro-American programming; Star Sports, largely Euro-American sporting events; *BBC News*, the British Broadcasting Corporation’s worldwide news service; and *MTV*, the American music channel (Kumar, 2006). Eventually STAR TV grew to include more channels, but offered viewers old and new American soap operas like *Dynasty* and *The Bold and the Beautiful*, talk shows like *Ricki Lake* and *Oprah Winfrey*, drama shows like *Baywatch*, live coverage of international sports, MTV, and BBC World Service (Kumar, 2006). By July 1993, Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation bought 63.6 percent of STAR TV’s total shares from owners at that time. By July 1995, STAR TV became completely owned by News Corp. In 1996, STAR TV was reportedly reaching 53 million households worldwide (Kumar, 2006).

In 1992, News Corp. also acquired 49.9 percent share in the Hindi-language channel called *Zee TV*, which was launched by Indian businessman Subhash Chandra (Kumar, 2006). *Zee TV* was different from STAR TV because for the first time Indian audiences were exposed to Hindi-language television that was not Doordarshan, the state-sponsored national television network. Chandra’s strategy was to provide Hindi television viewers with what Doordarshan did not— a Hindi-language equivalent of Star TV’s English-language soaps, sitcoms, talk shows, game

shows, and more (Kumar, 2006). Unlike Doordarshan, Zee TV was not constrained by government control over programming content.

By the mid-1990s, Zee TV established itself as a major network catering to Hindi-speaking viewers, with an estimated reach of 140 million people worldwide. In 1995, Zee TV established itself in the United Kingdom. In 1996, it extended its network to Africa; and by 1998, it entered the United States. By September 1999, Chandra bought out Murdoch's stake in Zee TV (Kumar, 2006).

By 1998, Zee TV covered Asia, Europe, the U.S., and Africa, catering to the 25-million Indian diaspora (Thussu, 1998). With its mix of Hindi films and film-related programs, serials, game and talk shows, it was widely acknowledged by the mid-1990s that Zee TV had changed the face of broadcasting in India (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005). Zee TV was one of the first Indian companies to recognize the potential of broadcasting overseas to the diaspora and currently claims to reach 250 million viewers in 120 countries (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005). The Zee TV network was also behind the first company to launch direct-to-home satellite services (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005). But most importantly Zee TV's success grew because it offered entertainment-oriented programming in the form of Hindi film-related shows (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005). In the U.S., Zee TV reaches 40 percent of all South Asian households on both cable and satellite (S. Venkatasubramanian, personal communication, August 13, 2007).

#### **4.7.6. Zee TV vs. STAR TV**

Zee TV, which is distributed by the Dish network, and StarTV, which is distributed by DirecTV, are major competitors in India, which means subscribers can

only view one of the networks based on the satellite service they subscribe to in the Washington Metro area. Zee TV is also available on Comcast Cable.

Zee TV paved the way in educating media executives that Hindi-language programming is the best way to reach the mass audience in India. Furthermore, Star TV learned how to reach mass audiences from Zee TV as it continued to lose viewers from its English-only programming to Zee TV's Hindi-language programming (Thussu, 1998). Zee TV's popularity attracted other commercial networks such as Sony TV, which also began offering varied Hindi-language programming. Other commercial networks started to develop programs catering to regions of India that were not Hindi-speaking regions of the country. Sun TV and Eenadu TV started programming services in regional languages, especially in South India, where English and Hindi are spoken only by a limited few in the large metropolitan areas. The purpose of the regional-language channels was to cater to viewers' interests in ways that Doordarshan, Star TV, and Zee TV never could (Kumar, 2006).

#### ***4.7.7. Westernization of India's programming***

In India, CNN/Headline News is one of the many channels offered to customers either via cable or satellite. But it often caters only to those who are well-educated in English. In contrast, *Aaj Tak* news, developed in India and has a more national orientation rather than international orientation in news. Furthermore, *Aaj Tak* uses informal Hindi rather than the formal Hindi spoken by the state broadcaster, Doordarshan. Finally, it focuses on storytelling instead of talking heads (anchors reading news stories only) reading editorials. *Aaj Tak* is a phenomenon in India because it uses a global media format (live shots, ticker tape, reporter packages), but

reflects national news coverage (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005). *Aaj Tak* not only reaches the mass audience in India, but the Indian diaspora can also appreciate its global format.

*Kaun Banega Crorepati* is another successful adaptation of a global media format. The show is adapted from *Who wants to be a Millionaire?* by Star TV. The program has achieved high ratings in India and has generated other quiz show clones among rival networks, Zee TV and Sony (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005).

#### ***4.7.8. The Indian soap opera***

The term *soap opera* was “coined by the American press in the 1930s to denote the extraordinarily popular genre of serialized domestic radio dramas, which, by 1940, represented some 90% of all commercially-sponsored daytime broadcast hours” (Allen, 1997, p. 1514). The “soap” in the term refers to the sponsorship by manufacturers of household cleaning products. “Opera suggested an ironic incongruity between the domestic narrative concerns of the daytime serial and the most elevated of dramatic forms” (Allen, 1997, p. 1514). India has “closed” soap operas like the *telenovelas* in Latin America. These soap operas dominate prime-time programming and are broadcast nightly over three to four months. These soap operas eventually end, and the design and reception of the closed soap opera make it fundamentally different from the “open” soap opera typical in the U.S. (Allen, 1997). India has had “soaps” for decades, but they have become popular in recent years because of the lavish sets, clothes worn by the actors, and more importantly, the story lines. These drama tackle the social issues of present-day India (Engineer, 2007). Many of the story lines in the dramas reflect the hardship of India’s striving middle

class compounded with India's traditional family structure. For example, the story lines are changing to reflect how more women are working in the household as opposed to the traditional disagreements over cooking between the women in the household. Furthermore, the women are portrayed as smart, strong characters and their traditional roles in the household are being upgraded (Engineer, 2007). That is because more women in India are working and supporting their families financially for the first time amid India's rapid economic growth.

However, some soap operas are not realistic as they reflect rich families living in mansions. Some are even shot in foreign locations. The women wear bright, heavily embroidered saris (women's outfit with six yards of cloth) with heavy jewelry. The clothes worn by the characters are a main topic of conversation among the viewers (Engineer, 2007). Currently all of the top 10 shows in India are Hindi-language soaps. Together they attract more than 50 million viewers (Engineer, 2007).

#### ***4.8. Summary***

In summary, this historical overview provides insight into the different kinds of media used by Asian Indians, such as movies, newspapers, radio, and television, both cable and satellite. The various kinds of media used by Asian Indians depict the changes in media technology over a period of years. This overview has described the background of Asian Indians in the U.S. and their cultural connection to India.

The next chapter describes the historical method used for this study. It explains why a chronological historical overview of media use by Asian Indians in this dissertation was presented as well as how oral histories of the cohort being studied were conducted.

## **Chapter 5: Historical Methodology**

### ***5.1. Design of the Study***

The study was designed in two phases to address why Asian Indians have acculturated into Indian programming available via the satellite dish. In the first phase, the historical overview, describe the different kinds of media that have catered to the Indian diaspora since the 1960s. As the researcher gathered information to build the historical overview, she conducted oral history interviews with Asian Indian media experts to obtain information not documented. The historical overview described the technological changes that took place in media. In the second phase of the study, the researcher conducted oral history interviews with 10 couples who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago. The oral history interviews elicited their recollection of their media use from the 1960s to the present.

#### ***5.1.1. Rationale for Historical Methodological Approach***

A historical methodological approach, which is useful in qualitative methods, immerses the researcher into the past to prepare for the oral histories, which also allows the study to be grounded (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). This method focuses on examining the past or even reexamining the past to see if it has been portrayed accurately. The research creates a historical base, or context, to enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of a study.

Historical methods use either primary sources or secondary sources. Primary sources can be the original documents and oral history interviews as evidence that portrayed the event (or period in history) being studied. Secondary sources are those in which people wrote about the primary sources in a particular area of research. In

general, secondary sources should only be used to find primary sources when doing historical research (Berg, 2007).

Historical methodology involves the advancing of a possible explanation for evidence as research progresses. The goal of historical methodology is to reconstruct the past as accurately as possible (Berg, 2007).

### ***5.1.2. Emic vs. Etic***

The study calls for an historical approach to help uncover what draws Asian Indians, who migrated to the U.S. in the 1960s and early 1970s, to watch Indian television programs via the satellite dish. This qualitative approach for discovering the enculturation and acculturation process of these immigrants stems from making an emic distinction to this research. The emic approach gives the researcher in-depth understanding into the behaviors of these Indian immigrants, both in the historical overview as well as the oral histories. For example, with the emic approach the researcher tries to understand what people from a specific culture value as meaningful and important (Brislin, 1976). The etic approach generalizes behaviors based on external criteria. For example, following historical data collection and analysis, the researcher makes generalizations across cultures accounting for all human behavior (Brislin, 1976). In this study the researcher uses the emic approach rather than the etic approach because she tries to understand if Indian culture is what draws Asian Indians to Indian television via the satellite dish. Therefore the emic approach brings value to this study.



## *5.2. Use of Chronology*

The purpose of the chronological historical overview is to provide historical context and to explain the use of Indian media by Asian Indians in the U.S. and how Indian media has progressed. By building this historical context, the researcher leads the reader to the heart of the dissertation, i.e. the use of satellite television by Asian Indians. The dissertation acknowledges important events during the time period studied, as well as changes in media technology that lead Asian Indians to acculturate to Indian television. The events include the following:

- a) Asian Indians' immigration to the U.S.—specifically 1965, the year the Immigration and Nationality Act lifted quotas for Asians to enter the U.S.
- b) Early Indian media— Hindi movies available in the 1960s that were played at local universities or art theaters.
- c) Newspapers imported from India
- d) Indian newspapers produced in the U.S. for the Indian diaspora in the 1970s
- e) Early Indian television and radio in the U.S.
- f) VCR revolution - Bollywood films rented to play on home VCRs.
- g) Return of Indian movie theaters
- h) Cable programming for the Indian diaspora in the U.S.
- i) Indian programming imported from India on satellite television that became available to Asian Indians in the U.S. in 1998
- j) Westernization of India's programming

The purpose of the chronology was to gain understanding of Asian Indians' connection to their own culture, such as what makes them want to stay connected to India and to their community through media. The different kinds of media used by Asian Indians over the years helps develop the rationale as to why Asian Indians are connected to Indian programming via satellite television today. In addition, the purpose of chronology is to show the kind of media has been technologically available to Asian Indians as they settled and built their lives in the U.S. over the past 40 years.

### ***5.2.1. Oral Histories of Media Experts***

To establish the chronology of events, the researcher found the information in books, journal articles, ethnic newspaper articles, and websites, but still discovered gaps. Therefore, to fill some of the gaps in the literature review, the researcher conducted oral history interviews with Asian Indian media experts. These experts had a role in establishing media in this U.S. for the Asian Indian population. The oral histories uncovered the kind of media available catering to the Indian diaspora in the U.S. In this group of oral history interviews, the researcher tried to uncover the motivation to create certain media that catered to the Asian Indian population in the U.S. Furthermore, the media experts became primary sources providing necessary information needed to complete the historical overview (Patton, 2002).

The researcher sent out a mass email through the South Asian Journalists Association based in New York explaining what was missing in her study. She received about 50 responses with information on media experts in both the U.S. and India. Some of the responses named the same expert for a specific kind of Indian

media, which made it clear for the researcher to determine the media expert. The researcher traveled to India and conducted oral history interviews with former executives of India's leading newspapers. The purpose of these interviews established if there was an audience for Indian news in the U.S. among the Indian diaspora. The researcher traveled to New Delhi and interviewed former executives with the *Times of India* and *The Statesman* to answer this question.

The researcher also talked to executives with one of India's leading networks - Zee TV - about the overseas market to establish how they target the diaspora, specifically the Indian population in the U.S. The purpose of these oral histories was to find out if the Indian diaspora in the U.S. is taken into consideration as programs are created for the network. Furthermore, the researcher wanted to find out if these networks make any money from the Indian diaspora in the U.S. to understand the network's potential for growth in the U.S.

The oral histories included executives who realized that there was a market for Hindi films in the U.S. and decided to get them dubbed over to VHS tapes. Others included the CEO of a leading television channel that caters to the Indian diaspora, the host of a leading Indian radio program, and the founder and publisher of the first newspaper catering to the Indian diaspora in the U.S.

Interviews for the oral histories included

- Tracy ThompsonWest, EchoStar's vice president of international programming (Denver)
- Anu Babber, senior manager, international programming, in charge of South Asian content for DirecTV (New York)

- Anil Srivatsa, host of *Anil ki Awaaz*, the radio show, COO of *India Today*, *Radio* (New Delhi)
- R.V. Smith, former editor of *The Statesman* (New Delhi)
- Inder Malhotra, former editor of *The Statesman*, *The Times of India* (New Delhi)
- Shamlal, former editor in chief of *The Times of India* (New Delhi)
- Anil Sinha, current editor, *The Statesman* (Calcutta)
- K.N. Gupta, former editor, *Economic Times* (New Delhi)
- S. Venkatasubramanian, head of Zee TV's US operations (Dallas)
- Kishore Lulla of *Eros Entertainment* (CEO, London)
- Ken Naz of *Eros Entertainment* (Hindi film distributor, Secaucus, New Jersey)
- Lal Dadlaney of *Video Sound* (Hindi film distributor, Edison, New Jersey)
- H.R. Shah, chairman and CEO of *TV Asia* (Edison, New Jersey)
- Gopal Raju, founder and publisher of *India Abroad* (New York)
- Veena Merchant, former editor of *India Abroad* (New York)
- Sandy Close, executive editor of *New America Media* (San Francisco)

Each media expert was asked standard questions (see Appendix C) and specific questions to their field (see Appendix B). Each oral history interview lasted from one to two hours.

ThompsonWest answered questions in very general terms via email and also forwarded my questions to EchoStar's corporate communications. Babber answered questions over the phone. Srivatsa was interviewed in his office in New Delhi, India.

Smith, Malhotra, Shamlal were all interviewed in their homes in New Delhi, India. Sinha was interviewed in his office in Calcutta, India. Gupta was interviewed at a conference in New Delhi, India. Venkatasubramanian and Lulla were both interviewed over the phone. Naz, Dadlaney, and Shah were all interviewed in their offices in Secaucus and Edison, New Jersey, respectively. Raju and Merchant were interviewed in their offices in New York. Close was interviewed at a conference in Washington, DC.

### *5.2.2. Oral History Interviews of Asian Indians*

Once the historical base was established, the researcher conducted oral history interviews of members of the Asian Indians' generation who migrated to the U.S. in the 1960s and early 1970s. By conducting the oral histories, the researcher gained understanding as to how this cohort became acculturated into watching Indian television. This cohort was used in this study because they did not grow up watching television in the U.S. Television arrived in India in 1959, and even at that time it was only in a few selected homes (Ray & Jacka, 1996). This cohort of Asian Indians learned to watch television after migrating to the U.S.

This cohort was first exposed to Indian programs on cable access channels in the 1980s but by the late 1990s, this cohort was exposed to Indian programs via satellite television (S. Venkatasubramanian, personal communication, August 13, 2007). The researcher used the oral history interviews to discover why this generation is attracted to this Indian programming after living in the U.S. for nearly 40 years.

### ***5.3. Oral Histories***

Oral history refers to the historical discovery of the remembered but unrecorded past (Startt & Sloan, 1989). Its purpose is to reconstruct the past through a retrospective interview. Oral sources, however, cannot stand alone. The testimony must be used in conjunction with other sources (Startt & Sloan, 1989). The process of oral histories involves three stages: background study of the interviewee, strategies for conducting the interview, and verification of the interview's validity (Startt & Sloan, 1989). Oral histories can provide background and social texture to research and become a connection between the past and present.

Oral history can be used as a primary source when conducting historical research. For example, when the researcher developed the historical overview of Indian media available to Asian Indians, she interviewed media experts who functioned as primary sources. "Things that have survived from the past, called documents, are the basis of historical knowledge" (Hoopes, 1979, p. 5). However, many things from the past have not been documented, so experts are interviewed to establish a basis of historical knowledge. "Songs, speeches, interviews, and formal and informal conversation are all oral documents, useful for history" (Hoopes, 1979, p. 5).

Oral histories are a complement to written documents (Hoopes, 1979). Given the historical base established in this study, there is a wide range of written material available creating a historical timeline of the Indian media available to Asian Indians over the past 40 years. However, as stated above, not all information is documented.

Therefore, oral histories by media experts provide the necessary information to compliment the written documents.

Oral history interviews test the memory of how events happened. “Such research is a test of other people, of the accuracy of their memories, of their ability to assess their own lives realistically, and of their ability to profit from experience” (Hoopes, 1979, p. 5). For example, the Asian Indian cohort functioned as primary sources, because they are the generation studied in this dissertation, and they helped establish how media use changed as technology changed over time.

Oral history is a form of historical research that involves personal contact with other people. “‘Oral history’ refers to the collecting of any individual’s spoken memories of his life, of people he has known, and events he has witnessed or participated in” (Hoopes, 1979, p. 7). When conducting an oral history, the researcher does not have the option of being a participant observer of the scene or memory the participant is speaking about (Hoopes, 1979).

The greatest advantage of conducting oral histories is that the historical researcher has an opportunity a chance to actively participate, as the interviewer, in creating the oral document (transcript) and, therefore, can obtain the information he or she needs (Hoopes, 1979). The best historical researchers “actively apply the criterion of *usefulness* in choosing interviewees and the subjects about which they are to be questioned” (Hoopes, 1979, p. 13). For example, the researcher carefully chose the media experts interviewed for their *usefulness* in establishing the historical overview of this study.

Hoopes (1979) describes how the researcher uses written documents to aid in recreating the past. The research from the written documents is used “to help the interviewee better remember both the facts and how he felt about them” (Hoopes, 1979, p. 16). In this particular study, the researcher did not just rely on written documents to recreate the past but instead relied on her own memory of the past. The researcher could rely on her own memory because she witnessed her own parents become consumers of the various kinds of Indian media available throughout the years. The researcher was able to prompt each participants’ memory with her own recollection of the various kinds of subscriptions that came to her own home. Further, she remembered going to the university halls to watch Hindi movies with her parents, watching movies on the VCR with her parents, watching Indian programs available on the cable access channels and on the satellite dish. As a result, the research benefited from the background of the researcher.

Oral historians must deal with the fact that the human memory is not perfect. “All historical documents, including both oral and written, reflect the particular subjective minds of their creators” (Hoopes, 1979, p. 15). Although written documents are less distorted by memory and considered a better source of facts by some historians, oral history gives a “feel” for the facts provided by the interviewee (Hoopes, 1979, p. 15). For this study, the cohort of Asian Indians interviewed provided a feel for the climate of media available to them throughout the past 40 years.

Oral histories can deal with the experiences not only of the famous but also of ordinary people. As Rubin and Rubin (2005) explain, some oral histories pay



attention to ordinary people and their experiences, because they explain how certain discoveries shaped their specific generation. For this study, talking to the cohort of Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago about the Indian media in their lives was essential in learning how their media habits had changed as technology had changed.

### ***5.3.1. Culture***

Another element of oral history is learning to understand the context shaped by culture. “To learn about culture, researchers ask members of a group about what is socially approved, listen for and discuss terms that are specific to a group or setting, and examine what people have learned through experience and then passed on to the next generation” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 9).

Hoopes (1979) explains that in order to understand cultural history, historical researchers must study individual documents, such as letters, pictures, or oral history interviews. Furthermore, as culture is complex, learning about it in oral histories requires careful, detailed description, which can be obtained through techniques such as open-ended interviews (Hoopes, 1979).

The virtue of the open-ended interview in oral history is precisely the kind of detail it provides, especially on reasons and motives. Though it is more difficult to generalize from such individualized information, its detail, its ‘thickness,’ is more likely to reveal inner, cultural meaning. ...In history, where factors of lapsed time and memory create complications, detail and thickness are of the utmost importance (Hoopes, 1979, pp. 47-48).

This “thickness” in description proved to be most useful when analyzing the oral histories later in the study.

### ***5.3.2. Conducting the Oral History***

Conducting the oral history is like conducting an open-ended interview. The method requires the interviewer to be prepared to sit with the participant for at least an hour to get full narrative responses. The researcher is most interested in how the participant frames and structures the responses. “Qualitative interviewers listen to hear the meaning of what interviewees are telling them. When they cannot figure out that meaning, they ask follow-up questions to gain clarity and precision” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, pp. 13-14). As the researcher questions the participants, their perspectives on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as they view it, not as the researcher views it. The most important aspect of the interviewer’s approach should convey the attitude that participants’ views are valuable and useful. “Qualitative research is not simply learning about a topic, but also learning what is important to those being studied” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 15).

For this study, the researcher conducted the oral histories as standardized open-ended interviews for both the media experts and the cohort of Asian Indians. As is standard practice, the doctoral committee approved of the questions in the dissertation proposal before interviewing began and the university’s institutional review board for protection of human subjects also approved the structured interview (Patton, 2002).

Although the wording of the questions was determined and approved in advance, and all the interviewees were asked the same questions, at times the

researcher found it necessary to combine the standardized open-ended approach with a conversational strategy. For example, some of the answers to the questions led the researcher to probe even further, giving acertain flexibility to the interview (Patton, 2002). For some of the interviewees, the researcher needed to prompt the participants with key words, such as “India Abroad, Zee TV,” when making reference to different kinds of media. For some interviewees, the English words in the answers did not come immediately to them, but the researcher knew what they were trying to say based on the findings already established in previous interviews. Therefore, the researcher prompted them with the necessary English words to trigger their thought processes. It should also be noted that even though the Asian Indian cohort has lived in the U.S. for nearly 40 years, for some, English words do not come as naturally as words in their native language. Furthermore, the researcher was also limited in translating Hindi as well.

But more importantly because the researcher was second generation, and the same age as many of the children of the interviewees, the researcher felt as if she was talking to “aunts and uncles” and could approach each question with a conversational style. This style allowed the researcher to establish a rapport with each interviewee (Patton, 2002).

...that rapport must be established in such a way that it does not undermine my neutrality concerning what the person tells me. Neutrality means that the person being interviewed can tell me [the researcher] anything without engendering either my [the researcher’s] favor or disfavor with regard to the content of their response (Patton, 1990, pp. 316-317).

But having too close a rapport with the participants could lead to a drawback in the study because the participants may feel too informal with the researcher. For example, being close in age to the children of the participants means they may forget that they are participating in a research study and fail to give the best answers possible to the questions asked.

The credibility of the researcher often comes into question in a qualitative study, particularly if there is a possibility for bias in the study. However, as Patton (1990) explains the “data inevitably represent perspective rather than absolute truth. Getting close enough to the situation observed to experience it firsthand means that evaluators can learn from their experiences, thereby generating personal insights” (p. 475). As noted in the introduction of this dissertation, the researcher outlined her biases in the section called the “Role of the Researcher.”

The first interview was very different from the last interview. In the first interview, the researcher did not know what to expect and had no point of reference for the answers. The second interview was similar to the first; but by the third interview, the researcher noticed some similarity in the answers. By the time the researcher interviewed the sixth couple of the ten, she had uncovered similar findings in the answers. As Rubin and Rubin (2005) point out, this process is called reaching a saturation point:

You are not looking for any differences at all but looking for those that are related to the concepts and themes you are working out. As you continue to interview people from each of the relevant categories, each new conversation should add less and less to what you already know, until all you start hearing

are the same matters over and over again. At that point, you have reached what Glaser and Strauss term the ‘saturation point’, and you stop. (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p.67, Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

In addition, the researcher expanded on the questions based on some of the findings formed from previous answers. For example, one topic that was not anticipated in the answers was how these Asian Indians felt attracted to the Indian programming because of music. The researcher pursued this topic in subsequent interviews. Overall the researcher used a “go with the flow” approach (Patton, 2002, p. 343). This approach meant that as oral histories were unfolding, the researcher let the participants elaborate on certain points and expand on answers, because it sometimes led to uncovering unforeseen information.

Although the standardized open-ended answers may have become conversational at times, the interviews did not lose focus because the questions stayed within a specific subject area. By staying focused, the researcher was also able to interview each participant efficiently. Furthermore, the standardized open-ended interview also made data analysis easier, “because it is possible to locate each respondent’s answer to the same question rather quickly and to organize questions and answers that are similar” (Patton, 2002, p. 346).

#### *5.3.2.1. The Interview Protocol.*

In this dissertation, the researcher used the historical overview to construct questions she asked in the oral history interviews. The researcher constructed the questions based on the chronology of media use described. The researcher’s thorough review of Asian Indian media use helped her formulate the questions for the

Asian Indian cohort. In addition the researcher was able to remember examples of Indian media used by her own parents, which helped her formulate the questions. However, the researcher did not solely rely on her memory of the past in developing the questions for the interviews, but relied on the information documented in the historical overview. This approach helped the researcher take a step back and examine each interview independent of her own biases through her parents' experience. As the researcher constructed the questions, she made sure her series of questions had the following functions:

Its [the interview] first responsibility is to ensure that the investigator covers all the terrain in the same order for each respondent. The second function is the care and scheduling of the prompts necessary to manufacture distance. ...The third function of the questionnaire is that it establishes channels for the direction and scope of discourse. ...The fourth function of the questionnaire is that it allows the investigator to give all his or her attention to the informant's testimony (McCracken, 1988, pp. 24-25).

The interview protocol also helped establish the domain the oral histories needed to explore. "It also specifies categories and relationships that may organize the data," and it helps the investigator "have a list of topics for which questions must be prepared" (McCracken, 1988, p. 31).

When asking the questions, the researcher first started with the questions in bold (See Appendix A). The purpose of starting with these questions first was to ensure that the most important question were asked even if the interviews took longer than expected. These questions were directed to the heart of the research question in

the dissertation. Upon completing those questions first, the researcher then back-tracked and asked the un-highlighted questions from the beginning of Appendix A. She was able to ask all the questions for every interview she conducted, including the mandatory questions in Appendix C. However, it is important to emphasize that the questionnaire does not preempt the “open-ended” style of the oral history. “Within each of the questions, the opportunity for exploratory, unstructured responses remains” (McCracken, 1988, p. 25).

As these interviews were conducted as oral histories, Startt and Sloan (1989) explain how the historical interview involves three stages: “1) preparation; 2) the interview itself, and 3) subsequent reconstruction” (p. 183). Preparation involves “background study and selection of and approach to an interviewee” (Startt & Sloan, 1989, p. 183). The interview itself “deals with strategies of conducting the interview” (Startt & Sloan, 1989, p. 183). The subsequent reconstruction is when the interviewer checks the validity. “After that the interview becomes an authentic oral record to be tested by all of the means of internal criticism” (Startt & Sloan, 1989, p. 183). Internal criticism means “determining the credibility of a document - i.e., that a particular detail is as close to what actually happened as we can learn from a critical examination of the best sources” (Startt & Sloan, 1989, p. 164).

The researcher checked the reliability and validity of each oral history. Reliability applies to “the degree to which an interviewee tells the same story on separate occasions. The validity describes the degree to which a given account could be corroborated by the other available resources that related to the event (Hoffman & Hoffman, 2006, p. 278). For this dissertation, the oral histories were conducted only

once. However, the detailed account of the participants' media use and why they watch Indian television via the satellite dish was strongly in conjunction with the findings in the literature review and historical overview.

#### *5.3.2.2. The Memory.*

Oral history can be defined as recorded interviews that preserve historically significant memories for future use. Oral historians are those who use many types of materials, in addition to recording spoken memories, to document and explain the past. However, it is critical for oral historians to be aware that the memory of interviewees is fragile, "supple and pliant" (Morrissey, 2006, p. 175). Furthermore, "personal and autobiographical memory provides information from individuals who have experience, preferably direct, of events of historical significance." (Hoffman & Hoffman, 2006, p. 291).

### ***5.4. Sources and Data Gathering***

#### ***5.4.1. Participants (Asian Indian Cohort)***

The researcher conducted oral histories with 10 couples who migrated to the U.S. between 1960 and 1972, and currently reside in the Washington Metro area. All of the participants subscribe to Indian programming via the satellite dish, and use the Dish Network for their satellite television services. Most of the participants started their satellite service when Indian programming was first introduced in the U.S., which was in 1998 (S. Venkatasubramanian, personal communication, August 13, 2007). The highest educational degree within this cohort was a medical degree, eight people had their master's degree, and the remaining 11 all had their bachelor's degree. All of the participants are of the Hindu religion, and they speak a



combination of Punjabi, Hindi, and English at home. However, some of the participants, who are originally from South India, speak a combination of Telegu and English at home. None of the households speak only English at home. The average age of participants was 65.

For many of the couples the husbands came to the U.S. first, established themselves professionally, and returned to India for an arranged marriage. When the husbands returned to the U.S., not all brides came with them immediately. Many wives waited a few years to get an immigration visa before they could join their husbands in the U.S. Only four people arrived before 1965, but the rest (16 participants) arrived in the U.S. after 1965. Three couples have a family income from \$100,000 to \$200,000 per year. The remaining seven couples earn well over \$200,000 per year. Eleven of the participants are still gainfully employed, four are retired, and five women are homemakers. Their occupations include real estate, medical physicist, esthetician, doctor, restaurant owner, but six are civil or mechanical engineers. Three couples have three adult children each, the remaining seven couples have two adult children each. The couples reside in McLean, VA, Potomac, MD, Rockville, MD, Glenn Dale, MD, Darnestown, MD or Springfield, VA.

It was a strategic decision by the researcher to find participants from the Washington Metro area. In order to really gain depth in these oral history interviews the researcher had an “in” in the Washington Metro area. She had mutual acquaintances who introduced her to the potential participants as well as general knowledge about them.

Knowledge about the people being studied and familiarity with their routines and rituals facilitate entry as well as rapport once one has gained entry.

Understanding a group's *argot* (specialized language), for example, may assist an investigator not only in gaining entry but also in understanding what is going on once he or she has access. In some instances, the researcher may hold some special relationship with members of a group he or she seeks entry to or may himself be a member of that group (Berg, 2007, p. 184).

The researcher felt that if she went to New York or another major metropolitan city and randomly introduced herself to Asian Indians of this generation, it would not be the efficient way to gain access for this research. By using the same generation from the Washington Metro area, the researcher gained access to a cohort of individuals who had the same experience in one area of the country. This was the best method to understand who these people really are, how they stay connected to their culture and gain in-depth understanding of this issue.

#### ***5.4.2. Snowball Sampling and Procedure***

Having lived in the Washington Metro area off and on for more than a decade, the researcher has become familiar with the Asian Indian social scene and events that took place in the region. Furthermore, her involvement with organizations like the Network of South Asian Professionals and the South Asian Journalists Association helped the researcher develop a close circle of second-generation Asian Indian friends. Some of the researcher's Asian Indian friends are from the Washington Metro area and, therefore, their parents live in the area.

Through a series of acquaintances, like her friends, the researcher was referred to people who fit the generation she was interested in studying. After the first few interviews, the participants recommended other people to interview. Hence, the researcher used the snowball sampling technique to find the appropriate 10 couples, who are current subscribers of Indian television via the satellite dish and who also migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago. Snowball sampling is a technique used in finding people who know people familiar with the subject who can make the cases rich in the study (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

The researcher called each of the participants, using the names of the recommenders to try and convince them to do the interview. The researcher was able to gain entry by using her friends and social networks to see if anyone could offer a referral into the cohort she needed to study (Vallance, 2001). Thirty-two couples were contacted for this study. Some couples were not interested in participating. Some couples discussed how they really did not watch that much television and therefore would not be good participants for this study. Some couples watched Indian television via Comcast instead of the satellite dish and therefore did not qualify for this study. The couples who did respond to the researcher's phone calls were interested in participating in the study and followed the criteria of migrating to the U.S. between 1960 to 1972 and watched Indian television via the satellite dish.

The researcher carefully explained the study to each potential participant. However, these participants were of a specific social class. In fact, some of them were clearly multi-millionaires based on the homes the researcher visited in Potomac, MD and Mclean, VA. For some of the participants, just because the researcher was

of Indian descent and from the Washington metro area, a mutual acquaintance was not enough to gain access into their lives. The researcher literally had to describe a short background about herself on the phone to appear credible when she was initially setting up the interview. This description included:

- the researcher was Kathleen Matthews' producer for four years (a former well-liked television anchor in the Washington Metro area),
- the researcher had her master's degree from Northwestern University.
- the researcher worked in television for 10 years as a producer
- and that the researcher's own parents came to this country during the 1960s and worked as professionals.

With this description the researcher was able to gain the participants' initial trust.

Once the interviews were conducted, the researcher not only gained intellectual honesty from their answers, but some of the participants shared personal stories about how they came to the U.S.

#### ***5.4.3. Pre-testing***

No formal pre-testing was conducted. However, when the researcher made the initial phone calls to set up the interviews, she established whether the participants met the criteria of the study.

#### ***5.4.4. Setting***

Each oral history was conducted in the home of the couples, usually in the dining room, at a time that was convenient for them. One interview was conducted in the participant's workplace. Because the oral histories were conducted in their homes, the participants remained in their comfort zone. Furthermore, the researcher

was able to observe the Indian culture established in each participants' home by the artifacts on display as well as aroma of Indian cooking. In addition, the researcher shared a meal with one couple and was offered food or beverage by all the other couples. By interviewing the participants at home, the researcher became familiar with the interviewees in their home-setting. "Immersion in the setting allows the researcher to hear, see, and begin to experience reality as the participants do" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 106). By immersing herself in the home setting of each participant, the researcher also learned from her own experience in the home-setting. "This immersion offers the researcher the opportunity to learn directly from his own experience of the setting" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

#### *5.4.5. Quality of Oral Histories*

All of the interviews were conducted in English. Each audio-taped interview lasted from 45 to 90 minutes. Each person was interviewed separately, meaning no husband and wife were interviewed together. The researcher took notes during the interviews, which consisted of key words, phrases, and major points made by the respondents during the interviews (Patton, 2002). But more importantly, the researcher had 10 years of professional journalism experience that included interviewing sources for stories and was able to use that experience when conducting the interviews. Before the oral histories began, each participant answered 10 questions for a demographic profile (See Appendix D). Oral history questions were then asked of media experts (See Appendix B and C) and of each Asian Indian participant studied in this cohort (See Appendix A and C). In the results and discussion section, each participant was given a pseudonym to maintain anonymity.

#### ***5.4.6. Institutional Review Board***

The study was approved by the Philip Merrill College of Journalism's Human Subjects Review and the University of Maryland's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The participants were given consent forms (or read consent scripts) developed according to the requirements of IRB (See Appendix E and F). All the participants were asked to read and sign these forms at the beginning of each oral history. All the interviewing was completed by the researcher.

#### ***5.4.7. Sample Size***

The researcher stopped with 10 couples because by then she had discovered patterns in the participants' answers that appeared to be themes for analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Furthermore, by discovering similar findings in the answers, the researcher felt she had reached a level of confidence for analysis in the sample size of her data collection (Babbie, 2007).

### ***5.5. Analysis of the data***

After the oral histories were conducted, the researcher moved to the next phase of method, the analysis. "Analysis entails classifying, comparing, weighing, and combining material from the interviews to extract the meaning and implications, to reveal patterns, or to stitch together descriptions of events into a coherent narrative" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 201).

The process of data analysis "entails data reduction as the reams of collected data are brought into manageable chunks and interpretation as the researcher brings meaning and insight to the words and acts of the participants in the study" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 152-153). Content analysis refers to making sense out of the

“qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings” (Patton, 2002, p. 453). Furthermore, “thick, rich description provides the foundation for qualitative analysis and reporting” so the researcher can draw her own “interpretations about meanings and significance” (Patton, 2002, p. 437- 438).

In the analysis stage, the researcher must be able to recognize concepts, themes, events, and topical markers. “A *concept* is a word or term that represents an idea important to your research program; *themes* are summary statements and explanations of what is going on; *events* are occurrences that have taken place; and *topical markers* are names of places, people, organizations...” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 207).

Having been a field producer (off-air reporter) in local television for several years, the researcher was accustomed to paying close attention in interviews. Her industry experience taught her to notice details in interviews so that she could quickly pick out soundbites for daily news coverage. By listening carefully to the oral histories, the researcher began to notice concepts, themes, events, and topical markers in the answers from the different participants.

#### ***5.5.1. Coding the data***

After reviewing the transcripts, the researcher had a much clearer picture of the various concepts, themes, events, and topical markers from the various participants. The themes were each given a label, which began the process of coding the data. “Coding involves systematically labeling concepts, themes, events, and topical markers so that you can readily retrieve and examine all of the data units that refer to the same subject across all your interviews” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 207).

From these themes, the researcher devised four main categories. “The process of category generation involves noting patterns evident in the setting and expressed by participants” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 154). These are five main categories:

- 1) Becoming American
- 2) Stereotypes of Asian Indians on U.S. television
- 3) Staying connected to India through other media
- 4) Attraction to Indian programming
- 5) The American filter

The researcher was able to construct these initial categories based on findings discovered in the answers to the questions asked in the oral histories. As Patton (2002) states, “...the investigator has two primary sources to draw from in organizing the analysis: 1) the questions that were generated during the conceptual and design phases of the study, prior to fieldwork, and 2) analytic insights and interpretations that emerged during data collection” (Patton, 2002, p. 437). This process of discovering patterns, themes, and categories in the data is called *inductive analysis* (Patton, 2002, p. 453).

After establishing these categories, the researcher used four different colors to highlight answers in all the transcripts that matched the corresponding categories. As Marshall and Rossman (1999) state “...color coding of notes... is invaluable for piecing together patterns, defining categories for data analysis, planning further data collection” (p. 148). For example, “attraction to programming” was pink,



“stereotypes of Asian Indians on U.S. television” was blue, “becoming American” was green, and “The American Filter” was orange.

Once various answers were color-coded in the transcripts, the researcher separated all the answers in pink (attraction to programming) onto a document with each participant’s name and subsequently separated the remaining answers with their corresponding categories based on the color codes established. After separating the data, the researcher had five main category names. The researcher could then examine the findings more closely and even see repetition in some of the answers from different participants.

### ***5.5.2. Results and Discussion***

The process of writing the results and discussion for this dissertation was also part of the analysis. For the researcher to discover findings in the data, she analyzed the quotes against the concepts of enculturation and acculturation and the literature review. This process is called *deductive analysis*. (Patton, 2002, p. 453). For example, many of the participants talked about how watching American television helped them improve their American English, because their English reflected the British style that was taught to them in India. Learning to speak American English by watching American television is an example of acculturation. As the participants moved to the U.S. they were compelled to learn a new cultural system, i.e., learn to speak American English. This process of new learning is acculturation (Kim, 2005). This process is also an example of cross-cultural adaptation, where individuals learn new cultural elements (Kim, 2002).

Another example reflects how many participants were drawn to Indian programming because the information is “immediate and up-to-date.” While some of the participants felt the programs were not up to the American standards they were used to, they still became acculturated into watching Indian programming. As Kim (2005) explains, strangers were compelled to learn a new cultural system in the cross-cultural adaptation process, and this process of new learning is called acculturation (Kim, 2005).

### ***5.6. Summary***

In summary, historical methodology is meant to build the foundation for understanding why Asian Indians acculturate to Indian programming via the satellite dish. The use of chronology gives the reader a historical overview of the various kinds of Indian media available to the cohort of Asian Indians examined in this study, those who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago. The researcher found the need to conduct oral histories with Asian Indian media experts because so much literature on the media available to this particular cohort has never been documented. The final phase of the methodology included the oral histories of the Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. in the 1960s and early 1970s. The purpose of the oral histories was to create primary source material for the historical overview to provide context as to why Asian Indians acculturate to Indian programming via the satellite dish.

In the next section, the Results and Discussion, the researcher describes her findings in the oral histories. These oral histories demonstrate these Asian Indians’ recollections of their Indian media use from the 1960s to the present. The researcher then develops the major findings that emerged from the oral histories. The section

begins with an overview of India's political climate and circumstances many Asian Indians faced before moving to the U.S.

## Chapter 6: Results and Discussion

By August 15, 1947, India gained independence from British colonial rule and the country was partitioned into India and Pakistan. “The transfer of power was far from peaceful. More than half a million lives were lost and at least 13 million people became refugees, as Muslims left India for Pakistan and Hindus and Sikhs left Pakistan for India” (Leonard, 1997, p. 26). The Asian Indians studied in this dissertation lived through the riots and killings all across India before the country was partitioned and gained independence. Most of them were born around 1942 in India. Once India gained independence in 1947, they spent their childhood, teenage, and early adult years living in the aftermath of India’s national independence movement. At that time, India’s first prime minister was simply trying to build the country by investing in steel plants, power and irrigation projects, and other heavy industries. In this movement, India’s best scientists and engineers found ready employment (Rangaswamy, 2000). However, by the early 1960s, there was a setback in the Indian economy because of an “unexpected surge in population, failed crops, and costly wars with China and Pakistan, all of which undermined the people’s confidence in the government, and caused many of the skilled professionals to look for opportunities abroad” (Rangaswamy, 2000, p. 31).

The cohort of Asian Indians in this study did not always see India’s potential. Many of them who lived in India did not necessarily think the country had a future. By 1965, the U.S. changed its immigration policy to welcome professionals, who had education and training, to fill openings for specialized jobs. As a result, thousands of Asian Indians, like the group studied in this dissertation, migrated to the U.S. They

came to the U.S. because there were better opportunities here. “There were few constraints attached to immigration, no contracts to sign, no difficult conditions to fulfill. The only requirement was a professional degree, and a willingness to risk a future in America with only a few hundred dollars in one’s pocket” (Rangaswamy, 2000, p. 31).

As this generation spent their early years in India, these Asian Indians survived the riots and killings of India’s partition. They, along with their families, learned to live in India after the country gained independence. One source of entertainment that remained steady throughout their childhood, teenage, and early adult years was watching Hindi movies. In conducting the oral histories, the researcher asked many participants about the first time they saw a Hindi movie in India. Uma Bhatt, a 60-year-old, homemaker described her experience:

I was a small child. The theater in our town, the people owned the theater. Their daughter lived in on our street. So all the kids used to play together, so we used to go like twice a week, at least, to see a movie, maybe half an hour, kind of curiosity of how it works. Not with my parents, just little kids and driver will take [us to the movies and] for soda and something. We watched like for 15-20 minutes and then came home. That was like a big deal for us. We didn’t watch any television in India in those days.

Television was not introduced in India before 1959 (Ray & Jacka, 1996). Among the 10 couples interviewed for this dissertation, only two people watched television briefly in India, before arriving in the U.S. These televisions were not in their homes,

but belonged to a relative in one of the major cities of India. As a result, almost all the participants saw television for the first time in the U.S.

In this phase of the study, oral history interviews were conducted with 10 couples who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago. During the oral history interviews the immigrants described their recollections of their Indian media use from the 1960s to the present and addressed the main research question: What is the historical process that has led Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. during the 1960s and early 1970s to become acculturated to Indian television in the U.S.? In addition, the researcher tried to gain understanding as to how Asian Indians became enculturated into watching U.S. television and eventually acculturated into watching Indian television. As noted in the methodology section, all the participants migrated to the U.S. between 1960 and 1972, and their average age was 65. They all currently live in the Washington Metro area and subscribe to Indian programming via the satellite dish. Their interview responses reflected their understanding of the history and the context of 20<sup>th</sup> century India as well as living as an Asian Indian in the U.S.

Major findings emerged in the process of conducting the standardized open-ended questions asked in the oral histories. Several of the participants shared similar answers to each of the questions. As a result, the researcher developed five main categories from the findings in the oral histories: Becoming American, Stereotypes of Indians on U.S. television, Staying connected to India through other media, Attraction to the Indian programming, and The American Filter.

## **6.1. *Becoming American***

As Asian Indians migrated to the U.S. from 1960 to 1972, many saw television for the first time after arriving in the U.S. The participants in this study reported that they watched television programs that included *I Love Lucy*, *Gunsmoke*, *General Hospital*, *The Price is Right*, *Father knows Best*, *60 Minutes*, *The Young and the Restless*, and *The Guiding Light*.

This section is divided into two parts. The first part discusses acculturation, the cross-cultural adaptation process where individuals learn a new cultural system in their new host society but still maintain their own cultural integrity. In the acculturation section, the researcher discusses how the Asian Indians in this study used television to learn about the American culture. The second part discusses enculturation, a learning process that leads individuals to social stability and cultural continuity within their culture. In the enculturation section, the researcher presents findings that show how these Asian Indians learned the act of watching television and became socialized into a certain standard of television programming.

### **6.1.1. *Acculturation***

#### **6.1.1.1. *Learning the American Culture.***

This cohort was asked why they watched the programs they named, and the general response was that American programs helped them understand how Americans act and think. Some of the participants shared personal stories about their experiences as they watched American television. Vivek Bhatt, a 67-year-old mechanical engineer, talked about how watching certain American sports programs,

such as football games, helped him establish a rapport with his colleagues in the workplace:

When you work in a company that has 30-40-50 people, everybody talks about sports. Coming from India, and not really knowing the American football, you seem to be left out of the conversations. I happen to have a color television and really didn't know anything about the American football. The guy who lived next door to us, who was American and loved football, he knew that I had a color television. He would come home to watch football with me, and teach me the American football. [This] was very important for me to go back to the office, because then I can say "OK, I did see the Redskin game yesterday, I see who the quarterback is," and then not only did I understand the football, but I became the biggest fan of the American football.

Vikas Dutta, a 70-year-old doctor, also talked about how sports programs have helped him feel like he belonged in the workplace:

It has worked. When you go to work, you know, you meet with people at all levels and the first thing is, you know, to create a rapport with somebody, your secretaries, your people at different levels, or even professionals. You just can't talk about work. People, who are helpers, the secretaries etc., if you talk to them and say hey, you know, did you like the game last night, this is what happened, this and that, you know even that creates more of confidence in each other and brings people closer. I think, you know, working in the environment you work with, you know, we cannot totally ignore the American norms and American culture.



Sports programs helped Bhatt and Dutta become acculturated to the U.S. In this study, Bhatt and Dutta as well as other participants, wanted to learn how to fit in at work. They started watching sports programs so they would have something to talk about in the workplace. These individuals thought that if they could carry on a conversation with their work colleagues about something in the American culture, they would eventually become accepted in the workplace.

By watching American sports programs, these Asian Indians learned how to act in American culture. This process of watching television to learn how to act in American culture is an example of the need for acculturation. Reece and Palmgreen (2000) studied the same phenomenon among Asian Indian graduate students in the U.S. and saw their need for acculturation as one of the motives for media use. The authors found that Asian Indian students used television to learn about their host culture and new host society, so they could acculturate to the U.S. (Reece & Palmgreen, 2000). According to Reece and Palmgreen (2000), the uses and gratifications approach in their study suggests that media consumers are active and goal-oriented television users, meaning, the “audience actively selects media messages, seeking ways to satisfy particular needs and desires” (p. 810). In this dissertation, these Asian Indians were actively watching sports programs to fulfill their goal -- “fitting in” at the workplace.

This process of wanting to watch American television is also an example of one of Berry’s acculturation indicators. Berry (1990) described individuals who were listening to the radio, watching television, or reading newspapers and magazines as those who wanted to learn about their new culture in their new host environment.

Some participants, who were not in the workplace, discussed how television taught them how to act in American culture. Uma Bhatt, a 60-year-old homemaker, said she learned through American television how to act when she visited an American's home:

I picked up a lot of ideas. You know how you go to somebody's house, [and] they say, you want a drink, if you say "no," it's "no." I picked up few things, simple things, from [television]. You know because in India, we do a lot of [insisting], we say "no, no, you have to take it and so on." But over here, [if] person need, they can ask for [it], but you do offer once. If they don't want, it's OK. So I picked up a few things.

Bhatt explained how when a guest visits a friend's home in India, it was understood that the guest will not be allowed to leave without having something to drink and eat. This process of cajoling is standard in Indian culture; when guests visit a home in India, they are treated with highest regard. In fact, there is an expression, "guests are like gods," which translates to receiving a blessing when a visitor comes to the home. Hence, it is normal to offer food and drink to guests. But in return, guests usually respond by saying "no thank you," which really means "yes." This process of the guest saying "no," and the host not taking "no" for an answer, goes on for several minutes before the guest finally accepts the meal and/or drink. However, in American culture that type of exchange does not take place. When guests visit an American home, if they are offered a meal or drink, and they respond with "no, thank you," that is usually the final answer and offer.

Bhatt's description is an example of a stranger in the integration mode of the acculturation process. The integration mode implies that the stranger wants to maintain his or her own cultural integrity as well as maintain relations with other group members. This course is possible when the dominant culture is open and accepting of the acculturating groups (Berry, 1990).

Bhatt decided that she would offer a meal or drink once, but if the visitor did not want anything, she would not keep insisting. She learned through watching American television that in the U.S. it is not necessary to keep insisting on giving a visitor a meal or drink. As a result, Bhatt learned to maintain her own cultural integrity but also adopted the norms of her new host society. Watching American television gave Bhatt an example of how to act in an American's home.

Bhatt's example is also similar to Johnson's (1996) research on how Hispanic women chose to socialize in their host country. Johnson (1996) found that viewers who actively select and identify with certain television genres such as action dramas, talk shows, comedies, and soap operas enhanced how television became useful in the acculturation process. Therefore, Johnson (1996) suggested that the uses and gratifications theory provided greater understanding for the relationship between television viewing and the acculturation process.

#### *6.1.1.2. Language.*

The participants in this study learned English in India, but they learned the British form of English with a different accent. Balraj Das, a 64-year-old civil engineer said that watching American television helped him improve his English. "I think it [television] helped me to learn to speak better English." Balraj's wife,

Bandita, a 59-year-old homemaker with a master's degree from India, also found American television helpful in improving her English:

I enjoyed basically the shows. Like I say I thoroughly enjoyed watching *I Love Lucy*. You know, I must have watched that repeatedly you know 3, 2-3 times, you know in the beginning. I mean there was a little bit in the beginning, little bit difficulty understanding, because the dialogue, I mean their way of speaking was different than we grew up in India, you know. That's more British. And this accent is different, but once, I mean, you know [we adjusted]. Yeah, adjusted and then I guess watching television, I mean with that, you know, even it makes it easier to understand the language better, you know. Otherwise it would have taken much longer because, like I say, I haven't worked.

In this example, Das explained how she grew up speaking British English, which had a different accent. By watching American television, Das learned to understand American English. As a result, Das used television to help her learn how to speak American English as well. From a uses and gratifications theoretical perspective Das actively watched American television to help her improve her English, thus satisfying her need to acculturate.

This cohort already knew English before moving to the U.S. They studied English in India, but they did not have an opportunity to use it. At that time, English was rarely spoken in India because Hindi was still the language of daily life. Because they already had a base knowledge of the English language, these individuals demonstrated how they wanted to acculturate by watching television to improve their

English and, thus, use it in their daily life. Berry (1990) described individuals' knowledge or use of the host language in their new culture as another example of an acculturation indicator. Berry (1990) described this process of acculturation as continuous first-hand contact between cultures. In this example, individuals had prior knowledge of English and tried to use English in their new culture.

### ***6.1.2. Enculturation***

Like the Bhattas, as the Das' and Dutta watched American television to become acculturated in the U.S., they were also becoming enculturated into U.S. television. They all were learning the act of watching television. Herskovits (1955) described how the enculturation process starts during an individual's childhood when he or she becomes conditioned to fundamental habits, such as eating, sleeping, speaking, and personal hygiene. Herskovits (1955) described how, with adults, the enculturation process functioned at a more conscious level, where individuals learned accepted behavior in society. This process of learning led individuals to social stability and cultural continuity within their culture. These Asian Indians learned how to watch television for the first time in the U.S. Essentially, they were learning the act of watching television as it is part of the American culture.

But it wasn't just the act of watching television that became part of their enculturation process. Television has been suggested as a medium of enculturation with far-reaching effects associated with its form, content, and use over time. Gerbner and his colleagues (1978) suggested television's major cultural function was to stabilize social patterns and to cultivate resistance to change. They believed television's mass-produced messages cultivated a shared concept of reality. The

mass-produced messages to which Gerbner and others refer were produced through television news, drama, and advertising.

#### 6.1.2.1. *The Soap Opera.*

Some of the participants discussed how they watched soap operas after arriving from India. The women in particular did not work because, essentially, they were homemakers. Their daily menu of shows included *General Hospital*, *Young and the Restless*, and *Guiding Light*, as stated above. As a result, not only were they becoming enculturated into watching American television, but they were also becoming cultivated into watching a certain genre of television with its customary story lines and values.

Vandana Dutta, a 62-year-old restaurant owner, explains how she used to watch soap operas when she first arrived in the U.S., “You know, they were very different from India, you know. They were very open and they were, they were falling in love very easily, which I never saw that. It was very interesting, very interesting, different, very different.”

Dutta described how she had never seen two people fall in love so openly on screen before. The soap operas in the U.S. are much more explicitly sexual, and Dutta had never seen that. Nearly everyone of Dutta’s generation had an arranged marriage, which meant they did not date or fall in love before marriage. Usually their parents arranged their marriage. Therefore, they were not exposed to couples falling in love on screen and expressing their emotions so openly. As a result, when they started watching American soap operas, not only were they learning to watch

American soap operas for the first time, they were being exposed to open sexual expression on screen for the first time.

Bandita Das described her television watching experience:

During daytime, I would watch my soaps you know. *The Young and the Restless* and then *The Guiding Light* I remember you know. Maybe one or two other shows you know which I don't remember, the names are not coming to me, you know. But now I basically I don't [watch them]. I just, I don't have any desire to [watch] either, you know.

Suneil Advani, a 67-year-old retired civil engineer, used to watch soap operas when he first came to the U.S.:

Before the Indian channel came, we used to watch all kind of [shows] you know, *As The World Turns*, *General Hospital*, *Three's Company*, and so on and so forth. When I was [a bachelor] for six to seven years, you know, I come home, and my hobby was to just watch TV, just sit. I never go outside and stuff like that. I was not very extroverted and I used to watch. ...I started teaching in 1965 at Howard University and I [would] come home at noon time after classes and watch soap operas.

In these examples, Dutta, Das, and Advani not only became enculturated into the act of watching television, but they became enculturated into a certain genre of television - American soap operas. In their enculturation process, they learned how Americans are more open with their sexual expression on television. They also learned the act of watching television.

Watching soap operas is unique compared to watching other kinds of television. Soap operas have a certain quality; they function as serial narratives. “A serial narrative is a story told through a series of individual, narratively linked installments.” (Allen, 1997, p. 1514). With serial television, the viewers’ understanding of and pleasure in each show has to do with their knowledge of what happened in previous episodes. “Furthermore, each serial episode always leaves narrative loose ends for the next episode to take up.” (Allen, 1997, p. 1514). With serial narratives, the viewer’s relationship with the characters is also different from episodic television. In episodes, characters cannot undergo changes and seldom refer to events from previous episodes. However, serial characters do change across episodes; they age and even die. Some have both histories and memories (Allen, 1997).

Soap operas are of two basic narrative types: *open* soap operas and *closed* soap operas. The open soap opera has no end point in its narrative. The closed soap opera does eventually end. Examples of the open soap opera in the U.S. include *General Hospital*, *All My Children*, and *The Guiding Light*. The closed soap opera is more common internationally, where it dominates primetime programming in Latin America, India, Great Britain, Australia, and other countries. The closed soap operas are broadcast nightly over three or four months. The design and reception of the closed soap opera make it fundamentally different from the open soap opera (Allen, 1997).

The soap opera is one of the most complex genres of television. Part of the enjoyment by the viewers is dependent upon their consistent knowledge about the



characters and storyline. As a result, some of the participants who told about watching American soap operas after moving to the U.S. became enculturated into this genre of television. Their process of enculturation stemmed from watching the characters evolve and change and maintaining knowledge of what happened to the storyline in previous episodes. This particular cohort may have also become interested in watching soap operas because of the distinct expression of romantic love on the screen.

By watching these American soap operas, Dutta, Das, and Advani also developed an understanding of serial programming on American television. These viewers began to understand how the characters and story lines change and develop across episodes. The viewers never watched television before coming to the U.S., let alone serial television. Therefore, they became enculturated into how American soap operas on television develop their story lines and characters.

#### *6.1.2.2. Family Programming.*

Bandita Das and others described how they enjoyed watching family-oriented programs:

*Price is Right.* Yes, yes, yes, in the beginning [I watched] that. I just, again and again, I watched *I Love Lucy*. I really liked that show and this, you know, *Price is Right* and then *Father Knows Best*, you know. I mean at that time eventually I mean I just started watching more and more, you know.

Jagdish Jain, a 71-year-old real-estate agent, was asked what kind of U.S. television he currently watches, and he said he watches old episodes of the *Lucy Show* and *Gunsmoke* (on *TV Land*) because he used to watch these programs when he first

started watching television. “On U.S. television some old, old, you know, these episodes. Yeah like, for example, *Gunsmoke*, *I Love Lucy*, and this kind of old stuff, 30-year-old [programs].”

Nandita Nandi, a 59-year-old administrative professional, talked about why she enjoyed watching the *I Love Lucy* show:

We use to watch those days like what, like *Lucy*, *I Love Lucy*, those kind of things. Like [it was] a family thing, we use eat dinner...of course those days TV was also good. These days it’s kind up to [the parents]. You know in those days there were family shows.

Sandya Gopal, a 61-year-old esthetician, describes watching both *I Love Lucy* and the soaps: “I remember watching ‘Lucy’ and *I Love Lucy* and few shows and all, you know, all that, you know. And I started to watch soap operas to some extent.”

By watching these family-oriented programs, these Asian Indians became enculturated into this genre of American television. These Asian Indians were drawn to this type of family-oriented programming because they came from a family-oriented background. Furthermore, they were learning how to live as a nuclear family. When they left India, most of them were part of an extended family living situation. When they came to the U.S., they started to build their nuclear family. By watching programs like *I Love Lucy* or *Father Knows Best*, they were being exposed to the American concept of the nuclear family.

This cohort was also exposed to situation comedies. Situation comedies on mass-market television in the 1950s and 1960s characterized family life (Taylor, 1989). Situation comedies such as *Father Knows Best* and *Leave it to Beaver*

portrayed a homogenous and idealized picture of American family life (Baran & Davis, 2006). Even the *I Love Lucy* show depicted the family life of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz in the premise of a situation comedy (Anderson, 1997a).

These comedies had qualities such as “warmth, familial relationships, moral growth, and audience inclusiveness” (Leibman, 1997, p. 404). Characters went through learning experiences in each episode. The humor stemmed from the audience’s knowledge of the characters and their relationships with one another. Furthermore, audience members problem-solved along with the characters (Leibman, 1997).

The comedies were usually in a home setting with the stereotypical nuclear family. Programs like *Father Knows Best* had exaggerated acting styles and crises. They relied upon coincidence in problem-solving, as well as issues such as generational conflict in the themes of the shows (Leibman, 1997). With *Leave it to Beaver*, the show usually centered around the main character, “Beaver,” and his dilemmas. With the advice of his elders, the child learned moral lessons (Leibman, 1997). In the *I Love Lucy* show, each episode tried to teach Lucy not to question the social order (Anderson, 1997a).

Nevertheless, Asian Indians were watching these television programs and becoming accustomed to this portrayal of American family life. Furthermore, Das, Jain, Nandi, and Gopal were attracted to these programs because they demonstrated a sense of family, which is a big part of the Indian culture (Leonard, 1997).

### *6.1.2.3. Sports.*

As stated earlier, some participants watched American sports programs to fit in at the workplace. As a result, watching sports helped them to become acculturated into the American culture. Sports programming on television also offered Asian Indians ways to become enculturated into another genre of television. Bhatt, a mechanical engineer, talked about how watching sports, such as football games, helped him build relations with his workplace colleagues. He used to watch Redskin football games and then talked about the highlights of the games at the office the next day. But, eventually, watching football was no longer a chore to adapt into their work environment. They eventually watched football because they enjoyed the game. Bhatt talked about how he started going to the home games for the Redskins as well. Bhatt's love for football is an example of how he became enculturated into sports in American culture.

Dutta, a doctor, also talked about how watching football helped him in his work environment. He described how watching sports helped him converse with members of his staff about something besides work. He said being able to talk about football or other non-work related items brought him closer to his staff. He also believed that it showed his staff that he was not ignoring one of the norms of American culture.

Both Bhatt and Dutta watched football as a way of learning about the American culture, but at the same time they became enculturated into American sports. Television functioned as the medium in this enculturation process, which helped Bhatt and Dutta appreciate an aspect of American culture - football.

Watching sports is different from watching other kinds of television. With sports, viewers identify with their team, their favorite players, their college, and other allegiances. This involved process has fans become familiar with players and their teams, so they start following them and learning about them. Baran, a media scholar, describes the process:

Fans follow players as well as teams and the camera is well versed in the close-up. Roone Arledge of ABC called this "sports as soap opera." Baseball gives us the tight shot of the pitcher's anxiety as he holds the runners on first and third or zooms in on the concentration in the basketball player's eyes as she shoots two from the charity stripe with the game on the line. (Baran, 1997, p. 1557)

Overall, television as a medium has allowed its fans to stay enculturated into sports. There are certain characteristics of various sports that make them better for television, which results in large viewing audiences. As Baran suggests, "Sports is the only programming that has successfully attracted large audiences on a weekend day. This creation of regularized audience behavior enables the medium [television] to maintain its role as a familiar aspect of 'everyday life'" (Baran, 1997, p. 1556).

Furthermore, unlike soap operas and comedies, sports were a part of American culture before television existed, and sports are still played for and in front of paying customers. Some sports, like major league baseball, were around long before radio was even invented and developed apart from television (Baran, 1997).

In summary, these Asian Indians described how watching American programs after first moving to the U.S. helped them understand how Americans act, think, and

speak. Some of them shared specific examples, like watching football games, which helped establish a rapport with work colleagues. This process of watching television to learn how to act in American culture is an example of acculturation because these individuals wanted to learn about their new culture in their new host society. These Asian Indians also became enculturated into U.S. television because they were learning the act of watching television. As a result, television became the medium in the enculturation process. This learning process led individuals to social stability and cultural continuity within their culture. Some of these Asian Indians also became enculturated into a certain genre of television such as American soap operas and family programming. Some participants became enculturated into American sports because of television.

## ***6.2. Stereotypes of Asian Indians on U.S. television***

As Asian Indians became enculturated into mainstream television, “programs such as *The Donna Reed Show*, *Leave It To Beaver*, and *Father Knows Best* presented idealized versions of white middle-class families in suburban communities” (Spigel, 1997, p. 588). These programs also excluded people of racial and ethnic backgrounds in suburban life (Spigel, 1997).

With programs such as *Father Knows Best*, this cohort became enculturated into watching a homogenous picture of the American family on television, as Gerbner suggested. With these images, audiences may have wondered if poor people, working women, or ethnic groups even existed in the U.S. in 1965 (Baran & Davis, 2006). Furthermore, if there was portrayal of any ethnic groups on television, it was not always accurate, but stereotypical (Browne, 2005). In this section, the researcher

examined how the participants were also exposed to many stereotypes of India and Indian culture on U.S. television and in U.S. media in general.

The researcher specifically asked the participants what kind of images of India they saw on U.S. television. One answer that was universal among almost all the participants was that too much of India's "poverty" was shown on U.S. television and in U.S. media in general. Many participants said how the first images they saw of India in the U.S. were actually in *The Washington Post*. Jagdish Jain, a 71-year-old real estate agent, remembers vividly:

1974, I can tell you one thing. In *The Washington Post* there was an editorial with a beggar with a bowl, because at that time Indira Gandhi tested this atomic weapon. We saw that one, we didn't like that. That is not the way India should be projected by *The Washington Post*. Some youngsters, they may not think about that, we thought these people should not do that, you know.

These are *The Washington Post* people. With a bowl, with a small bottle, beggar blasting, you know, this thing, we didn't like that kind of thing.

Sunita Sharma, a homemaker in her 60s, took issue with the images of India she saw: "In the newspaper too, they will give the picture of the poor people, dowry burning, this and that. On the front page, like big, as if [it was the] only [news]. They never showed any good thing about images [of India] on American television." For many Asian Indians, it was even more offensive to show the poverty in India and not show poverty in the U.S. on American television.

Poornananda (1998) analyzed contemporary stories in *The Washington Post* and found that "a majority of the news stories from South Asian countries were about

crime, conflict, and disaster” (p. 165). Furthermore, he said that these stories created a “negative image of the foreign countries in the minds of readers” (p. 165). While this was a contemporary analysis of *The Washington Post*, it matched many of the disturbing images of India in *The Post* in the 1960s and 1970s described by the participants. In addition, the interpretation of the news stories suggested the “backwardness and failure of the government, institutions, and individuals” of India (Poornananda, 1998, p. 165-166).

Deepti Dharma, a 61-year-old retired pension analyst, found the images of India’s poverty on television disturbing as well:

Like people did not have enough good [food] to eat or people will eat from, you know, like a trash or something. Small children [will eat] and all that. I said why they are showing all these things. People do [the same] over here, still taking our food from the trash all the time, so those kinds of things.

Some people thought the images shown simply misinformed the American viewer about Indian culture, explained Vandana Dutta, a 62-year-old restaurant owner:

People thought that we live under the trees. That was, that bothered me like anything. And people have asked me many times, ‘Do they have homes there’? [They were] so ignorant about India, because America was not showing anything about India much. They were always showing poverty, people living in the streets. That’s all they’ve shown.

Priti Patel, a real estate agent and former lecturer in her 60s, described what she saw on PBS in the early years after her arrival:



Like on PBS you see, they would show more of snake charmers and those things. They were not showing the universities and the academic field, and how modern our homes are and you know the way our upbringing is you know. We are no, nothing special you know. I don't think we are any special. This is the whole India. I was like that and I used to feel, particularly when we came here in 70s, on PBS, you know, they are going to Rajasthan or some places, where they can still show about the caste system, and about those snake charmers, and the beggars, and those things.

Patel's husband, Prakash, a researcher in his 60s, thought images of India on television were distorted:

I think the media went too far a little bit, went too far. I saw in Assam (state in northeastern India) somewhere in a regional tribe or somewhere. A medical van for the first time had gone to a village to provide service and they were showing on the television here a group of 20 people dancing around it. You know, they were trying to show that how backward they are. ...I say it's a misrepresentation.

Dharma, Dutta, the Patels all described images that follow a pattern of Indian stereotypes portrayed in early films made in the West (Ramasubramanian, 2005). The early films depicted India as a country with "huts, jungles, caves, and temples filled with animals," plus traditional transportation, such as "rickshaws and elephant rides." Some of the other depictions were the portrayal of abused women, which included "sati (bride burning) and dowry." The films also showed people engaged in activities

such as “snake-charming.” Overall Ramasubramanian, in his research, found a pattern of Indian stereotypes in films made in the West.

Sandya Gopal, a 61-year-old esthetician, said her colleagues at work saw “a temple of rats.” She added, “You just feel little embarrassed, sometimes you feel, see that they could show something better to the general public.”

Vivek Bhatt, a 68-year-old mechanical engineer, was asked by people in the U.S., if “tigers and lions” roamed the streets of India. This was something he had never seen, but it was portrayed on U.S. television. Furthermore, Bhatt felt these kinds of questions were improper:

It made you feel bad and because we knew better. We knew that people were living a lot better coming from Punjab, having the automobiles, having the good life that people are living. It was not certainly something that I think they were showing properly.

This feeling of “knowing better” and being embarrassed, as described by Bhatt and Gopal, was common among the participants. They were aware of India’s richness in culture and maintained a strong attachment to the country and culture.

Images the participants described were not just stereotypical; they portrayed India as exotic. As noted in the literature review, programs of India and Indian culture aired on NET and PBS during the 1960s and 1970s. The researcher watched some of these programs or examined their files and found that the producers had a Eurocentric point of view. For example, one of the programs on NET that aired April 23, 1965, was *India: Writings in the Sand*. It was part of an NET series called *The Population Problem* about the problems of increased population affecting natural

resources, technology, and societies around the world. The program and its files are currently available for viewing at the National Public Broadcasting Archives, and it strikes a contemporary viewer as having an Eurocentric point of view and elitist perspective, as described below:

India's greatest problem—an exploding population in a country where there is now barely enough food to feed the people. ...The program reports on village life in India where 90 percent of the people live in 500,000 rural villages. Most of the rural population is illiterate and the average income is only \$76 per year (Hollyman, 1961).

This description made India sound backward, like a land filled with savages. Also, the producers failed to explain that the country was under British rule for many years and that this slowed the development of agriculture to meet the population needs. Overall, many of the programs on NET and PBS described India as a backward country, and some stories made India appear exotic and mysterious.

Seeing images like these on the screen also made it difficult for Asian Indians to acculturate to their new host culture, the U.S. These Asian Indians knew they were seen as “other” (Wiseman et al., 1989). These images can affect the self-confidence of the newcomer, who is trying to acculturate to their new host country. As for the host culture, Wiseman and his colleagues (1989) explained that the “attitudes an individual holds toward members of a foreign culture play a critical role in influencing how positive or negative his/her impression is of the other culture and its people as well as the degree of mutual understanding that is achieved” (p. 351).

This attitude is often created by images in the media. The mass media use symbols and stereotypes as an easy way of communicating the diversity of people “through newspaper headlines, movie characterizations, and television pictures” (Wilson et al., 2003, p. 44). Once a stereotype is created on television or in a newspaper of a foreign culture, it affects the ease of acculturation and cross-cultural communication for the newcomer in the host culture (Wiseman et al., 1989). In addition, some studies have shown that negative television stereotypes can influence the way minorities perceive themselves and the way minorities are perceived by other members in society (Jacobson, 1995).

Stereotypes can also affect the attitude of members of the host culture, which may eventually lead to social distance between members of the two different cultures (Wiseman et al., 1989). For example, studies show that stereotyped media portrayals and news coverage reinforce racist attitudes, which create social distance between members of different cultures. These racist attitudes can lead to mass actions against the group portrayed stereotypically (Wilson et al., 2003). But more importantly, the racist attitudes also affect the acculturation of strangers in a host culture “because external culture contact is involved [in acculturation], followed by both the cultural and the individual changes” (Berry, 1990, p. 235). As interaction occurs, racism may interfere.

Participants shared how they were frustrated because the U.S., at that time, never aired any positive stories about India. Dinesh Dharma, a 67-year-old mechanical engineer explained:

What they were showing was true, but not the reflection of the overall country or the society, you know. You can take one isolated incident, but that is not, you know, [the] real country. So you have to show with that, you know, with the bad thing, you have to show what is, you know, [the] good thing happening [with the country]. That they were not doing.

Dharma's wife, Deepti, resented the fact that other images of India were not shown on the screen: "We had a good life also. We have a good culture also. At that time they were not showing those parts, you know, they were showing what is bad in our culture."

Nikhil Nandi, a 66-year-old medical physicist, explained that only the negative images of India appeared on U.S. television:

Because I come from India, I was born there, and I used to visit, as I said, quite often. So I know what's going on in India, so I knew that they could have shown good things [about India] and they could have but instead they used, I mean kind of, amplified the negative stuff more than the good stuff.

Vandana Dutta agreed: "They make us feel like that, because I felt that they could have shown better of India too. If they were showing worst of India, they could show better of India too. But that they did not portray it."

Vandana's husband, Vikas, a 70-year-old doctor, was frustrated with how little Americans knew about India:

I think when I came here 40 years ago, Americans at all levels had no idea what India is. India was thought about as a poorly, backward country with

villages and trees and poverty. I think every time, when you came here, you know the only word they knew was ‘Gunga Din.’

*Gunga Din* is a 1939 adventure film about three British sergeants and their native water bearer, who fight a religious cult of ritualistic stranglers in colonial India. The film is based on the 1892 poem by Rudyard Kipling (Wikipedia, 2007).

Ramasubramanian (2005) described *Gunga Din* as a film made in the West that perpetuated stereotypes of India.

Suneil Advani, a 67-year-old retired civil engineer, described what his American friends asked him: “We had some friends and they used to ask, does the elephant roam in New Delhi, do you have a toothbrush in India - stuff, questions like that. That makes you feel like that these people have no idea whatsoever.”

The Dharmas, Duttas, Nandi, and Advani all grew frustrated with the stereotypes of India portrayed on American television. Not only did they grow frustrated with Americans’ lack of knowledge about India but they also did not see the same kind of portrayal of the U.S. on American television. Renu Advani, a 60-year-old homemaker, explained:

The only thing U.S. always portray, you know, the poverty of India. All those documentaries they show, you know, too much poverty, which is not right. ...The whole of America is not Saks Fifth Avenue. You see these homeless when you go to D.C., and you see them so much but their camera [never] stop on, you know, the poverty, the poorest, the undone, all the hungry people, and like that. So that’s the difference you know, which is not right.

Asian Indians who were trying to acculturate to the U.S. in the 1960s and early 1970s found these stereotypical images of their culture disturbing, especially since those who migrated to this country came as professionals. They were highly educated. The stereotypical media images could have also toyed with their own sense of identity as they tried to establish themselves in the U.S.

These images on television or in the newspaper exposed many Asian Indians to negative images of India. However, while participating in these oral histories, these Asian Indians said they were still attached to India and tried to maintain their connection to India well before the Indian programming was available on the satellite dish. Prakash Patel summarized by saying, “I don’t think you lose with what you have born and what you have grown up.”

In summary, watching programs like *Father Knows Best* created a homogenous picture of the American family on television. As a result, the limited portrayal of ethnic groups was stereotypical. When asked to describe the images of India and Indian culture on U.S. television, many of the participants pointed out the contrast between depictions of India and the U.S., saying that too much of India’s poverty was shown. These stories created a negative image of India in the minds of viewers. Overall, the images of India shown on television, such as snake charmers, followed a pattern of Indian stereotypes also depicted in early films made in the West.

The stereotypes could also affect the attitude of members of the host culture. As a result, these racist attitudes could also create a social distance between members of different cultures, which could also affect the acculturation of strangers in a host culture. In this study, these Asian Indians found the stereotypical images of India

disturbing, especially since those who migrated to this country came as professionals. These kinds of media images could have also toyed with their own sense of identity as they tried to establish themselves in the U.S.

### ***6.3. Staying connected to India through other media***

As this cohort became enculturated into the act of watching television in the U.S. and into certain television genres, they still faced stereotypes of India and Indian culture on U.S. television. They maintained their sense of Indian culture through other forms of media and cultural practices. Many participants in this study shared how they stayed connected to India before Indian programming became available on the satellite dish. In this section, the researcher has created subsections to depict the participants' Indian media use and overall connection to their culture. These subsections are watching movies at a local university theater, subscribing to Indian newspapers, renting Indian movies, watching Indian television on cable access channels, and connection to the culture. By creating these subsections the researcher has shown how this cohort stayed connected to India and Indian culture through other Indian media.

#### ***6.3.1. Watching movies at the theater***

This generation of Asian Indians grew up watching Hindi movies in India. When they moved to the U.S., Hindi movies were occasionally screened at a local university theater. Deepti Dharma, 61-year-old retired pension analyst, described the circumstances:

We missed our India, you know, in the beginning when we came in this country, so that Indian movie was giving much you know fun. It was like we



get fun out of it, because you know it's our Indian language, Indian songs, you know, story and we all were young at that time. So it's more, you know, connection so.

Vivek Bhatt, a 68-year-old mechanical engineer, also remembered going to the movies as a social event:

In '67-'68 we would, seven-eight of us, would get together to go [to] pizza together. Because there were only a few places where you could go get a good pizza, and then Indian movies. Once in a while the movies would come to American University, and so we would all go and watch there, or they would come to some temple. So the quality was very poor, but still since it was Indian music, Indian movie, we all would get together to do that.

Suneil Advani, a 67-year-old retired civil engineer, had closer ties to the Indian film industry:

The first Indian movie in this area was shown by me as a president of the Indian Society. We somehow got from, we got a movie from India and we paid him [the distributor] 20 dollars, from New York somewhere. Alright. We showed it in the Howard University and we put [charged] 50 cents/ticket. And I was at the gate, [and] everybody knew me. We sold only two tickets. So that was the only business we did here and we had to pay 18-19 dollars from our own pocket to pay for the movie. Because nobody would buy the ticket from me because everybody knew it [me]. They walk on [through] the gate and they say Mr. [Advani], we are walking in. They were all my friends.

Most participants remember watching the films at Catholic University as portrayed by Prakash Patel.

Yes, we used to go to once in a while to Catholic University, something like that. Well, because it was Indian, because others were going. Social, I think it was. I think lot of people who watched, came to that movie, were more social as well as. It was a combination, it was not movie alone.

Watching Indian films was most familiar to Dharma, Bhatt, Advani, and Patel, as well to other participants, because it was similar to the entertainment in their childhood. In addition, these Asian Indians were willing to drive to the area universities to watch the films. As Jain (1989) explained, Asian Indians in the San Francisco Bay area would drive to the University of California, Berkeley to watch Indian films, because it “brought India closer to them” (Jain, 1989, p. 125). Furthermore, it wasn’t just the movies that brought them closer to India, it was the music (Jain, 1989).

Dharma, Bhatt, Advani, and Patel also described watching these films as a social function, just as La Brack (1988) described the screenings of Indian films in Yuba City, California, in the late 1960s. The films were attended by the entire Indian community because for many families going to see films was a major social function (La Brack, 1988). These participants, as well as others, just wanted to watch Indian actors and settings on the screen. Fisher (1980) called these films a “nostalgic link to India” as many films showed sights familiar to its viewers (Fisher, 1980, p. 63-64). Overall these Asian Indians were able to maintain a sense of Indian culture soon after their arrival in the U.S. by watching these films.

### ***6.3.2. Subscribing to Indian newspapers***

Another way these participants stayed connected to their culture was by subscribing to Indian-American newspapers like *India Abroad*. Of the 10 couples, nine were subscribers of *India Abroad* as it regularly brought them news from India and the Indian community in the U.S. Sarvesh Sharma, a 72-year-old retired engineer, described how he would just pick up an Indian magazine or newspaper at the Indian grocery store:

When I see, say Indian magazine, I just definitely love to see that what's going on in the news. That we buy, when we go to Indian store. You buy the grocery and that's all we buy, Indian grocery. We will go to Indian shop, and there is all these Indian magazines there, so I just picked up Indian and start reading and go through each pages and see.

Sharma's wife, Sunita, a homemaker in her 60s, also remembered why they read *India Abroad*:

Just the India [knowledge], to get in touch with all what's happening in India and hear what Indians are doing. Like *India Abroad*, we are all about India, its good to get knowledge from wherever you can. What's going on in our country and what the other Indians are doing in other countries, their achievement, shows on the television and in these papers, it's good to know that.

Priti Patel, a real estate agent in her 60s remembers why she subscribed to Indian newspapers:

We use to get the Indian newspaper the *India Abroad*. We used to subscribe only because we wanted to know what's happening there on a day-to-day basis, you know. So the same thing is, as I said, that I am very interested. So sometime I joke, I say I know everything that is happening in Delhi [more] than I know many things here. So it's just a curiosity.

The newspapers were another form of maintaining Indian culture, bringing the Indian community together and obtaining news from India. The founder of *India Abroad*, Gopal Raju, started the newspaper, because he felt there was no newspaper that catered to Asian Indians in the U.S. He believed many people who came to the U.S. lost contact with India and, therefore, it was a forum to keep in touch with their homeland. In addition, the newspaper, through communication, connected Asian Indians in the U.S. (V. Merchant, personal communication, February 22, 2007). *India Abroad*, like other ethnic newspapers, listed announcements of community events, festivals, cultural activities, and other information that Asian Indians could use to help with their initial adaptation process in their new host society (Lin & Song, 2006).

This Indian newspaper, like other ethnic newspapers, also became a source for preserving cultural identity (Lin & Song, 2006). These Asian Indians shared common values, experiences, and behavioral and linguistic traits, which were different from other ethnic groups. Therefore, their strong sense of ethnic and cultural heritage became a source of pride and group identification through their Indian newspapers.

### ***6.3.3. Renting Indian movies***

Asian Indians did not just stay connected to their culture through Indian movies at university theaters and newspapers; the innovation of the VCR created another way Asian Indians consumed media and stayed connected to their culture. Bandita Das, a 59-year-old homemaker, said she had regular gatherings with her friends to watch Indian movies.

I remember, still remember, the first movie we for seven dollars paid for the movie you know, for the rent. It was hard to find, I mean because we have to go to Silver Spring. There was, that's the only shop they have. So we went all the way there and then sometime we will bring two for a week, you know, two movies, or sometime even three, you know. And then sometime, then we [our] other friends [would] have them, we would copy from each other, you know. So whatsoever he watched, he will give us, you know. We just exchanged, you know.

Vandana Dutta, a 62-year-old restaurant owner, also enjoyed watching Indian films on her VCR with her friends: "So all my friends would come to our house and watch movie. Nobody had a VCR except us. So we all got together and watched Indian movies."

Deepti Dharma agreed with Fisher (1980) and also suggested that these films were a nostalgic link to India:

We were so much used to see Indian movies, you know, when we were in India. So that's another, I think, there was not any other socialization or something. So you, in winter time or something, when you don't need to go

out or cannot do much outside, just rent a movie and watch movie. You know it's more fun to watch Indian movie. Because during the whole day, you know, we see the American television. So you want to see something over the weekend, something Indian, you know.

Deepti felt “Americanness” was already in their everyday lives. They were surrounded by English-speaking people and television spoken in the English language.

Furthermore, American films were already playing in the movie theaters. By renting Hindi movies, these Asian Indians were exposed to their own culture, language, and traditions.

Sandya Gopal, a 61-year-old esthetician, remembered why she enjoyed watching Indian movies on her VCR:

Everybody didn't have the VCR then, so you know, you just felt guilty watching by yourself, you kind of invited everybody, okay come on over we will watch a movie, kind of thing. Because you know, you will, again [have] the same reason, I like to hear the culture, see the culture, hear those languages and hear the music, see any dance or something, you know. Story, you know, it just bring[s] you, connects you with our culture.

Like Das, Dutta, Dharma, and Gopal, many of the participants described how watching Indian movies kept them connected to Indian culture. Gillespie (1989) examined the use of watching Bollywood films on the VCR in a London suburb. She found that older Asian Indians watching the films did not just connect them to the culture, but “nostalgia” was the key to watching these films (Gillespie, 1989). Parents had specific uses for the films, such as linguistic, religious, and social-cultural

learning for their children (Gillespie, 1989). Thus, the films were used for entertainment and as tools for cultural continuity and reaffirming cultural identity (Gillespie, 1989).

Just as Das, Dutta, and Dharma described how watching Indian movies was an occasion to get together with friends, Helweg and Helweg (1990) portrayed how people preferred watching Indian movies at home and having video parties, where they invite friends to watch rented movies together. La Brack (1988) detailed how the VCR ended many screenings of Indian films at university and community theaters, because overall it was cheaper to rent or buy a movie and watch it at home with friends and family. As a result, these Asian Indians turned to their own ethnic group for primary group relations and stronger ethnic identity (Dasgupta, 1989). In addition, these Asian Indians were able to maintain their identity and cultural heritage by renting Indian movies.

#### ***6.3.4. Watching Indian television on cable access channels***

While the VCR spread across the U.S., cable television also started to make its way into the homes of many Asian Indians. In the Washington Metro area, Indian programming is offered on one of the cable-access channels on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Almost all the participants in this study described how they watched and still watch Indian programming on these channels.

Vivek Bhatt said he still enjoys watching Indian programming on the cable access channels: “I do watch on Saturdays some television like channel 56, or Darshan television and so on. [Just] so to sort of get some perspective of what they are saying about India and Indian Americans and so on.”

Bandita Das talked about why she tried to never miss any Indian programs on the cable access channels:

Indian, yeah. We, that we never missed, because it was coming just Saturday, only for an hour, you know. That we definitely we make a point to watch those shows you know. Because that's the only access we have for Indian. There was Channel 56, there used to be just one hour program, you know. They will give all the news from this area, you know. And then, I mean that that we tried to watch. We made a point to watch. They were yeah community, religious. There was some news, local news, you know.

Renu Advani, a 60-year-old homemaker, discussed why watching these programs was important to her:

Just to hear Indian songs and to get community news, which movie they are playing in, you know, in this city and Indian news like that. Well for the community news, just to be in touch with, because, besides that, there was no other way of getting information regarding the community. So they advertise it. I mean, like, even in what program in the mandirs (Hindu temples) and like they are celebrating whatever, Janamashtami, Diwali, you know. They advertise it through the Indian news channels.

Nikhil Nandi, a 66-year-old medical physicist, summarized why these programs were essential before the age of satellite television: "Because that was the only Indian program available on the TV, there was no dish." Sundeep Gopal, a 68-year-old retired engineer, shared similar sentiments, "Just to be with your culture and what [it] was. Not because they were of any quality or anything, but it's just [the]



feeling of back home with your own.” Priti Patel felt the same way: “We used to have [these] Indian programs on Saturday mornings of Indian community. Everybody watched that, because you see yourself in them.”

Bhatt, Das, and Advani all described how they watch these programs to find out news in their community. These programs aired on public access channels. As Kellner (1997) discussed, public access channels were meant for groups and individuals to make programs about their own communities. These channels were designed to increase community participation.

These channels did not just serve the community, but also rebroadcast shows from India, such as news and religious programs, dance clips from Hindi films, and drama shows. Some programs were rebroadcast in a native language from India. As Nandi, Gopal, and Patel noted, these were the only Indian programs available, before satellite television, that created a connection to Indian culture. These programs resonated with the Asian Indian audience because they contained cultural references that were easily understandable to them, as suggested in studies of other cultures. For example, De Santis (2003) explained that the Spanish-speaking audience preferred local programs or programs imported from the Spanish-speaking world because of the cultural references easily understandable to the Latin American audience.

### ***6.3.5. Connection to the culture***

After Asian Indians migrated to the U.S., they tried to maintain their culture, not just through the media but through religious ceremonies, festivals, food, clothing, and getting involved with the local Indian organizations. These Asian Indian women gave specific details as to how and why they maintained their cultural connection to

India. Deepti Dharma explained how she maintained her Indian culture on a daily basis outside of using Indian media:

Daily routine, first is our Indian food no matter what it is, everyday Indian food and prayers in the house, our language. When we talk, you know, that's also get connected, our social circle that also you know Indian, religious ceremony, puja and all that we do that's you know Indian.

Uma Bhatt explained why celebrating Indian festivals was important to her:

All the Indian festivals we celebrate here, like the Raksha Bandan, we do very big way. We have a large family here. My husband's sister, her children, even though my kids don't have their real sister, but they do with cousins. We want to keep that culture. There's some meaning behind it or maybe it's just recognizing that it's [a] kind of connection with brother-sister loving and all that.

Priti Patel also recognized why she celebrated the festivals:

Religion, we do observe our festivals, you know. As I told you earlier, that in our generation when we are growing up, we had the festivals there [in India], but I don't think except Diwali and a few other thing[s]. We do here also, we have the same thing, because we have the Indian social setup.

Sandya Gopal found clothing to be another way of maintaining culture:

Yeah, I just, so, Indian clothing of course whenever we can wear them, you know, like Indian functions, parties or what not, you know, I mean I love wearing Indian clothes and love to look as Indian as possible.

Vandana Dutta, a 62-year-old restaurant owner, commented on why it was important to maintain the culture:

It's that I feel that my children should also know what my background is, where I came from, what I did when I was younger, and all that. So they can they have some, they have values in their minds, you know, what I do and they can pass it on to their children.

Dharma, Bhatt, Patel, Gopal, and Dutta maintained their culture through various rituals, Indian food, and clothing to preserve their identity. Celebrating the Indian festivals, whether at home or at the temple, was also a way of preserving religious identity. For many Asian Indians, religious identity was a way of being accepted in American culture while still being different (Leonard, 1997). Almost everyone in this study discussed doing a daily "puja," which is a prayer ritual. As Leonard (1997) noted, Hindus carved out a space in their American-designed homes to create "puja" rooms or shrines for worship (Leonard, 1997) as a way of preserving their Indian culture.

Patel and Dutta also noted that much of what they practiced was what they grew up with in India. They continued to identify with their place of origin, creating a diasporic community. Furthermore, by maintaining their culture, these Asian Indians were able to pass it on to the next generation.

Dharma talked about how Asian Indians become connected to their culture through their Indian social circle. Patel discussed the "Indian social set-up" of how Asian Indians formed a community in their new home country. Rangaswamy (2000) described how Asian Indians formed their communities starting with regular private

parties and social gatherings in their homes. Indian associations formed as more immigrants migrated to North America and allowed Asian Indians, who are widely scattered geographically, to come together as a community. In addition, the number of Asian Indian festivals began to grow. Many of the early associations and festival celebrations were formed in response to loneliness and alienation, and these groups answered the social needs of the Indian population (Rangaswamy, 2000).

In summary, these Asian Indians maintained a strong sense of culture after arriving in the U.S. through the use of various forms of Indian media: first through films at university theaters and newspapers, then through movies made for the VCR, and eventually through television shows on cable access channels. Watching Indian films at university theaters reminded them of their entertainment in their childhood and brought them closer to India. The Indian newspaper was created as a way for Asian Indians to stay connected to each other and form a larger community. Just like the newspaper, Indian movies have also kept Asian Indians connected to Indian culture. But when Indian movies became available on videos, friends would get together and have Indian video parties. Watching Indian programs on cable access channels was another way for Asian Indians to feel connected to India and find out about the news in their community. Asian Indians did not just try to stay connected to India through media; they also tried to maintain their culture through Indian food, clothing, religious festivals, and more. As a result, their “Indianess” stayed with them, creating a diasporic community. Their Indian media helped to sustain their diasporic community (Mooney & Evans, 2007).

#### ***6.4. Attraction to Indian programming***

In the previous sections the researcher explained how Asian Indians became acculturated into American culture and enculturated into watching American television, described the stereotypes of Indians on U.S. television, and discussed the different forms of Indian media used by Asian Indians to stay connected to their culture. Furthermore, the researcher has also demonstrated how Asian Indians maintain a deep connection to their culture, creating an diasporic community. But when Indian programs became available via the satellite dish in 1998, this access gave Asian Indians a new way to stay connected to India.

In this section the researcher analyzed the oral histories of the cohort she interviewed and discovered several findings as to why they started subscribing to the dish and why they were attracted to this Indian programming. These findings included: discovering the dish, up-to-date information, no longer felt like outsiders, language, sense of pride, music, and Indian themes in the programs.

All the participants in this study currently subscribe to Indian programming on the Dish Network. Almost all the couples got the Dish when it first launched its Indian programming channels in 1998. On average, each person watches 25.5 hours of Indian programming and 16 hours of American programming in a week.

The researcher first tried to determine why this cohort decided to purchase a satellite dish.

##### ***6.4.1. Discovering the dish***

There were various reasons as to why this cohort decided to get Indian programming via the satellite dish. But almost all of the participants said that the

decision to subscribe was led by a female member of the household, usually the wife. Some of them heard about the dish through friends and relatives. Nandita Nandi, a 59-year-old administrative professional, explained that she heard about it from her temple.

No this is my decision, because I heard that, because I am with so much with temple. Because sometimes we will have, I am like right now Hanuman devotee. So they have lot of Hanuman stories and Ramayana stuff like that. So that's the reason. I don't want to watch too much violent movies and stuff like that. That's how I've made my decision to get the dish, so that [I] like and watch all kind[s] of Indian religious things and stuff like that.

Uma Bhatt, a 60-year-old homemaker, described how she learned about the Indian programming from family:

My sister-in-law. She has a lot of channels on hers. I don't know what kind of package they have. But I was very much interested in watching, you know Indian, Punjabi as well or yoga on Dish. They teach yoga and cooking. Some soap opera, some cultural programs, you know, they have nice programs all the time.

Vikas Dutta, a 70-year-old doctor, explained that he learned about the dish from the community, but he also wanted to get it for other reasons.

My mother has been living with us mostly over 40 years and I thought that was a very good idea to have something from our own culture and language available to her. And also for any, we have always had visitors from India, and those people, you know, to keep them busy, occupied, interested, for

everyone [it] has been there. In fact, you know, this has been very good. We feel for our family, for our children to keep up with the culture and language.

Nandi, Bhatt, and Dutta all learned about the Indian programming available on the satellite dish from their Indian community. In this study, these Asian Indians learned about the dish from friends, relatives, or an advertisement. But others also said they had relatives from India living with them and it was needed to keep them occupied.

#### ***6.4.2. Up-to-date information***

Some of the major findings established why these participants were attracted to this programming. The findings were developed from two very specific questions asked during the oral histories: “What is it about these programs that get you ‘hooked’—meaning you can’t miss an episode? Do you feel a greater connection to India by watching these programs? Why or Why not?” The first theme illustrated how the participants appreciated the up-to-date information from the Indian programming via the dish. Deepti Dharma, a 61-year-old retired pension analyst explained:

Because you get all the updates, current news, current, you know, economic condition, anything, you know, bad or good, mishap of [what] happened.

Something like, that way, you know, we are connected immediately. We get those news because of the Dish or because of the Indian channel, we get those things immediately.

Renu Advani, a 60-year-old homemaker, also acknowledged the importance of getting news in real time from India:

When we go to India, we don't feel left out over there because we know what's happening around there now. India is a upcoming power. Through news, we see that, you know, how India is growing and, much [of] India has grown. So, it's nice to have it and you know nice to watch these things.

Renu's husband, Suneil Advani, a 67-year-old retired civil engineer, felt as if he was in India when he was watching his Indian shows.

Sometime we feel we are sitting in New Delhi watching these shows, because there they are coming live. All the shows are coming from Delhi, and I think they are coming from Delhi and Bombay, and sometime we feel, we call our family members in Chandigarh and Delhi and discuss sometime the programs, you know.

With satellite television, this generation found out what was happening in India now, which was interesting to Vandana Dutta, a 62-year-old restaurant owner: "And by watching Indian programs, that is giving me more opportunity to see what's happening in India now. I'm very much interested to know."

Like Dharma, Advanis, and Dutta, many of the participants shared these sentiments and mentioned that up-to-date information was not just the latest news and sports information, but also included the latest fashion and styles in India. Lee (2004) examined the viewing patterns of Korean immigrants watching Korean satellite television in various Texas cities. Like the participants in this study, Lee (2004) explained how Korean immigrants could watch Korean television in "real time" 24 hours a day, providing viewers with the most recent updates of current events in



Korea. Watching the news in real time through satellite television also gave viewers direct access to the homeland (Sinclair et al., 2000).

It is important for the reader to understand the value of getting information in “real time” for the participants in this study. When this generation first arrived in the U.S. nearly 40 years ago, they were only able to connect with India via letters and the phone for their news. As Uma Bhatt depicted, there was not much connection with India at that time: “I would say it was really not that much connection (to India) except with the letters with the family.” Because of the delays in air mail, it took weeks for this cohort to obtain information from India. The phone connection was not easy either because India’s poor infrastructure contributed to substandard landlines. Once the phone connection was established, all these Asian Indians could say to each other was “Hello” because the calls were usually permitted for only three minutes and it was too difficult to hear a whole conversation. Eventually this cohort started to subscribe to Indian newspapers, but Indian television available via satellite gave them a chance to receive information instantly. They did not have to wait to get their news, so they felt connected to India in “real time.”

#### ***6.4.3. No longer felt like outsiders***

The second finding as to why this cohort was attracted to this type of programming was that they no longer felt like “outsiders” in their original homeland. They did not feel lost when they went back to India; they knew everything that was going on in the country, as Vivek Bhatt, a 68-year-old mechanical engineer, described:

And also keeping the connection is important. Because when we do go there, we don't feel we are going to some foreign land, we're still going to a land where we grew up in and have a lot of connections from that standpoint of view.

Sunita Sharma, a homemaker in her 60s, explained how satellite television helped her feel connected to India:

You don't feel like you are away from home that is the connection I have. And I think when you go to India and everybody, what they, well everybody watches these shows too, so I see well, we are not behind. Anything here, living that far [away], but still we are getting everything what they are getting.

Bandita Das, a 59-year-old homemaker, described why she no longer felt like an outsider when she visited in India:

Well, here we are, you know a little more about India, like you don't feel you are that far away. I mean, you know, we just feel more, I mean, we go almost every year, or year and a half, we go to India, you know, in that sense. It's not that we just, we haven't visited there much, you know. So yeah, I feel more like you know what's going on there.

On average, these Asian Indians traveled to India every three to four years after moving to the U.S. For many, their visits became yearly in the last 15 years. As this generation returned to India during the 1970s and 1980s, they often felt lost in their own homeland because India was also changing while they lived in the U.S. Now with satellite television, when they visited India they felt in touch with the country because they stayed connected in real time through television. Just as Bhatt,

Sharma, and Das no longer felt like outsiders in their homeland, Lee (2004) noted the role of satellite television in Korean immigrants' lives reinforced the viewers' ethnic identity and connection with Korean culture and society.

#### ***6.4.4. Language***

The third finding was the language spoken in the programming. Many of the participants felt a connection to India when they heard Indian programming spoken in their native Indian language, such as Hindi, Punjabi, or Telegu. Vandana Dutta explained why hearing her native language is significant:

It's emotional. I feel, oh, my gosh, at least my language is still prevailing and I can still watch Indian programs. I don't have to be worried about English, you know, that much. Yes, look, I know I, that's why I just told you; because I really like that. I would rather see Indian program spoken Hindi spoken there than English. And speaking English, for them [my children] it's okay. For them it's fine, but for me, I feel Hindi is what draws me [to the programming].

Like I have just, when somebody speaks Hindi, I'll look at him more.

Vandana's husband, Vikas Dutta, found hearing his native language drew him to his Indian cultural roots:

I think significance [of language] is, you know, that it helps you feel that you have continued to live with your own culture and with your own social values. And although, you know, if I am with a group of people where there is no Indian there, I feel fairly comfortable. But on the other hand, I feel equally comfortable when there is a completely Indian group, and that way, you

know, I mean it's just that if, it's the ease of availability of the Indian shows I would say.

Priti Patel, a real estate agent in her 60s, said

The reason being, anything you grow up [with], whether it's English or Italian or German or anything, anything you grow up [with], the language, the music you grow up [with], look at our children. Everybody, they enjoy the music, they have grown up [with]. So we, it is very natural that we are contributing, you know, subscribing to these channels only, because we had our language thing.

The Asian Indians in this study wanted to stay connected to their own culture.

They wanted to hear television programs in their native language as opposed to watching programs in another language. With certain jokes and expressions, the participants could understand the meaning in their own language, which was why language played such an important role in enjoying this Indian programming. For example, in a study using physical appearance and language, Roslow and Nicholls (1996) found that television commercials by a Hispanic actor in the spoken language Spanish were more persuasive in the Hispanic market than commercials delivered in English (Roslow & Nicholls, 1996, p. 74). Roslow and Nicholls (1996) showed the “strength of ethnic identification based on languages spoken at home resulted in differences of attitudes toward the products” being advertised in the commercials (p. 68). The Spanish commercials appealed to Hispanics because the anchors reacted to situations in tune with Hispanic cultural expectations (Roslow & Nichols, 1996).

These Indian programs also played a role in helping the younger generation communicate with the grandparents, some of whom were living with the participants. Balraj Das, a 64-year-old civil engineer, described how these programs helped granddaughters talk to his mother:

Well, one thing I can tell you that's important, and I see the value of these programs in my grandkids, which I couldn't give to my own kids. So my grandkids, I have three granddaughters and a [grand] son. I think they pick up some language. It helps to communicate with my mother because my mother doesn't speak English and she doesn't understand English. She is completely uneducated. So they, these, my granddaughters, they communicate pretty good with my [mother], they can speak, they can at least understand. They may not be speaking all the [correct] thing, but they can understand her because they watch lot of Indian movie[s]. So it's, just has something, because they watch with pictures. They watch the language. So it's easy sometimes to understand with pictures and they can understand my mother better. That's one of the good things I think out of these programs.

Nandita Nandi shared the same experience with her grandchildren:

That way the generations who [are] here just like [my] grandkids and everybody, they can see what is the picture of India, what kind of culture of India, how they live over there, how they talk. Like I would guess that kind of thing, I think that can help for this third generation is especially.

Like Das and Nandi, Gillespie (1989) illustrated how many parents believed that by watching Indian films their children would maintain their Indian language,

which became a symbol of culture and identity. In her study, parents also found the films to be a point of reference to negotiate customs, traditions, values, and beliefs of the Indian culture, especially when second-generation children born and brought up in England resisted Indian traditions and customs shown in films. The films were used for entertainment and as tools for cultural continuity and reaffirming cultural identity (Gillespie, 1989).

#### ***6.4.5. Sense of Pride***

The fourth finding among the participants is that this cohort felt proud of the advancement of India's technology. As a result, many participants have appreciated the progress India has made since they moved to the U.S. Dinesh Dharma, a 67-year-old mechanical engineer, explained his sense of pride when he watched India's progress on television:

I think you are more proud than before because [the] country of your origin is doing better and is being recognized as a[n] economic power, you know. So that make[s] you gratifying, you know, and you enjoy watching those kinds of success stories.

Vandana Dutta also enjoyed seeing how India has changed as she described what she specifically saw on the screen with India's progress:

I would say clothes also, I mean, the kind of jewelry, the clothes they're wearing, and then the kind of houses they are showing. And you know, the improvements in India, like it's not like [it] there used to be forty years ago, you know. I mean all the programs were just crying, crying, crying, crying, crying. Now it's in happy programs. You can see the [country] flourish. You

like the country has flourished so much that even [in] the programs people are laughing and smiling, and all that.

This generation of Asian Indians saw thousands of people slaughtered and killed as Hindus left Pakistan and moved to India, and Muslims left India and moved to Pakistan. This cohort did not see India's potential (as noted in the introduction of the Results and Discussion section). Many people did not think India had a future. They came to the U.S. missing India but not willing to go back because there were better opportunities in the U.S. Many of the participants in this study saw India's progress on satellite television, as well as the development of Indian technology, and felt proud.

Another reason these participants took so much pride in watching the programming was that they were not used to seeing Indians act with so much confidence, as Suneil Advani described:

All I would say here is that I am very, very impressed with the way the announcers come on the stage, come on the TV, and do that. Those girls are so very well dressed, so very well mannered. They speak so fluent English, I mean, it is unbelievable how these girls are trained. I am telling you I am so proud of that and I always tell my wife. I say look at this girl, her expressions.

Overall, there is a sense of pride among the participants in watching how India has progressed, not just economically, but also professionally.

#### ***6.4.6. Music***

Music was another finding discovered among the participants. Among them, Dinesh Dharma, who explained why music attracted him to the programming, saying,

“Indian music is very easy to follow because you grew up with it.” Authentic Indian music resonated with this generation because the sounds of the Indian instruments were sounds they were used to hearing, explained Vivek Bhatt:

But to me, Indian music is certainly, at least gives me greater pleasure to listen to than any other music. I think that there is certainly a cultural connection, it’s just the beat of the music, you know, the way it is presented, the way it is put together, I think it is certainly a lot superior. I’m pretty sure the American music people who love it, you know, my kids love American music, but I just never got hooked into it.

Furthermore, this cohort could understand the words to the music when watching Indian programming, explained Sunita Sharma:

When I was born in my years I have heard only Indian music. American music I have no interest and no craze and no understanding. Some of the song[s] I may have heard, but I am not used to those. It doesn’t effect good on to my ears that I want to listen again and again this song or something. Indian music is melodious and very nice, and plus it’s in our blood.

Sundeep Gopal, a 68-year-old retired engineer agreed:

Western music doesn’t mean much to me. I can’t understand [the] lyric[s]. I can’t understand. It more annoys to me than what the original real music used to be. So Indian music copies much more, because it’s, it is even if it is today’s one popular music, it has lot more lyric. Music soothing, it feels good to your ears, not noise.



Some of the participants watched the programming just to hear the live concerts like Priti Patel:

I am more of a music person. That is what it is. My interest in this Indian thing [programming] is because of the music. I expanded from the few channels to this whole thing, you know, right now, only because they sometime give concerts, although they don't do the right things, yet they can. There's really improvement, this Dish Network people, [because of] but the live programs, music programs, concerts and the, generally, the music thing. The old songs, the in between, the songs of the 1980s, as well as, so music is music.

Dharma, Bhatt, Sharma, Gopal, and Patel, as well as many other participants, enjoyed watching Indian programming, because of the Indian music. Like these Asian Indians, Lee (2004) determined that Korean immigrants enjoyed watching the historical dramas and programs because they featured old Korean songs.

The sounds and lyrics to the Indian music resonated with this cohort because they never became enculturated (a learning process that leads individuals to social stability and cultural continuity within their culture) into American music. Furthermore, they never became acculturated (a cross-cultural adaptation process where individuals learn a new cultural system in their new host society, but still maintain their own cultural integrity) to American music either.

#### ***6.4.7. Indian themes in the programs***

Another finding discovered among these Asian Indians was their attraction to the themes in the Indian programs. Some of the scenes and story lines brought back

memories for these Asian Indians. For example, Vivek Bhatt, a 68-year-old mechanical engineer, said the programs showed more cultural ties to the Indian family.

I think if anything, it sort of strengthens some of the old culture when you watch the Indian programming. When you see the notion about the children still saying, I think, which is, from my standpoint a very good thing, you rarely hear in this country, the kids saying I want to do this for my mother, I want to do this thing for my father. I think whenever they show, the Indian shows, if the kid is watching a show that is going to win some money, they are going to ask him, what are you going to do with your money? The first thing he's going to say is I want to buy a house for my mother. I want to buy this for my father. He doesn't say I'm going to go on some big vacation, and spend the money. So culturally I think that their relationship to the family is a lot stronger in that respect, and caring for the parents is a lot stronger. And that sort of tends to strengthen what you grew up with.

The Indian soap operas also resonated with some of the participants because the story lines reflect the Indian joint family system, the kind of extended family many of these Asian Indians grew up with, as 67-year-old Suneil Advani explained:

I started teaching in 1965 at Howard University and I [would] come home at noon time after classes and watch soap operas. Now we have a choice between the American soap opera and Indian soap opera and all these channels, 10 or 11 channels we have, we have all Indian channels. We both

feel comfortable because we can relate to the heritage, the family background of Hindu culture [in the Indian soap opera].

Advani watched American soap operas when he first came to the U.S. But when Indian soap operas became available on satellite television, he started watching Indian soap operas. Advani became acculturated into watching Indian soap operas. These programs portrayed elements of Indian culture, such as the extended family, that do not exist in the American soap opera, as Advani described:

The story is, you know, fascinating and basically it is social behavior of the people, how the mother-in-law acts, how the daughter-in-law acts, how the father-in-law acts in all these Indian family. Because we are a traditional Indian family and you know, these people have set up the program in such a way that in any program either the mother-in-law or the daughter-in-law is villain, and the other is a saint and vice-versa.

Hence, Advani's primary learning was in watching American soap operas, but he learned to watch Indian soap operas, a new kind of programming on television.

Some Indian soap operas emulate what Advani described, but some story lines have changed. Engineer (2007) noted that some of the themes in Indian soap operas were no longer about how the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law were fighting about how to cook dinner. Instead the story line revolved around the daughter-in-law building her career (Engineer, 2007). The structure of the Indian soap opera still depicted the extended family structure. As a result, many participants found these soap operas interesting, not just for the resemblance of the joint family system they grew up with but for the changing economic structure that is happening within the

Indian family. These soap operas essentially gave them a chance to learn how India's economic growth among the middle class affects the traditional Indian family structure (Engineer, 2007).

Many Indian programs also gave these Asian Indians up-to-date information on India's latest fashions as well as how India's society is changing, as Uma Bhatt described: "I just like to watch what is going on in India these days, how people are living, and what kind of fashion, some time I watch for that. Some, just in general, I watch because I like the story." Like Bhatt, many of the women in this study discussed in their oral histories how they enjoyed learning of India's latest styles and fashions.

The religious programming was also unique because, when this generation migrated to the U.S., there were few Hindu temples in the country. As noted in the literature review, people established a space for worship in their U.S. homes, so they could carry on like the religious practice they grew up with in India. Once temples were built, Asian Indians had another place for worship. Now these participants could see religious services on television, as Nandita Nandi described:

You see most of the times, whenever there is any special stuff, like about religious, Hanuman (Hindu god) and something, I like to watch to that. After that I will go put the music. So comedy doesn't bother me that much, it is there, my husband watch, I'll watch with him. So that's my priority.

The Bhatt, Advani, and Nandi, among the rest of the participants, were attracted to the programming because of the Indian cultural themes in the shows.

In summary, most of the participants in this study heard about the satellite dish through friends and relatives, at their temple, or in an advertisement. The decision to subscribe to the dish was led by a female member of the household. Some people subscribed to the dish keep relatives from India living with them occupied.

Major findings were established, which helped explain why these Asian Indians were attracted to this programming. The first finding was that participants appreciated watching Indian programs in “real time.” They did not have to wait to stay connected to India.

They also no longer felt like outsiders when they returned to India to visit. Satellite television allowed them to keep up with how the country was developing through the up-to-date visual images television provided on the screen. Asian Indians could visually see how the country was progressing through the programs and television advertisements.

Many of the participants felt a connection to India when they heard Indian programming spoken in their native Indian language. Hearing their native language spoken on television strengthened their cultural roots and identity. Some parents also believed their grandchildren would start to learn an Indian language if they heard it on television.

Participants also experienced a sense of pride when they saw India’s global progress on television. As noted, these participants, as well as others of their generation, left India when the country was still trying to establish itself after independence. They watched with great pride India’s progress both economically and professionally. These images were a sharp contrast to the television pictures of India

this cohort saw when they first moved to the U.S. As stated earlier, many of the images of India and Indian culture on American television nearly 40 years ago focused on India's poverty.

Another finding is that music drew viewers to the programs. Many of the participants of this generation never appreciated American music, primarily because they could not understand the lyrics. They were used to listening to Indian instruments, which also created their cultural connection to the programming.

The themes in the Indian programs also resonated with this cohort because they showed more cultural ties to the Indian family. The story lines of most of the soap operas also demonstrated the Indian joint family system these Asian Indians were raised with. Other themes that attracted participants to these programs included watching the latest fashion trends and religious programming.

### ***6.5. The American Filter***

The final category that was identified was called "The American Filter." As noted in "Becoming American," these participants were enculturated into American television: they learned how to watch television in the U.S. As U.S. television developed its presentation style with increased visual elements, these participants also became accustomed to a certain standard when watching television. Essentially, American television became a filter through which these participants judged Indian television. As a result, Indian television was held to the standard of American television, thus creating the American filter.

At the same time these Asian Indians were attracted to Indian programming for the "real-time Indianess" it brought to the screen. They also felt proud of the

development in technology in India. But, while they valued American broadcasting standards, they did not want to see Indian programs copying Western cultural values. In the instances where Indian programming was being judged against American programming, participants wanted to make sure that it was Indian enough.

In this section, the researcher found several reasons as to why this cohort disliked some of the Indian programming. These findings included copying Western culture, objectifying women, news programs that were not up to standard, and Indian soap operas that dragged on too long. These findings indicated that the cohort became enculturated, a learning process that leads individuals to social stability and cultural continuity within their culture, into American programming. These findings also suggested that the cohort became acculturated, a cross-cultural adaptation process where individuals learn a new cultural system in their new host society but still maintain their own cultural integrity, to Indian programming via the satellite dish. The following is an explanation of each finding and its implication for enculturation and acculturation.

#### ***6.5.1. Copying Western Culture***

The first finding described by almost all the participants was that the programming was described as “too Western.” Dinesh Dharma, a 67-year-old mechanical engineer, said Indian programming was simply copying Western culture and not really reflecting the reality of the country.

Because I think that’s all, the everything, that lifestyle. And whatever they are showing is based on lifestyle that American shows that, you know. They are copying rather than reflecting the real life in India of the majority of the

people, you know. Even like the lifestyle they are showing for the rich, that also is not Indian life styling. Indian rich have their own of, you know, but mostly what they show them is completely Westernized.

Dharma felt Indian television focused on how the wealthy lived in India, which is a small portion of the population. Just like television, “The India that is now being shown through Bollywood cinema covers only the cosmopolitan class. Only a few films highlight social issues, and the ones that address these issues do not become ‘hits’ at the box-office” (Raj, 2007). Dharma did not feel Indian television programs focused on how the majority of the population lived in India. Dharma felt the programming copied American shows because he believed American programs also focused on the wealthy rather than the majority of how the American population lived. Furthermore, he believed the wealthy in India have adopted a Westernized lifestyle and that image was being perpetuated on the screen.

Dharma’s wife, Deepti, a 61-year-old retired pension analyst, agreed that the programs had some Western cultural elements, and would rather see programs stay true to Indian culture:

Too Western, because it looks like, you know, they are copying everything what we see here, you know, the basic standards, style, you know setup and all that. One way it is good though, because whole world is getting into one culture, it looks like, you know, everybody is following America. So that way is open up for our Indian people back home to get what’s going on here and everybody understand American language. So we are also getting into that so



we become more connected with each other, yeah, but in some part of we should have our own style or our own, you know.

Deepti Dharma felt the style of the programming exposed too many Western cultural values. She, like her husband, wanted to see Indian programs develop their own style.

The Dharmas did not believe some of the Indian programs reflected true Indian culture and would rather see programs embrace Indian culture and tradition. The Dharmas wanted to see India the way they remembered the country when they left nearly 40 years ago. Although they traveled back to India many times, they did not change with the country. As a result, they remained connected to India's traditional values and culture and did not connect with the Western images of India in the Indian programming.

### ***6.5.2. Objectifying Women***

Some participants did not agree with the way women appeared on the screen. The researcher discovered some participants complained that Indian women on Indian television were scantily dressed and too open about their relationships with men. They were used to seeing women dressed in Indian attire, like a sari or salwar suit, explained Vandana Dutta, a 62-year-old restaurant owner:

Western in the sense that, like the kind of, they are getting dressed, like the girls they don't look like Indian anymore. They don't wear that much Indian, Western clothes; they are into Western clothes. And like even the sets, like they have adapted lots of Western movies and they turn into Indian movies.

And sometimes it's depressing that to see, that we are we are losing our culture that way.

Dutta also wanted to see India the way she remembered it when she left the country. She remained connected to the traditional values of the culture and, therefore, could not relate to the images of modern-looking women on the screen. Dutta even said that the girls do not look Indian anymore. She felt as if she was watching Indian women with a Westernized demeanor and clothing on screen. She also thought the television sets and movie sets were too Western-looking. As a result, she felt women wearing Western clothes and Western-looking television and movie sets showed how Indian television programs were not staying connected to Indian traditional culture.

Uma Bhatt, a homemaker in her 60s, said that the programs were adopting Western culture:

The clothing, less and less clothing, they're wearing. And the way they start talking, and drink, and smoke, the ladies, we never saw before. But I see now in a lot of movies, and kind of shows that ladies are freely drinking and all that. So I would say they have adopted a lot of Western culture there.

For Bhatt, the image of Indian women drinking was something that she had never seen before. Furthermore, this image was being perpetuated on Indian television. Bhatt said Indian programming was copying Western culture by showing images of Indian women drinking on Indian television. The concept of women drinking in India is something her generation could not imagine. Bhatt remembered India as she left it 40 years ago, as having a very traditional, conservative culture for women, who were shielded from Western influence. She did not change with the country and was not

familiar with the modern image of an Indian woman. However, it is important to note that this image of the modern Indian woman applies to only a small segment of the population, the wealthy class, who have been exposed to Western culture outside of television. The majority of India's population is middle-class. Therefore, Bhatt may have believed that Indian programming was not portraying the average Indian woman on television.

The Asian Indians in this study were accustomed to seeing American women portrayed in a sexually free manner on television, but not Indian women. Women appeared to be more open about their relationships with men, as Renu Advani, a 60-year-old homemaker, explained: "Now the girls have relationship before marriage, you know, they live with the boyfriends even without getting married. It's getting so, you know, they say it's getting so popular." Advani went on to say, "Then we feel this is not our culture, but, and the way they dress up. I mean there is no shirt or anything. They are, all they are wearing is strapless and things."

Advani and others are part of a generation who left India when arranged marriages were still the norm. Couples did not date or live together before marriage. When this cohort saw women acting more open about their relationships with men, they interpreted that to be demeaning to women. They expected to see women sheltered as they were in their young adult life. Hence, they were thinking of images of Indian women as they remembered them in India when they left the country 40 years ago. Furthermore, they expected to see women dressed in Indian attire, fully covered, and not in Western clothes, such as strapless blouses.

Sunita Sharma, a homemaker in her 60s, also felt that copying the Western format of programming made Indian women appear in a degrading manner and that it did not show the reality of the culture:

They should not try to follow Western [ways] because they think they are [better]. This television is showing in abroad countries, so they should [not] do those kind of things what the people do is here, it's wrong. If that is their motto to do that, they should keep their originality to show the good things in the television, set an example over here, but why they are following Western things. Clothes wise they are following, drinking wise and flirting wise, sleeping with one another, husbands cheating on the wife, it was not in our culture and all they show in the television. All the time the same things, I don't know what's gone wrong with them, and why they are making these kind of things. So that's what I want know, are they really happening there or they are copying only just to show us here?

Sharma felt the images of women were not showing a realistic picture of how women behaved in India. She wanted only positive images of India broadcast on television to preserve India's traditional culture and values for viewers abroad. When she saw images of women in Western clothing, she thought women were copying Western culture. Furthermore, when she saw images of women drinking, flirting, or committing adultery, she said Indian television was copying a Western style of programming in their story themes. Sharma did not believe Indian women behaved that way. She did not believe the programs were accurately portraying Indian culture.

Balraj Das, a 64-year-old civil engineer, also felt the television shows dishonored women:

It's more Western and that's, than the Western culture itself. If you really look at the woman, the way they dress in these, I think it is filth more than anything else. I mean, they have gone across limits, sometimes vulgar, I would say. It's that particularly in case of woman, men probably I don't know, but we are a conservative society.

Again, Das was used to seeing images of Indian women in a very conservative manner. In fact, he believed the portrayal of women in the programs had surpassed images of women he had seen on American television. He thought images of Indian women in Indian programming had become vulgar and crossed traditional Indian limits.

Dutta, Bhatt, Advani, Sharma, and Das, as well as other participants, did not agree with portraying Indian women scantily dressed in Western clothes instead of Indian attire. They also were not used to seeing Indian women being open about their relationships with men, or drinking. They said these images on Indian television did not represent traditional Indian culture. Some did not believe that Indian women really behaved this way. They even felt that some of the images of Indian women on Indian television surpassed those American women portrayed on American television. They also thought the sets of the television programs and movies were too Western-looking.

### ***6.5.3. News programs not up to standard***

The Asian Indians in this study did not connect with the Western images of India and Indians on television. They still longed for India's traditional values and culture to be portrayed in its Indian programming. However, they said Indian news programs were not up to the standard of American news programs. This cohort became enculturated (a learning process that leads individuals to social stability and cultural continuity within their culture) into a certain standard of news programs—American news programs. The next finding discussed among the participants was the amount of actual news in a news programs. Many said that there was not enough actual news content, as Vikas Dutta, a 70-year-old doctor, explained:

You try to get an update, but as I said, you know, one of the things, which [it] lacks is the more of political discussion. And the news you watch occasionally, if you turn on the news channel, I mean that's it the saddest part, is they are not up to standard. And they do not provide enough information and the first thing they talk about is cricket (sport). Although, you know, when I grew up, you know, I grew up watching cricket during my school and college days, but then there is only so much of cricket you can see and watch.

Dutta was tired of news programs being consumed with sports and wished there were more news programs that had political discussion like *Meet the Press*. Overall, he did not believe the Indian news programs were up to the U.S. standard and did not provide enough information about the rest of the country.

Balraj Das also criticized the news, saying it focused on too much sports and celebrity news:

I think, again, the news is very below standard. They even don't have any news which is what we [are] watching. They have one cricket [news item]. They will spend 15 minutes, for example. They don't make any sense. I mean it's a huge country, billion people. There are [a] lot of things. When I go, I see lot of things, which I think they will be, newscast should be about those problems the country faces, not about cricket. Fifteen minutes out of 30 minutes for cricket and then there is a wedding going on, nonsense stuff about wedding of a film-star son. I mean that's the last thing in my life. How the hell I care whose son is getting married and they spend all 25 minutes on the news. Who wants to watch that news. That's full of garbage.

Das thought the news programs focused on too much sports and entertainment and, as a result, they were below standard. Das said that the Indian news programs did not reflect the content driven newscasts he was used to watching in the U.S. He presumed that the newscast should be about the problems in the country, not about sports. Das also said the news programs concentrated on Indian celebrity news. Most of the participants in this study were used to watching news programs that had depth. From the oral histories, it appeared as if they saw Indian news programs reflect the styles of *Entertainment Tonight* or *ESPN* rather than a regular evening news program.

Das went on to say what he would like to see in news programs:

I mean it's a vast country with vast problems with lot of things going on. There is a lot of progress going on. We have a culture which dates back to, civilization dates backs to hundreds of years. There are a lot of things, they can plan these programs on. They can have this news about what's going on

in today's world, in the international world and India. How we are reacting to those things. Yeah. That's not the news they cover.

Das wished there were more educational programs that focused on India's history and culture. He also emphasized that India was a large country with both problems and progress and would have liked to see Indian news programs reflect coverage of everything going on in the country. He also would like to see Indian news programs have more international coverage of events around the world.

Other participants talked about how they wished the programs reflected the "real life" of India. For example Prakash Patel, a researcher in his 60s, said:

The program[s] need improvement. There is no question in my mind. It definitely needs quality improvements, even in sitcoms. I mean if they have to reflect, there should be some reality somewhere. I think Indian programs lack reality. Do the American programs lack reality? Sometimes, yes.

Patel, like Das, also felt the programs needed improvement. He felt Indian programs, in general, were not realistic and that is why the overall content needed to be improved.

Dutta, Das, and Patel would like to see Indian news programs improved. They all felt the news focused on too much entertainment and sports and did not reflect the reality of the country. Dutta would like to see an Indian version of *Meet the Press*, and Das would like to see more educational programs. Patel would like to see realistic Indian programs.



#### ***6.5.4. Indian soap operas dragged on too long***

The next finding discussed among the participants was that the evening soap operas dragged on too long. In “Becoming American” some participants of this study talked about how they watched soap operas when they first came to the U.S. These shows included *General Hospital*, *Young and the Restless*, and *Guiding Light*. These Asian Indians were becoming enculturated into watching a certain genre of television—American soap operas.

The soap operas described above are “open” soap operas, which meant they have no end point in their narrative. The “closed” soap opera was what this cohort described when referring to evening drama programs. The closed soap operas are broadcast nightly over three or four months, but eventually end and are more common in countries like India than in the United States. The design and reception of the closed soap opera make it fundamentally different from the open soap opera (Allen, 1997).

When viewing American soap operas, these participants became enculturated by watching the characters evolve and change over the episodes. They also maintained knowledge of what happened to the story line in previous episodes. They were enculturated into following the progress of the American story line in soap operas. As a result, when Indian soap operas dragged on too long, some participants became frustrated because the development of the characters and story line were not up to the standard of American soap operas. Sunita Sharma explained further:

In the beginning I liked it, but these, all these soap operas they, they take to you nowhere, they are just, oh my gosh, when the story finishes, they want to

drag on, they start good plays, but they keep on drag on, oh they drag in such a way that the original play you forgot what, how nice it was.

Sharma discussed specifically what did not work in the soap operas:

The story line they start, but no characters are good. Acting is very good, that is very good part about it, but the only thing I am concerned about when they start a story, continue that theme. They, I think, after running for two, three months, they don't know what to do with the story.

Sharma described how in the beginning she enjoyed the Indian soap operas, but then she felt as if the storyline was going nowhere. The story line in Indian soap operas started out strong but did not manage to continue a strong theme after two or three months. Sharma said the soap operas would drag on and the viewers would eventually forget the original plot. Sharma liked the acting but thought the characters were not fully developed. Sharma went on to say that some of the dramatic effects used in the soap operas lowered the production quality of the soap operas, not something they were used to seeing in the American soap operas:

Well, like if somebody enters in the house, they are shocked to see that person, how come that person came, then there is, they focus on five member sitting. What's the purpose, I don't understand after all, you are shocked, you can have your expression, you are shocked, but they don't have to do music like that. And put on each one, they are putting the flash light [spotlight] on each one and breaking the light just like that, that the person can be shattered. I don't know why they do that in every play, not only in song. I would say

that is, whatever the production, whoever the producer is or the direction, I don't know, or the storyteller, whosoever, its wrong idea.

Sharma felt that some of the special effects used in the soap operas sensationalized the story. Sharma described how the camera and music in the soap opera scene focused on five family members sitting, when someone entered their house. Spotlight effects were then used on each family member creating another dramatic effect. Sharma did not like these effects. She had become enculturated into watching American soap operas, which use less special effects and more developed plots and characters.

Vikas Dutta also thought the soap operas dragged on too long:

We would like to see more of that (Indian political discussion shows), because after a time, you know, we get tired of watching soap operas. And the problem with the soap opera is, you know, they unnecessarily drag on. And some of us, you know, who are not really serious watchers of the shows, for example one day to another day, you know, if you don't watch it for three days, you know, you have no idea how things change and what has happened. Me and my wife in particularly watch, want to watch the program where it is more of intellectual discussions amongst the actors, and I particularly like the high level of language and social discussions.

Dutta also said the soap operas dragged on too long and he eventually got tired of watching them. He said that if a viewer missed several episodes, he or she would not be able to follow along. Dutta had also become enculturated into the variety of

American programming available in the evening. He found that too many Indian soap operas were offered in the evening and not enough intellectual programming.

Prakash Patel believed the storylines of the Indian soap operas were also deteriorating: “They started as hilarious comedy, interesting, you know. But they, as the story went on, I didn’t like the trend of the story. I don’t think the story writer[s], they are doing a good job.” Patel thought they started out amusing and captivating, but he also thought the story lines dragged on.

Sharma, Dutta, and Patel all became tired of the ongoing story lines in Indian soap operas. Sharma did not like the special effects used with the shows, and Dutta thought there was not enough intellectual programming in general.

These viewers, like other participants in this study, developed an understanding of serial television after becoming enculturated into American programming. With serial television, the viewers’ pleasure in each show had to do with the development of the story lines and characters. As a result, some of the participants who watched American soap operas after moving to the U.S. became enculturated into this genre of television as well. Their process of enculturation stemmed from watching the characters evolve and change through the episodes and maintaining knowledge of what happened to the storyline in previous episodes.

When they started to watch Indian soap operas, they became acculturated into watching them. They already had a knowledge base of how soap operas developed after watching American soap operas. As a result, they learned to watch Indian soap operas and appreciated them for their Indian themes. However, they all felt the story lines dragged on too long and were of low quality.

This final category, the American Filter, demonstrated that these Asian Indians became skilled television viewers. They knew the difference between good and bad programming. After becoming enculturated into American television, they used American television as a filter to help them decide if the Indian programming was up to standard, both in its production quality and storytelling. As a result, they became media literate. “A media literate person... can access, analyze, evaluate, and produce both print and electronic media” (Aufderheide, 1993). Other definitions revolved around media literacy education include:

...by teaching them [students] how to understand, analyze, and evaluate media messages, and ...by highlighting the role of media in democracy, the importance of being an informed voter, and a responsible, aware, and active participant in local, national, and global communities (Mihailidis, 2007).

In summary, Indian television programs in general copied Western culture when they may have been better off in their own style. Many of the participants said the Indian programs did not reflect true Indian culture and they would rather see programs embrace Indian culture and tradition. For these Asian Indians, the image of India they wanted to see on the screen was the image of the country they remembered. Many people who left India in the 1960s still thought of the country as it was 40 years ago. Although they traveled to India and visited their extended families every few years, they did not change with the country. It was almost as if they were stuck in a “time machine,” holding onto the culture they grew up with. These viewers were able to analyze and evaluate what they saw in the Indian programming and believed that it did not reflect true Indian culture. However,

another reaction to Indian programming came from being enculturated into American programming and, therefore, being accustomed to a certain standard and quality of program. Perhaps both frames of reference were applied as this cohort watched Indian media.

Participants did not agree with the way women appeared on the screen. Some viewers thought the women on television, who wore Western clothes, exposed too much of their body parts. They were used to seeing women dressed in Indian attire and connecting to the traditional culture. Again, disliking how women were objectified on television was another example of how this cohort analyzed and evaluated Indian media through an American Filter.

Some participants did not feel the Indian news programs were up to standard and spent more time on sports and entertainment news. They did not feel the news was complete given the reality of the country. As a result, they would have liked to see more educational programs and political discussion shows. As these Asian Indians analyzed and evaluated Indian news programs, they compared them to American news programs because they were enculturated into American programming. By becoming enculturated into American programming, particularly news, they understood the role of media in democracy. This kind of media literacy was what made these Asian Indians feel that the Indian news programs were not up to standard.

As participants discussed how the Indian soap operas dragged on too long, they showed that they were used to watching American soap operas with characters and story lines developed as in the west. Again, these Asian Indians analyzed and

evaluated Indian soap operas and compared them to American soap operas. By becoming enculturated into American soap operas, they had divulged certain expectations. In Indian soap operas, they could see through the low level of production quality and story-telling, which made them believe the shows were not up to standard.

### **6.6. Summary**

The five findings described in the results and discussion section came from the respondents' answers in the oral histories. The first finding was the process of "Becoming American" in the U.S. In this phase Asian Indians were learning how to watch television for the first time and, essentially, become enculturated into watching American television. While watching American television, they also gained a better understanding of how Americans speak and act in American culture. For some participants, learning to watch and understand American sports programs helped facilitate conversation in the workplace. Participants also found that their English improved after watching American television.

The second finding was the process of watching "Stereotypes of Indians on U.S. television." Asian Indians grew frustrated because they never saw any positive images of India or Indian culture on U.S. television. The images portrayed focused on India's poverty but also included elements of India's exotic culture such as "snake charmers." Respondents felt that India was depicted as a backward country.

The researcher established how these Asian Indian participants had a strong connection to their culture before they became attracted to Indian programming. This strong connection was maintained by the various forms of Indian media

available to them before satellite television developed Indian programming. Hence, for the third finding, “Staying connected to India through other media,” the researcher outlined the various kinds of Indian media the respondents used in the past 40 years. The respondents talked about how they first watched Hindi movies at area university theaters because this was a connection to India. They also subscribed to Indian newspapers that catered to the Asian Indian audience in the U.S. because they wanted to know what was going on in India and their Indian community. They eventually rented Hindi movies to watch on the VCR and watched Indian programming on cable access channels. Again, the reason was that they enjoyed watching Indian programs and Indian culture.

The fourth finding was the “Attraction to Indian programming.” In this section the researcher establishes that Asian Indians were attracted to Indian programming for specific reasons, most importantly because the information was immediate. For the first time, these Asian Indians were watching India in “real time.” They did not have to wait to get the latest information on India. They no longer felt like outsiders in India when they visited India because they were in touch with the latest developments in the country. They enjoyed watching programming spoken in their mother tongue. They felt proud of the advancement in India’s technology. They were attracted to the music and felt nostalgic about certain Indian scenes on the screen. The Indian soap operas reminded them of India’s extended family structure, but also educated them on the changing economic structure within the family. They also enjoyed watching the religious programming as they could appreciate Hindu religious services on the screen.



This process of being attracted to Indian programming is also a process of becoming acculturated to the programming. These Asian Indians already developed their television viewing habits in the U.S.; hence, they became enculturated into watching television. Enculturation is a cultural adaptation process and acculturation is cross-cultural adaptation process. Kim (1988) defined enculturation as the process in which individuals adapt to the surrounding cultural forces through years of socialization. Kim (2005) defined acculturation as a process where individuals learn a new cultural system in their new host society but still maintain their own cultural integrity.

Throughout the Results and Discussion section, the researcher has tried to explain how these participants became enculturated into watching American television and how watching American television helped them with their acculturation process into the U.S. After watching stereotypes of themselves on U.S. television, these participants got tired of seeing themselves marginalized on the screen. Sunita Sharma, a homemaker in her 60s explained that she still felt marginalized by American programs: “No matter how good [the] American shows are, you don’t feel that you [are a] part of them. When you watch these [Indian] shows, it looks like that we are part of them, one of them. [This] is the difference.” Watching these stereotypes was also part of their process of becoming enculturated into watching television.

Despite feeling marginalized in American culture, Indians maintained a strong sense of identity and worked hard to maintain their culture, creating an diasporic community. Asian Indians stayed connected to India through media, and tried to

maintain their culture through Indian food, clothing, and religious festivals, and more. By having such a strong sense of identity and culture, these Asian Indians became attracted to Indian programming via the satellite dish. These Asian Indians developed the skill of watching television after moving to the U.S. and then became acculturated into watching Indian television via the satellite dish. Describing reactions similar to those of the participants in this study, Lee (2004) conducted research on the role of satellite television in Korean immigrants' lives. In Lee's study, the results showed that Korean satellite television reinforced viewers' ethnic identity, the immigrants' connection with Korean culture and society. Lee (2004) also explained how watching Korean television in "real time" gave viewers direct access to their homeland and concluded that satellite television "may replace ethnic newspapers and videos in the future," because of real-time broadcasts (p. 78).

The final finding, "The American Filter," establishes that while Asian Indians enjoyed watching Indian programming, they were also used to a certain standard of television because they became enculturated into American television. They learned to watch television in the U.S. As a result, they became media literate in the U.S., which led them to analyze and evaluate Indian programming. One of the most common themes discovered in this section was that the programming was "Too Western." These Asian Indians were not familiar with the cultural changes that were taking place in India and described the images of India on television as copying Western culture.

In summary, the five findings that emerged from the oral history interviews were Becoming American, Stereotypes of Indians on U.S. television, Staying

connected to India through other media, Attraction to Indian programming, and The American Filter. As discussed in the oral history interviews, each participant went through these stages before becoming acculturated to Indian television.

The following chapter will revisit the research questions posed in the introduction and discuss the major findings. The chapter will also discuss the big concepts established throughout the dissertation, the limitations of the study, the findings that could be helpful for television market research, and possible future research.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

This chapter summarizes the major findings of the study by revisiting the research questions. This chapter also explains the important insights discovered in this study, the limitations of the study, how this study is valuable to media companies. Finally, it gives recommendations for future research.

### ***7.1. Research Questions Revisited***

The research questions of this study were designed to investigate how Asian-Indians who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago have stayed connected to India through various forms of media and how they eventually became acculturated into watching Indian television via the satellite dish.

The study addresses the following questions, including the main research question:

1. What is the historical process that has led Asian Indians, who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago, to become acculturated to Indian television via the satellite dish in the U.S.?
2. What were Asian Indians doing, in terms of media behaviors, before a wide variety of media, including movies, newspapers, and cable television, was readily available to this generation of Asian Indians when they moved to the U.S. 40 years ago?
3. What effect did American television have on their acculturation to the U.S. and to Indian television?
4. How did media use affect them in the past?

5. How do they use media now, and how do today's media affect their lives in the U.S.?
6. What would these Asian Indians like to see improve in Indian television, if any improvement is needed?

The research questions were explored using qualitative analysis of the oral history interviews of Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. between 1960 and 1972 from India and reside in the Washington Metro area.

### *7.1.1. First Question*

The first research question, the main research question, investigated how Asian Indians have stayed connected to India through various forms of media. The question asked:

What is the historical process that has led Asian Indians, who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago, to become acculturated to Indian television via the satellite dish in the U.S.?

As discussed earlier, this particular cohort of Asian Indians did not grow up watching television in India because television was not introduced in India before 1959 (Ray & Jacka, 1996). They developed their television viewing habits after migrating to the U.S. The cohort in this study migrated to the U.S. between 1960 and 1972. As a result, they became enculturated into watching television in the U.S., meaning they learned to watch television for the first time after arriving in the U.S. As defined earlier, enculturation is a learning process that leads individuals to social stability and cultural continuity within their culture.

The process of becoming enculturated into American television eventually played a role in becoming acculturated into Indian television. While watching American television, this cohort was exposed to stereotypes of Indian culture on U.S. television. As a result, these participants got tired of seeing themselves marginalized on the screen. Watching these stereotypes was also part of their enculturation process into American television. Even though these Asian Indians were watching stereotypes of India and Indian culture on American television, they still maintained their Indian identity and a strong connection to their culture. They also maintained their culture through Indian food, clothing, religious festivals as well as early forms of Indian media.

Four events unfolded for this cohort to eventually become acculturated to Indian television: 1) they were being exposed to stereotypes of themselves on American television; 2) they maintained a strong sense of culture and identity through various forms of Indian media as well as other aspects of the Indian culture such as food, clothing, and festivals; 3) media technology continued to advance in the U.S. and media habits of this cohort changed along with the development of media technology; 4) the growth of unregulated cable television and satellite television created major changes in India's broadcasting sector. As a result, media technology and programming advanced in India as well. Media executives began to launch major networks in India, creating an increase in the number of channels that reached subscribers both in India and the Indian diaspora (Asian Indians residing outside of India). Media executives also learned that if they wanted to reach the masses, they needed to develop Hindi-language programming. Once Indian television launched in

the U.S. through satellite technology, it also developed into a standard of television these Asian Indians were accustomed to viewing. These Asian Indians became acculturated into Indian television because they were drawn to certain elements in Indian television that American television did not have.

### *7.1.2. Second Question*

The second research question examined the media behaviors of Asian Indians when they moved to the U.S. 40 years ago, well before a wide variety of Indian media including movies, newspapers, and cable television, were readily available. Before a wide variety of Indian media became available to this generation, these Asian Indians were writing and receiving letters to stay connected to India. Because of the delay in air mail, it took weeks for this cohort to obtain information from India. The phone connection was not easy either. Unfortunately, due to India's poor infrastructure, landlines were never properly developed, making it difficult to have a proper phone conversation. (Today, most of India uses mobile phones, which has made it very easy to communicate globally).

Also, this generation grew up watching Indian movies in India. When they moved to the U.S., Indian movies were occasionally screened at a local university theater. Here in the Washington Metro area, this cohort mainly watched Indian movies at Howard and Catholic universities. For them it was a social event as well as “a nostalgic link to India” as the films brought familiar sights of India to its viewers (Fisher, 1980, pp. 63-64).

### *7.1.3. Third Question*

The third research question addressed how U.S. television helped these Asian Indians in their acculturation to the U.S. and to Indian television. As stated earlier, these Asian Indians were asked why they watched American programs after they first moved to the U.S. Their general response was that American programs helped them understand how Americans act and think. At least two participants talked about how they watched football games to help them establish a rapport with their work colleagues. By watching sports programs, participants were becoming acculturated to the U.S. because they wanted to learn how to fit in at work. These individuals thought that by talking to their work colleagues about something in the American culture, they would eventually become accepted in the workplace.

Watching sports is just one example. Some homemakers said they watched American television just to learn how to act in American culture. Some participants discussed how watching television helped them improve their English. By watching American television, some individuals learned how to speak American English, which is another form of acculturation.

Watching American television helped these participants become acculturated to U.S. culture, they were also becoming enculturated to American television. These individuals learned how to watch television for the first time in the U.S., specifically, the act of watching television as it is part of the American culture. These Asian Indians developed the skill of watching television after moving to the U.S. and then became acculturated into watching Indian television via the satellite dish. As stated earlier, acculturation is a process where individuals learn a new cultural system in



their new host society, but still maintain their own cultural integrity. By becoming acculturated to Indian television, these Asian Indians learned to watch television by watching American programming, but when Indian programming became available via satellite, they learned to watch Indian programs.

This cohort was attracted to specific elements of Indian programming that were comparable to the American programs they were enculturated into watching. For example, the *Aaj Tak* news program in India used a global media format with live shots, ticker tape, and reporter packages in its presentation. It also used an informal style of Hindi (Chadha & Kavoori, 2005). Its format was similar to that of CNN/Headline News. Another program in India, *Kaun Banega Crorepati*, also used a global media format. The show is an Indian version of *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* with the same kind of lighting and set, but the questions pertain to Indian culture and it uses an Indian movie star to ask the questions.

Another element that attracted these Asian Indians to Indian programming was the language spoken on air. The Indian programming that developed upon the expansion of the broadcasting sector in India was mainly in Hindi or a regional language of India. As noted earlier, many of the participants in this study felt a connection to India when they heard Indian programming spoken in their native Indian language. Seeing a global format in the programming and hearing programs spoken in their native language led these Asian Indians to become acculturated to Indian programming.

#### ***7.1.4. Fourth question***

The fourth research question asked how did media use affect Asian Indians in the past, which refers to the stereotypes they saw of India on mainstream television? As Asian Indians became enculturated into mainstream American television, they also became enculturated into watching a homogenous picture of the American family on television. Rarely were pictures of India portrayed on U.S. television when they first moved to the U.S. However, when images of India were portrayed, many participants said that too much of India's poverty was shown in the U.S. media. Overall, the images of India shown on television, such as snake charmers, jungles, and temples filled with animals, followed a pattern of Indian stereotypes also depicted in early films made in the West (Ramasubramanian, 2005). These kinds of images made it difficult for Asian Indians to acculturate to their new host culture. Viewing stereotypes of a foreign culture on television could affect the ease of acculturation and cross-cultural communication for newcomers, like these Asian Indians, in their new host culture (Wiseman et al., 1989). It could affect the attitude of members of the host culture, which could lead to social distance between members of two different cultures (Wiseman et al., 1989).

Participants grew frustrated with the negative images of India seen on U.S. television, especially because they knew the portrayal was not an accurate reflection of the overall country. Also, when they migrated to the U.S., they came as highly educated professionals. These stereotypical media images toyed with their own sense of identity as they tried to establish themselves in the U.S.

### *7.1.5. Fifth Question*

The fifth research question examined how this cohort of Asian Indians use media now, and how today's media affect their lives in the U.S. This research question examined what these Asian Indians sought in Indian media to fill the void they feel in U.S. media. Today, this cohort of Asian Indians watches Indian programming via the satellite dish. They learned about the Indian programming available on the dish from friends, relatives, or advertisements. By watching Indian television with this latest technology, these Asian Indians are able to stay connected to India in "real time" - that is they learn about what's going on in India now. This generation used to depend on letters to get the latest news of India, which could take weeks. They used to rely on the phone, which was not reliable due to poor connections and high cost. However, as Lee (2004) explained with the Korean immigrants she studied, viewers are provided with the most recent updates of current events 24 hours a day. Watching the news in real time through satellite television also gives viewers direct access to the homeland (Sinclair et al., 2000).

By watching Indian programming in real time, these participants no longer feel like "outsiders" in their original homeland. As many of these Asian Indians travel back to India to visit their extended family, they often feel lost in their own homeland because India is changing. However, through satellite television, they do not feel lost because they know everything going on in the country in an up-to-date manner. Satellite television helps them stay connected with India. Similarly, in Lee's study, the role of satellite television in the lives of Korean immigrants

reinforced the viewers' ethnic identity and connection with Korean culture and society (Lee, 2004).

Satellite television offers these Asian Indians a chance to watch television in their native Indian language, such as Hindi, Punjabi, or Telegu. By hearing their mother tongue, these Asian Indians are drawn to their Indian cultural roots. For these participants, certain jokes and expressions are much easier to understand in their own language, which is why language has played such an important role in their enjoying the Indian programming. In a study using physical appearance and language, Roslow and Nicholls (1996) show how spoken language Spanish used by a Hispanic actor is more persuasive in advertisements with the Hispanic market than using English and a non-Hispanic actor.

Watching these Indian programs and hearing their native Indian language helped these participants form some common ground with their grandchildren. Gillespie (1989) found that many parents believed that by watching Indian films their children would maintain their Indian language, a symbol of culture and identity. Parents found the films to be a point of reference to negotiate customs, traditions, values, and beliefs of the Indian culture. The films were used for entertainment and as tools for cultural continuity and reaffirming cultural identity (Gillespie, 1989).

The Asian Indians in this study feel a sense of pride in the advancement of India's technology. When they left India, they did not see the country's potential for growth. They spent their childhood, teenage, and early adult years living in the aftermath of India's national independence movement. Many people did not think

India had a future. As the participants saw India's progress on satellite television and the development of Indian technology, they felt proud.

Hearing Indian music on satellite television affects these participants' lives today. For these Asian Indians, authentic Indian music attracts them to the programming because the sounds of the Indian instruments were sounds they grew up with. Furthermore, they could understand the words to the music when watching Indian programming. Similarly, Lee (2004) determined in her study of Korean immigrants that they enjoy watching the historical dramas and programs because they feature old Korean songs.

For this generation of Asian Indians, the sounds and lyrics to the Indian music resonate because they never became enculturated (a learning process that leads individuals to social stability and cultural continuity within their culture) into American music. Nor did they become acculturated (cross-cultural adaptation process where individuals learn a new cultural system in their new host society, but still maintain their own cultural integrity) into American music.

As these Asian Indians watched Indian programming via satellite today, they also recognized the Indian themes in the programs. Some of the scenes and story lines in the programs bring back memories for them. One common theme depicted in many Indian soap operas is the struggle of living within the Indian joint family system. Many of these participants grew up in this family system, which includes all the sons, daughters-in-law, their children, and the parents of the sons living together. These story themes reflect some of the family in-fighting that goes on between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. However, some story lines have changed, which

actually educate these viewers on how many Indian homes in India function today. For example, Engineer (2007) describes how some of the themes in Indian soap operas revolve around the daughter-in-law building her career. As a result, many participants find these Indian soap operas interesting not just for the resemblance of the joint family system they grew up with, but for the changing economic structure that is happening with the Indian family. These soap operas give the participants a chance to learn also about India's economic growth among the middle class, which affects the traditional family structure (Engineer, 2007). These Indian themes attract the participants to the programming, which also includes the latest fashion trends and religious programming.

#### ***7.1.6. Sixth Question***

The sixth research question asks what these Asian Indians would like to see improve in Indian television. Some of the participants did not feel the Indian programs accurately reflect Indian culture. Many participants said the programs were simply copying Western culture or focusing on how the wealthy live in India, which is a small portion of the population. Many participants wanted to see Indian programs develop their own style and embrace Indian culture and tradition.

Some participants did not appreciate the way Indian women were objectified on the screen. As noted earlier, this generation still remembered India the way they left it nearly 40 years ago. Although they traveled back to India many times, they did not change with India. As a result, many participants remembered India with traditional-looking women, dressed in Indian attire, fully covered; they therefore could not relate to the images of the modern-looking Indian woman with a

Westernized demeanor. Some participants even felt that some of the images of Indian women on Indian television surpassed in vulgarity how American women were portrayed on American television. Overall they would like to see the images of Indian women improve.

They wanted to see positive images of India broadcast on television to preserve India's traditional culture and values for viewers abroad. When they saw images of Indian women in western clothing, drinking, flirting, or committing adultery, they thought Indian programs were copying a Western style of programming in their story themes. Some people did not believe the programs were accurately portraying Indian culture or that Indian women behaved in that way. Some participants thought the television sets and movie sets were too Western-looking at times and, therefore, Indian programs were not staying connected to their traditional Indian culture.

This cohort wanted to see the standard of Indian news programs improve. They did not believe enough actual news was reported in the news programs. Instead they felt the news programs focused too much on sports and entertainment news and did not reflect coverage of the overall country. They were used to watching more content-driven newscasts with depth in the U.S., which is what they would like to see in Indian newscasts.

These Asian Indians said Indian soap operas dragged on too long. Some participants described how they were frustrated because the development of the characters and storylines were not up to the standard of American soap operas. They enjoyed Indian soap operas, but after a while they felt that the storyline was going

nowhere. Also, the special effects used in Indian soap operas sensationalized the stories. These Asian Indians would like to see these elements change because they are used to a higher standard of story telling and production quality.

## ***7.2. Important Insights***

The answers to these research questions results in a positive enculturation and acculturation experience for Asian Indians. However, during this process, the research uncovers some major findings in this study.

### ***7.2.1. Change in technology over time***

This cohort changed their media habits as media technology changed over time.

*Letters and phone calls.* Upon arriving to the U.S., these Asian Indians wrote letters to stay connected to their homeland. The news was not immediate, but it was a way to stay informed and stay connected. They rarely made phone calls to India, because it was too expensive and, due to substandard landlines in India, a proper connection was rarely established.

*Early movies.* When they moved to the U.S., Indian movies were occasionally available at some local university theaters. Watching these films brought Asian Indians closer to India because they had a chance to hear their native language and Indian songs. Overall these Asian Indians were able to maintain their sense of Indian culture and identity soon after arriving in the U.S. by watching these films.

*Newspapers.* These participants also began to stay connected to their culture by subscribing to Indian-American newspapers. However, the first newspaper, *India Abroad*, did not become available until more Asian Indians migrated to the U.S.



Once it launched, it became a forum for Asian Indians to stay connected with each other by listing announcements of community events, festivals, cultural activities, and more. But, more importantly, it was way for new immigrants to stay connected to India.

*Renting movies.* When the VCR was invented, it became just as important as the home television to the Asian Indian community because the new technology allowed the consumer to watch movies at home (Wood, 1992). As a result, this cohort had regular gatherings with their friends at home to watch Indian movies. The VCR also changed the socialization patterns for many Asian Indians because friends were now getting together to watch a movie instead of sharing the concerns of their lives and their homeland (Helweg & Helweg, 1990). By renting Indian movies, these Asian Indians were exposed to their own culture, language, and traditions. By watching these films with their friends and family, they turned to their own ethnic group for primary relations and stronger ethnic identity (Dasgupta, 1989).

*Indian television via cable.* Once cable systems began to offer public access channels, these channels were meant for groups and individuals to make programs for their own communities. Public access channels reflected the “interests of groups and individuals usually excluded from mainstream television” (Kellner, 1997, p. 1310). The whole purpose of public access channels was to provide a voice for people who are not in the mainstream.

This cohort watched Indian programming offered on cable access channels on Saturday and Sunday mornings. The participants said they watched these programs because the shows gave news about the Indian community in the Washington Metro

area. The shows also gave this cohort a chance to stay connected to their culture. But they mainly watched these shows because they were the only Indian programs available at the time.

*Indian television via satellite.* In the U.S. Indian programming packages became available on the Dish network in 1998. Although satellite television services were available well before that, Indian programming (via satellite) was not. The Asian Indians in this study all used the Dish network for satellite television services. Most of the couples got the Dish when it first launched its Indian programming channels (in 1998). On average, each person watched 25.5 hours of Indian programming a week.

These Asian Indians wanted to continue to stay connected to India. Several findings were discovered as to why this cohort was attracted to the Indian programming. These findings include receiving information from India in real time, which led to no longer feeling like outsiders when they returned to India for a visit; hearing their native language; a sense of pride in the advancement of technology; and the music and Indian themes in the programs.

As this cohort's media habits changed with the changes in media technology available to them, the most significant advancement that satellite television had to offer was Indian news and programming in real time. These participants strived to stay connected to India once they moved to the U.S. They changed their media habits as media technology produced information and created a cultural connection more instantaneously.

### *7.2.1.1. Uses and Gratifications Approach*

In this study the researcher also learned how the participants were also active media users when they first moved to the U.S. By applying the uses and gratifications theoretical perspective, the researcher gained insight into how this cohort watched American television to learn how to act more “American.” Some members of this cohort actively watched American television to fulfill their need to acculturate. They watched sports programs so they could “fit in” at the workplace. They watched other programs to learn how to act in American culture, like an American home. Some participants discussed watching American television to improve their English, both in speaking and understanding.

Clearly, the study creates linkage between the uses and gratifications theoretical perspective and the need for acculturation. In this study, the audience (Asian Indians) actively selected American television to satisfy their particular need to understand the American culture. The need for acculturation is what motivated these Asian Indians to watch American television in the first place. However, the design for this particular study was not to focus on the psychological aspects of how this particular cohort used television to fulfill their need to acculturate to a new society. Instead, the focus of the study was to establish how Asian Indians who became enculturated into U.S. television became acculturated into Indian television. Specifically, this study focuses on how one process of cultural adaptation (in television) led to another process of cross-cultural adaptation (Indian television).

This study examined the historical process of how Asian Indians have been drawn to Indian media to keep them connected to their community. This study was

supported by outlining the historical chronological use of media by Asian Indians and oral histories describing why they use Indian media. Furthermore, the study focuses on how this Asian Indian cohort stayed connected to their culture and community through various kinds of media.

#### *7.2.1.2. Diffusion of Innovation*

As these Asian Indians changed their media habits as media technology evolved, they learned from each other the latest media technology that became available. As the latest media were introduced, the innovation was communicated among these Asian Indians and eventually adopted by them through the diffusion of innovation. For example, once the VCR was invented, Asian Indians were among the first to adopt this technology. Media used by diasporic audiences have usually been the front runners of technology adoption due to the difficulties in trying to reach these diasporic audiences (Karim, 2003). Asian Indian families owned the VCR well before many households in Britain so they could watch Indian films on videotape (Gillespie, 1989). In this study, Asian Indians learned about the VCR after watching movies in small gatherings at each others' homes. In fact, many of them borrowed Indian movies from each other. The VCR ended many screenings of Indian films at university and community theaters because, overall, it was cheaper to rent or buy a movie and watch it at home with friends and family (La Brack, 1988).

Another example of the latest media technology used by this cohort was satellite television. Satellite technology, such as direct-to-home (DTH) networks like DirecTV and DISH, has made international channels available to ethnic communities. Before satellite technology, there was limited space in the airwaves for ethnic

broadcasters to reach diasporic communities (Karim, 2003). But today's array of Dish packages, cable television, and more have brought millions of users to new forms of media.

In addition, as discussed in the results and discussion section, this cohort discovered the Dish mainly through friends and relatives. One participant discussed how she saw many different Indian channels available at her sister-in-law's home, which sparked her interest to subscribe to satellite television. Another participant discussed how she learned about it from fellow worshipers at her temple.

Overall the change in media technology over time changed the media habits of this cohort. As media technology advanced, participants in this study learned about the advancements through diffusion of innovation. As this community continued to adopt the latest media technology, it sustained its connection not only to its homeland but to those within it.

### ***7.2.2. Diasporic Community***

People who move to the U. S. from other parts of the world are not always interested in assimilating to the mainstream American culture. Instead, they may form diasporic communities. These Asian Indians maintained their identity and culture through early forms of media, creating their diasporic community. The diasporic community is the formation of a new community in the new home country. In order to maintain this community new immigrants resort to language, cultural practices, religious practices, and marrying within their community. But they used media that caters to their community such as films, television, radio, newspapers, and magazines (Mooney & Evans, 2007).

Diasporic communities gravitate toward their own press to stay informed about their community and their homeland, such as watching television programs imported from their home countries (Cambridge, 2005). These immigrants do not want to lose their sense of identity, sense of self and sense of ethnic values (De Santis, 2003). In addition, as ethnic minorities continue to be stereotyped in mainstream American television, they gravitate toward television programs of their ethnic origin (Alia, 2003).

Immigrant groups and ethnic minorities have often found themselves victims of cultural oppression in a new society (Kim, 2005). As a result, the immigrant groups have ended up acting “to reproduce the status quo of the dominant cultural ideology of assimilation and its ‘melting pot’ vision of society” (Kim, 2005, p. 376). However, not all ethnic Americans disappeared into the “melting pot” as many thought they would when they migrated to the U.S. Instead, as the U.S. became more multicultural, many ethnic groups sustained their ethnicity. As a result, minority communities now maintain their cultural differences, producing new metaphors, such as “tossed salad” (indicating that shapes and flavors are retained in the new mix) when referring to the U.S. (Cunningham & Sinclair, 2000). Some scholars argue that ethnic media helped to sustain ethnic identification in a multicultural environment like the U.S. (Aksoy & Robins, 2003).

This study found that two processes happened at the same time. As media technology changed over time, Asian Indian consumers used the latest media to continue to stay connected to India. The other process was the formation of the

Indian diasporic community through this media use, because Asian Indians used media to stay connected to each other.

The *imagined community* is similar to the diasporic community.

The work of Benedict Anderson (1983) argues that from a historical perspective, the development of print capitalism created the possibility of an imagined community, in which individuals experienced feeling intimately connected to millions of people they had never met. The widespread dissemination of newspapers led to a heightened awareness of the ‘steady, anonymous, simultaneous experience of communities of readers’ (Etefa, 2005; Anderson, 1983, p. 31).

By creating an imagined community Asian Indians were able to feel instantly connected to other Asian Indians in the U.S., who they had never met before. Other scholars suggest that if the imagined community became possible because of newspapers, then this could also be true of broadcast media outlets (Cardiff & Scannell, 1987). In fact, an area of research that is still being developed is how diaspora communities use satellite television, also called transnational communication networks. These transnational networks of media help sustain diasporic communities by enhancing a sense of diaspora consciousness (Cohen, 1997). In this study, Asian Indians used letters, the phone, movies, newspapers, the VCR (to watch movies), cable-access channels, and satellite television to stay connected to their culture and sustain their Indian identity. As Gillespie (2000) noted, “diaspora identifications and connections are greatly strengthened by modern communications technologies” (p. 166). These Asian Indians tried to maintain their

culture through Indian food, clothing, religious festivals, and more, thus creating their Indian diaspora.

### ***7.2.3. Fragmented Audience***

By creating these diasporic communities, these Asian Indians became a fragmented audience – meaning their attention was drawn away from the mainstream media to the media of their diasporic community. This cohort was first exposed to a homogenous portrayal of American family life with programs like *Father knows Best* and *Leave it to Beaver*. In addition, when images of India were depicted on American television, the country and culture were usually portrayed in a negative manner. After watching stereotypes of themselves on U.S. television, these participants got tired of seeing themselves marginalized on the screen. In fact, one participant described how she never really felt like she was a part of the American culture when watching American shows, but when she watched Indian television she did not feel marginalized.

Despite feeling marginalized in American culture, Asian Indians maintained a strong sense of identity. They also stayed connected to India through other forms of media, such as newspapers, films, and television because they reinforced their ethnic identity and connection to their culture. By using other forms of media, these Asian Indians did not follow along with the mainstream but became a segmented audience. “The term segmentation is used to refer to the process by which media supply is matched more precisely to a relevant set of media consumers, and process is aided by the greater possibility of selection on the part of consumers themselves” (McQuail, 2005, p. 447).



This audience also became a fragmented audience. “Fragmentation involves the dispersal of the same amount of audience attention over more and more media sources” (McQuail, 2005, p. 447). For example, as most viewers had a choice of three national channels in the early years of television (1950s and 1960s), “the same media experience was widely shared by nearly everyone” (McQuail, 2005, p. 448). Now with the influx of cable and satellite television and the U.S. becoming more culturally diverse, audiences’ attention is increasingly dispersed among the variety of media sources available.

For example, the Dish network has more than 130 international channels in more than 25 languages, including Arabic, Polish, Italian, Hebrew, Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese, and Hindi (K. Hubbard, personal communication, August 15, 2007). Asian Indians can subscribe to Indian language packages that include several channels with programming imported from India or they can subscribe to individual channels (Dish Network, 2007b). As various ethnic groups migrate to the U.S., many become consumers of new media, such as satellite television. These groups may form new smaller audiences, and their strong attraction to ethnic media ultimately could lead to the end of a socially collective audience (McQuail, 2005). As a result, fragmentation means there is no longer a center, just many diverse sets of media users.

As these Asian Indians were enculturated into watching American television, many of them still watched American television, even though they became acculturated to Indian television. As noted in the results and discussion section, this cohort on average watched 16 hours of American television per week, but watched

25.5 hours of Indian programming in a week. Hence, these Asian Indians became a fragmented audience.

As audiences become fragmented and individualized in their choice of media, they lose their sense of identity as one audience. Essentially they form a new smaller audience with a strong attraction to ethnic media, which can ultimately lead to the end of a socially collective audience (McQuail, 2005). One of the theoretical implications of mass media is that it functions as an agent of social control, as media act unintentionally to support the values of the dominant culture (McQuail, 2005). As McQuail (2005) explains, “the content of media with the largest audiences does appear broadly supportive of reigning social norms and conventions” (p. 495). However, with the onslaught of ethnic media, audiences become diverted and attracted to media that may take them away from the dominant culture. With fragmentation, eventually all media choices could be individualized, McQuail (2005) suggests, “Media users will come to have no more in common with each other than owners of any other consumer article” (p. 447).

#### ***7.2.4. Media Literate Audience***

Another important insight the study uncovered was how these Asian Indians also became skilled television viewers. They knew the difference between good and bad programming using judgment that was “trained” in the U.S. After becoming enculturated into American television, they used American television as a filter to help them decide if the Indian programming was up to standard both in its production quality and story telling ability. As a result, they became media literate, which meant

that they could “access, analyze, evaluate, and produce both print and electronic media” (Aufderheide, 1993).

Silverblatt (2001) defined media literacy by emphasizing the following elements:

- 1) A critical thinking skill that enables audiences to develop independent judgments about media content.
- 2) An understanding of the process of mass communication.
- 3) An awareness of the impact of the media on the individual and society.
- 4) The development of strategies with which to analyze and discuss media messages.
- 5) An awareness of media content as a “text” that provides insight into our contemporary culture and ourselves.
- 6) The cultivation of an enhanced enjoyment, understanding, and appreciation of media content.
- 7) In the case of media communicators: the ability to produce effective and responsible media messages. (pp. 2-3).

In this study, these Asian Indians said that Indian television programs copied too much of the Western culture; they felt women were objectified on Indian television; they felt news programs were not up to standard; and they felt their Indian soap operas lacked a proper character development, story lines, and production quality. These viewers were able to critically think about the Indian television programs they watched and make independent decisions about its content.

As noted, these viewers were part of a group of skilled, educated professionals, who migrated to this country. They all had college degrees at that time and at least half of them now have graduate degrees. Their level of education enabled them to think critically about the media and make independent judgments about media content well before Indian television was established via satellite.

For example, when stereotypes of Indian culture and India were depicted on American television, these Asian Indians knew the images of India were distorted because of their strong sense of Indian culture and Indian identity. These Asian Indians knew when stereotypes and sensationalized images of India and Indian culture were being portrayed on American television. Even though they had only just begun watching American television, they were still from an educated class of people who knew the kind of rich culture India had to offer, especially as they compared their culture to the American culture. Hence, they were able to think critically about the Indian media images portrayed.

One of the common responses from this cohort was that they were tired of seeing India's poverty portrayed on American television, specifically in terms of "beggars." In fact, one participant said that "not all of the U.S. was Saks Fifth Avenue," which meant that they were aware of the homeless in the U.S. However, they felt that images of U.S. poverty on American television were rarely shown.

This cohort became enculturated into a certain standard of television production. As a result, they expected to see the same visual quality of programming that they saw on American television. When Indian television was available on the public access channels, it still lacked the production quality that American cable

channels had in their programs. Although Asian Indians were drawn to watching them for their community news, they were able to quickly assess and evaluate the poor quality of production. Hence they were media literate enough to know the difference between good and bad television production.

As this cohort grew fond of watching Indian movies on VHS tapes, once the VCR was invented, they valued the production quality of the films. However, there was a period of time when Indian movies were not up to standard in their production quality. Some of the films sold and distributed were pirated copies, which meant that they were copies of copies and lost quality each time a copy was made. With satellite technology and DVDs, movies were now digitally enhanced, which made them more enjoyable to watch, because the actual quality of the picture improved. Many of the films now included subtitles, so those family members who had not learned an Indian language could watch them as well. The digital technology of Indian television and films made a difference in how this cohort chose to watch the programming.

### ***7.3. Contribution of research to theory and application***

The contribution of this research to the integrative communication theory brings greater understanding to the process of adaptation. This particular cohort was interested in the integration mode (Berry, 1990). They wanted to maintain their own Indian cultural integrity, but also develop relations with other group members. However, this cohort also showed signs of the separation mode (Berry, 1990). They preferred to socialize among themselves rather than the dominant culture. In fact, they used media, i.e. American television, to help them integrate in the work place, which is why this study can be linked to the uses and gratifications theoretical

perspective. This cohort was definitely not interested in assimilating and that is losing their original cultural identity and only forming relations with members of the dominant culture (Berry, 1990). This cohort was also not interested in being marginalized and that is neither maintaining their cultural identity nor forming relations with other group members in the society (Berry, 1991).

These Asian Indians functioned at both the group level and individual level of acculturation (Berry, 1990). Forming Indian associations in their new host country so all members of the Asian Indian community could come together and participate in cultural activities was an example of the group level of acculturation. At the individual level of acculturation, these Asian Indians' behavior and attitude changed as they saw the value of getting to know their work colleagues on a non-work related level.

Another contribution this research brought toward understanding the process of adaptation was the role of media technology at the newcomers' stage of acculturation. For these Asian Indians, they left their homeland when media technology was not really available to stay connected to India. As a result, these Asian Indians resorted to forming their own community to maintain their cultural identity. Newcomers were also accepting of any media available to them as long as it helped them feel connected to their homeland and eased their adaptation into their new host country.

Today, the adaptation process is completely different for newcomers, because they have access to the internet, satellite television, and better phones. Newcomers are faced with a variety of media choices to feel instantly connected to their

homeland. Even video can be watched on the internet. Newcomers have less of a chance to feel isolated in their new host country. In fact, they may not even feel the need to join a diasporic community, because technology keeps them connected to their home culture on an individual level. For today's newcomers, the adaptation process is smoother, less isolating. The chances of feeling lonely are less likely.

This concept is important for media executives to understand as they develop programming for the future, like the year 2020. People who migrated to the U.S. in the 1980s, 1990s, 2000s are facing a different adaptation process because of all the other new media available to them. They are already familiar with various kinds of media because it had been introduced in their homeland (like India) before they moved to the U.S. Furthermore, the new technology available allows them to feel instantly connected to their home culture.

Also, newcomers who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago may have needed to integrate into their new host culture in order to survive. At that time, diasporic communities had not formed yet. Newcomers may have needed to learn and associate with members of the dominant culture for their own well-being. Today, more ethnic groups have migrated to the U.S.; there is also an abundance of media technology available to them; and there are also established diasporic communities. Ethnic groups migrating to the U.S. today do not necessarily need to integrate with the dominant culture in order to survive. They could easily stay in "separation" mode, that is, stay within their own sub-culture that already formed in the U.S., and never really get to know the dominant culture.

With that said, media executives should keep in mind the importance of cultural identity for new immigrants as they migrate to the U.S. In addition, they should think about how television can help new immigrants with their adaptation process, instead of hinder it. As shown in this study, audience members can be media literate and know when their culture is being portrayed inaccurately (stereotypes). Audiences are also able to see the differences in programming that is created with a white Eurocentric perspective and programming that is created by producers from the homeland. Programming that empowers cultural identity would most probably be welcomed by ethnic groups, which would lead to loyal and consistent audiences.

This study gives journalism and communication research greater understanding that new immigrants may never fully adapt (assimilate). They want to be reminded of where they came from and they use media to help them maintain their identity. Media executives need to remember that even if people migrated to the U.S. 40 years ago, or 20 years ago, they still want to be reminded of their roots in an authentic manner as it eases their adaptation process.

#### ***7.4. Limitations of the study***

The limitations of this study revolve around the specific cohort used in this study. As noted, this particular cohort did not grow up watching television in India. When they moved to the U.S., they learned to watch television for the first time. As a result, this particular cohort presented a unique opportunity for an enculturation and acculturation study. Furthermore, the study was possible because of the timing of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which allowed skilled professionals from other countries to come to U.S. This particular generation migrated to the U.S. before



television began to take off in India. Therefore, this study cannot be easily applied to Asian Indians who moved to the U.S. during the 1980s because, by then, television was introduced in India and its reach surpassed the urban areas of the country. Asian Indians who moved to the U.S. in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, had already watched television in India; therefore, they would not be suitable for this kind of study. Furthermore, Asian Indians who have migrated to the U.S. more recently have not had to meet the requirement of being a skilled professional to migrate to the U.S. In summary, focusing on this particular cohort, those who migrated to India between 1960 and 1972, made this study possible.

There are other limitations in using this particular cohort for this study. First, this cohort is from a particular part of the country, the Washington Metro area. As a result, the researcher cannot generalize as to whether other Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. during the 1960s had the same experience in other parts of the country. Secondly, these participants were all willing to do the study. Using the snowball sampling method and referral system (from each participant), the researcher was able to find 10 couples who were willing to talk for an hour or hour and half about their television viewing habits. Because random sampling was not used, the researcher rarely encountered anyone who was unwilling to meet in person for an oral history interview. Finally, they all came from a specific socio-economic background, enabling them to afford a satellite dish and a wide variety of programming, not to mention a very particular lifestyle. Thus, this group does not represent the overall Asian Indian population in the U.S.

### ***7.5. Value of Ethnic Media***

Watching media in their own language and culture keeps many immigrants from feeling uncertain and helps them deal with feelings of being uprooted once they arrive in their new homeland. As a result, ethnic media can be very valuable in the transition process. As ethnic media have grown, scholars have sought to understand the motivation behind the popularity of ethnic media as more people migrate to the U.S. One theory is that ethnic media provide “emotional refueling” to new immigrants to help them cope with feelings of uncertainty in their new host culture (Kim, 2001).

Some scholars have argued that ethnic media can affect the socialization process of strangers once they migrate to the U.S. However, the given study shows how this cohort not only socialized with the American public, but also managed to use their ethnic media to maintain their own culture and identity.

In addition, many ethnic minority group members in the U.S. struggle between their own perception of their ethnic identity and the perception of others’ questioning of their ethnic heritage (Ting-Toomey, 2005). These ethnic minorities who strive to be *American* are constantly reminded by the media or in personal interaction that they are not part of the larger U.S. society (Ting-Toomey, 2005). This struggle is one of the underlying factors that affects the immigrants’ acculturation experience and their ethnic-cultural identity development process, which is essential to identity change or transformation (Ting-Toomey, 2005). Hence, the use of ethnic media can lead to stronger ethnic identification and relief from struggle (Jeffres, 2000).

The need for ethnic television was realized after studies showed that migrant communities were eager to maintain their identity with their homeland. In recent years, new media technologies have made it possible for diasporic communities to stay linked to their communities of origin. Diasporic media have made it possible for recent immigrants to sustain their identity and culture at a distance (Aksoy & Robins, 2003).

As diasporic communities form in the U.S., media companies are looking for ways to sustain audiences. Network television channels used to just compete with each other, but now they are not only competing with cable television channels, they also are competing with satellite television channels for the same audience.

According to the *2007 State of the News Media* report, audience and revenue numbers are still growing with ethnic media and use and demographic data shows “foreign-language speakers have fanned out across the country, creating new markets for the ethnic outlets” (Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 26). This increase in ethnic media indicates that ethnic groups may be tired of seeing themselves marginalized in mainstream media (Cambridge, 2005). This study has made it possible for media companies to gain insight into how ethnic audiences have become media literate and what attracts them to programming that sustains their interest.

For example, programming spoken in the native language of the viewer has made it much easier for the viewer to understand and connect to the programming. Sandy Close (personal communication, August 10, 2007), the executive director of New America Media, explains further:

News that whether you are a mother with children and have to get them enrolled in school. Someone who has to figure out what it's going to take to buy a new car or get a car, how to register it. How to look for the best buy in the local super market. I mean how to go through zoning ordinances. I mean if you don't have the language and you are isolated from the culture because you are new. ... You want 'news you can use' that helps you navigate the mainstream culture from your own.

Close (personal communication, August 10, 2007) also describes how ethnic media has also become an advocate for "voiceless communities," so that both the ethnic media and community become part of the public culture.

In addition to language, other factors that have attracted viewers to the ethnic programs are cultural music, cultural themes, and actors and anchors, who are of the same ethnic origin. This kind of programming also leads to stronger ethnic identification, suggesting that ethnic media can help sustain ethnic identification in a multicultural context.

Furthermore, satellite television continues to be a potent influence in accelerating the globalization process. Globalization is seen as "fostering international economic integration and as a mechanism for promoting global liberal capitalism" (Thussu, 2006, p. 60). As noted, television helps to overcome any language barriers (McQuail, 2005). This general phenomenon of media globalization suggests media are in a special position to act "as both an object and an agent of the globalizing process" (McQuail, 2005, p. 246). The latest technology in television has given a push toward the globalization process (McQuail, 2005).

As the U.S. has become more multicultural, it is no longer the “melting pot” where people migrate to the U.S. and assimilate to American culture. Instead, ethnic communities have formed that maintain cultural differences and sustain ethnic identification. Ethnic media contributes to this multicultural environment.

### ***7.6. Future research***

The most logical place to start future research for this study would be with the 3rd generation of Asian Indians, the grandchildren of the cohort in this study. During the interviews, many Asian Indians talked about how they watch some of their Indian programs with their grandchildren because they believe the exposure will help the younger generation understand Indian culture. In fact, some of them even said that they wished it had been around for their own children growing up in the 1970s. Research could focus on how this programming affects the 3rd generation of Asian Indians as they form relationships with their grandparents.

Another area of future research would be to develop the final finding of the results and discussion section, “The American Filter,” further and explore the media literacy of this audience.

Another area of research is to conduct this study with a generation of Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. after the year 2000. The study could focus on how they become enculturated into Indian media in India and how that translates to becoming acculturated into the U.S. culture. The study could also focus on whether U.S. media helps them in their acculturation process as it did with the generation of Asian Indians 40 years ago.

### ***7.7. Conclusion***

The purpose of this study was to try to understand how Asian Indians who migrated to the U.S. nearly 40 years ago have become acculturated to Indian television via the satellite dish. This particular generation did not grow up watching television in India; they learned to watch television in the U.S. Hence they became enculturated into U.S. television. This particular generation was unique for this kind of enculturation and acculturation study.

However, having a strong sense of Indian culture and identity, these Asian Indians used various Indian media available to them over the years to sustain their ethnic identity. These media included movies, newspapers, and television. The study described historically the different kinds of Indian media that became available to this cohort over the past 40 years.

The study included oral history interviews with 10 couples from the Washington Metro area who migrated to the U.S. between 1960 and 1972. In these interviews the researcher discovered how these Asian Indians became enculturated into American television and how American television helped them acculturate to the U.S. Also uncovered were the stereotypes of India these Asian Indians faced when watching American television, and the kinds of Indian media and Indian cultural activity they used to help sustain their ethnic identity. The study then uncovered why these Asian Indians are attracted to Indian programming available via the satellite dish, mainly because it is available in real time. The study uncovered what these Asian Indians do not like about Indian television, mainly that they feel it is copying too much Western culture in its programs.

Some concepts uncovered in the study include how this cohort changed their media habits along with the change in media technology over time; how these Asian Indians sustained their ethnic identity through Indian media; and how they became a fragmented audience and how these viewers are media literate.

In closing, using the concepts of enculturation and acculturation, an area of scholarship that has yet to be mined, is an effective way to understand how diasporic communities use satellite television, specifically transnational communication networks.

## Appendix A: Oral History Interview Questions

(Bolded questions asked first)

### *Early Stages*

- 1) Why did you migrate to the U.S.?
- 2) Do you remember the first time you saw a Hindi movie in India?
- 3) What do you remember about watching Hindi movies?
- 4) Did you go with your friends? Your parents?

### *Coming to the U.S.*

- 5) What year did you come to this country? Why?
- 6) When you came to this country, what was the first city you lived in?
- 7) Did you join an Indian organization group? If so why or why not?
- 8) Were you ever involved in establishing a temple in this country?
- 9) When was the first time you saw a television? Was it in the U.S.?
- 10) Do you remember what you thought when you saw the television program?

### *Renting Hindi Movies in the U.S.*

- 11) When did you first get a VCR? Why?
- 12) When did you start renting Hindi movies?
- 13) Was it hard to find Hindi movies to rent?
- 14) Why did you want to rent them?
- 15) When did you first get a DVD player?
- 16) When did you get your satellite dish? What year?

### *Indian Television*

- 17) Approximately how much Indian television do you watch in a week?**



- 18) How much U.S. television do you watch in a week?**
- 19) What satellite Hindi channel (Indian channel) service do you subscribe to?**
- 20) How did you decide to get access to Indian TV channels, who was behind the decision? Were there any concerns? Was there any resistance from other members of the family?**
- 21) What Hindi programs do you watch on these channels, i.e. talk shows, action dramas, soap operas, comedy shows, news programs?**
- 22) What is it about these programs that get you “hooked”—meaning you can’t miss an episode?**
- 23) Some scholars say that people who’ve lived away from their original home country and have thus adopted a new home country, have assimilated to the new culture. What do you think attracts you to this type of Indian programming, especially after living in this country so long?**
- 24) Do you feel a greater connection to India by watching these programs? Why or why not?**
- 25) How does watching Indian television influence the rest of your life, which is now acculturated to the U.S.?**
- 26) How does watching Indian television influence your cultural practices?**

*Images on Indian television*

- 27) What are some of the images that you see in these Indian television programs that you didn’t see in Hindi movies in your childhood?**

- 28) What do you think about the development of Indian television programming that's imported to this country; some critics say it's much too "Western?"
- 29) Hindi movies rarely showed any affection in film, but Indian television today shows much more affection in its programs between couples, how does that make you feel?
- 30) If you had a choice of watching an U.S. drama program or Indian drama program, which one would watch? Why?**
- 31) If you had the choice of watching a Hindi movie or an English movie, which one would you watch? Why?
- 32) What do you think of the quality of the news programs? And what attracts you to watch them?
- 33) Do you think it's important to maintain a cultural connection to India, if so why? or why not?**
- 34) How does watching Indian television shape your understanding and expectation on the next generation and your perceptions of U.S. culture?
- 35) How does Indian television affect perceptions of children, quality of life?

*Images of India on U.S. television*

- 36) What are the kinds of images of India you have seen on U.S. television?
- 37) Do you remember watching the news of Indira Gandhi's assassination on U.S. television? If so, what do you remember?
- 38) Do you remember of watching the news of the Bhopal incident on U.S. television? If so, what do you remember?

39) What did you think of the coverage of President Bush's trip to India and the sidebar stories about India that accompanied the coverage?

40) Have the images of India in U.S. television changed?

*Connection to Culture*

**41) How important is it for you to maintain connection to the culture? How do you do it?**

**42) How important is it for you to assimilate or understand your new environment? Which is more important to you?**

**43) When you started watching Indian programs, did you have to give up watching American programs?**

44) Are you using Tivo or the VCR to record other programs?

45) What more significant to you? What are you interested in? (If they say both, ask in what ways?)

*Questions added after the first few interviews*

46) What kind of improvements are needed in the Indian television programs?

47) What about music?

48) What other kinds of media have you used throughout the years—like India Abroad? Cable TV?

49) Did television help you to understand the American culture; if so, how?

50) How often do you go back to India?

51) Do you remember the first time you saw a Hindi movie in the U.S.?

## **Appendix B: Oral History Interview Questions Asked of Media Experts**

### *Indian Satellite Television*

Anu Babber, Senior Manager, International Programming, in charge of South Asian content for DirecTV (New York)

1. Please describe the programming packages you have to offer the Indian diaspora in the United States.
2. Have your programming packages grown since you first discovered this particular niche market, Asian Indians?
3. When did Indian programming via DirecTV become available in the United States?
4. Is there anything you do specifically to sustain this particular clientele?
5. Which ethnic population is your largest clientele?
6. Where do Indians rank in this?
7. What kind of audience size do you have from the Indian diaspora?
8. What is the average age of your overall subscribers?
9. Do you find your subscribers stay loyal to DirecTV, given the competitiveness in the market?
10. Is there anything specific that you want to offer your ethnic subscribers in general?
11. For the Indian American clientele, are you looking for programming that also has some sort of American community based news as well?
12. Why did DirecTV choose to go after the ethnic audience?
13. Would you say that DirecTV makes more of a profit through its ethnic programming here in the United States than other countries?

Tracy ThompsonWest, EchoStar's Vice President of International Programming  
(Denver)

1. Please describe the programming packages you have to offer the Indian diaspora.
2. Has this grown since you first discovered this niche market?
3. What do you have to do to sustain this clientele? Why or why not?
4. What kind of audience size do you have from the Indian diaspora?
5. What parts of the country have the largest clientele?
6. What is the average age of your subscribers?
7. Are these subscribers loyal; if so why?
8. What do you look for in programming that you want to offer your subscribers?

S. Venkatasubramanian, Head of *Zee TV's* U.S. Operations (Dallas)

1. Do you have any kind of special programming that caters to the Indian diaspora and if so, what, and why do you have it?
2. When did you first start beaming into the United States?
3. How big is your U.S. South Asian market?
4. What is your audience size in the U.S. for South Asian viewers?
5. Does this audience size cover both cable and satellite? If so, what is the size for each?
6. What is the audience size for viewers in the Washington D.C. Metro area?
7. When did *Zee TV* first realize that there is a significant market overseas?
8. Does *Zee TV* make any kind of profit with its overseas subscribers?
9. Is there anything your network does with its programming to cater to the Indian diaspora?

10. What do you think the future holds for *Zee TV* in the U.S.?
11. Who is your strongest competitor in the United States?
12. What is *Zee TV's* biggest challenge that it is facing right now?
13. What is *Zee TV's* biggest challenge for the future?

#### *Indian Radio Program*

Anil Srivatsa, host of *Anil ki Awaaz*, the radio show, COO of *India Today, Radio* (New Delhi, India)

1. How did your radio program start?
2. How do you sustain listeners?
3. What was your initial programming? Commentary? Music? And why?
4. What kind of audience size do you have with your radio program?
5. What do you look for in programming that you think keeps subscribers loyal to your show?
6. Why do you think ethnic programs have become so valuable in the U.S.?

#### *Indian Films on VHS tapes or DVDs*

Kishore Lulla, CEO of *Eros Entertainment* (London)

1. As founder of this company, what attracted you to the U.S. markets?
2. Back in 1977 when *Eros* was founded, what kind of role did it play with South Asian media in the U.S.?
3. What is the cultural influence that these movies provide to the South Asian diaspora in the U.S.?
4. What is the future of *Eros Entertainment* now?
5. How does satellite television have an impact on *Eros'* DVD market?

Ken Naz of *Eros Entertainment*, Head of U.S. operations (Secaucus, New Jersey)

1. Please explain the history of *Eros Entertainment* in the U.S.; specifically, what it was when it started, what it is doing today?
2. When did *Eros* open a North American office and why?
3. Why did *Eros* launch in the U.S.? What was the motivation behind launching?
4. Why did you think a company like *Eros* would do well in the U.S.?
5. How did the films on VHS tapes have an influence in bringing movies back into the theater?
6. When did Bollywood films really take off in the U.S., because even though the VCR hit the consumer market at a specific time, Hindi films were not necessarily available to rent?
7. How did the company realize there was a South Asian market in the U.S.?
8. When would you say Bollywood DVDs became available in the rental market?
9. How have DVDs changed the way the Bollywood films are being marketed overseas?
10. Is that your main revenue stream, the DVD market, now?

Lal Dadlaney of *Video Sound*, (Edison, New Jersey)

1. Who was responsible for launching Hindi films into the VHS market here?
2. Were you responsible for the transition from VHS back into the theater?
3. What do you think brought Asian Indians back to the theater after watching films on VHS tapes for so many years?
4. Is there something else about these films that bring people together? If so, what?
5. When did you stop putting movies in the theatres and why?
6. Please explain further the problems with piracy in both the VHS and DVD market for Hindi movies.

7. How have DVDs changed the way Bollywood films are marketed overseas?

*India Television produced in the U.S.*

H.R. Shah, Chairman and CEO of *TV Asia* (Edison, New Jersey)

1. How did *TV Asia* start?
2. Did this channel help the Indian community, and if so, how?
3. Did you launch on both cable and satellite, and why?
4. What kind of programming do you offer on *TV Asia*? Is any of the programming imported from India?
5. What is the purpose of *TV Asia*?
6. What is your audience size?
7. What languages do you broadcast in?
8. What is your coverage? Do you air strictly in North America?
9. You are based in New Jersey, but do you have bureaus anywhere else in the U.S.?
10. What is the average age of your viewers?
11. What kind of feedback do you get from your viewers?

*Indian Newspapers in the U.S.*

Gopal Raju, founder and publisher of *India Abroad* (New York)

1. What made you launch this Indian newspaper?
2. How was the Indian community communicating with one another before an Indian newspaper was launched?
3. Did you personally have an overseas subscription of an Indian newspaper, and why?
4. Just provide me with some detail on exactly how the newspaper was started?



5. How did you come up with the funding to start the newspapers?
6. How big was *India Abroad* when you started it?
7. Were you reprinting news directly from India?
8. Do you remember anything about the subscription base at that time, how exactly did that start?
9. When would you say *India Abroad* reached its peak?
10. What was the news coverage like then in terms of covering the Asian Indian community in the U.S.?
11. What was the role of *India Abroad* with the growing Indian community in those days?
12. Can you describe what the state of ethnic newspapers was at that time?
13. Why did you sell *India Abroad* to Rediff.com India Limited?

Veena Merchant, former editor of *India Abroad* (New York)

1. How was the Indian community communicating with one another at that time?
2. Did the community have newsletters among each other?
3. When did the newspaper start making money?
4. When you started, do you remember how big the staff was?
5. What kind of stories were being covered within the community, once you joined the newspaper?

### *Indian Newspapers in India*

R.V. Smith, former editor of *The Statesman* (New Delhi, India)

Inder Malhotra, former editor of *The Statesman*, *The Times of India* (New Delhi, India)

K.N. Gupta, former editor, *The Economic Times* (New Delhi, India)

1. What kind of newspaper was offered to Indian diaspora at that time?
2. How long did it usually take to reach the U.S. when mailed from India?
3. Was there any effort to cover the news of Indians abroad or to any marketing effort?
4. Can you talk about the news that you covered with *The Statesman's* Overseas Weekly edition?
5. What about your own work as a correspondent, did you work overseas?
6. Can you describe the the letters to the editor from your readers overseas?
7. What was the subscription size for the overseas edition?

Shamlal, former Editor in Chief of *The Times of India* (New Delhi, India)

1. Can you talk about the impact the *Times of India* has had on Asian Indians, who lived abroad particularly the U.S., during the 1960s?
2. Was there an overseas edition?
3. During the 1960s did any of the letters to the editor for the *Times of India* come from aboard?
4. Can you expand on the differences that newspaper, radio and television have made with Indians both abroad or here in India?
5. Do you remember covering any stories or having stories written about the Indians moving abroad?
6. Were there stories about Indians moving abroad, such as leaving India to move to the U.S.?

Anil Sinha, current editor, *The Statesman* (Calcutta, India)

1. What is the coverage of the Indian diaspora in *The Statesman* today?
2. Do you have letters to the editor from readers overseas, particularly U.S.?
3. If so, what issues are discussed in these letters?

Sandy Close, Executive Director of *New America Media* (San Francisco, CA)

1. What is the value of ethnic media today in 2007?
2. Do you see any changes in main stream media that are making more efforts to incorporate covering ethnic communities? If so, what?
3. Is ethnic media leading to a more fragmented society? If so, how?

### **Appendix C: Standard Oral History Questions Asked of Everyone**

1. Since economic liberalization took place in India, what kind of impact is Indian television having on the Indian diaspora?
2. Some scholars say that people who've lived away from their original home country, and have thus adopted a new home country, have assimilated to the new culture. What do you think attracts Asian Indians to this type of Indian programming, especially after living away from India? Is there a connection viewers have to India with this type of programming, i.e. game shows, talk shows, soap operas, and news programs?
3. Why do you think Asian Indians enjoy watching the programs imported to the U.S.?
4. What is the significance of language (programming spoken in Hindi), similarity (anchors/actors who look like the viewers), and non-verbal cues (Indian themes in the programs)?
5. What is it in U.S. programming or non-Indian programming that makes Asian Indian viewers feel marginalized?

## Appendix D: Demographic Profile

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. What language(s) do you speak at home?
  
2. What is your highest level of education? (Please circle one or specify)  
high school, college, Master's, Ph.D.
  
3. What year did you arrive in the U.S.?
  
4. Do you have children? How many?
  
5. Your age
  
6. U.S. Citizen Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. Religion \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. What is your occupation?
  
9. Family income? (please circle one)  
  
\$100k/year                      \$100-\$200k/year                      more than \$200k/year
  
10. Where do you live?

## Appendix E: Consent Form

**Project Title (Working Title):** Enculturation of South Asian Media among South Asian immigrants in the U.S.

This research will be conducted in the U.S., India, and on the phone. This dissertation (research project) will first explain the historical process that led Asian-Indians to watching Indian television programs. By doing this, the researcher will have established a base to the study, specifically the body of literature on this topic. However, there are several areas in the body of literature that have not fully explain the various kinds of media used historically by Asian Indians in the U.S. Below are a list of people, who will be asked to support information needed for the literature review. Not all people below will be interviewed. Furthermore, other experts like the names listed below may be interviewed instead.

We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you are involved in television or radio programming that caters to the South Asian (India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh) population in the United States.

The procedure involves in-depth interview or phone interview. Most probably the phone interviews will be conducted from my home. If the interview is in person, it will be at a place convenient for both of us. Each interview should not take more than 20 minutes, but could take up to an hour, depending on the length and detail of your answers.

Standard questions to be asked of everyone:

- 1) Since economic liberalization took place in India, what kind of impact is Indian television having on the Indian diaspora?
- 2) Some scholars say that people who've lived away from their original home country and have thus adopted a new home country, have assimilated to the new culture. What do you think attracts Asian-Indians to this type of Indian programming, especially after living away from India? Is there a connection viewers have to India with this type of programming, i.e. game shows, talk shows, soap-operas, and news programs?
- 4) Why do you think Asian-Indians enjoy watching the programs imported to the U.S.?
- 5) What is the significance of language (programming spoken in Hindi), similarity (anchors/actors who look like the viewers) and non-verbal cues (Indian themes in the programs)?
- 6) What is it in U.S. programming or non-Indian programming that makes Asian-Indian viewers feel marginalized?

More questions will be asked but they will be similar to the questions listed above.

Your personal information like your name and job title will NOT be kept confidential if this information is used in a dissertation. Eventually the dissertation will be published into a book.

This research project may involve making an audio tape of this interview, if you agree. The tape is simply made to ensure the information obtained is recorded in the exact manner in which you speak. After the dissertation is completed, the audio tapes will be destroyed, if used at all.

\_\_\_ I agree to be audio-taped during my participation in this study  
\_\_\_ I do not agree to be audio-taped during my participation in this study

Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.

There are no known risks associated with participating in this research project.

This research is not designed to help you personally, but if the information is in a published dissertation, you could be known as an expert on South Asian programming in the United States. We hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of South Asian media in the United States.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.

This research is being conducted by Indira Somani, Ph.D. Candidate with the College of Journalism at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Indira Somani at 202-441-0606, or [isomani@jmail.umd.edu](mailto:isomani@jmail.umd.edu). If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742; (e-mail) [irb@deans.umd.edu](mailto:irb@deans.umd.edu); (telephone) 301-405-0678

This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.

Your signature indicates that:

- you are at least 18 years of age;,
- the research has been explained to you;
- your questions have been fully answered; and
- you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project.

Name of Subject \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Subject \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix F: Consent Script

The working title for this project is called: Enculturation of South Asian Media among South Asian immigrants in the U.S. This research will be conducted in the U.S., India, and on the phone. This dissertation (research project) will first explain the historical process that led Asian Indians to watching Indian television programs. By doing this, I will have established a base to the study, specifically the body of literature on this topic. However, there are several areas in the body of literature that have not fully explained the various kinds of media used historically by Asian-Indians in the U.S. By interviewing you, I will get the information needed to support the literature review.

This is a research project being conducted by myself, Indira Somani, Ph.D. Candidate with the College of Journalism at the University of Maryland, College Park (or in my home). I am inviting you to participate in this research project because you are involved in television or radio programming that caters to the South Asian (India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh) population in the United States. The purpose of this research project is to seek your knowledge that will eventually be my dissertation.

The procedure involves in-depth interviews or phone interviews. This should not take more than 20 minutes, but could take up to an hour, depending on the length and detail of your answers.

Your personal information like your name and job title will NOT be kept confidential, if this information is used in a dissertation. Eventually the dissertation will be published into a book.

This research project may involve making an audio tape of this interview, if you agree. The tape is simply made to ensure the information obtained is recorded in the exact manner in which you speak. After the dissertation is completed, the audio tapes will be destroyed, if used at all. Do you agree to be tape-recorded? *Yes or No.*

Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if I am required to do so by law.

There are no known risks associated with participating in this research project. This research is not designed to help you personally, but if the information is in a published dissertation, you could be known as an expert on South Asian programming in the United States. We hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of South Asian media in the United States.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.

If you have any questions about the research study itself, you can contact Indira Somani at 202-441-0606, or [isomani@jmail.umd.edu](mailto:isomani@jmail.umd.edu).

Please confirm that you are:  
at least 18 years of age; *yes or no?*  
the research has been explained to you; *yes or no?*  
you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project, *yes, or no?*  
Ok, let us begin the interview...

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