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# The Nature of Contradictions in India: Using an Applied Ethnographic Technique to Further Intercultural Understanding

Melissa LR Handa

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THE NATURE OF CONTRADICTIONS IN INDIA:  
USING AN APPLIED ETHNOGRAPHIC TECHNIQUE TO FURTHER  
INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

by

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Thesis

Submitted to the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology

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MASTER OF ARTS

in

Sociology with a concentration in Applied Research

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June 9, 2009

Ypsilanti, MI

## Dedication

To my husband Hitesh Handa, for opening my eyes to a whole world I never knew existed and for teaching me how to adapt to and build a love for that world.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge all of those who helped me with my work process. First and foremost, I would like to thank Mrs. Neeru Handa, who helped me as an associate to complete my research, giving me inspiration along the way. Thanks also go to Shivani, Surinder, and Hitesh Handa as well as Avrijeet Chatterjee for helping me with the nitty-gritty details. Many thanks go to my respondents, who were willing to share their ideas, beliefs, and culture with me. I would also like to thank all of those who supported and mentored me academically, including Drs. Jay Weinstein, Solange Simoes, Mansoor Moaddel and Jacqui Smith. Last, I would like to give thanks to the people who helped me get where I am today. They are my friends, my family, and my peers. Through their support I learned that I can be anything and everything that I have ever dreamed of being.

## Abstract

India is often noted for the large body of contradictions that exist within it, which has left many observers in a state of bafflement, never really understanding why or how such huge inconsistencies can harmoniously exist. The intent of this thesis is to begin an exploration into India's mass of contradictions.

The insights of Indian informants were incorporated into this study in an attempt to explain this dilemma. The respondents were interviewed in order to determine whether (1) they are aware that these contradictions exist and (2) whether they attempt to reconcile them and, if so, how. The fascinating interplay between India's cultural traditions and its economic system can hopefully be better understood as a result of this study. In the future, a similar model may be useful in exploring other developing countries and their own personal sets of contradictions.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

*Introduction*

Let's play make-believe. Use your imagination to transport you to a busy New Delhi street. You are making your way to the temple to perform a sacred prayer. On the way, you are contemplating the knowledge and beliefs of Hinduism, amazed by the advanced philosophy behind, this, one of the oldest religions in the world.

Suddenly, you hear a shrill whimper, and you turn to see a stray dog being forcefully kicked by a *chai-wala* (*tea vender*), who says that it is scaring off his customers; the dog, who already is sporting multiple cuts, bruises, and bald patches from similar incidents of abuse, runs away with his tail between his legs and hides under the nearest parked car. You continue making your way to the temple, slightly disturbed by what you saw, but dismissing it all the same.

After a few more minutes, you encounter a bevy of cows. When you draw closer, you notice that the cows are almost skeletal, not as healthy as you might expect, considering their holy status here. You want to offer them some food, but see that they are already eating. Why, what are they eating but the very trash that pollutes the streets!

You must admit that when you first arrived in India, you noticed the pollution right away. It's hard not to, when the thick smog inhibits one from taking deep breaths of air, not to mention that there's more trash than grass on the ground. Still, whether trash is plentiful or not, why can't somebody give these supposedly holy creatures some fresh, green food to eat? And another thing, if the Hindus revere the Earth and wish to protect it, then why all the pollution?

Shaking it off, you continue on your trek, ignoring the surrounding world and focusing inward on your own thoughts. Finally, you reach the temple. There are many orphaned children waiting outside the temple, with outstretched palms beseeching passers-by for just a small morsel of food. No one concedes to the request of the starving children; some even spit at or kick the children to get rid of them more quickly (much in the same manner you witnessed the *chai-wala* treating the dog earlier in the day). Feeling compassion for the homeless children, you approach and begin to offer them the lunch you had packed for the day. Just as you are about to drop the lunch in the outstretched palms of the orphans, the priest makes his appearance, pushing your hands back away from the children. He explains that you can't give them anything or more will show up and they won't leave you. Overall, it just isn't worth the trouble of trying to help.

Before you can even question the priest about this matter, he steers you to the nearby river where you will be performing the prayer. The river, like the rest of the nearby land, is badly polluted. There are even some wild pigs, foraging for trash at its banks. Ignoring the scavengers, you and the priest perform the *pooja* (*prayer ceremony*). At the end of the prayer, the priest gives you your *Prasad* (*blessed offering from God*): banana, coconut, and a variety of local fruits. After handing you your offering, the priest quickly balls up the plastic bag that he used to bring the fruits and other materials for the *pooja* and throws it into the river, only adding to the filth. Wouldn't the Hindu holy men at least respect the earth and wish to keep it clean? Are earth-friendly practices, while highly sacred to ancient Hindus, alien to modern-day Indians? You have had enough at this point. Why is it that India has so many contradictions present within it? Why is it

that the people, even the priests, don't even seem to think twice about it? You continue on with your vacation, enjoying all of the tourist stops, but you never forget how you noted so many frustrating inconsistencies during your stay and how India as a whole doesn't seem to make any sense at all.

What a grim story, but it is just a story, right? Actually, all of the events mentioned above were real observations I made while in India. When I witnessed the first few examples of Indians not practicing what they preach, I dismissed it and excused them in my mind. But the wealth of contradictions is just far too plentiful in India to permanently dismiss them.

This brings many questions to mind. What makes India capable of fostering so many contradictions within its borders? How do its citizens reconcile these differences in belief and practice? Do they even notice that there is any difference? That's what I wanted to know. The best way to learn the answers to these questions would be to ask the Indians themselves, and that is precisely what I set out to do.

### *Problem Statement*

I suspect that I am not the only Western tourist who has left India in a state of confusion and annoyance. In fact, many other Westerners have made mention of the very observations I just shared with you. One British journalist had this to say: "India is a land of contrasts, of unending surprises, mysteries, contradictions and conundrums. Some please enormously, others disturb profoundly" (Woodsworth, 2001 p. 14). Still other observers have referred to it as "a unique bundle of contradictions like wealth and poverty, of information superhighways and the lack of highways" (Sengupta, 2001, p. 14), "a land of hypocrisies which are coexisting harmoniously on some level and yet

make it a challenge” (Swamy, 2000, p. 12), and as “a mosaic of contradictions” (Zainulbhai, 2005, p. 26). No quote has captured the contradictions of India as beautifully and as poetically as that of travel writers O’Reilly and Habegger (1995, p. xx), when they noted: “India—monsoon and marigold, dung and dust, colors and corpses, smoke and ash, snow and sand—is a cruel, unrelenting place of ineffable sweetness. Much like life itself.”

Usually, people leave India never having these questions answered, never understanding why or how these contradictions continue to coexist. Although a baffling quest, it is absolutely essential that the world understand India as it is. One can not simply note the frustration they feel at witnessing all of the contradictions, give up, and move on. It is necessary to dig deeper, to understand the country and its people, despite the difficulty of this task. As O’Reilly and Habegger (1995, p. xvi) note “The one-world monoculture has risen with daunting swiftness, weaving a new cross-cultural rug... The global village exists in a rudimentary fashion, but it is real.” This statement is even more true today than it was when the authors noted it twelve years ago. They further note that “no amount of creeping homogeneity can quell the endless variation of humanity” (p. xvi). We, as members of a growing global community, need to talk to each other, and, more importantly, we need to understand these interchanges.

#### *Purpose of and Justification for the Study*

As the global village continues to become more pervasive, the importance of intercultural understanding has never been so important. If we are to truly work and live together as one globe, we must strive to understand and respect one another, at least to a certain extent. Understandably, this task can be a daunting one. When examining other

cultures, we, as humans, often do so in an ethnocentric light- passing judgment on those who are different from ourselves.

As I will attempt to show you in this study, India has perhaps been the most baffling country of all to outsiders. Now, as India rises as an economic powerhouse, it is essential for the rest of the world to be able to work together with it. To do this, a certain level of intercultural exchange and understanding must take place. This thesis urges the global community, Westerners in particular, to stop and think about what it is that makes India, India. I offer an analysis, both through literature review and original research, of one of India's most perplexing oddities: the seeming coexistence *and acceptance* of radical extremes. I hope that this review is the first of many in a series of work done to help us better understand and communicate with our global neighbors.

### *Research Questions*

Bearing in mind India's seeming array of contradictions and outsiders' bewilderment over this matter, I have formed several research questions. These questions seek to determine if Indian nationals also recognize the host of contradictions spotted by outsiders, and, if they do, how they reconcile them. In addition, they seek an understanding of what allows the contradictions to exist so indiscreetly in Indian society. Finally, they attempt to use the knowledge gained from answering these queries to better understand India as a whole and enhance intercultural communication. Specifically, these questions are:

1. Do Indian informants acknowledge the presence of the many contradictions that exist within their state?
2. Do they attempt to reconcile these seeming inconsistencies and, if so, how?

3. What is it that allows these contradictions to exist unfazed? Is this unity of opposites the result of a specific element of tolerance and adaptability inherent to Indian culture, or is it due to the clash of Indian traditionalism vs. the forces of Western modernization and neo-colonialism?
4. How can these answers help the world to better understand and communicate with India as the global world-scene becomes more and more real?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

*Introduction to the Literature*

To begin our exploration of India and its vast array of contradictions, we must first understand what a contradiction is, as well as what a contradiction does. To do this, I have divided this review of literature into several major subsections, all working towards the goal of explaining India's complex dilemma. We will first attempt to define the concept of contradiction using the dialectic perspective originated by the great Greek philosophers, then passed on to the likes of Hegel and Kant and at last developed to its most widely popularized usage by Marx. Next, we will apply these concepts to the specific case study of India, reviewing its present state of affairs and also its historical context. We will then use all of this as a framework for interviewing Indian Informants and obtaining valuable insights "straight from the horse's mouth," so to speak. Finally, we will look at several possible explanations, synthesizing the previous theory with the somewhat newer phenomena of globalization, neo-colonialism, and modernization.

*Sociological Theory and the Nature of Contradictions*

Before we begin with our discussion of India and its body of contradictions, it is important to first define the concept. To explore the meaning and use of contradiction, we trace it back to its beginnings in the field of philosophy. Next, we will see how sociology has adapted and adopted the term to serve its own interests. Special emphasis will be placed on Marx's interpretation of contradiction, as it is expressed through the dialectic method. We will conclude this section by actively defining the various meanings of the term according to how they will be used in this study and in warning of potential problems in this method.

*origins in philosophy: from Hegel to today.*

The concept of contradiction was first pondered by some of the great classical philosophers. Many scholars assert that the dilemma goes all the way back to the ancient Greeks (Kainz, 1996). One such classic thinker was Zeno, who with his arrow, tried to conclude that motion could not exist, as it was a contradiction in terms. Unfortunately, for Zeno, he had his terms a little bit confused (Schaff, 1960). It was not until Wilhelm Frederic Hegel that the contradiction was thought about in terms of how we view it today (Ollman, 2003).

According to Hegel, reality, or the absolute, is a complex system of propositions, where each proposition is largely interdependent on the rest. He further believed that philosophy was defined by its history, and that it is necessary to view the system as a whole to be able to obtain total truth or total reality. Always modest, Hegel stated that he did not discover or invent this way of thinking; he merely brought to attention what was already there (Kainz, 1996; Moore, 1990). This way of thinking is now known as the dialectic thought process (Ollman, 2003).

The dialectic has proven very useful for helping scholars to contemplate contradictions in a logical way. It is important to note that the dialectic thought process is rather different from the logical (premise-conclusion) mode of thought. While the dialectic uses the principle of *historical materialism* as a way of looking past the trees to see the forest, the logical thought process often gets caught up in the trees (Ollman, 2003; Schaff, 1960).

Today, some debate exists among scholars of philosophy as to whether or not a contradiction can even exist. This conundrum is referred to as the *law of contradiction*.

Philosophers still haven't agreed on one solid definition for this law; some of the favorite interpretations of the term include (1) nothing that exists, physical or mental, can contradict itself, (2) that nothing can be thought to contradict itself, (3) that contradiction can only exist between sentences and propositions, and (4) that contradiction may apply only to rational beings and not hold true to others (Sibajiban, 1964).

While philosophers continue to debate the meaning of the *law of contradiction*, it is most simple, for our purposes, to define a contradiction as the unity, or joining, of opposites, a state that exists within all objects and beings (Schaff, 1960). Working with this understanding, let us move on to a discussion on how sociologists have treated the topics of contradiction and the dialectic.

*applying the concept to sociological study.*

For sociologists, the meaning of the term *dialectic* is ambiguous at best, although it is important to distinguish contradiction from ambiguous, contradiction being both at the same time while ambiguous is neither-nor (Wright 1985). Contradiction and the dialectic are inexorably intertwined; contradiction is the *what* and dialectic is the *how*. The general tendency is to think of the dialectic not as a process or method, but rather as a perspective. Before going into depth with the definitions, it is important to draw attention to the fact that the term *dialectic* has been overused (and often improperly) within the discipline of sociology. Furthermore, many classical theorists have presented specific biases towards the dialectic; this is to be expected since Hegel discovered the dialectic before sociology was even invented as a discipline (Schneider 1971).

Surprisingly, the sociologist who speaks most clearly about the concepts of contradiction and dialectic is not even a conflict theorist but a structural-functionalist.

Louis Schneider found the dialectic scheme to be usable in a productive way but also a bit too caught up in its perplexity. In true structural-functionalist, Schneider created meaning clusters for the dialectic in order to make it more understandable and to help it be used more properly (Weinstein, 1984). When determining what dialectic means and how it should be used, sociologists and other social scientists seem to cluster their definitions around three major themes: the dialectic as historical, analytical, and estimative. Within these three major themes, there are several definitions, as identified by Schneider (1979).

The first definition (1) is that of a “world I never made” or the discrepancy between intention and outcome resulting in inadvertent consequences, more succinctly, irony. Irony itself suggests not only that we believe we know what the outcome should be before it occurs, but also an innate ambiguity and paradox. A related definition (2) is that means become ends, or inadvertent consequences become goals; this process of goal shifts is also part of the dialectic (Schneider, 1975, 1979).

The next definition (3) encompasses both the dialectics of defeat and triumph. Simply put, the current mode of doing can hinder the development and use of a better way that has yet to be accepted for modal use. Human nature is to avoid change and to gravitate towards the familiar, but in so doing the means can destroy the ends and prevent us from achieving the most desired result.

Although conflict is not necessarily central in defining dialectic, the next definition (4), development through conflict as coined by Kaufmann, maintains that contradictory sides are essential to one another; A implies and requires B, just as B implies and requires A (Basavapunniah, 1983, Schneider, 1979). Building off of this,

another definition (5) is simply that of contradiction, paradox, and dilemma, whether actual or perceived.

Another definition (6) has been termed the contradictory logic of passion by Myrdal, which asserts that all of the greater emotions are dialectical; no philosophy is needed to rationalize instinct or feeling. The last definition (7) states that conflict is resolved through the joining of seeming opposites.

While all of these definitions contribute to the overall sociological understanding of the dialectic, for our purposes I would like to focus on definitions number 3, 4, and 5. For further exploration of the dialectic, I now turn to Marx.

*Marx's adaptation of the dialectic.*

Perhaps the most famous dialectician of all times is Karl Marx. Marx sought to understand not only how something happens but also to understand the system that allows it to happen. "For Marx, contradiction belongs to things in their quality as processes, within an organic and developing system. It arises from within, from the very character of these processes... and is an expression of the state of the system," summaries Ollman (2003, p. 18) in his work *Dance of the Dialectic*.

The dialectic research process has four kinds of relations. One is to identify whether two things are similar or different; this was referred to as the commonsense approach by Marx. Another is to interpret the opposites as they are part of their surrounding conditions and as they are perceived by the onlooker. The third research type is in the build-up and build-down of a process, the before and after, the effect that time has on a changing entity. The final type relates to the development of incongruous components that are dependent on one another, or contradiction (Ollman, 2003).

For Marx, contradiction--which we should remember applies to our perception of things rather than to the things themselves--was the most important form of dialectic research. The contradiction is an and-and arrangement rather than the more traditional either-or of modern logic.

Contradictions are present in everything, they are interdependent, one part can not change without somehow affecting the others. They are resolved through development, as they become more and more intense. If they are resolved, then they will eventually disappear altogether. Contradiction is the most effective way of bringing about change, just as it implies an impending change (Basavapunnaiah, 1983; Ollman, 2003; Schaff, 1960).

### *The Indian Example*

Now we must move on past an exploration of the concepts of dialectic and contradiction and move in to an example that dually displays the meaning and application of these terms. A great modern-day paradigm of contradictions in action is none other than the South Asian subcontinent, India.

Many visitors to India have noticed that it hosts a number of interesting and baffling contradictions. In recent years, this phenomenon has been getting more attention due to India's emergence on the world scene and its vast investment potential. Of the quotations I have located on this subject, three primary themes emerge. They attribute India's sea of contradictions to (1) its late start as a nation and struggle to achieve development, (2) its political system, economy, and social order, and (3) its multicultural and religious heritage.

*India's struggle to develop as a nation.*

Whether in scholarly journals, newspapers, or magazines, India has been generating a lot of attention lately. Many have realized India's vast potential to become one of the world's strongest economies sometime in the near future. Accordingly, this nation has become a fascinating subject for those who wish to make foreign investments. The world still hasn't reached an agreement, however, as to if India is a safe investment or a dangerous one. India's zigzag path to development has left many an investor terrified. Several authors have discussed this path and its potential outcomes, each adding new insights to the question.

In his PhD dissertation, Atsi Sheth (1997, p. iii) analyzes "the contradictions between the broad consensus around market reform and the reluctance of the state to implement it." In so doing, he calls attention to the inconsistency between "the pro-market rhetoric of state officials and [the frustration of] domestic and international investors." The author informs us that this seeming contradiction of government policy and its implementation has been recognized by the world scene since the eighties, when the process of economic liberalization began in India (Sheth, 1997).

In her PhD dissertation, Jacqueline Fewkes (2005) sees India's development issues through a Marxist lens. She analyzes the contradiction between the economic and political spheres and discusses how the paradox can lead to social conflict. Fewkes' description is full of conflict and struggle, as she delineates India's development efforts as "an ongoing process of engaging with the contradictions and possibilities for cosmopolitan social networks within new political and economic arenas... with

contesting visions of the new social networks, which can lead to social conflict... a product of the struggle between incompatible social contexts” (Fewkes, 2005, p. vi-vii).

Authors Pick and Dayaram (2006) further contemplate this contradiction of government policy and government action. They tend to identify the dilemma as arising from the clash of Indian traditionalism and Western modernism. The authors claim that many scholars doubt whether “India is on the right development path, as the nation attempts to graft Western-style capitalist structures and technologies on to traditional ways of life.” The authors use the strong words “ambiguity, contradiction, and paradox” to characterize the development path taken by India (Pick and Dayaram, 2006, p. 171).

Ian McDonald (2003) also sees India’s contradictions surrounding development as a clash between Eastern tradition and Westernization. He, however, takes his analysis further, predicting that the contradiction can not be easily reconciled and will only grow in severity. He believes that militant Hindu nationalism is increasing as a response to global modernity, as an attempt for India to maintain its national identity. McDonald discusses “the complexities and contradictions of the globalization-nationalism nexus in contemporary India,” all the while implying that the situation will get a whole lot worse before it gets any better (McDonald, 2003, p. 1563).

*the contribution of India’s political system, economy, and social order.*

In addition to being commonly called-out on its erratic development path, many more people seem to contribute India’s body of contradictions to the structural elements of its society, such as the political system, the economy, and the general social order. Westerners and Indians alike are astonished by the continued existence of the caste system, even in the face of India’s widespread acceptance of democracy. It is the

coexistence of such extreme entities that is the very definition of contradiction. It is a unity of opposites. In the passages that follow, I have included several observations (note that many are from Indians themselves) that make reference to these structural inconsistencies.

Zainulbhai (2005) emphasizes the need for India to continue its process of economic reform, stating that it is necessary if India is to ever keep up with its powerhouse neighbor China, let alone the rest of the world. He further references the great difficulties India faces in this process because of its inconsistencies: “But the country and its economy present a mosaic of contradictions. India is a stable democracy, but an undercurrent of religious and ethnic tension remains” (p. 26).

Patten (2006, p. 28), in his article for the financial times presents, a passion for the “wonderful, annoying, incomparable country.” He describes his interest this way: “for all its terrible and terrifying contradictions...I have admired Indian pluralism...and been appalled by manifestations of the caste system. I have admired Indian democracy and been shocked by its casual criminalisation.” Patten points out that many of India’s macro institutions and customs are inconsistent with one another. Of it all, the caste system and its conflict with the formal pluralistic political system remains the most obvious.

Singh and Smith (2001, p. 14-15) give additional commentary about the hypocritical nature of the caste system, stating that the “system assigns people's status and economic welfare according to their birth,” as opposed to merit and hard work. They further explore the contradictions embedded within India’s treatment of religion. They say that “with ingenuity and blind faith, citizens of India, the world's largest democracy,

navigate a sea of contradictions, conflict, and corruption. India's constitution calls for religious tolerance, the separation of church and state, and the equal treatment of citizens, yet conflict between India's Hindu majority and Muslim minority is on the rise.”

In discussing demographic statistics of the country, Thakurta (2006), notes that India, which accounts for 17 percent of the world population, has among the world's highest rates for poverty (36%), leprosy (68%), tuberculosis (30%), and death by preventable diseases (26%). He then quips at how these numbers seem to contradict other elements of India, by referring to the popular phrase, “India accounts for close to a third of the world's software engineers and a quarter of the world's undernourished” (p. 1). It is astonishing that India could have such high rates in devastating poverty and in high-status careers, both extremes coexisting within its borders.

Dasgupta (2000, p. 62) notes that “India presents a picture of sharp contrasts.” He continues by pointing out that it is “the world's largest democracy, it is home to some of the world's brightest minds in technology and business. But it is also one of the world's poorest and most illiterate countries with extremely poor infrastructure, a power-hungry bureaucracy that does not like private enterprise, and a vulnerable political system divided along class, religion and caste lines.” Dasgupta has observed the pervasiveness of India's structural contradictions; finding them within the spheres of India's economic, political, educational, and class systems.

“What is India all about?” Sengupta (2001, p. 14) asks. “It is a unique bundle of contradictions like wealth and poverty, of information superhighways and the lack of highways, and yet offers the promise of great business prospects,” he offers. Sengupta

has worded his observation in a crafty, fluid way, but its meaning is deep as any. India is full of surprises, if not contradictions.

In referring to India's alarming AIDS rates, Swamy (2000, p. 12) refers to India as "a land of hypocrisies which are coexisting harmoniously on some level and yet make it a challenge...It's a land of diversity and land of contradictions." She, like the other authors cited, notes that India's contradictions are present and puzzling. She further points out that the contradictions exist in harmony with one another, which would almost imply that they are not frustrating to Indian citizens at all, but rather part of their way of life.

India's inconsistencies do not only contribute to its domestic issues, they also have an effect on its international relations. In his article for the *Beijing Review*, Zheng Ruixiang (2002, p. 7) states that the Indo-Pakistani conflict over Kashmir "is more than a territorial dispute; it is related to national contradiction, religious conflicts, and many other political elements." Ruixiang is telling us that India's (and in this case, Pakistan's as well) paradoxes, if not understood by others, can lead to conflict for the nation.

In a letter to the *New York Times* titled "India Remains a Land of Poverty and Richness" (1997, p. 30), the unnamed author comments on "the inherent contradictions in this enormous country." The author explains that "while the percentage of poor people decreased to 33 percent in 1993 from 50 percent in 1951, the level of poverty today is far worse than it was in 1951, when urban slums did not dominate city landscapes." In other words, the extreme ends (or poles) of the contradiction may very well be increasing in severity. This lets us know that the inconsistencies are not coming to an end but rather remaining throughout the decades. It is doubtful that these contradictions will cease to be

any time soon, thus making it all the more important for the world to understand what they mean and how they affect the country and its relationships.

Travel writers O'Reilly and Habegger (1995, p. xx) note the many examples of India's structural inconsistency quite eloquently, while also alluding to its multicultural hotbed as another factor. They refer to India as:

a country strained beyond belief with people and pollution, an incomprehensible bureaucratic labyrinth, and the calcification of the caste structure, laws against it notwithstanding. It is home to the world's largest movie industry and some of the world's worst living conditions, a place where advanced technology and science coexist with crushing poverty and disease, where exquisite music and dance and the science of right action live side by side with political corruption and mob violence on a massive scale.

O'Reilly and Habegger really leave nothing unsaid in their emphasis of India as a country where contradictions rule, albeit a peaceful rule.

*India's multicultural heritage as the host of its contradictions.*

Language, religion, art, film, fashion- all are examples of cultural components. One of the many captivating elements of Indian society is just how multicultural it is. The country has over twenty-five nationally recognized languages in addition to many different regional dialects. Besides Hinduism, India also has several other popular religions, including Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism, to name a few. Even Hinduism, itself, has several different forms of practice depending on the follower's ethnicity, caste and gender. These are but a few of the examples citing

India's multicultural heritage. In the quotations that follow, the authors have noted India's multiculturalism as the root cause of its sea of contradictions.

Cotter (1997, p. 1), an art reviewer for the *New York Times*, believes that Indian art, particularly painting, also manifests the contradictions evident in Indian society. He refers to art form as "threaded with contradictions... where the spiritual and the secular, barbarity and bliss, meet head on. It's an astonishing convergence." Commonly, art is believed to be a manifestation of a culture's underlying values. This must mean that India's contradictions are deep within the core of the society.

Another element of culture is language. Adi Merwan Hastings (2004) studied the Sanskrit revivalist movement and the conditions that allow it to be possible for his University of Chicago PhD dissertation. According to the author, the movement is both a return to the past and a creation of something new. Hastings refers to this as "archaizing modernism," a term which is itself a contradiction. Hastings rules that "Sanskrit becomes a thread linking a distant past and a possible future by virtue of its essential continuity, and yet is simultaneously a radical departure, something entirely new" (p. 3).

Parvathi Menon (1996), writer for *India Abroad*, speaks of other Indian revivalist movement, ones that are religious in nature. Menon calls attention to the nationalist Hindu revivalist movement and the Islamic revivalist movement that arose as a counter to it. These two often clash with one another, and when they do, "contradictions between the higher and lower castes within Hindu society would come out, with the latter, along with other religious minorities, like the Sikhs and Christians, building their own characteristic revivalist movements" (p. 21). Thus more, unique revivalist movements continue to form in opposition with one another. Menon traces this trend back to the

British regime, who “naturally tried to intensify and utilize these contradictions to cause disintegration of the national movement” (p. 21). The British, who implemented a “divide and conquer” strategy in India, are often thought to have caused this oppositional stratification within Indian society, a phenomenon that is still highly apparent even today, over 60 years after the nation achieved its independence from the British.

One journalist for *India Today*, Prasannarajan (2005, p. 36), referred to India as:

followed by a question mark when a nation born with the psychological baggage of invasion and colonialism began to take those tentative steps in freedom... an incomprehension sustained by a unifying idea. It was multi-everything: language, culture, religion, custom. Homogeneity was not Indian. Still it did work-India the polyphonic democracy, India as a package deal in cultural contrasts and contradictions.

Prasannarajan is trying to press that although India had much to overcome in its early days of freedom, the India of today has flourished, perhaps in part due to these problems. India's being *multi-everything* has proven to be both a strength, in that it endures changes and tolerates conflict, and a weakness, in that its multifarious state is not always unified. Either way, one can surely see that India's *package deal* has made it most intriguing to outsiders and most enduring for insiders.

One ever-present force in India is its film industry, Bollywood (which is the world's largest film industry and can be likened to a Mumbai version of Hollywood). Bollywood, itself, is a very expressive institution of the Hindu culture. It is close to the hearts of the people and artfully reflects on the past, present, and future of India and its populace. Jyotika Viridi (1996) observed the contradictions inherent in Indian cinema for

her University of Oregon Ph.D. dissertation. She notes, “The hallmark of Hindi cinema is to ‘resolve’ these unresolvable contradictions of class, religious communities, and sexism...they cut across, struggle, accommodate, coexist uneasily, or reconstitute each other to reveal the topography of postcolonial culture” (n.p.). As is clear in Viridi’s quotation, the film industry does not create or intensify contradictions; it feeds off of what is already present in society, framing the irresolvable elements of Indian life in a resolute way. Anyone who has ever witnessed a heart-felt monologue of the tear-stricken Shah Rukh Khan surely knows that Indian cinema runs much deeper than entertainment; it is used as a tool of social protest and reform and also as a promulgator of patriotism and national pride.

In an assignment for the London *Financial Times*, Nicholas Woodsworth (2001) toured northwest India by train. He came out of the experience with the conclusion that “India is a land of contrasts, of unending surprises, mysteries, contradictions and conundrums. Some please enormously, others disturb profoundly” (p. 14). Woodsworth maintains that you do not have to engage in some profound analysis of Hindu culture to observe its contradictions. In fact, all one needs to do is stand on a packed train platform and look around; there you will find “all of India.” From “tall, turbanned country Rajputs with formidable curlicued moustaches; cool Indian beauties in gorgeous saris; saffron-robed Hindu holy men swinging stainless-steel begging buckets” to “bespectacled Bengali bureaucrats hefting weighty attache-cases; blind beggars ringing tinkling finger cymbals; jostling red-shirted porters carrying vast loads on their heads; Mongol-eyed military men from the high Himalayas; Muslim ascetics sporting henna-dyed beards” (p.

14). Just a quick look at the inhabitants of India will confirm that many differences in lifestyle, in belief, in everything exist within this baffling country of extremes.

As is apparent from the above quotations, many visitors to India have made note of the vast array of contradictions within the nation. The above sources include magazines, journals, newspapers, and even travel literature. Many visitors to India are left astonished, and sometimes confused, by the seemingly paradoxical nature of the country. In order to find out why India exists in this state, it is most prudent to ask its countrymen.

## Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

This research began December 2006 with my first trip to India. During my one month's stay in New Delhi, I could not help but make observations. Although I was in India for leisurely pursuits, academic inquiries took over my stay. I recorded many observations both in my 90 pages of journal entries and drawings as well as in my memory. What started as an incessant need to "better understand" turned into full-scale, although impromptu, participant observation on my part. Upon my return to the United States, it became clear that I could turn my observations into something larger. This was how my thesis research got its start.

*Research Instruments and Data Collection*

This study is largely qualitative in nature. The primary mode of data collection was group interviews, which were taken using an ethnographic method. Respondents were grouped into one of four interview groups, each with five participants, in order to achieve a total of twenty respondents.

*The Sample*

Although an attempt was made to stratify the sample based on key variables, in the end, sample members were selected largely by convenience. The population of interest is Indian nationals. However, only residents of the capital city, New Delhi, were interviewed due to time constraints and limited research funding. This study is exploratory in nature, which justifies the nonrandom sample of respondents.

Respondents were selected for participation by my research associate, Mrs. Neeru Handa (who has obtained her Master's Degree in Political Science).

Originally, the sample of respondents was intended to be stratified by key demographic variables, such as gender, age, religion, and education. Also, six groups were planned—five with four respondents each and one with five respondents—for a total of 25 respondents. The intended composition of the group interviews was to look like this:

1. All Hindu, All male, Age varied, Education similar
2. All Hindu, All female, Age varied, Education similar
3. All Sikh, Gender varied, Age similar, Education similar
4. All Muslim, Gender varied, Age similar, Education similar
5. Religion varied, All male, Age similar, Education similar
6. All Hindu, All female, Age similar, Education varied

These variables were initially chosen for two primary reasons. One reason was to enable observation of how cultural power-differentials may affect the group interview's interactions (such power differentials are present between male-female, elder-youth, and high education-low education). Also, to avoid potential interfaith disputes within the group setting, only one group was designed to vary by religion. I predict that all of the chosen factors affect the way an individual thinks about problems. Ideally, varying the group structures would have lowered the incidence of "group think" on behalf of the respondents, as well as provide a meaningful methodological research supplement, as is in line with the applied nature of this thesis. Key demographic information for the final sample of 20 respondents can be seen in Table 1 (Appendix J).

*The Design*

Group interviews were selected as the main mode of research for this study for a few reasons. One of these reasons is the desire to minimize as much as possible the effect that the presence of the researcher would have on the respondents. Another reason is that respondents speak many different languages and often switch between languages mid-sentence. It also enabled respondents to help one another to achieve meaning for the group topics. Last, the short period allotted for data collection was considered when choosing this mode of research for the study.

To carry out the group interview sessions, I began by giving the respondents an introduction to me and my research. This introduction was sequentially translated into Hindi, the national language of India, by my research associate. After the introduction and any brief questions, I then distributed a document of informed consent, confirming the respondents' willingness to participate in the interview (See Appendices B and E). After this, I explained the set-up of the group interview, how it was intended to work, the rules, and the basic structure of the conversation. Questions again followed.

During the session, Q cards were displayed to the group. Each Q card displayed two contradicting sentences, in both Hindi and English languages. Respondents were asked which sentence they think is true or if both can be true. Respondents were encouraged to share their reasoning and to engage in discussion with the group. At natural breaks in conversation, new Q cards were presented displaying a new set of contradictory sentences. The groups carried on in this manner until all of the cards had been discussed and presented. Last, respondents were asked if they thought any of the sentence sets were contradictory and to explain their stance. They were further asked if

they thought only some of the sentences contradicted each other or if all of them did and what was the difference. The group was also asked to define *contradiction* and to give an example.

The sentence sets total seventeen. They have been broken down into two major categories, religion/ science and structural. These sentences were selected on the basis of other researchers' observations (as reported in the literature review), as well as my own observations from prior visits to India. The topics are as follows (Please note that sets 1-7 refer to religion vs. science and 8-17 refer to structural contradictions):

	Sentence A	Sentence B
Set 1	Hinduism has 1 God	Hinduism has many Gods
Set 2	Some Indians worship the Sun as a demigod	The Sun is a star
Set 3	Indians value and excel in the sciences	Indians have a very strong belief in God and religion
Set 4	Cows are sacred	Cows are very thin and eat trash from the streets
Set 5	Hindus revere the earth	India is one of the most polluted countries in the world
Set 6	Indians regularly practice Ayurvedic medicine	Indians regularly practice Western medicine
Set 7	Indian doctors are very skilled at both preventing and treating disease	India has some of the highest rates for AIDS, Leprosy, Tuberculosis, in the entire world
Set 8	India is a part of the continent of Asia	India is its own subcontinent
Set 9	India has many poor people living on the streets	India has many rich people living in large houses
Set 10	Hindus are accepting of other religions	Hindus and Muslims don't get along
Set 11	Indians maintain their cultural heritage	India is becoming Westernized
Set 12	India holds elections to choose politicians	India's politicians are corrupt and do not always act in the best interest of its people
Set 13	India is trying to move on past the legacy of the caste system	Scheduled caste members hold over 50% of the seat reservations in colleges
Set 14	India has both rules and lanes for driving	Indian traffic is disorderly
Set 15	Indian women are becoming more independent	Indian women should do as their husbands tell them
Set 16	Indians respect their elders	An increasing number of the elderly are

Set 17	Indians feel that their country is the best in the whole world	being abandoned by their children Many Indians emigrate to other countries
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*\*A version of this list has been included as Appendix A for quick reference when referring to graphs*

In addition to the interview session, respondents were asked to complete two short paper surveys, one administered before the group session and one was administered after (see Appendices C and D for English language, F and G for Hindi language). The intent of the pre-group survey was to collect demographic data for the sample. It also gave the respondent an opportunity to select an alias to be used when I later wrote about this research. The post-group survey asks respondents questions regarding how they felt as being part of a group interview, whether they were able to speak their minds, and how well they thought this method of research could work for other topics.

*Limitations of the Study*

A great many limitations existed within this study. Some, I project, would exist within any study of this nature conducted within India due to cultural considerations, while others were simply due to the specific challenges of being a graduate researcher (having little money and little experience) and still others were just unhappy circumstances that befell the researcher (which could not be planned for and were not expected).

*money.* First, both constraints were certainly an issue. The researcher funded her own travel expenses for the study and spent roughly thirty dollars for thirty small gifts for the participants to be given as tokens of appreciation (which they were delighted to receive and greatly appreciated). No other expenses were accrued. However, the

expense of a roughly nineteen-hour transatlantic flight and of food and lodging for one month in a foreign country are not inexpensive by any means. That said, the researcher was under an immense pressure to complete the interviewing process during this stay or risk having to spend a great deal more money on this project.

*time.* Although the length of stay in New Delhi was equal to approximately one month's time, only four days were available where interviewing was possible. A number of other events/factors whittled down the amount of time dedicated to research; they were the researcher's need to be available for wedding planning (2 weeks gone from budget), the wedding (3 days gone from budget), infection of researcher with a variety of regional ailments, including laryngitis (10 days gone from the budget). As one can see, some of the interceding events were planned and accounted for while others were rather unpleasant detractors from the research process.

*technological.* To maintain a professional air about my research, it was necessary to obtain typed-Hindi copies of all interview forms (informed consent document, pre-group survey, post-group survey). However, Hindi-scripted keyboards are somewhat of an anomaly, as most Indians use an English QWERTY keyboard (English is the preferred language in the workplace). It took great effort to locate a business that was able to type the translated Hindi forms and even greater lengths to explain the desired format to the technician.

*methodological.* Methodology is where the vast majority of the limitations of this study reside. The following list details these issues:

- Inability to stratify groups as desired (unable to obtain respondents matching various backgrounds, due to snowball-esque sampling technique)

- Inability to set up times for interviews in advance (one prospective respondent came at the appointed time on three separate occasions, but since none of the other respondents came, she had to be dismissed)
- Inability to obtain groups of respondents who were unknown to each other (extremely difficult to set up times for everyone to meet for an interview, IST), which resulted in groups of respondents who were known to one another and to my research associate, either as relatives or neighbors. The use of respondents who were known to one another could have inhibited some people from fully and freely speaking their minds
- Lack of seriousness about the research from respondents as well as research associates (people coming and going during the course of an interview, people cutting others off to say “hurry up, let’s get it over with,” a general unwillingness to take the steps outlined by my proposal)
- Use of a small sample (n=20) which disables the use of quantitative data analysis.
- Overwhelming background noise (Traffic, construction, street vendors, etc.)
- In hindsight, it would have been better to ask the respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with the sentences rather than asking them to label the statements as either true or false. This slightly different set-up could have made the respondents feel less pressured and to have more easily recognized that there were, in fact, no right or wrong answers.

*experience*. Last, a lack of experience inhibited the researcher from being able to deal with the above-enumerated limitations with promptness and a professional ingenuity.

More seasoned researchers in the same circumstances many not have become so waylaid

by the long list of difficulties. However, as a beginning researcher I found it difficult to overcome, the number and size of these limitations. Luckily, this particular researcher has a great deal of spunk and was able to make the best (that she could) out of the situation.

## Chapter 4: Presentation and Analysis of Data

*Respondent Views on Contradiction*

Each of 17 sentence sets was presented to the interview groups, one by one. Informants' explanations of the phenomena were as varied as the respondents themselves. The following section presents their views. For each sentence set that did not have complete cohesion or agreement among all subjects in all groups, a table has been made to present cohesion by various key demographic features. These characteristics are interview group, gender, age group, educational attainment, monthly income, field of study, and primary language; information is also given overall for all respondents. For each category of each demographic feature three columns are provided: the first lists how many people spoke in relation to the item, the second how many thought that sentence A was true, and the third how many thought that sentence B was true. All of these tables can be found in Appendix J.

*informants' explanations.*

*set 1*

*a. hinduism has one god;*

*b. hinduism has many gods.*

The interview began by discussing sentence sets related to religion and science. The first set of sentences was (A) Hinduism has one God, and (B) Hinduism has many Gods. Thirteen respondents spoke about this question; 10 agreed that Statement A was true and 11 agreed that Statement B was true. Table 2 (Appendix J) breaks down responses by key demographic groups. Cohesion for sentence set one was strongest by age, income, and, of course, interview group.

In response to this topic, Gayathri (D1), a newly married 23-year-old Brahmin likened Hinduism to the nation in which it was born, “God is one. India has 28 states with different religions and regions and people have their own beliefs, different languages. God is one but is segregated into different parts.” Adding to Gayathri’s explanation, VJ (D4), a 60-year-old retired scientist gave an acronym for GOD, “They are all parts of the same god. Why we call god as G.O.D? G for generator, O for operator, and D for destroyer. Brahma is the generator, Vishnu operator, and Shiv-ji is the destroyer.” Other respondents gave similar answers, such as there is one God with different personas to embody different powers or that there is one God with many different names or groups of followers. One more cynical respondent reported that people create their own Gods in order to achieve a higher political power.

*set 2*

*a. some indians worship the sun as a demigod;*

*b. the sun is a star.*

The next interview topic asked respondents about the status of the sun. The sentences were (A) Some Indians worship the sun as a demigod, and (B) The sun is a star. Twelve respondents gave their views on this topic; 7 agreed that Statement A was true and all 12 agreed that Statement B was true. Table 3 (Appendix J) breaks down responses by key demographic groups. Cohesion for sentence set two was not clearly strongest by any one demographic predictor.

Tony (B5), a 49-year-old wealthy business owner, explained it like this, “Tribal man was fearful from all the powers, whether it was the sun or any other power. So they used to treat it as a god—it can harm that person.” VJ also gave a good explanation, “The sun is a star, whosoever gives us is like god. We worship whoever gives us

something. Sun gives us light and whatever we have on this earth like vegetation it is because of the sun. Everything on earth is because of sun. But yet it is a star, since it gives us so much we worship it.” Other respondents gave the same answers, reporting that the sun is worshiped for its power as well as for a fear of that power.

*set 3*

*a. indians value and excel in the sciences;*

*b. indians have a very strong belief in god and religion.*

The following set of sentences asked respondents about the strong emphasis placed on both science and religion in Indian society. The sentences were (A) Indians value and excel in the sciences, and (B) Indians have a very strong belief in God and religion. Nine respondents gave their views on this topic, and all agreed that both statements were true.

Vibz (B4), a 19-year-old engineering student, said “Both are true; it’s our tradition. Religion helps to keep a person on the good way and science in making the country progress with its development.” Furthering that line of thought, Tony (B5) added, “Because we feel both are complimentary to each other. Science is dealing with the outside world, religion is also science but dealing with inside world.” The general feeling among respondents seemed to be that religion and science were complimentary, not contradictory. One respondent also noted that science has to do with ability while religion deals with communality. Most respondents did not feel the need to explain more on the topic.

*set 4*

*a. cows are sacred;*

*b. cows are very thin and eat trash from the streets.*

The next topic asked respondents about the role of cows in their society. The sentences were (A) Cows are sacred, and (B) Cows are very thin and eat trash from the streets. Twelve respondents spoke, and all agreed that both statements were true. It is of note that no other interview topic created as much discussion as this one. Several respondent spoke about the topic once more, when they were later asked to define contradiction.

Naresh (C1), a 53-year-old lower income shopkeeper, stated “People throw trash on the streets. People who have pet cows don’t feed them properly and then let them wander the streets.” VJ (D4) offered a more elaborate explanation, “Our values have changed. Cow’s milk was considered the best milk after mother’s milk. That’s why cow is worshipped because like mother’s milk cow’s milk is digestible and nutritious. Earlier, Hindus used to take out one *roti* (*whole wheat flatbread*) for the cows. Now values have changed. Even cow dung was used to clean the floors of the clay houses.” Many other respondents touched on these same areas, speaking of a change in values and the many uses of cows. Others noted that urbanization and an increasingly busy lifestyle make it too difficult to care for the cows. One noted that better technology makes cows less important; there are now machines which can mass produce milk, so every family does not need to own their own cow. Many were quick to place blame, whether on Western influence, emigrants from neighboring countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh who do not honor the Hindu value system, and even the government for not creating policy to deal with the issue.

*set 5*

*a. hindus revere the earth;*

*b. india is one of the most polluted countries in the world.*

The following set of sentences asked respondents about their reverence for the earth and the high level of pollution present in their country. The sentences were (A) Hindus revere the earth, and (B) India is one of the most polluted countries in the world. Eight respondents spoke, all agreed that both statements were true.

Bobu (D3), a 23-year-old travel agent, thought that the West created pollution at a much worse level than India. He said, “India is polluted but Western countries like US, UK, and France have a bigger role in destroying the ozone layer. Indians are harmful for their own people but Western countries are affecting the whole earth.” Tony (B5) spoke more about the importance of the earth than pollution, “Country is everything, earth is also country. It is sacred to everyone... Even the astronauts who have gone to the moon have brought the earth from there. So whichever country you belong to, you like that earth. It is not a question of India or anywhere else.” Other respondents spoke of the importance of the earth for survival and were quick to blame the government, the West, or India’s high population for its pollution.

*set 6*

*a. indians regularly practice ayurvedic medicine;*

*b. indians regularly practice western medicine.*

The following set, 6, asked respondents about their medical practices. The sentences were (A) Indians regularly practice ayurvedic medicine, and (B) Indians regularly practice Western medicine. Fourteen respondents gave answers to these questions; 12 agreed that Statement A was true and 13 (all but one respondent) agreed

that Statement B was true. Table 4 (Appendix J) shows that cohesion for sentence set one was strongest by field of study, dominant language, and as always interview group.

Dolly (A5), a 47-year-old homemaker and mother of two, simply stated that “People will use whatever suits them or their situation.” VJ (D4) added to the discussion by explaining that “Western medicines are important for their immediate effects. For operations, that is the Western way. Ayurvedic medicines are made from natural products and have minimal side effects.” Other respondents noted that the choice of medicine may be limited to the poor, uneducated, or village-dwellers due to lack of knowledge or lack of finances. One respondent noted that since the country is so large, it is expected to have diversity.

*set 7*

- a. indian doctors are very skilled at both preventing and treating disease;*
- b. india has some of the highest rates for aids, leprosy, tuberculosis, in the entire world.*

The following set of sentences asked respondents about the skill of their doctors and the high rates of disease within the country. The sentences were (A) Indian doctors are very skilled at both preventing and treating disease, and (B) India has some of the highest rates for AIDS, Leprosy, Tuberculosis in the entire world. Fifteen respondents spoke, all agreeing that Statement B was true and all but one agreeing that Statement A was true. The dissident was Neha (C5), a 23-year-old assistant hotel manager with a master’s degree. Neha would not agree to Statement A because many Indians seek medical treatment in other countries, rather than within their own.

Nanz (A2), a 23-year-old Human Resources Executive, explained that “Over 70% of the Indian population is poor and living in villages. Only 30% are urbanized. People

staying in the city get the proper doctors.” Surinder (C4), a 60-year-old retired bank manager, also discussed the effect of poverty, “Due to poverty, some people can’t afford to have medicine, because the medical system is very costly. Certain people cannot afford to have medicine. Poor people can’t have proper food or medicine. Doctors are intelligent, but many people don’t have the proper resources.” Other respondents spoke of the effects of education, caste membership, lack of knowledge, high population, and pollution on the disease rate.

*set 8*

*a. india is a part of continent of asia;*

*b. india is its own subcontinent.*

At set 8, a new segment of the interview began, the one which asks respondents about structural contradictions. The first set of sentences in this battery was (A) India is a part of the continent of Asia, and (B) India is its own subcontinent. Of the sixteen respondents who answered this question; 10 agreed that Statement A was true and 12 agreed that Statement B was true. Table 5 (Appendix J) breaks down the responses. For this set, members of the same income level and interview group displayed the strongest cohesion.

To answer this question, Vibz (B4) offered, “So many religions coexist here, so many different cultures, they are coexisting simultaneously in one country. It is sort of a small continent.” VJ also said “There are so many languages, different types of people, so many states that it can be called as a subcontinent.” No other respondents offered explanations for this set of sentences, beyond stating that the answer to this and other questions was purely a matter of common sense.

*set 9*

- a. india has many poor people living on the streets;*
- b. india has many rich people living in large houses.*

The next topic deals with the juxtaposition of extreme wealth and poverty within India. The sentences were (A) India has many poor people living on the streets, and (B) India has many rich people living in large houses. Sixteen respondents spoke in response to this question, all agreed that both statements were true.

Gayathri (D1) seems to blame the poor for their lot (a common sentiment in India), “Maybe one of the reasons is India is still a developing country. It is not developed yet and many people are still below the poverty line. They prefer to beg rather than work.” Tony (B5) does not believe this juxtaposition is a uniquely Indian phenomenon but that it is present throughout the world. He said, “This is true with all the countries. Just the day before yesterday, I read a report that in America the rich people are becoming richer and the poor are becoming poorer. The gulf is widening. It is true in India, because the population is more than it can support. But over the years, I have seen the poor are not becoming poorer—their standard of living is improving.” Other respondents believed that the unequal distribution of income may be caused by a lack of government aid to help the poor and that the situation may look more extreme in India than other countries since the poor are very poor.

*set 10*

- a. hindus are accepting of other religions;*
- b. hindus and muslims don't get along.*

The next set of sentences relates to the accepting nature of Hinduism and the Hindu-Muslim hostility present in India. The sentences were (A) Hindus are accepting of other religions, and (B) Hindus and Muslims don't get along. Thirteen respondents spoke

about this question; 12 (all but one respondent) agreed that Statement A was true and 9 agreed that Statement B was true. Table 6 (Appendix J) shows the responses broken down by key demographic groups. Cohesion for sentence set ten was strong for all of the variables besides gender and dominant language, the strongest being interview group.

In response to this question, Nanz (A2) cited political, not religious reasons for the feud, stating that “Hindus accept others but not Muslims; it is a problem since independence. That’s why India and Pakistan fight.” Naresh (C1) blames Muslims, not Hindus, for this problem, saying, “In the whole world, nobody wants to live with Muslims—not even Americans do. They are very cheap/dirty (Hindi word *gandi* has two possible translations) people.” Many respondents noted that Hinduism in theory agrees that all religions are true and therefore accepts other religions. Many also stated that the partition of India and Pakistan is what created Hindu-Muslim problems and that Hindus don’t have any problems with Christians, Sikhs, Jains or any of the other religions present in India. They said that the population of Muslims in India is larger than that of Pakistan, so how bad can it really be? One respondent solidly refused to accept that Hindus were accepting of other religions.

*set 11*

- a. indians maintain their cultural heritage;*
- b. india is becoming westernized.*

The next set of sentences related to the traditionalism and Westernization that are both present in India. The eleventh set of sentences was (A) Indians maintain their cultural heritage, and (B) India is becoming Westernized. Thirteen respondents gave their views; 9 agreed that Statement A was true and all 13 agreed that Statement B was

true. Table 7 (Appendix J) breaks down the responses. Cohesion for this set of sentences was strongest by income and interview group.

Vibz (B4) told us that “Tradition’s fading. It’s fading fast. Still we know we can’t become totally Westernized. Our traditions and culture will always be with us.” VJ (D4) said something similar: “Indians try to adopt the good things from Western culture, but they are still connected with their roots.” The remaining respondents stated that there is a divide between the generations, with elders promoting tradition and youngsters copying Western lifestyle trends. Many respondents swore that India was adopting only the good things from Western culture but were also quick to blame the West for problems discussed later in the interview.

*set 12*

*a. india holds elections to choose politicians;*

*b. india’s politicians are corrupt and do not always act in the best interest of its people.*

The following set of sentences asked respondents about the corruption embodied by their democratic representatives. The sentences were (A) India holds elections to choose politicians, and (B) India’s politicians are corrupt and do not always act in the best interest of its people. Thirteen respondents spoke, all agreeing that Statement B was true and all but one agreeing that Statement A was true. The dissident was Bobu (D3), a 23-year-old travel agent. Bobu would not agree to Statement A because he swears that elections are irrelevant since corruption has permeated every level of Indian society. He says, “Second is correct, here competition is at every level from the top to the bottom. Whereas, in Western countries it is only at the top level. Politicians are money-minded more than normal people.”

Takesh (B3), a 28-year-old doctor and emigrant to the United States, said “See the problem in India is there are two corrupt people standing in election so basically you don’t have any choice. You either vote for this corrupt person or that corrupt person. It’s democratic, but people who are good can’t stand in elections.” Other respondents stated that politicians are selfish and money-minded, not just in India, but everywhere. They also said that good people aren’t willing to become politicians, due to the extremely bad reputation that Indian politicians have.

*set 13*

*a. india is trying to move on past the legacy of the caste system;*

*b. scheduled caste members hold over 50% of the seat reservations in colleges.*

Sentence set 13 was the last set presented that respondents did not agree with both statements 100%; it discusses the caste system and India’s attempt to transition into a casteless society, its own version of affirmative action. To clarify, scheduled caste is the official government label for the people from groups which conventionally have held the lowest status in India; one commonly understood example is that of the “untouchables” (Scheduled Castes of India, 2008). The sentences were (A) India is trying to move on past the legacy of the caste system, and (B) Scheduled caste members hold over 50% of the seat reservations in colleges. Ten respondents spoke about this question; 7 agreed that Statement A was true and all 10 agreed that Statement B was true. Table 8 (Appendix J) shows that the breakdown is clearest by income and by interview group.

Respondents saw this as a very political topic. Vibz (B4) said, “I think the basic Scheduled Castes who are present here in India, nothing is there to provide for them. People who are taking advantage are rich people, urban people, who become Scheduled Caste for the benefits. Nothing is being done to help the real Scheduled Castes—the

backwards races.” Bobu (D3) took it further, saying, “This is because of the vote bank. To get more votes, politicians try to give more rights to scheduled castes, schedules tribes and those from other backwards classes. 50% seats is because of politicians. The country can’t grow with the caste system or reservations.” Other respondents thought that seats in colleges should be given by education and experience, not through the reservation system. Many respondents expressed India’s desire to move forward as a nation and blame the politicians for putting their own interests above that of the people’s.

*set 14*

*a. india has both rules and lanes for driving;*

*b. indian traffic is disorderly.*

The next set of sentences asked respondents about Indian traffic. The sentences were (A) India has both rules and lanes for driving, and (B) Indian traffic is disorderly. Seventeen respondents gave their views on this topic; all agreed that both statements were true.

Richu (D2), a 21-year-old commerce student, gave a simple yet effective explanation, “Some people don’t know about the rules and regulations. Everybody is in a hurry. Everybody wants to reach their destination as soon as possible.” Nanz (A2) believes that the traffic laws aren’t properly enforced due to the corruption of the police. She said, “There are rules but people don’t listen because money works everywhere. Because everyone needs money so if you give a 100 rupee note, you can get off.” Other respondents noted corrupt police and a general disregard for the law contribute to the disorderly traffic. Takesh, the emigrant of the sample, said that even Americans disregard the traffic laws when there is an accident or traffic is backed up for some other reason, and in India, the situation is like that every day, due to the high population.

*set 15*

*a. indian women are becoming more independent;*

*b. indian women should do as their husbands tell them.*

Sentence set 15 asked respondents about the role of Indian women in society.

The sentences were (A) Indian women are becoming more independent, and (B) Indian women should do as their husbands tell them. Thirteen respondents spoke, all agreeing that Statement A was true and only one agreeing that Statement B was true. The dissident was Choti (A1), who at 68 years old was the oldest female surveyed, is a high school educated homemaker to a retired husband. Choti insists that it is “fifty-fifty,” offering no further explanation.

Bobu (D3) explains that women are independent but submit to maintain their social image, saying, “Everybody is mean (sic. selfish) in this world so why should women listen to their husbands. They are smart enough, but they do listen to their husbands because they don’t want to spoil their image in front of other people.” Tony (B5) insists that Indian women did not always assume a lower role in society and blamed the Mughals for their recent status: “Indian women are becoming more independent, no doubt about it. If you see the Aryan civilization, there also women were given 50% of the charge—they were respected equally to their husbands. There was no discrimination. Ultimately, after there was an invasion of the Muslims in India, things deteriorated. Again we are going back to the same thing—women are becoming more independent.” Other respondents noted that a divide exists between city and village people and that women’s increased access to education has increased their rights. Others noted that Westernization is a positive catalyst for women’s rights in India. In hindsight, this topic

could have been more effective had it been worded differently; the inclusion of the word “should” turned sentence B into a value judgment rather than a critique of reality.

*set 16*

*a. indians respect their elders;*

*b. an increasing number of the elderly are being abandoned by their children.*

The following set of sentences asked respondents about the role of elders in their society. The sentences were (A) Indians respect their elders, and (B) An increasing number of the elderly are being abandoned by their children. Sixteen respondents spoke; all agreed that both statements were true.

Takesh (B3) explained, “People are becoming busy in life; they are becoming more self-centered so they are going away from their parents.” He then followed up with some anecdotal evidence, “My grandmother still lives with my parents and so do the grandparents of many of my relatives. It’s the new generation that is creating the trouble.” Surinder (C4) thinks that Westernization is to blame for the deteriorating respect for elders in Indian society: “Some Western culture is impacting on India. Previously people used to respect their elders. Our culture is good, but the Western effect is coming.” Other respondents mentioned that most people do respect their elders and that the ones who don’t are just a different type of people altogether. More than one person blamed the Western influence on India, while others maintain that the problem is exaggerated in the media due to the popularity of the topic in Indian films.

*set 17*

- a. indians feel that their country is the best in the whole world;*
- b. many indians emigrate to other countries.*

The next set of sentences asked respondents about Indian national pride and their high emigration rate. The sentences were (A) Indians feel that their country is the best in the whole world, and (B) Many Indians emigrate to other countries. Seventeen respondents spoke, and all agreed that both statements were true.

Neha (C5) explained, “I think both are right, because of high unemployment and low opportunities. People also leave to do advanced studies.” Vibz (B4) and Tony (B5) spoke of the special kind of social capital that is present only in India. Tony swore that Indians leave, but always intend to come back and settle in India when they want to start a family. Vibz disagreed, “They don’t come back,” he said. Another respondent mentioned that India has fewer and better equipped research facilities, prompting Indians to leave the country for the opportunity of doing research at a higher level. Many spoke of the desire to earn more money abroad or to get an advanced education. More than one respondent made sure to point out that although India has less money and fewer opportunities, their social capital and cultural tradition is strong.

*response patterns.*

One concern I had using a group interview format for Indian respondents was that the cultural tendency towards the collective would prevent some respondents from speaking their minds, if it meant dissenting from the group. Although, for the most part, groups did not always unanimously agree on the topics, cohesion was still the highest by interview group. Cohesion was second highest by income category. Education level and

field of study tied for the third highest cohesion levels, followed by age group and overall, respectively. Last, gender and dominant language tied for last place in terms of cohesion. The cohesion percentages and rank ordering can be seen in Table 9 (Appendix J). Note that cohesion is high among all groups, even the ones with the lowest ranking.

*respondents' understanding of contradiction.*

At the end of each group interview, respondents were asked what contradiction means to them and if any of the sentence sets were contradictory. Group A, the all female group, did not even need to be asked; they started explaining that the sentences were not contradictory, but rather just obvious facts about half way through the interview:

Nanz (A2): "It is a common sense- we don't need an explanation." (in response to set 8)

Nanz (A2): "See, Melissa, the kind of statements you have put are facts; there is nothing crosscutting each other or something. It's not against each other. They are both facts. If you ask Indians, there is nothing to justify it." (in response to set 12)

Madhavi (A3): "They don't need explanations because these questions are true- these are facts." (in response to set 12)

Dolly (A5): "All the statements are true facts." (in response to set 13)

Group B, our all male group, focused more on explaining why the specific examples might be deemed contradictory. They cited tradition versus modernism, a misunderstanding of India by outsiders, and the transitory state of the nation:

Takesh (B3): "Some beliefs are coming from the past, we don't want to leave them but at the same time we want to take new ones also. To some extent it is hypocrisy. We want to believe what are elders told us but new books and ideas say other things and we want to believe that too."

Vibz (B4): “A few were contradictions. This is what contradiction is, the world has a distorted view of India. You have to explore this country, otherwise you can’t know.”

Tony (B5): “I wouldn’t say all questions were contradictions but a few were (like cows). India is at present in a transition state, where our old culture and habits are still with us but we are also influenced by the west. The world is viewing India in the wrong way. They are not seeing India in the right way, that’s why these sentences are contradictions. They are from a different prospective altogether.”

Group C, one of two mixed gender groups, had difficulty defining contradiction.

Like many other groups, they alluded to hypocrisy. Although they were unsure of how to define the term, they felt confident that the sentence set referring to cows was a good example of a contradiction.

Naresh (C1): (starts talking about cows)

Surinder (C4): (starts talking about cows)

Neha (C5): “In most cases, both sentences are true; some were hypocritical. Contradiction is when the first sentence is- I am having a hard time explaining...”

Group D, our second mixed gender group, was also quick to point out examples of contradictions within the interview. One respondent furthermore dubbed a contradiction two statements that are both agreed with but are antonyms. Another member of the group did not find any of the statements to be contradictory.

Bobu (D3): “There were contradictions, like the sun one, caste system- there are a few of them. A contradiction is when we agree with both the things, we support both, but both statements are anonymous (sic).”

Neena (D5): “None were contradictions.”

Although a majority of the respondents had difficulty defining the term *contradiction* precisely, many were able to cite examples and give possible reasons why things are the way they are. Most respondents noted that some, but not all, of the

sentence sets were contradictory, but several still believed that none were contradictory. It is interesting to note that of the six respondents who believed none of the examples embodied contradictions, all were female.

#### *Use of the Group Interview Format*

After the interviews were finished, a post-group survey was distributed to assess the effectiveness of the group interview format in this research. The short, one-page survey asked respondents questions about how well they liked the group, how comfortable they felt being a part of it, how much they were able to say and why or why not, as well as how well they think this format could work for interviewing Indians in the future. The response was largely favorable.

The first question on the survey was *how much did you like participating in the focus group format used today*. Respondents were offered a five point scale. Of the twenty respondents surveyed, sixteen reported *liking it very much* (the highest category), while the remaining four reported that they *liked it okay* (the second highest category). No respondents chose the lower three categories.

The next question asked respondents *how comfortable did you feel participating in the focus group format used today*. Twelve of the twenty respondents said that they felt *very comfortable*. Six reported being *comfortable*, and the remaining two said they were *neither comfortable nor uncomfortable*. None of the respondents chose the response options corresponding to discomfort.

The next question had a larger range of responses. It asked *how much were you able to say about what you thought while in the group*. This time less than half of the respondents chose the strongest response option, I was *able to say whatever I thought* (9).

Six respondents chose the second category, I was *able to say most things I thought*. Four reported being *able to say some things I thought*, and one respondent chose the lowest category, *not able to say anything I thought*.

A couple of follow-up questions were asked. The first was *why do you think you or others may have been unable to talk freely about the things you thought today*. The question allowed for respondents to check as many of the eight options that applied. The most popular answers were: *because someone else said what I was thinking before I could say it* (6), *because I did not know how to say what I was thinking* (5), and *because I or 2 people dominated the group* (4). One or two respondents also selected *because I did not understand what was being talked about* (2) and *because I am young and let my elders talk* (1). No respondents chose any of these three options: *because I did not want to look unintelligent in front of the others in the group*, *because I did not want to talk about these things in front of an American*, or *because I am a woman and let the men talk*.

Additionally, respondents were asked to write in any other reasons why they felt that they or others in the group may not have been able to speak freely. Three respondents offered additional explanations. One simply stated that he was not feeling well that day, and thus not able to speak as much as he may have otherwise. Another respondent wrote in that all of her ideas were matching with the others. One particularly insightful respondent noted that others might not have spoken due to differences in their educational backgrounds.

The survey closed by asking respondents to rate *how well do you think that the focus group style can work to interview Indians in the future*. Again they were offered a

five point scale. Twelve respondents said that this format could work *very well*; six said that it could work *pretty well*, and two said that it was *okay-okay*.

Overall, I am not entirely convinced of the validity of these results. It seemed that one of two factors may have influenced respondents' answers. One reason could have been fatigue from the interviewing process. Respondents might have been worn out after going through the informed consent document, the pre-group survey, and the interview process. They may have just quickly checked off answers, in order to finish their involvement in the research. Another, perhaps more likely factor, could have been respondent desire to give the "correct answer." As a whole the respondents seemed very willing to please; they may have hoped by giving more favorable answers that they were pleasing me and helping my research.

Table 9 displays additional information about each of the groups, including interview time and length, respondents' relationships to each other and to my research associate, the levels of overlap, agreement, seriousness, rush, and interest. It also notes the respondents in order of vocal dominance and some of the distractions that existed during the interview.

## Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusions

*Summary*

With the exception of sentence set 15, which discusses the status of women in Indian society, a majority of respondents found both statements to be true for the remaining sixteen examples. Although most respondents believed both were true, they did not necessarily believe that this was contradictory. Often times, the most vocal respondents were the ones most likely to see contradictions within the examples. Respondents also had a difficult time defining contradiction, although they seemed to fully understand the concept.

Individual interviews could be useful to tease out more in-depth analysis of the examples from the respondents, without being shaded by what others around them are thinking. A greater number of follow-up questions and probes could also provide further insight.

*Discussion*

For many of the subjects, the term *contradiction* alluded to something negative. The sentence sets they were presented were, in most cases, both true. Even if they appeared to be opposites to outsiders, most subjects did not see inconsistency between the two concepts. The few examples that did seem contradictory to respondents, such as the sentences referring to the status of cows in India, were justified by the coexistence of both traditional values and modern tendencies within the country. Other examples, such as those referring to the treatment of elders or of women, were not inconsistent to the respondents since these were viewed as either-or statuses; some people fall on one side of the spectrum while others don't.

While the sentence sets were presented to the respondents as plain statements, many respondents seemed to take them as cultural criticisms. They were quick to justify the presence of these contradictions in their society by referring to specific sources of conflict. Popular referents were the government, Muslims and Pakistan, Western countries and culture, and also Indian youth. A number of respondents noted that they had not thought about these issues before, and perhaps this is what led to their defensive rationalization. While respondents were defending their culture, they also did not appear angry or upset by being asked these questions, though they were sometimes upset by the chosen topics.

An interesting dichotomy existed between value systems and material conditions. That is to say, although subjects seem to hold concrete values, they weren't always able to act on said values due to difficulty and sometimes impossibility of opportunity. This led to a gap between attitude and behavior for the subjects, although the respondents were quick to point out that these types of inconsistencies are by no means unique to India and are, in fact, a global phenomenon.

These findings seem to suggest that India is in a transitory state. Many of the sentence sets could be divided into the traditional response or the modern one, where the traditional response belongs to the older generations and the younger generations are assimilating into the global culture. India is something of a hodge-podge of cultural modes and beliefs, but to India, this makes perfect sense. There is no small problem presented by the juxtaposition of such seemingly different types of people, things, and ideas. Since many of the respondents were quick to defend themselves or their country when presented with the sentence sets, we can see that they are concerned about what

others in the world think of them. When entering into a dialogue with India, it is important to be culturally sensitive. It is also helpful to ask about phenomena that are not easily understood by an outsider, rather than jumping to your own, perhaps rash and faulty, conclusions.

Indian informants readily acknowledge the presence of contradictions within their state, though they did not always identify them as such. Many inconsistencies were reconciled through rationalization, a comparison of two opposing sects within the country (such as youth and elders or traditionalism versus modernization) or just plain acceptance. The contradictions continue to exist unfazed because they are accepted and tolerated among the Indian people, whether because of the divide between attitudes and behaviors or because of the general adaptability of its people. Within India, the force of tradition and modernization do not seem to clash; rather the two together, side-by-side, both help to define India in the twenty-first century.

According to Scheider's third definition of the dialectic, human nature is to avoid change and to gravitate towards the familiar, but in so doing the means can destroy the ends and prevent us from achieving the most desired result. India, however, is quite curious in that it gravitates towards both the familiar and the new ways of doing things. Schenider's fourth definition of dialectic refers to development through conflict. Remembering that conflict isn't always a negative friction, this definition seems to apply quite well to India. India's many different ideas and methods coexist, whether new or old, and help it to gain impetus like no other. Schneider's seventh and final definition of the dialectic states that conflict is resolved through the joining of opposites. For India, this doesn't cause the conflicting forces to disappear, but rather to not seem so disparate

in nature anymore. This makes them seem to be on a spectrum of multiple-choice methods rather than either-or propositions.

#### *Recommendations for Further Research*

During the collection and analysis of this data, several interesting threads emerged in the discussions. Respondents seemed most intrigued by the example of cows having a holy status but not being well-cared for by Hindu society. This example was most cited as a true contradiction, and the most in-depth explanations were given to account for it as well. Researchers might consider looking into the ideas presented by these respondents and forming a more in-depth data collection related to cows.

A couple of interesting themes emerged regarding women. The only study sentence that the respondents almost unanimously dismissed as untrue was *Indian women should do as their husbands tell them*. Is this because my sample was highly educated and urbanized, or is the status of women in India improving or different than how Westerners view it to be? Another reason this sentence was dismissed could have been due to its slightly faulty wording; while all other sentences were worded as objective statements, this one was written with a subjective bent. Also regarding women is the fact that women were least likely to define an example of contradictory, with six of the eleven female respondents not believing any of the sentences were contradictory. The men were able to define contradiction and give examples with greater ease. Surprisingly, gender was not a significant cohesion factor; in fact, it was the least significant of all, tied with dominant language.

Indubitably, this study was inhibited by the lack of diversity amongst respondents. Researchers with more time, connections, and greater funding resources should definitely consider asking similar questions to additional demographic selections. The exclusion of Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs (major religions of India) cannot be overlooked. Ideally, the study could have also included those from a more disadvantaged background and from a lower socioeconomic background. At the very least, this study should be conducted amongst a sample of Muslim respondents, since many of the examples cite Hindu-Muslim relations and a number of respondents used partition or interreligious rivalry to explain some of the examples.

Arguably, these examples used to explore the sectors of religion and science and the structure of the nation's society could be adjusted to apply to a number of other developing nations, where unequal distribution of wealth and traditionalism versus Westernization are also pervasive. This research is unique in that it asks Indian nationals about their views regarding these topics. Further research could explore similar contradictions in other developing nations, such as South Africa, Brazil, Russia, or China.

Contradictions are by no means unique to developing nations, such as India. One might also wonder what would Indian nationals think about the Western world, if they were to visit? Would they note some of our many contradictions present? It can, perhaps, be easier for outsiders to note inconsistencies in a culture, since everything looks fresh and new to them and their views aren't tainted by personal ties. Regarding this situation, a famous quote from the bible is called to mind: "And why do you take note of the grain of dust in your brother's eye, but take no note of the bit of wood which is in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:3 Bible in Basic English). It is true that wherever humans

are present, so too are contradictions. Contradictions are universal to all humans, embodied in unique manifestations from culture to culture and person to person. Some contradictions may be more readily identified than others due to their degree.

Contradictions in other cultures may stand out more to an observer also because of their seemingly exotic flair.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A: SENTENCE SETS QUICK GUIDE

### Set 1

- A. Hinduism has 1 God
- B. Hinduism has many Gods

### Set 2

- A. Some Indians worship the Sun as a demigod
- B. The Sun is a star

### Set 3

- A. Indians value and excel in the sciences
- B. Indians have a very strong belief in God and religion

### Set 4

- A. Cows are sacred
- B. Cows are very thin and eat trash from the streets

### Set 5

- A. Hindus revere the earth
- B. India is one of the most polluted countries in the world

### Set 6

- A. Indians regularly practice Ayurvedic medicine
- B. Indians regularly practice Western medicine

### Set 7

- A. Indian doctors are very skilled at both preventing and treating disease
- B. India has some of the highest rates for AIDS, Leprosy, Tuberculosis, in the entire world

### Set 8

- A. India is a part of the continent of Asia
- B. India is its own subcontinent

### Set 9

- A. India has many poor people living on the streets
- B. India has many rich people living in large houses

### Set 10

- A. Hindus are accepting of other religions
- B. Hindus and Muslims don't get along

### Set 11

- A. Indians maintain their cultural heritage
- B. India is becoming Westernized

### Set 12

- A. India holds elections to choose politicians
- B. India's politicians are corrupt and do not always act in the best interest of its people

### Set 13

- A. India is trying to move on past the legacy of the caste system
- B. Scheduled caste members hold over 50% of the seat reservations in colleges

### Set 14

- A. India has both rules and lanes for driving
- B. Indian traffic is disorderly

### Set 15

- A. Indian women are becoming more independent
- B. Indian women should do as their husbands tell them

### Set 16

- A. Indians respect their elders
- B. An increasing number of the elderly are being abandoned by their children

### Set 17

- A. Indians feel that their country is the best in the whole world
- B. Many Indians emigrate to other countries

## APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT (ENGLISH)

<b>Document of Informed Consent</b>
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Hello, I am a graduate student in the Sociology program at Eastern Michigan University (USA). I am conducting research on the opinions of Indians, in order to help Americans better understand India. In answering these questions, **there are no right or wrong answers**, only your opinions. Helping me to conduct this research is my associate, Mrs. Neeru Handa. We would like to interview you in connection with this research for about one and a half hour's time.

To conduct this interview, we will be asking you questions in relation to your beliefs and your opinions. The interview will be conducted in a group interview format. This means that in addition to you up to five other people will be interviewed at the same time, and you will answer the questions as part of a group. Keep in mind, that **overall participation in this interview is voluntary**. In addition, **you have the right to refuse to answer any question** that makes you uncomfortable. **You can also stop the interview at any time**, you wish. Although, we cannot foresee any risks that would occur to you as a result of participating in this interview.

Note, this interview is intended for data collection in relation to my Master's thesis. **I can promise you complete confidentiality** in relation to what the group talks about today. My research associate and I will know who you are, but in writing about this research, we will not use your real name and any other identifying clues. We also request that you and other participants in this group interview maintain each other's confidentiality. This means that **what we talk about here, stays here** and should not be discussed with any third party.

Also, if you would like to receive a summary of the completed research, please indicate here by checking yes or no. If you choose to receive a summary, you will need to write your mailing address below so that we may send it to you.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would like to receive a summary of the completed research.  
\_\_\_\_\_ No, I do not wish to receive a summary of the completed research.

If you have any questions about this interview or about the focus group format, feel free to ask them now. My contact information, as well as the information for my supervising professor is listed below. I have also attached a copy of my business card along with my contact information in India.

If you understand and agree to the terms listed above, could you please sign and date here:

Respondent: \_\_\_\_\_  
*signature* *date*

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_  
*signature* *date*

Associate: \_\_\_\_\_  
*signature* *date*

Melissa Rayner, Graduate Student:  
Dr. Jay Weinstein, Professor: (734) 487-0012  
Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology  
Eastern Michigan University Ypsilanti, MI 49221

BUSINESS CARD ATTACHES  
HERE

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Please write your name and mailing address below, if you would like to receive a summary of the completed research:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Pre-Interview Survey

Please note that your answers are confidential, and I will not be disclosing your real name when I write about this research. I would like to give you the opportunity to create a nickname for yourself. If you do not wish to create your own nickname, I will select one for you. Please write your desired nickname on the line below.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Gender.** Please Circle.      Male                  Female                  Other

**Age in years.** Please Write. \_\_\_\_\_                  **Birth date** Please Write. \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Day/Month/Year

**What is the highest level of education that you have completed or are currently working towards?** Please circle.

None                  1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> standard                  6<sup>th</sup>-11th standard                  12<sup>th</sup> standard  
some college                  Bachelor's                  Master's                  Doctorate  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

**What was your main field of study in school?** Please write. \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your occupation?** Please write. \_\_\_\_\_

**On average, how much money in rupees do you (or your family) make in one month's time?** Please circle.

Less than 10,000      10,000-20,000      20,000-30,000      30,000-40,000      more than 40,000

**What religion do you practice?** Please circle.

Hindu      Muslim      Sikh      Christian      Buddhist      Other \_\_\_\_\_

**What particular branch of your religion do you practice?** (Ex: Muslim -> Sunni) Please write.

\_\_\_\_\_

Which caste do you belong to? Please write. \_\_\_\_\_

What is your dominant language? Please write. \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate all languages in which you are fluent. Please underline or circle.

English      Hindi      Assamese      Bengali      Bodo      Dogri      Gujarati

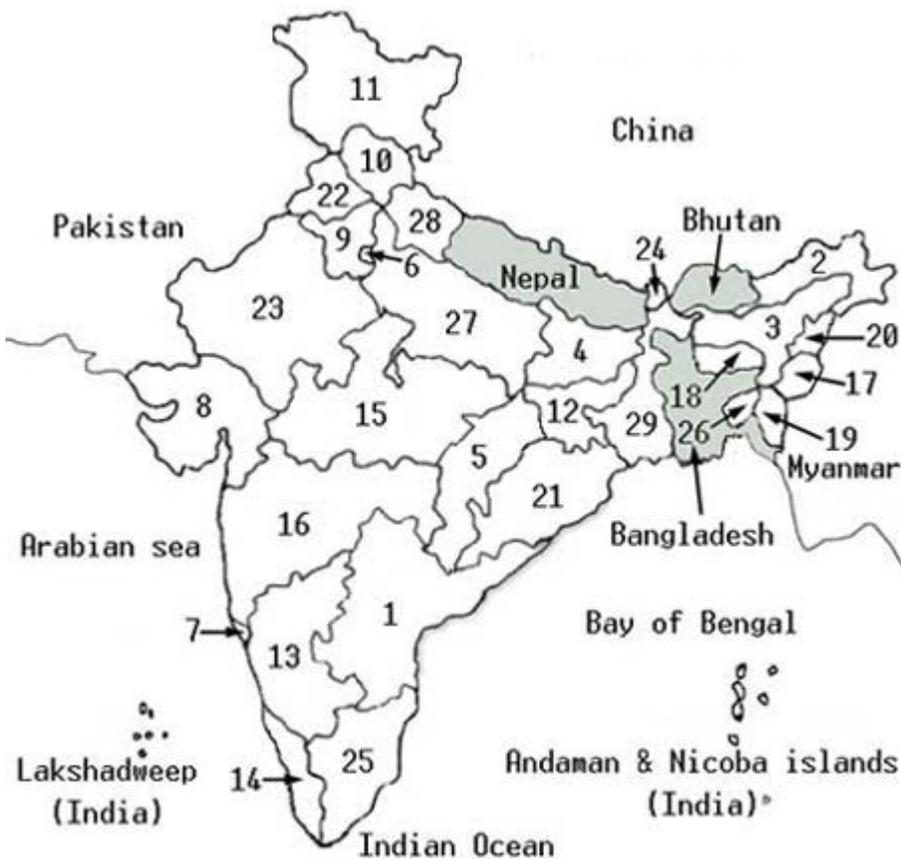
Kannada      Kashmiri      Konkani      Maithili      Malayalam      Manipuri      Marathi

Nepali      Oriya      Punjabi      Sanskrit      Santhali      Sindhi      Tamil

Telugu      Urdu

Others \_\_\_\_\_

What is your ethnicity? From what region of India do you or your family originally come from?  
Please circle on the map or in the list.



1. Andhra Pradesh
2. Arunachal Pradesh
3. Assam
4. Bihar
5. Chattisgarh
6. Delhi
7. Goa
8. Gujarat
9. Haryana
10. Himachal Pradesh
11. Jammu and Kashmir
12. Jharkhand
13. Karnataka
14. Kerala
15. Madhya Pradesh
16. Maharashtra
17. Manipur
18. Meghalaya
19. Mizoram
20. Nagaland
21. Orissa
22. Punjab
23. Rajasthan
24. Sikkim
25. Tamil Nadu
26. Tripura
27. Uttar Pradesh
28. Uttaranchal
29. West Bengal

## Post-Interview Survey

Your chosen nickname. *Please write.* \_\_\_\_\_

**How much did you like participating in the focus group format used today?** *Please circle.*

liked very much	liked okay	didn't like, didn't dislike	didn't like	really didn't like
-----------------	------------	--------------------------------	-------------	--------------------

**How comfortable did you feel participating in the focus group format used today?** *Please circle.*

very comfortable	comfortable	not comfortable, not uncomfortable	uncomfortable	very uncomfortable
------------------	-------------	---------------------------------------	---------------	-----------------------

**How much were you able to say about what you thought while in the group?** *Please circle.*

Able to say whatever I thought	Able to say most things I thought	Able to say some things I thought	Not able to say anything I thought
-----------------------------------	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

**Why do you think you or others may have been unable to talk freely about the things you thought today?** *Please check all that apply.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Because 1 or 2 people dominated the group and would not let others talk
- \_\_\_\_\_ Because I did not know how to say what I was thinking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Because I did not want to look unintelligent in front of others in the group
- \_\_\_\_\_ Because someone else said what I was thinking before I could say it
- \_\_\_\_\_ Because I did not understand what was being talked about
- \_\_\_\_\_ Because I did not want to talk about these things in front of an American
- \_\_\_\_\_ Because I am a woman and let the men talk
- \_\_\_\_\_ Because I am young and let my elders talk

**Are there any other reasons why you may have been unable to talk freely today?** *Please write.*

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**How well do you think that the focus group style can work to interview Indians in the future?** *Please circle.*

very well	pretty well	okay-okay	pretty poorly	very poorly
-----------	-------------	-----------	---------------	-------------

अपने विषय में लिखित प्रमाण पत्र

नमस्कार ! मैं ईस्टन मिशिगन विश्वविद्यालय कि समाज-शास्त्र में स्नातक कि छात्रा हूँ। मैं एक प्रकार कि खोज कर रही हूँ, भारतीयों के विचारों पर जिससे अमेरिका के लोग भारत के विषय में अधिक जान पायें। एक प्रकार के प्रश्नों के उत्तर देने से मुझे सहायता मिलेगी, जिसमें सही या गलत नही बताना सिर्फ अपने विचार बताने है। मेरे इस कार्य में मेरी सहायक श्रीमती नीरू हांडा है। इस खोज के लिये मैं कुछ जानकारी चाहती हूँ, जिस में कभी एक या डेढ़ घण्टा लग सकता है।

इस निरीक्षण के लिये हम आप से कुछ सवाल पुछेंगे आपके विचार जानने के लिये। यह निरीक्षण एक समूह में किया जाएगा जिसमें आपके अतिरिक्त अन्य 5 सदस्य होंगे। इस समूह के सदस्य के रूप में आप उत्तर देंगे। यह निरीक्षण आपकी इच्छा पर आधारित है, आप चाहे तो किसी सवाल का जबाब देने से इनकार कर सकते है या कभी भी बीच में रोक सकते हैं। यह सब आपकी इच्छा पर आधारित है।

आप इस निरीक्षण में समूह में सुखद रूप से भाग ले सकते है। आप इस बातचीत में विचारों के आदान-प्रदान में सुखद अनुभव कर सकते है। एक विदेशी के साथ अपने विचारों, अपनी सभ्यता के विषय में बात कर के आप एक प्रकार से लाभ भी प्राप्त कर सकते है। इस समूह में बात करने का आपको धन्यवाद के रूप में एक छोटा सा चिन्ह देते हुए मुझे बहुत प्रसन्नता होगी। इस खोज के दौरान यदि कोई नई बात पता चलती है या कोई जोखिम की बात होती है, जो आपकी इच्छा के विरुद्ध है। आपको लिखित रूप में प्राप्त कराई जाएगी, जैसे ही कुछ पता चलेगा।

यह बातचीत केवल मेरे उप-स्नातक शास्त्रार्थ के विषय के जानकारी की प्राप्ति के लिये कि जा रही है। हम हर जानकारी को गुप्त रखने का प्रयास करेंगे। परन्तु यह बातचीत के समूह में हो रही है इसिलिये इस समूह के हर सदस्य एक दुसरे कि बात को गुप्त रखना चाहिए। इस का अर्थ है कि जो बात हम यहाँ करेंगे यही रहेगी, किसी अन्य से इस विषय में बात नही कि जाएगी।

हम आशा करते है कि जो जानकारी हमें यहाँ मिलेगी वो हम व्यापारिक स्थानों, वैज्ञानिक जर्नलस् तथा विश्वविद्यालय मे उपस्थित करने में समर्थ रहेंगे। इस खोज के विषय में पुरे समूह की ओर से जानकारी दी जाएगी ना की किसी एक अकेले की ओर से। इस विषय में लिखते हुए हम आपका असली नाम या कोई अन्य जानकारी नही देंगे।

इसके अतिरिक्त यदि आप चाहते हैं कि आप को इस खोज के विषय में संक्षिप्त जानकारी मिले तो आप अपनी सहमती दे सकते हैं। इसके लिये आपको अपना डाक के लिये पता देना होगा।

\_\_\_\_\_ मुझे संक्षिप्त जानकारी चाहिये।

\_\_\_\_\_ नहीं मुझे संक्षिप्त जानकारी नहीं चाहिये।

अगर आप इस समागम के विषय में या सामुहिक वार्तालाप के विषय में कुछ जानकारी चाहते हैं तो पुछ सकते हैं। मेरे सम्पर्क कि जानकारी, मेरा कार्ड तथा मेरे प्राध्यापक की जानकारी नीचे दी गई है।

यदि आप यह सब से सहमत हैं और आप को समझ आ गया तो कृप्या हस्ताक्षर कर के तिथि डालें।

उत्तर देने वाला \_\_\_\_\_

*हस्ताक्षर*

\_\_\_\_\_

*दिनांक*

सवाल पुछने वाला \_\_\_\_\_

*हस्ताक्षर*

\_\_\_\_\_

*दिनांक*

सहायक \_\_\_\_\_

*हस्ताक्षर*

\_\_\_\_\_

*दिनांक*

मलिस्सा रेनर, स्नातक विद्यार्थी (313)414-1523  
डा० जय वाइनस्टाइन, प्रोफेसर (734) 487-0012  
समाज शास्त्र विभाग, एन्थ्रोपोलोजी तथा कर्मिनियोलोजी  
पूर्वी मिशिगन विश्वविद्यालय, यपसिलेंटी मिशिगन 49221

कृप्या अपना बिजनेस कार्ड यहाँ संलग्न करें।

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यदि आप इस समागम कि संक्षिप्त जानकारी चाहते है तो कृप्या निचे अपना नाम व पुरा पता लिखें।

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX F: PRE-GROUP SURVEY (HINDI)

### समागम से पहले का निरीक्षण

मैं आपसे यह वादा करती हूँ कि आपका असली नाम गुप्त रखा जाएगा। आपको यह छुट दी जाती है कि आप अपनी पसन्द का कोई भी नाम रख ले। अगर आप नाम नहीं रखना चाहते तो मैं आपके लिए कोई भी काल्पनिक नाम रख लूँगी। आप अपना नाम नीचे लिखें।

लिंग :- चिन्ह लगाएँ      स्त्री      पुरुष      अन्य  
आयु वर्ष में कृप्या लिखें— /ता०— /मास/—वर्ष  
आप कितना पढ़े हुये है या पढ़ रहे है ? चिन्ह लगाएँ  
अनपढ़      पहली से कक्षा पाँच      कक्षा 6 से ग्यारह      कक्षा बारहवीं  
कालेज      बी० ए०      एम० ए०      डाक्टरेट  
अन्य—

स्कूल में किस क्षेत्र में पढ़ाई की है ? कृप्या लिखें—

आप क्या काम करते है ? कृप्या लिखें—

औसतन आप या आपका परिवार एक महिने में कितना कमा लेते है ? कृप्या चिन्ह लगाएँ  
रु० 1000 से 10,000      10,000 से 20,000      20,000 से 30,000      30,000 से 40,000  
रु० 40,000 से अधिक

आप किस धर्म को मानते है ? कृप्या चिन्ह लगाएँ।

हिन्दु, मुसलिम, सिख, क्रिश्चिन, जैन अन्य—

आप अपने धर्म के किस क्षेत्र को मानते है ? कृप्या लिखें

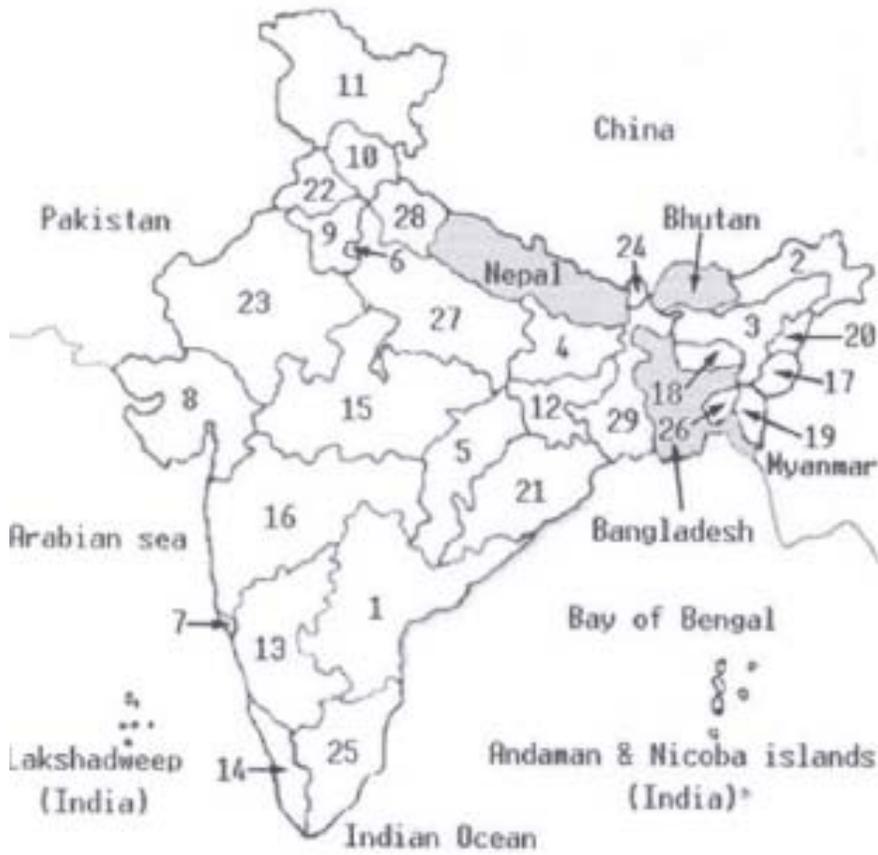
आप किस जाती के है ?

आपकी मुख्य भाषा क्या है ? कृप्या लिखें।

आप अन्य कौन सी भाषा जानते है ?

इंगलिश	हिन्दी	असामी	बंगाली	बोडो	डोगरी	गुजराती
कन्नड	कशमीरी	कोंकणी	मैथिलि	मलयालम	मणिपुरी	मराठी
नेपाली	उरिया	पंजाबी	संस्कृत	संथाली	सिंधी	तामिल
तेलगु	उर्दु	अन्य	—			

आप मुख्य रूप से किस स्थान से सम्बन्ध रखते है ?



1. Andhra Pradesh
2. Arunachal Pradesh
3. Assam
4. Bihar
5. Chattisgarh
6. Delhi
7. Goa
8. Gujarat
9. Haryana
10. Himachal Pradesh
11. Jammu and Kashmir
12. Jharkhand
13. Karnataka
14. Kerala
15. Madhya Pradesh
16. Maharashtra
17. Manipur
18. Meghalaya
19. Mizoram
20. Nagaland
21. Orissa
22. Punjab
23. Rajasthan
24. Sikkim
25. Tamil Nadu
26. Tripura
27. Uttar Pradesh
28. Uttaranchal
29. West Bengal

APPENDIX G: POST-GROUP SURVEY (HINDI)

समागम से बाद का निरिक्षण

आपके द्वारा चुना गया नाम। कृप्या लिखें। \_\_\_\_\_

आपको गुप में बातचीत करना, जो कि आज किया गया कितना पसन्द आया। चिन्ह लगायें

बहुत अच्छा	ठीक ठाक	न बुरा न अच्छा	बुरा	बहुत बुरा
------------	---------	----------------	------	-----------

आपको गुप में बातचीत करना, जो कि आज किया गया कितना आन्नददायक लगा। चिन्ह लगायें

बहुत सुखद	सुखद	न सुखद न दुखद	दुखद	बहुत दुखद
-----------	------	---------------	------	-----------

आप गुप में बात करते हुए जो सोच रहे थे, उसे कहने में कितना समर्थ रहे। चिन्ह लगायें

जो सोचा सब	अधिकतर सब	कुछ कुछ	कुछ भी नहीं
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आप क्या सोचते हैं कि आप या अन्य स्वतंत्रता से कुछ क्यों नहीं कह पायें जो सोच रहे थे ? चिन्ह लगायें।

- \_\_\_\_\_ क्योंकि एक या दो लोग ही बोल रहे थे अन्य को नहीं बोलने दिया।
- \_\_\_\_\_ क्योंकि मुझे नहीं गता था कि जो सोचा है कैसे कहूँ।
- \_\_\_\_\_ क्योंकि गुप में सबके सामने बेपकुफ नहीं लगना चाहा
- \_\_\_\_\_ क्योंकि मुझे विषय ही समझ में नहीं आया।
- \_\_\_\_\_ क्योंकि एक अमेरिकन के सामने कुछ कहना ठीक नहीं लगा।
- \_\_\_\_\_ क्योंकि मैं एक स्त्री हूँ पुरुषो को बोलने दिया।
- \_\_\_\_\_ क्योंकि मैं छोटा हूँ, बड़ो को बोलने दिया।

क्या अन्य कोई कारण है, जो स्वतंत्रता से नहीं बोला गया ? चिन्ह लगायें

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आप क्या सोचते हैं कि गुप में बातचीत भारत में कितनी सफल हो सकती है ? चिन्ह लगायें

बहुत सफल	सफल	ठीक ठाक	असफल	बहुत असफल
----------	-----	---------	------	-----------



EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

November 20, 2007

Melissa Rayner  
418 Florence Street, Apartment 2  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Dear Ms. Rayner:

The College of Arts and Sciences Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Eastern Michigan University has reviewed and approved as exempt research your proposal titled, "The nature of contradictions in India: Using an applied ethnographic technique to further east west understanding". The IRB determined that the rights and welfare of the individual subjects involved in this research are carefully guarded. Additionally, the methods used to obtain informed consent are appropriate, and the individuals participating in your study are not at risk.

Exempt research does not require reporting of continuation one year after approval if the project continues. However, should the sample or procedures change as to have an impact on human subjects, then this committee should be notified by using the *Minor Modification to Research Protocol* or the *Request for Human Subjects Approval* form depending upon the scope of the changes (see the forms online).

On behalf of the Human Subjects Committee, I wish you success in conducting your research.

Sincerely,

Dennis Patrick, Ph.D.  
Steven K. Huprich, Ph.D.  
Administrative Co-Chairs  
College of Arts and Sciences Human Subjects Review Committee

cc: Dr. Jay Weinstein

संख्यांक १५-६३२

# राजस्थान विश्वविद्यालय (जयपुर)

मैं, राजस्थान विश्वविद्यालय के कुलाधिपति,  
कुलपति तथा सेनेट के सदस्य, प्रमाणित करते हैं  
कि विश्वविद्यालय पत्राचार अध्ययन एवं सतत शिक्षा संस्थान, जयपुर  
की ..... (श्रीमती) श्यामा हांडा ..... को  
मई, सन् १९७८ की परीक्षा में उत्तीर्ण घोषित होने पर

## मास्टर आर्म्स

की उपाधि प्रदान की गई।

वह "द्वितीय" श्रेणी में उत्तीर्ण हुई। परीक्षा  
का विषय "राजनीति विज्ञान था।

(Political Science)

प्रमाण-पत्र इस विश्वविद्यालय की मुद्रा और  
कुलपति के हस्ताक्षर से अंकित किया जाता है।



वेदपाल लाली

५ अगस्त, १९७८

कुलपति

दिनांक \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX J: DATA TABLES

Table 1.

*Summary Demographics, by Respondent*

ID (Alias)	Age	Gender	Occupation	Education	Dominant Language	Other Languages
A1 (Choti)	68	F	house wife	HS	Hindi	English
A2 (Nanz)	23	F	HR executive	BA	English	Hindi
A3 (Madhavi)	42	F	banker	MA	Hindi	English, Punjabi
A4 (Minku)	20	F	student	some college	Hindi	English, Punjabi
A5 (Dolly)	47	F	home maker	BA	Hindi	English, Punjabi
B1 (Gopal)	28	M	driver	less than HS	Hindi	none
B2 (Miky)	18	M	student	some college	Hindi	English, Punjabi
B3 (Takesh)	28	M	research student	PhD	Hindi	English, Punjabi
B4 (Vibz)	19	M	student	BA	Hindi	English, Punjabi
B5 (Tony)	49	M	business	BA	Hindi	English, Punjabi
C1 (Naresh)	53	M	business	BA	Hindi	English, Punjabi
C2 (Kanchi)	20	F	student	some college	Hindi	English, Punjabi, German
C3 (Neeru)	46	F	teacher	BA	Punjabi	English, Hindi
B4 (Surinder)	61	M	retired	BA	Punjabi	English, Hindi
B5 (Neha)	23	F	assistant manager in event sales	MA	Hindi	English, Punjabi
D1 (Gayathri)	23	F	travel industry	BA	Tamil	English, Hindi, Sanskrit
D2 (Richu)	21	F	student	some college	Hindi	English, Punjabi, Sanskrit
D3 (Bobu)	23	M	quality assurance executive	BA	Hindi	English, Punjabi
D4 (Vj)	60	M	retired	BA	Punjabi	English, Hindi, Sanskrit
D5 (Neena)	53	F	house wife	BA	Punjabi	English, Hindi, Sanskrit

Table 2.

*Interview Results for Set 1*

	Spoke	A True	B True
Overall	13	10	11
Group A	n/a	n/a	n/a
Group B	3	3	3
Group C	5	5	4
Group D	5	2	4
Men	7	6	5
Women	6	4	6
18-21	3	2	3
23-28	4	3	4
42-49	2	2	3
53-68	4	3	3
<BA	n/a	n/a	n/a
BA	11	8	9
>BA	2	2	2
<10	1	1	1
10-20	4	4	3
20-30	6	3	5
>30	2	2	2
Commerce	6	4	5
Science	3	3	2
Arts	4	3	4
No College	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hindi	8	6	8
Other	5	4	3

Table 3.

*Interview Results for Set 2*

	Spoke	A True	B True
Overall	12	7	12
Group A	n/a	n/a	n/a
Group B	3	3	3
Group C	4	4	3
Group D	5	2	4
Men	7	3	7
Women	5	4	5
18-21	2	1	2
23-28	4	3	4
42-49	2	1	2
53-68	4	2	4
<BA	n/a	n/a	n/a
BA	11	8	11
>BA	2	2	2
<10	n/a	n/a	n/a
10-20	4	3	4
20-30	6	4	6
>30	2	2	2
Commerce	5	4	5
Science	3	1	3
Arts	4	3	4
No College	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hindi	7	5	6
Other	5	5	3

Table 4.

*Interview Results for Set 6*

	Spoke	A True	B True
Overall	14	12	13
Group A	4	4	4
Group B	4	4	3
Group C	4	2	4
Group D	2	2	2
Men	7	7	6
Women	7	5	7
18-21	3	3	2
23-28	2	1	2
42-49	4	3	4
53-68	5	5	5
<BA	2	2	1
BA	9	8	9
>BA	3	2	3
<10	2	2	2
10-20	3	2	3
20-30	5	4	5
>30	4	4	3
Commerce	5	4	4
Science	4	4	4
Arts	4	3	4
No College	1	1	1
Hindi	10	9	9
Other	4	3	4

Table 5.

*Interview Results for Set 8*

	Spoke	A True	B True
Overall	16	10	12
Group A	5	5	5
Group B	4	0	4
Group C	4	4	0
Group D	3	1	3
Men	7	3	5
Women	9	7	7
18-21	4	1	4
23-28	3	2	2
42-49	4	3	3
53-68	5	4	3
<BA	2	1	2
BA	11	7	7
>BA	3	2	3
<10	2	2	2
10-20	4	4	1
20-30	6	3	5
>30	4	1	4
Commerce	7	4	5
Science	4	2	4
Arts	4	3	2
No College	1	1	1
Hindi	11	6	9
Other	5	4	3

Table 6.

*Interview Results for Set 10*

	Spoke	A True	B True
Overall	13	12	9
Group A	2	2	2
Group B	4	4	2
Group C	4	3	4
Group D	3	3	0
Men	7	7	4
Women	6	3	4
18-21	3	3	1
23-28	4	3	3
42-49	4	4	3
53-68	2	2	1
<BA	2	2	2
BA	8	8	3
>BA	3	2	3
<10	1	1	1
10-20	5	4	4
20-30	3	3	0
>30	4	4	3
Commerce	5	4	3
Science	3	3	1
Arts	4	4	3
No College	1	1	1
Hindi	8	7	5
Other	5	5	3

Table 7.

*Interview Results for Set 11*

	Spoke	A True	B True
Overall	13	9	13
Group A	2	2	2
Group B	3	3	3
Group C	4	0	4
Group D	4	4	4
Men	7	5	7
Women	6	4	6
18-21	1	1	1
23-28	4	3	4
42-49	3	2	3
53-68	5	3	5
<BA	1	1	1
BA	10	7	10
>BA	2	1	2
<10	1	1	1
10-20	4	1	4
20-30	6	5	6
>30	2	2	2
Commerce	4	2	4
Science	3	3	3
Arts	5	3	5
No College	1	1	1
Hindi	8	6	8
Other	5	3	5

Table 8.

<i>Interview Results for Set 13</i>			
	Spoke	A True	B True
Overall	10	7	10
Group A	3	3	3
Group B	3	3	3
Group C	3	0	3
Group D	1	1	1
Men	6	4	6
Women	4	3	4
18-21	2	2	2
23-28	3	2	3
42-49	3	3	3
53-68	2	0	2
<BA	1	1	1
BA	7	5	7
>BA	2	1	2
<10	n/a	n/a	n/a
10-20	4	1	4
20-30	3	3	3
>30	3	3	3
Commerce	7	5	7
Science	1	1	1
Arts	2	1	2
No College	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hindi	8	6	8
Other	2	1	2

Table 9.

<i>Cohesion by Category</i>		
Rank	Category	%
1	Interview Group	93
2	Income Category	88
3	Education Level	86
3	Field of Study	86
4	Age Group	82
5	Overall	81
6	Gender	80
6	Dominant Language	80

Table 10.

*Additional Information about the Groups*

	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
Location	Restaurant	Our Home	R's Home	R's Home
Time	Late Evening	Mid Afternoon	Mid Evening	Mid Evening
Interview Length	7:58	19:07	19:37	22:27
R's Relationships				
to each other	Aunt, Daughter-in-Law, Daughter-in-Law's Daughter, Nephew's Wife, Nephew's Wife's Daughter	Father, Son, Father's Servant, Cousin, Cousin's Neighbor	Husband, Wife, 2 Daughters, Brother-in-Law	Husband, Wife, Son, Daughter, Daughter-in-Law
to associate	Sister-in-Law, Husband's Cousin's Wives, Husband's Cousin's Wives' Daughters	Nephew, Nephew's Son, Nephew's Servant, Son, Neighbor's Son	Brother, Sister-in-Law, Nieces, Husband	Brother, Sister-in-Law, Niece, Nephew, Nephew's Wife
Dominant R	Nanz	Tony	Surinder	VJ
2 DR	Dolly	Takesh	Naresh	Bobu
3 DR	Choti	Vibz	Neha	Gayathri
4 DR	Mahadvi	Miky	Neeru	Richu
5 DR	Minku	Gopal	Kanchi	Neena
Overlap	Not so high, since people didn't want to speak	Extremely High, interferes with understanding	Extremely High, almost 100%	High, especially with Richu
Agreement	Nearly Perfect	High	High	High, but not essential
Seriousness	Low	High	Medium	High
Rush	Extremely High	Medium	Low	Low
Distractions	Busy restaurant with construction going on nearby	people coming and going, Miky leaving before the end of the interview	none	People coming to door, Bobu leaving in the middle of the interview and coming back later, Grandma asking questions not understanding what is happening
Interest	Low	High	Medium	High

