THE PATHWAY TO GANG LIFE: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF SOUTH ASIAN YOUTH MOST SUSCEPTIBLE TO RECRUITMENT

by

Amandeep Gill Sangha

Bachelor of Arts, Simon Fraser University, 2003

MAJOR PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS (CRIMINAL JUSTICE)

In the
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice

UNIVERSITY OF THE FRASER VALLEY

Winter 2018

Approval

Name: Amandeep Gill Sangha
Degree: Master of Arts (Criminal Justice) Degree
Title: The Pathway to Gang Life: A Descriptive Analysis of South Asian Youth Most Susceptible to Recruitment

Examining Committee

Zina Lee, PhD
GPC Chair
Associate Professor, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice

_____

Amanda McCormick, PhD
Senior Supervisor
Associate Professor, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice

_____

Keiron McConnell, DProf
External Examiner
Faculty, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

_____

Date Defended/Approved: April 13, 2018

Abstract

This major paper provides an in-depth review of the history of South Asian gang-affiliated crime across the Lower Mainland of British Columbia and establishes a profile of youth most susceptible to gang recruitment. Through an historical analysis of media coverage on South Asian gang members, in addition to gleaning available information from recent exploratory and observational studies, there is sufficient material available to suggest that most South Asian gang-affiliated youth are young males between the ages of 16 to 29, who were raised in two-parent homes in middle-class neighbourhoods, and who have potential to excel both academically and professionally. However, to date, empirical data has been lacking and researchers have been unable to validate the characteristics of South Asian gang members and the factors influencing their apparent voluntary pathway to gang life. With a multitude of opportunity available to them, this major paper attempts to identify the potential causal factors influencing South Asian youths' choice to become gang involved, including cultural integration; social bonds with parents, peers, and schools; parental supervision; family and peer delinquency; and financial gain.

Acknowledgements

After taking an extended period of time away from the program, I would like to thank Dr. Amy Prevost and Dr. Irwin Cohen for facilitating my return to the University of the Fraser Valley to complete this major paper. My personal interests in understanding the South Asian gang phenomenon and desire to contribute to the research were always a driving force to complete this work. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Amanda McCormick for the support, guidance, instruction, and resources she made available to me throughout the process. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge a person who unknowingly motivated me for many years, Jasvir Gill, my fellow cohort member who always inspired and never judged.

Dedication

For my *Mom,* who, against all odds, fought the battle – and won.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT---------- III

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS---------- IV

DEDICATION---------- V

INTRODUCTION ---------- 1

TERMINOLOGY ---------- 3

THE SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY IN CANADA ---------- 4

THE HISTORY OF SOUTH ASIAN GANG VIOLENCE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA---------- 6

DEFINING SOUTH ASIAN GANGS---------- 9

IS GANG-AFFILIATION INCREASING AMONGST SOUTH ASIAN YOUTH? ---------- 13

THE SOUTH ASIAN YOUTH MOST SUSCEPTIBLE TO GANG RECRUITMENT ---------- 15

PROTECTING FAMILY HONOR VERSUS PERSONAL GRATIFICATION ---------- 22

SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY AND THE ROLE OF FAMILY---------- 26

LEARNING CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR THROUGH DELINQUENT ASSOCIATION ---------- 36

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION ---------- 42

REFERENCE LIST ---------- 49

Introduction

South Asian youth and gang violence has traditionally been an inaccessible topic for researchers trying to support community groups, law enforcement agencies, and policy makers with identifying and developing evidence-based responsive policies and programs to combat gang recruitment in British Columbia. Several sources reported in 2006 that more than 100 young South Asian males had been killed across the province, and primarily in the Lower Mainland, as a result of gang and criminal activity (The Province, April 2006; RCMP Environmental Scan, 2006). Subsequently, between 2007 and 2009, the Sanghera and Buttar-Malli South Asian crime groups were responsible for over 100 shootings in attempts to kill each other for profit and control over territory (Vancouver Police Department (VPD), March 2009). In the early months of 2009, gang violence, which included South Asian groups, exploded in the Lower Mainland to the extent that Chief Constable Jim Chu acknowledged that a "brutal" gang war was unfolding and that gangsters were applying different rules of engagement, meaning they were shooting one another when there was no real need to do so (VPD, March 2009).

Bouchard and Hashimi (2017) identified 134 gang-related homicides between the period of 2006 and 2012 across the Lower Mainland. According to the VPD (March 2009) and various media accounts, between January 20 and March 5, 2009 alone, there were 28 shootings in the Lower Mainland, resulting in 12 to 14 murders. Several young South Asian males were identified amongst those arrested, injured, or declared dead. In October 2008, the VPD implemented a multi-agency operation, known as Project Rebellion, to combat the increasing violence and threats generated by the most known and violent gangs in British Columbia, and to prevent further violence by "arresting known gangsters and putting them in jail for anything

police could gather evidence on" (VPD, March 2009; VPD, 2010). In 2009, amidst the gang war, the province implemented an anti-gang agency, the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit – British Columbia (CFSEU-BC). A steady decline in gang-related homicides was subsequently observed, with the lowest numbers occurring in 2014 (CFSEU-BC, 2015; Bouchard & Hashimi, 2017); however, despite the targeted efforts of law enforcement, South Asian youth continued to be engaged in gang activity. In March 2015, a new turf war involving gang-affiliated South Asian youth resulted in 19 shootings in that month alone across the cities of Surrey and Delta (CBC News, April 2015; Dhillon, April 2015). A 2016 Statistics Canada report on *Homicide in Canada* (David, 2017) revealed, for the second year in a row, an increase in gang-related homicides from 96 in 2015 to 141 in 2016. The increase was most notable in the provinces of Ontario (an additional 24) and British Columbia (an additional 10). The gang violence continued into 2017 and 2018, as reported by media across the Lower Mainland, and highlighted the involvement of gang-affiliated South Asian youth or young adults (Bolan & Eagland, March 2017; CBC News, August 2017, September 2017; CTV News Vancouver, January 2018).

While there is much speculation about South Asian youth and gang violence, little empirical information is actually known about the South Asian youth who become involved in gangs and the reasons for their involvement. Several initiatives, such as community forums and task forces, have been undertaken by law enforcement agencies and community interest groups to solicit information and solutions and have offered some insights into the characteristics of South Asian youth who join gangs and their reasons for doing so, the information is often anecdotal in nature. To date, little empirical data has been collected to inform the literature on South Asian gangs in British Columbia, and particularly those in the Lower Mainland. The intent of this paper is to offer a profile of South Asian youth who are most susceptible to gang

recruitment, through the identification of the particular risk factors that enable their pathway into gang life. In doing so, this paper will contribute to the existing, albeit minimal, research on youth gang violence in the Lower Mainland to help inform law enforcement agencies, policy makers, community programs, school administrators, families, and other interested persons on the characteristics and susceptibilities of South Asian youth involved in gang-affiliated lifestyles.

This major paper will review the history of South Asian youth gangs in British Columbia and explore their growth and sophistication over the past two decades. The definition of "gang" and traditional characteristics of gang members will be examined. The paper will then review existing literature on gang-affiliated youth and the theoretical notions that presume their gang involvement, including lack of social bonds between gang-affiliated youth, their parents, and community institutions, in addition to lack of parental control and peer delinquency. A description specific to South Asian gang-affiliated youth, their lifestyles, and their susceptibility to gang recruitment will be presented through a review of available literature and collections of anecdotal information. The paper will conclude with recommendations aimed to advance research on South Asian youth and enhance strategies to better support parents in dealing with their at-risk or gang-affiliated children.

Terminology

For the purposes of this paper, the term South Asian includes East Indian and Indo-Canadian individuals with ancestry or origins from India and its bordering countries of Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, unless otherwise indicated.

When referring to youth and young adults, the youth group will include middle and high school aged individuals from ages 12 to 17, while young adults will consist of individuals

between the ages of 18 to 35 years. Any research cited in this paper that uses different definitions will be specified.

The South Asian Community in Canada

According to the 2011 National Household Survey conducted by Statistics Canada, and consistent with the 2006 census results, South Asians remained the largest visible minority group in Canada. With a total population size of 1,567,400, South Asians made up 4.8% of Canada's total population. In defining "South Asian", Statistics Canada included, but did not limit to, those of East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan and Punjabi origins. According to the survey results, two-thirds reported East Indian ancestry, 9.3% reported Pakistani, 8.5% reported Sri Lankan and 4.7% reported Punjabi origins. When referring to South Asians or defining South Asian gangs, it is important to recognize that the term South Asian, which as noted is also used interchangeably with Indo-Canadian and East Indian, includes many ethnicities which are not necessarily similar to one another in terms of their historical experiences, cultural practices, religion, or language. Based on police and media reports of those who are South Asian gang-affiliated in the Lower Mainland, the vast majority of the slain and suspected appear to have Punjabi origin names and Indian/Sikh ancestry (Bakshi, 2002; Bolan, June 2005; Bolan, November 2005; Vancouver Courier, October 2006; Bolan, May 2014).

Statistics Canada (2011) data also identified that 30.7% of South Asians were born in Canada while 20.6% of South Asian immigrants came to Canada, between 2006 and 2011, primarily from India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Only 1.5% of South Asians who were born in Canada had two Canadian-born parents; therefore, most are considered first-generation citizens. The 2011 survey also reported that visible minorities were younger than the overall population, with a median age of 33.4 years. South Asians specifically reported a median age of 32.8 years.

Interestingly, the median age of second-generation South Asians, those with one foreign-born parent, was 12.2 years old. This youthful age of second generation South Asians interestingly coincides with the age group believed to be most susceptible to gang recruitment in the Lower Mainland.

With respect to education, the South Asian community does not appear to be underprivileged or unsuccessful in this area. According to a 2001 Statistics Canada report on *The South Asian Community in Canada* (with origins mainly from India and either Sikh or Hindu), South Asian youth and young adults were more likely to attend high school and obtain post-secondary education than their Canadian peers (Lindsay, 2001). In 2001, 72% of South Asian youth between 15 and 24 years of age were enrolled in a full-time educational program compared to 57% of their Canadians peers. Furthermore, Canadian adults of South Asian origin were more likely to have a university degree, and twice as likely to have a post-graduate degree, than the rest of the Canadian population (Lindsay, 2001). However, with respect to income, the Statistics Canada (Lindsay, 2001) findings showed that, although they are just as likely to be employed, Canadians of South Asian origin had lower incomes than the national average. South Asians reported that 85% of their income came from earnings in comparison to 77% for all Canadian adults. Despite employment efforts, South Asians were slightly more likely to fall below the low-income cut-off level than other Canadians (Lindsay, 2001). In 2000, 23% of the South Asian community lived below the low-income cut-off level in comparison to 16% of the total Canadian population. It was further noted that children (those under age 15) of South Asian families were also more likely to live in a low-income household in comparison to their peers. Specifically, in 2000, 28% of South Asian origin children were living in low-income households in comparison to 19% of all Canadian children. Having a more educated population, it is

interesting for such a large proportion of South Asian origin families to be living in low-income households. One possible explanation is that South Asians who immigrated to Canada, and subsequently became naturalized Canadian citizens, may have obtained their educational qualifications in their country of origin. Upon arrival to Canada, it is possible that these individuals did not have their educational credentials recognized by prospective Canadian employers, thus limiting their employment opportunities and earning potential. Even so, the high levels of academic success, whether achieved within or outside of Canada, should provide some insulation against gang recruitment of South Asian children; yet, the history of South Asian gang violence in British Columbia indicates that members of this population may be particularly at risk for recruitment.

The History of South Asian Gang Violence in British Columbia

According to the 2002 Canadian Police Survey on Youth Gangs (2003), Surrey and Vancouver were the first cities in Canada to report youth gang activity, in 1975 and 1979 respectively. Gangs have been operating in British Columbia since 1980 (CFSEU-BC, 2015) and, in 1989, the VPD established its first Gang Crime Unit in response to the growth of gangs in the city (VPD, 2010).

South Asian street gangs are thought to have first received attention in the Lower Mainland in 1988 (Singh, Waterhouse, & Plecas, 2006). Several notorious figures in the South Asian community, including Bindy Johal, Ron and Jimmy Dosanjh, Peter Gill, and the Buttar brothers, were all depicted as high profile South Asian gang members by the media (Matas, November 2002; Bolan, June 2005 & October 2005). The former Solicitor General of British Columbia, Kash Heed, then commander of the southeast quadrant of Vancouver for the VPD,

said that the roots of South Asian gang violence stemmed from this geographic area in which these notorious gangsters also lived (Vancouver Courier, October 2006).

Kim Bolan, a reporter with the Vancouver Sun, compiled a list of South Asian murder victims and suspects dating back to 1991 (June 2005). Throughout the 1990s, the violence inflicted by these criminal figures upon rival gang members, Sikh political leaders, and innocent bystanders was often public and brazen. These individuals were not afraid to publicly threaten or taunt their rival gang members through the media, a show of their gangster bravado. Although by the end of the 1990s the rivalries resulted in the elimination of several key South Asian gangsters, the violence did not cease. Instead, a new generation of South Asian gang-affiliated youth began to fill the void and the cycle of gang violence continued. The over-representation of South Asian murders in B.C. is evident; they accounted for 24% of the gang homicide victims between 2003 and 2013 yet only represented 6% of the overall population in this province (Jingfors, Lazzano, & McConnell, 2015). Further, in comparison to other Canadian census metropolitan areas, the Abbotsford-Mission region specifically earned the title of "gangland murder capital of Canada" as a result of its murder rate between 2003 and 2012, which reached 1.02 gang-affiliated murders per 100,000; this represented 38.6% of total homicides for the area (Cotter, 2013; Kwong, January 2015). In comparison and during the same period, the murder rates in other parts of Canada were far lower: Saskatoon's gang-related homicide rate was 0.89 per 100,000; Regina's rate was 0.81 gang-related homicides per 100,000; Edmonton and Winnipeg both reported a gang-related murder rate of 0.80 per 100,000; and Vancouver reported 0.60 gang-related murders per 100,000 (Cotter, 2013).

In September 2008, police agencies across the Lower Mainland combined efforts to combat gang crime with the VPD, and heavily focused on the southeast quadrant of Vancouver,

the territory of the South Asian Sanghera gang, referred to as "the most dangerous criminal element" (p.7) in the region (VPD, 2010). In 2013, 18 gang-affiliated killings occurred in Vancouver (Kwong, January 2015). More recently, in March 2015, the cities of Surrey and Delta saw up to 22 shootings in just one month, 14 of which were linked to low-level drug trafficking turf war between South Asian and Somali rival groups (CBC News, April 2015; Dhillon, April 2015). The violence continued into 2017 and 2018 as South Asian males associated with gangs or known to police continued to be murdered across the Lower Mainland (Bolan & Eagland, March 2017; CBC News, August 2017; September 2017; CTV News Vancouver, January 2018).

As mentioned earlier, Bouchard and Hashimi (2017) identified that 134 gang-related homicides had occurred between 2006 and 2012 across the Lower Mainland. The top five high profile events identified were the murders of South Asian gangsters Sandip Duhre, Ranjit Cheema, and Gurmit Dhak. The researchers found a steady rise in gang cases from 2006 to 2008, a peak in 2009 (2.75 murders per month), and a decline in 2010 and 2011 (Bouchard & Hashimi, 2017; Jingfors et al., 2015). Overall, they identified a total of 33 gang related murders between 2007 and 2010. The researchers noted that gang-related homicides did not necessarily occur during a "wave" (Bouchard & Hashimi, 2017: p. 201) or sudden upsurge of violence. However, they clarified that waves of violence could be identified when there was a battle ensuing between rival groups such as fighting over drug territory. They noted that major events, such as the murder of a leader, were not the triggers for the waves but rather, they occurred amidst the waves. Further analyses revealed a "murder season" (Bouchard & Hashimi, 2017: p. 208). Specifically, gang murders were more likely to occur from September to November and January to March, roughly on a six-month cycle. Based upon dates of media reports, it appears that a large number of gang-affiliated murders, indeed, occurred within these months (Bouchard &

Hashimi, 2017; Raptis, February 2012; Vancouver Courier, October 2006; Bolan, June 2005). The reduction over the month of December is likely linked to the holiday season (Bouchard & Hashimi, 2017), while the infrequency of murders over the summer months was associated to a possible period of re-grouping post gang violence, meaning gangs that may have lost a number of members due to the violence needed to pause their activity to evaluate their operation. Interestingly, the reduction in murders in the winter and summer months also coincides with periods of school closure, which may cause disruption to drug distribution or trafficking operations as youth may be less accessible when schools are closed thus, causing gang-related activity to generally slow down over the winter and summer months.

Defining South Asian Gangs

While the available local research and analysis of media reports convincingly demonstrates that South Asian gangs exist, only a handful of local studies have focused on the specific composition of these particular gangs, the pathways in or out of them, and how they may be differentiated from the non-South Asian gangs that are typically the focus of academic literature. Decker and Curry (2000) contended that understanding gang structure and activity is necessary in order to correctly explain gang activity across various groups (i.e. youth) that participate in gangs.

Historically, South Asian gangs were considered loosely structured opportunistic groups, often formed within family networks of brothers and cousins, and were seen as small players in the drug trade industry (Tyakoff, 2003; Skelton et al., 2005; Singh et al., 2006). Yet over the last 15 years, British Columbia law enforcement groups have acknowledged the ability of these groups to organize their drug trade across various networks across the Lower Mainland and into the United States, including distributing, trafficking, and transporting drugs across the Canada-

United States border (RCMP Environmental Scan, 2006; Bolan, May 2012). In other words, South Asian gangs may be becoming increasingly similar to non-South Asian gangs.

In assessing the South Asian gang problem in British Columbia, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) released a "hit list" of the 20 most dangerous crime bosses in the province; in this particular instance, no South Asian gangsters made the list (Skelton et al., 2005). However, in June 2005, the Criminal Analysis Section of the "E" Division RCMP released a report on organized crime identifying 108 active organized crime groups. In this report, Indo-Canadian Organized Crime was identified amongst the five most significant categories of organized crime in British Columbia. This suggested that, while South Asian gangs lacked hierarchy and leadership such that they were not seen to have a powerful crime boss, the South Asian gangs were capable of becoming organized enough to pose a threat to law enforcement. Kelly and Caputo (2005) identified that loosely structured groups were more reflective of "street gangs" which were linked to low level crime, such as South Asian gangs, while organized crime was seen to be more sophisticated; however, the researchers also recognized that street gangs could become increasingly organized over time. How South Asian gangs are defined is important because the definition is a reflection of their criminal operation, hierarchy, leadership, and threat level to both law enforcement and the public.

The Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (CFSEU), which is British Columbia's anti-gang agency, upholds Section 467.1 of the *Criminal Code of Canada* and understands a "criminal organization" (i.e. organized crime and gangs) to be:

> [a]n organized group of three or more, that as one of its main purposes or main activities the facilitation or commission of one or more serious offences, that, if committed, would likely result in the direct or indirect receipt of a material benefit, including a financial

> benefit, by the group or by any one of the persons who constitute the group (CFSEU-BC, Gangs in BC, 2015).

However, there is still confusion as it relates to delineating "criminal organization", "organized crime", and "gang" (Gordon, 2000). RCMP Sergeant Wayne Rideout (Skelton et al., 2005) identified that most South Asian gangs were not similar to other, more "conventional" organized crime groups, such as the Hells Angels or Asian criminal groups. Specifically, Sergeant Rideout noted that South Asian gangs were less sophisticated than the organized crime groups, with smaller players operating marginally above street dealer status. He indicated that South Asian gangs had less money at their disposal and engaged in more low-level activity than organized crime networks. He also stated that South Asian gangs had a greater propensity for spontaneous and brazen violence, often triggered by pride and bravado (see also Bolan, June 2005). Still, despite the differences in sophistication and activities, street level South Asian gangs and organized crime networks such as the Hells Angels are both considered 'gangs'.

Gordon (2000) stressed the importance of recognizing the differences between "organizations", "gangs", and "groups" because each required a different prevention and intervention strategy. The Greater Vancouver Gang Study was conducted with 128 known gang members, including 35 street gang members from various ethnic backgrounds described as: Indo-Canadian (including Fijian); Hispanic; Iranian; Chinese; and Vietnamese. It is not clear which specific ethnic origins were classified as Indo-Canadian or the specific reason for including Fijian participants in this grouping. One of the initial challenges of Gordon's (2000) study was identifying accurate and accepted definitions of "gang" and "gang member". The researcher found that police departments, police officers,

probation and corrections staff, researchers, policy makers, and members of the criminal groups or "gangs" themselves all differed on their understanding and definition of these terms.

Gordon (2000) was able to identify six main types of groups, each with a set of distinctive characteristics: (1) youth movements, which were described as movements or time periods categorized by dress code or social or economic developments (i.e. punkers); (2) youth groups, who came together in small clusters for social purposes and who could be intimidating to some (i.e. youth congregating at a shopping mall); (3) criminal groups, who were defined as small clusters that came together for financial gain; (4) wanna-be groups, who were described as loose structures of youth who were highly visible and identifiable through markings, who wanted to be seen as a gang member, and who engaged in spontaneous criminal activity for excitement; (5) street gangs, which were less visible semi-structured groups of young adults who participated in planned and profitable crime; and (6) criminal business organizations, which were organized groups with a formal structure and high level of sophistication. These categories were not exclusive as there was overlap in characteristics between some groups (Gordon, 2000).

Using these categories, today's form of South Asian gangs arguably best fit the category of street gangs. This position is supported by information provided by Tyakoff (2003), and the RCMP (Skelton, et al., 2005). In The Greater Vancouver Gang Study, street gangs were described as:

> [g]roups of young people, mainly young adults, who band together to form a semi-structured organization the primary purpose of which is to engage in planned and profitable criminal behaviour or organized violence against rival street gangs (Gordon, 2000: 48).

While this definition appears to appropriately reflect the activities of South Asian gangs, as described earlier in this paper, the lack of empirical research confirming the reasons for which South Asian youth band together hinders the ability to definitely define them as street gangs. Further, this definition of street gangs is quite focused on profit and less focused on other factors that may band youth together, such as ethnic marginalization (Gordon, 2000) and exploring newly found Canadian freedoms (Singh et al., 2006). It is also noted that definitions of "gang members" and "gang activity" may vary between researchers, communities, or the gangs themselves (McConnell, 2015); therefore, there may never be agreement on one single definition. Further, Peterson (2000) indicated that gang activity and membership constantly changed. Given this, she argued that definitions must also change to reflect shifts in context, diversity, and complexity. However, she also stated that, in order to develop policies and programs to prevent youth from engaging in gang activity, it is important to first agree upon a definition for gang activity.

Is Gang-Affiliation Increasing amongst South Asian Youth?

In 2003, Tyakoff identified that only a small percentage of South Asian youth were actually involved in criminal activity and violent co-offending. However, with reports of organized crime activity in Canada growing (Kelly & Caputo, 2005), the creation of new law enforcement task teams to combat gangs (VPD, 2010), and the waves of gang violence sweeping the streets (Bouchard & Hashimi, 2017), a concern loomed that youth in B.C. would be drawn to criminal activity and that South Asian gangs had the potential of becoming more organized, sophisticated, and violent (Bolan, October 2005; Tyakoff 2003). These concerns stemmed from the increasing number of high school aged males believed to be embracing a criminal lifestyle (Tyakoff, 2003).

There has been wildly inconsistent reporting on the actual number of South Asian gangs operating in British Columbia, specifically across the Lower Mainland. According to the Canadian Police Survey of Youth Gangs (Astwood Strategy Corporation, 2003), in 2002, there was an estimated 434 youth gangs across Canada with 7,071 members. Moreover, based on the survey results, it was estimated that, in British Columbia, there were 102 youth gangs with 1,027 members, primarily comprised of Asian youth (Astwood Strategy Corporation, 2003). Interestingly, Ontario, rather than B.C., was noted as having a substantial concentration of East Indian/Pakistani youth gang members. In contrast, Harjit Singh, who conducted an exploratory study on South Asian gangs in this province, estimated that there were approximately 1,500 South Asian gangs in the Lower Mainland, comprised of five to seven members each (Singh et al., 2006; McLaren, 2004). RCMP Sergeant Rideout estimated that there were between 30 and 40 separate South Asian gangs operating in the Lower Mainland, each consisting of three or four key members with a dozen associates (Skelton et al., 2005). The Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit-BC (2015) reported approximately 188 criminal groups operating in the province. The disparity in the estimated number of South Asian gangs operating in the Lower Mainland is quite significant, but may be the result of different methodological approaches to the question. For example, Harjit Singh's reported figure of 1,500 groups was based on the "inside" access he had with gang members during his exploratory study, whereas Sergeant Rideout's figure was based on gang members known to police (Singh et al., 2006; McLaren, 2004).

It is also important to note that many gangs today are not homogeneous, as many are no longer established on the basis of ethnicity; in other words, a gang today in British Columbia can consist of youth or young adults from many different ethnic backgrounds and are referred to as hybrid gangs (CFSEU-BC, 2015; VPD, 2010; RCMP Environmental Scan, 2006). The 2002

Canadian Police Survey of Youth Gangs (2003) indicated that nearly half (46%) of youth gangs in British Columbia were racially/ethnically diverse, consisting of two or more racial/ethnic groups. The CFSEU-BC (2015) confirmed four organized groups that have been operating in the province since 2011, including the United Nations, which is multi-ethnic, and the Independent Soldiers, which is primarily South Asian and originated from the gangster era of Bindy Johal.

Given reported alliances and rivalries with each other and the upper echelon organized crime gang of the Hells Angels gang (CFSEU-BC, 2015), some South Asian gangs have demonstrated their ability to become organized and run sophisticated operations beyond the street level. However, it is difficult to gauge the growth of South Asian gangs in British Columbia without data that has been collected in a systematic way against a defined paradigm of gang-affiliated activities. Details regarding the membership size, ethnic composition, types of gang activity, or propensity for violence in relation to the four B.C. gangs were not described by the CFSEU-BC. Gang members who are 'known to police' would need to be quantified in order to determine whether there is an increase in the number of South Asian gangs. With the knowledge that gangs are no longer defined by their ethnicity, perhaps it is not the number of gangs but rather the number of gang-affiliated South Asian youth and young adults in the Lower Mainland who need to be quantified. The growth should also be balanced against the number of South Asian gang members who are no longer affiliated as a result of long term incarceration, death, or having exited from a gang. Growth of South Asian gang-affiliation would reflect an increase in recruitment notwithstanding attrition rates.

The South Asian Youth Most Susceptible to Gang Recruitment

The gang-affiliated South Asian youth in the Lower Mainland do not reflect the traditional characteristics that are usually applied to gang members. The most relatable portrayal

of a gang member is someone, usually a young male, who is economically and academically disadvantaged, living in subpar housing with a single-parent, and faced with conflict or violence on a daily basis due to their geographic location and neighbourhood code of conduct (Thrasher, 1927, cited in McConnell, 2015; Decker & Curry, 2000; McConnell, 2015; Gordon, 2000). The 2002 Canadian Police Survey on Youth Gangs (2003) results showed that 48% of young gang members were under the age of 18 years, with 39% falling between 16 and 18 years old. Youth of South Asian origin (Indian/Pakistani) represented 14% of the youth gang population at that time.

Keiron McConnell (2015), a 27-year veteran of the VPD, had the unique opportunity to observe the environments of gang members across several cities including Toronto, Hobbema, Chicago, Los Angeles, and London. In the neighbourhoods he visited, McConnell noted the constant presence or reminders of gang activity in the neighbourhoods whether it be noticeable gang graffiti as seen in Hobbema; restrictions on movement to certain postal codes as was the case in London; or the need to defend one's territory which was the expectation of gang members in Los Angeles and Chicago. McConnell also noted that gang membership in these cities was driven by low socioeconomic status, intergenerational affiliation, and limited access to legitimate opportunities. In Decker and Curry's (2000) study of 96 young middle school students who self-reported some degree of gang involvement, the researchers found many contributing factors to gang association, including: an inclination to protect one's neighbourhood, to garner respect and status, and inter-generational role models who were gang-affiliated. McConnell (2015) also interviewed five former Lower Mainland gang members who described their environments as markedly different from those he visited. Specifically, the five Lower Mainland gang members indicated that there were no visible signs of neighbourhoods saturated with gang

graffiti or marked territory, there were no restrictions on their movement from area to area, nor did they feel the constant pressures of gangs in their neighbourhoods. The environments of the Lower Mainland gang members were not plagued with daily reminders of gang life to predispose them to gang recruitment and yet, they were still pulled towards the gang lifestyle. The lure to the gang life in B.C. differed from the cities visited by McConnell specifically, B.C. gang members joined gangs for financial reasons, to reach an elevated social status, and for a sense of belonging rather than out of necessity (McConnell, 2015).

Several previous efforts have been made to describe South Asian gang-affiliated youth and young adults in the Lower Mainland. These studies have characterized them as young males aged 16 to 25 years, from various social, cultural, and economic backgrounds, and including both recent immigrants as well as second-generation Canadians with South Asian roots (Brar, 2017; Singh et al., 2006; Tyakoff, 2003). Having observed 25 South Asian gang members during an exploratory study, Singh et al., (2006) identified that many of these gang members were middle-class, had supportive, non-criminal families, and had many opportunities to avoid criminal lifestyles. He found that many of the gang members led double lives as students or working professionals, possibly to keep pressure away from suspecting parents or to appease their parents who may otherwise believe the youth is "doing nothing with their life" (Singh, 2006: p. 28). The RCMP Environmental Scan (2006) also confirmed that South Asian gangs consisted of youth from a broad spectrum, including wealthy and educated families. However, little is known about the risk factors pushing these youth towards gang life, including their levels of attachment to their parents, families, educational achievements, or community. Understanding these risk factors would assist researchers with identifying the causal factors linked to gang-affiliation amongst South Asian youth.

In reviewing several longitudinal studies involving gang members in the United States, Howell and Egley (2005) categorized the risk factors associated to gang membership into five domains: individual, family, school, peers, and community. Howell and Egley (2005) contended that risk in one or more domains was symptomatic of future gang association, and the risk compounded when multiple domains became vulnerable. South Asian gang-affiliation has been anecdotally linked to vulnerabilities in several of the domains identified by Howell and Egley particularly, family, school, and peers.

Brar (2017) conducted in-depth interviews with five gang members in British Columbia's Lower Mainland, four of whom were South Asian. The four South Asian gang members were born in Canada, ranged in age from 22 to 29 years, and were raised in a two-parent middle-class household. Their educational achievements varied from grade 11 to some university, and three of the four members indicated being employed at the time of the interviews. Similarly, all 25 gang-affiliated South Asian males observed by Singh et al. (2006) completed high school, after which many had access to higher education and were capable of developing skills to become gainfully employed. However, some pursued higher education or secured employment only as a ruse to keep parental pressure away while engaging in gang activities. Reaching higher learning and being employed are relatively successful achievements for gang-affiliated individuals, making it harder to comprehend their "irrational response to rational conditions" (McConnell, 2015: p. 73) specifically, engaging in gang activity when crime-free, alternative options to achieve a similar lifestyle are available to them. Still, Inspector Blizard and Sergeant Rideout compared South Asian gangs to the inner-city street gangs of Los Angeles and maintained that, in contrast to these more well-known gangs, most South Asian gangsters did not have assets, did not have large sums of money at their disposal, and still lived at home with their families (Skelton et al.,

2005). Based on personal knowledge, living at home with family in one's adult years is acceptable in South Asian culture. Therefore, the advantages of joining gangs to get rich fast may be more appealing to South Asian youth given the few assets and limited funds in their possession. This criminal route may provide immediate gratification and status rather than pursuing an education and career to attain the same lifestyle over the longer term. More research and information would need to be sought directly from gang members to confirm whether this notion of "getting rich fast" over other possible explanations is supported.

High school appears to be the formative time for youth to establish gang connections (Hirschi, 2002). One presumption is that South Asian gang-affiliated youth were pulled towards gangs due to lack of attachment to their educational achievements or school community during these critical years (Hirschi, 2002). Through in-depth interviews, Brar (2017) noted that South Asian youth struggled with their learning experiences, they did not receive support from their parents who expected academic success, and they had conflicts with parents and teachers. During middle or high school, closely connected cliques began to transform into criminal gangs, and South Asian youth demonstrated negative behaviours (i.e. fighting) and engaged in delinquent activities (Brar, 2017; Singh et al., 2006). Singh et al., (2006) contended that these youth often displayed characteristics associated to their culture, such as competition for status, respect, material items, honor, and preventing gossip. He also noted that South Asian gangs were involved in conflict and rivalry primarily due to jealousy, hate, and attitudes of superiority. Both in schools and in gangs, South Asian males tended to respond to conflict with violence. Unsatisfactory achievements and conflict in school would expectedly be brought to the attention of the youths' parents however, with limited availability on the parents' part to monitor and

support their children outside of school hours, the prospect of the youths' behaviour improving would be low in these instances.

With respect to family relationships, Brar (2017) noted that tense, strained, or inadequate relationships existed between parents and three of the four South Asian males interviewed. All four South Asian gang members shared that they did not spend adequate amounts of time with their parents while growing up. At the time of the interviews, three of the gang members had no relationship with their parents. A theme identified by Brar (2017) included a "high level of conflict that negatively affected attachment to their parents" (p. 37) such as physical abuse, arguments, "getting caught in the crossfire" (p. 38) of parental issues, and getting kicked out of the family home. All four of the South Asian gang members indicated that they did not spend or recognize quality time with their parents as they were growing up primarily as a result of some action or inactivity on the part of the parents, including: disapproval by parents on the participants' choice of friends, which caused some participants to deliberately avoid their parents; alcohol abuse by one participant's father; and busy work schedules of parents. With little supervision in the home, and poor attachment both in the home and in school, the draw to gang life may be appealing to those youth who are seeking out connections; particularly if those connections come with financial gain and increased status. In these instances, youth who may be accustomed to receiving negative feedback from school administrators and parents for their unacceptable behaviour (i.e. poor academic success and violence) may have these same behaviours positively rewarded through money and status in a gang culture, where academic success is irrelevant and delinquent behaviour is acceptable.

Financial gain and social status appear to be the key motivating factors for many gang-affiliated youth in British Columbia (McConnell, 2015; Descormiers, 2013; Gordon, 2000), let

alone South Asian youth. Tyakoff's (2003) focus group sessions identified wealth, status, and power as reasons for South Asian youth to bond. All five of the gang members interviewed by Brar (2017) (four of whom were South Asian) reported financial gain as their primary motivation for gang-affiliation, and three of the South Asian members further indicated that financial success was important to their parents. Gang-affiliation through family networks was also identified, most commonly through networks of fathers, older brothers, and cousins who facilitated exposure to criminal activity and led flashy lifestyles that were admired and garnered respect. Tyakoff (2003) stated it was unclear whether social and economic status, among other variables, contributed to the onset of youth violence.

In November 2005, the Department of Canadian Heritage commissioned a report entitled *Community Response to South Asian Youth Violence*. Ten individuals from across the South Asian community were selected to prepare an integrated action plan aimed at reducing youth violence within the community. This Group of 10 outlined a number of issues challenging the South Asian community and the youth at risk of becoming involved in criminal or gang activity. The Group also established four main factors that they believed contributed to a youth's decision to lead a criminal lifestyle: (1) historic and current contextual factors; (2) family, schools, and community life; (3) cultural beliefs and values; and (4) the role of media. Each factor consisted of several pre-conditions and conditions that influenced the choice of a gang lifestyle. These pre-conditions and conditions covered a wide range of issues, such as: class/status structure within the community; learning that violence was acceptable; accessibility to crime and drugs; lack of parental involvement in schools and the education system; an overemphasis on the importance of financial success; and the lack of positive role models. While the Group of 10 determined that the four factors were all contributing towards youth violence, their identification was based on

personal belief and anecdotal information. As such, in the absence of empirical evidence, it is difficult to confirm these factors as the main influences on South Asian youths' decisions to form or join a gang.

Still, based on the four factors identified above, the Group of 10 similarly established four Opportunity Statements to identify the key needs of South Asian youth. These key needs included the need to prevent cultural conflicts, the need to support the development of academic and life skills, the need to counter the learned belief that violence is valid, and the need to create a safe support system to help youth transition out of criminal lifestyles. Again, while established through personal experience and anecdotal information, the Opportunity Statements were similar to the intervention strategies proposed by Wendy Taylor who had 25 years of experience working with young offenders (McLaren, October 2004). She proposed intervention strategies for home, school, and in the community, and urged parents to become more active in their children's lives. Moreover, Taylor suggested that it was critical for parents to know their children's friends. Taylor indicated that schools could provide guidance, security, and a sense of belonging. She indicated that youth would be less vulnerable to gang involvement if they gained acceptance and support at home.

Protecting Family Honour versus Personal Gratification

The reasons why South Asian youth, individually or in groups, engage in delinquent, criminal, or gang activities are not fully understood, as little qualitative or quantitative research is available on the target population. Based on information gathered by Singh et al. (2006), Tyakoff (2003), McConnell (2015), and Brar (2017), in addition to available media reports and anecdotal cases, it would appear that South Asian youth are not particularly disadvantaged when it comes to family support systems, educational achievements, employment opportunities, or geographic

environments. Some may even go further and claim that the family support system is overly protective and adheres to a code of silence when it comes to South Asian youth males, as parents become reluctant to cooperate with law enforcement investigations that may implicate their male family members (Tyakoff, 2003; Bakshi, 2002; Jheeta, 1988).

Jheeta (1988) identified the significant impact that family and extended family had on an individual in the South Asian community. Specifically, she mentioned that family offered security, belonging, identity, preservation, economic security, emotional support, opportunities for socializing, mutual assistance, and support to navigate external environments (i.e. western culture). She acknowledged that reputation and honour controlled the actions of family members, and further identified that wealth, status, and power were highly valued characteristics. These characteristics are consistent with reasons reported by some gang-affiliated South Asian youth and young adults who joined gangs (Singh et al., 2006; Brar, 2017). Jheeta (1988) maintained that the majority of the South-Asian culture could be described as "high context", a term defined by Hall (1981, cited in Jheeta, 1988), whereby relationships with family, extended family, and community were deemed important and highly valued over individual goals, material items or ideas which were seen as "low context". Hall's "high context" culture is synonymous to the values depicted by South Asian culture specifically as it relates to enhancing and protecting family bonds, adhering to familial hierarchies of control, and being bound by duty, obligation, and respect.

South Asian gang-affiliated youth appear to adhere to cultural expectations by living at home in their adult years, which maintains family ties, and by attaining higher education. However, they also simultaneously pursue their individual, material goals, which do not necessarily preserve the family's integrity and honour, especially when police mug shots are

displayed on national television or across newspapers for all to see. Alternatively, one could also argue that gang-affiliated South Asian youth, indeed, value family honour by following familial and hierarchical footsteps. Gang-affiliation through family networks was identified most commonly through networks of fathers, older brothers, and cousins who facilitated exposure to criminal activity and were admired for their flashy lifestyles (Brar, 2017). By supporting their criminal family network, in which the father figure may also be involved, the youth is able to tangibly demonstrate his loyalty to the family. In these instances, the ties between father and son are likely stronger than for those gang-affiliated youth who do not have a criminal familial connection. This concept would require further exploration and validation as it extends beyond the scope of this major paper.

As reported by Brar (2017) and Singh et al. (2006), a number of young South Asian males involved in criminal activities had exposure to the gang lifestyle through older siblings or cousins. This might also have been the case for well-known South Asian gangsters and brothers such as the Dosanjh brothers (Ron and Jimmy, and cousins Paul and Bicky), the Duhre brothers (Sandip, Balraj and Paul), the Buttar brothers (Manjit, Bal and Kelly), the Dhak brothers (Gurmit and Sukhveer), and the Sanghera crime family (Bolan, May 2014; Raptis, February 2012, VPD, 2010). Similarly, South Asian youth may have supportive families; however, they may not feel connected to their parents' religious, cultural, or traditional attitudes, beliefs, or opinions. Totten (2008) noted that many parents worked long hours and were unavailable for their children. In such cases, parents would be less available to pass on their values and cultural norms to their children, many of whom are now second generation.

Reflecting on the risk factors associated to cultural beliefs and values, the Group of 10 (2005) indicated that youth, indeed, were conflicted between the cultural and parental values

expected of them and the Western values that the youth preferred to observe. This personal preference on the youths' part aligns with Hall's definition of a "low context" culture (1981, cited in Jheeta, 1988), whereby youth are motivated by their personal choices over complying with the standards expected by the broader family. It is possible that gang-affiliated South Asian youth are asserting personal control (Sue, 1980, cited in Jheeta, 1988) to achieve their own goals of getting rich fast to acquire material objects, even if it means bringing shame or dishonor to the family. Jheeta (1988) stated that moving between the value system of high and low cultures created conflict due to the significantly different values and beliefs. It would be expected that the South Asian youth would assume a level of conflict within the family for failing to protect their family's honour; however, it seems that this traditional control mechanism, once considered to have a strong effect on behaviour, does not necessarily act as a deterrent for today's South Asian youth who are in pursuit of their own personal, material gains.

Understanding how South Asian youth in today's environment rank or reconcile their personal needs and desires against those of their culture and familial expectations would be informative for determining the type of intervention strategies that would most resonate with the youth. If youth are not interested in the culture or what the culture has to offer, then developing culturally based programs, for example, may not be the most effective method of intervention. This was noted in Tyakoff's (2003) focus group sessions in which adult participants noted there was a need for more culturally appropriate programs including Punjabi language classes and bhangra dance classes. However, these programs were proposed by adults who felt these activities were missing from the children's lives, while the gang-affiliated or culturally conflicted youth may not have an interest in these programs and thus, the programming would not be appropriate and may further exacerbate the problem. Further exploration is needed with South

Asian youth to determine the extent of the culture clash and how to bridge the gap between South Asian cultural norms and western experiences the youth may instead want to explore.

Social Control Theory and the Role of Family

Travis Hirschi's (2002) social control theory may offer an explanation as to why a proportion of South Asian youth are involved in risky, aggressive, deviant, or criminal behaviour. Hirschi (2002) contended that delinquent acts were the result of weakened or broken bonds with the groups to which the individual belonged such as family, school, and society in general. He maintained that conformity with acceptable behaviour could be achieved through four major social bonds or control variables: attachment; commitment; involvement; and belief. Hirschi (2002) argued that adolescents needed strong, positive, and prosocial bonds with their community, and that these bonds could be attained through one's family and school.

The first control variable, attachment, focused on positive bonds with one's family, peers, and school achievement. He argued that strong bonds with one's social groups have a protective effect against delinquency and association with delinquent peers because the effects of the positive bond are preferred by the youth. Hirschi (2002) described lack of attachment as lacking guilt or conscience or "to be free of moral restraints" (p. 18). With respect to the second control variable of commitment, Hirschi (2002) described this as the investment of time and energy towards an activity or achievement such as education or employment. When considering deviant behaviour, Hirschi explained that one would need to weigh the value of their investments against the risks of losing them for the deviant activity. Essentially, individuals assessed the advantages and disadvantages of committing a crime, and determined whether the benefits of the crime outweighed losing the time and hard work spent to establish bonds of trust with family, friends, and teachers. Hirschi (2002) identified that individuals contemplated crime when control bonds

were lost or weak, and further contended that strong bonds could overcome the urge to engage in delinquent behaviour with peers. Hirschi's (2002) third and fourth control bonds include keeping youth involved in pro-social activities so that they would not have time to engage in delinquent behaviour, and ensuring youth believed in the common values and rules of society that maintained law and order.

It is important to clarify that South Asian gang-affiliated youth may come from one of two family settings: (1) a traditional, non-criminal family for which gang-affiliation would not be the desired or approved outcome, or; (2) a family within which there are existing gang ties either through the father or older brother, and who facilitate gang-affiliation for the youth. Positive and prosocial bonds within a traditional, non-criminal family would be a protective factor against gang recruitment. However, positive and pro-social bonds within the gang-affiliated family would be less protective against gang recruitment and would more likely become a pull towards gang life.

Using social control theory to explain the actions of South Asian youth raised in non-criminal households, these youth would have weighed the benefits of the criminal activity against the potential loss of social bonds with their family, honour, education, or employment to determine whether or not to pursue the criminal activity. It is assumed for those youth who continued to live at home in a non-criminal environment that the parents would apply some level of scrutiny; particularly if the youth is driving a fancy new car or wearing expensive clothing in the absence of employment. In these cases, conflict might occur in the home if the youth's actions were unacceptable to the family. How the family reacts to the criminal behaviour, in conjunction with the youth's level of attachment with the family, would determine whether the youth continued or ceased the activity. In South Asian families, family cohesion and reputation

override individual needs (Jheeta, 1988) and therefore, South Asian youth are expected to conform and uphold family honour, or risk rejection by parents and family for whom a gang lifestyle is unacceptable. Therefore, if the youth valued the parents' opinion more than the material gains of crime, they would end their gang-affiliation. For those youth raised in a family with gang connections, the risk of losing these same social bonds would be non-existent, as the criminal family network would expect the youth to honour the family's criminal way of life.

Focus group sessions conducted with police and Crown prosecutors (Tyakoff, 2003) revealed that many South Asian parents denied their children's involvement in violence and put up a wall of silence. Jheeta (1988) and Bakshi (2002) maintained that conflict in South Asian families was managed internally within the family or, if necessary, mediated by community elders or members of extended families. This silence would be indicative of the desire to maintain family honour (Jheeta, 1988). However, sessions held with South Asian adult community members identified that, while denial of crime was a problem, the crime problem was overstated due to cultural insensitivity and media attention. Interestingly, the adult participants believed the violence was less about gangs and drugs and more related to power, control, and revenge. The underlying reasons driving youth to pursue power, control, and revenge using violence was not specified in the adult community member session. However, the session with Crown counsel echoed that these elements were contributing factors in addition to financial profit. In the youth sessions, participants recognized that parents worked hard to provide better lives for their children. However, they also identified that insufficient time was spent as a family, which resulted in a breakdown in communication between fathers and sons, which had adverse impacts on the connectedness of the family network. In other words, the breakdown of families due to parental work commitments weakened the opportunity to nurture

social bonds and instill cultural values and norms that would otherwise offer a protective barrier against the attractions offered by gang affiliation.

Although Jheeta's (1988) observations focused on the *Disownment of Indo-Canadian Women*, per the title of her paper, the requirement to maintain honour and respect are broad cultural norms expected from all, particularly women. Based on participant observation data collected by Singh et al. (2006), when parents learned of their child's gang involvement, a range of responses unfolded, from shock, denial, and deflecting blame to controlling behaviour. Singh et al. (2006) also reported that the criminal behaviours were managed within the family to avoid community scrutiny and judgment. When gang members were expected to stop the activity, they had to choose between family or gang involvement and often, gang activity was pursued even if it resulted in being disowned by family. Similar findings were reported by Brar (2017) through the interviews he conducted with gang members. More specifically, several gang members reported family involvement in gang activity, and all of the participants indicated that their parents, whom they lived with throughout childhood, could not have dissuaded them from gang life.

The unwillingness to maintain the family's honour and respect may be a reflection of the weakened attachment that these youth have to their parents, as the majority of participants indicated they had strained relations and limited personal time with their parents during their childhood (Brar, 2017). Hirschi's (2002) theory also maintained that youth made a rational choice when deciding whether to participate in deviant behaviour, and the choice to avoid crime could be enhanced with stronger social bonds. Therefore, each of the gang members in Brar's (2017) study would have weighed the pros and cons to make a rational choice to continue the criminal activity even if it meant losing their relationships with parents and family honour; to

them, however, it was not considered a great loss, given the weakened bonds that were already present.

Recent findings by Vuk (2017) further explained the important role of parents in shaping their child's eventual risk for gang involvement. Using data collected for the Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) program evaluation, Vuk (2017) analyzed parenting styles as identified by 5,935 eighth grade students (average 14 years old) in the United States and how these related to gang membership. The sample consisted of both male and female students with males comprising 48% of the sample. The parenting styles explored by Vuk (2017) included authoritative, authoritarian, neglectful, and permissive parenting. The research reviewed by Vuk described authoritative parenting as a healthy parenting style because of the high level of involvement by parents, the high level of responsiveness by the child, and the use of reinforcements and sanctions as appropriate. In this parenting model, parents have high expectations of their children, but also provide them with support and guidance to reach those expectations. They are involved in their children's lives and take the time to explain the rules and respond to their child's questions. Authoritative parenting is traditionally considered a protective factor against delinquency (Pezzella, Thornberry & Smith, 2016; Estep, Avalos & Olson, 2017), unlike authoritarian parenting or permissive parenting (Vuk, 2017). Vuk described authoritarian parenting as involving demandingness by the parental unit and low responsiveness by the child. This style includes lack of trust, love withdrawal, and lack of attachment between parent and child. In this parenting style, parents have strong expectations of their child, but provide them with little support to achieve these expectations. Rules are given, and not explained, and there is a lack of flexibility around the child's interests and ability to meet expectations. Utter conformity is expected, and children are taught to obey and not question. In contrast, permissive parenting is

at the opposing end of the parenting spectrum. With permissive parenting, there are few rules or expectations, and children are given substantial independence in making decisions about their interest and behaviours. However, this style lacks monitoring of behaviour and results in children acting independently and without restraint (Baumrind, 1978, cited in Vuk, 2017), parents were highly responsive to their children's needs, and so permissive parenting is linked to strong attachment. Lastly, neglectful parenting styles lack control and supervision, as parents are neither responsive nor demanding (Maccoby & Martin, 1983, cited in Vuk, 2017). In this style of parenting, children are essentially ignored by their parents. There are no expectations placed on the child, and the child's own interests, demands, and needs are ignored by the parent.

Researchers have found that permissive and neglectful parenting are more closely linked to drug/alcohol abuse, problem behaviour, and delinquency (Barber, 1996, Baumrind 1991, Loeber & Stouthamer-Louber, 1986, cited in Vuk, 2017). Vuk's (2017) study similarly revealed a positive relationship between gang membership and both neglectful and permissive parenting styles, but also with authoritarian parenting. Vuk found that children with healthy authoritative parenting were 55% less likely to be in a gang. Children with authoritarian parenting had increased odds of 43% of being in a gang, while those with permissive parenting had 92% higher odds, and those with neglectful parenting saw increased odds of 202% of being in a gang. While authoritarian parenting may achieve control over the youth's behaviour, the inflexible approach may invoke rebellion in youth who are not feeling heard or seeking out attention where none is being received, and joining a gang would not only demonstrate rebellion but would also catch the attention of parents even if the attention is negative. Permissive parenting is likely most favourable for South Asian youth as they are under limited supervision but would receive attention and gratification directly from their parents as needed. Should the parents be unable to

meet the material demands of the youth, the youth's decision to acquire the material objects through proceeds of gang activity will likely not be questioned or condemned. For example, if a young South Asian male makes a request to his parents for a luxury car but the parents are unable to meet the expectation due to financial limitations, the youth will not be questioned when he somehow comes home with the luxury car his parents could not provide. In this instance, the parents will not question their son on how he purchased the vehicle and if they do question, it will only be lightly to mention their displeasure in a manner that will not upset their son. The youth, in turn, may make his parents feel guilty for making him resort to criminal activity to obtain what his parents should have been able to provide to him. Lastly, with neglectful parenting being linked to much higher odds of becoming gang-affiliated (Vuk, 2017), it is most likely that South Asian youth in such instances are not being monitored by parents to any degree and the youth are in search of a bond with anyone, even the criminal type who may be more accessible outside of school hours when the youth is not being monitored.

Vuk's (2017) research results demonstrate that parenting style may be a risk factor for youth on the verge of gang involvement. This is also demonstrated in Brar's (2017) research in which some of the gang members he interviewed expressed being raised with strict childrearing practices, suggesting authoritarian parenting styles, while others indicated they were left alone and neglected. However, it is important to note that Brar's (2017) findings on their own do not represent the factors at play in the homes of South Asian youth in the Lower Mainland, and that there are many contributing factors to gang involvement of which parenting practices may be one subset. The gang members interviewed by Brar (2017) also expressed a lack of interest in school and affiliation with delinquent peers or gang-affiliated family members, which are also valid risk

factors to gang life. Additional research on the parenting styles of South Asian parents, specifically parents of gang members, would be required to draw any firm conclusions.

Hirschi (2002) maintained that, if youth are excused for their misbehaviour, the bond between parent and child might lack authority and respect (i.e. permissive or neglectful parenting). The youth grow up realizing that their parents will not punish them and, with this passive approval or lack of control and punishment, youth may engage in criminal behaviour as the punishment would not outweigh the criminal gains. For South Asian youth, the punishment from family, teachers, the extended community, or law enforcement would need to outweigh the personal material goods being attained. However, as concluded by previous researchers in this field, the threat of losing family bonds seems to have little influence over negative behaviour. By staying in the home, South Asian youth get the best of both worlds – living at home without reprisal and making fast money through criminal activity. This is exemplary of how permissive parenting would contribute to gang membership given the bond is still intact with parents, who continue to provide for the child. In such cases, there is no expectation of responsiveness to parental demands or supervision (Vuk, 2017), meaning the youth is not expected to give up or choose their gang lifestyle over living in the family home. This living arrangement may also be prevalent in traditional, non-criminal households where authoritarian and honour-bound rules are in place and adherence is expected. In these instances, the youth may feel a sense of freedom by moving out however; the family may not prefer this option as it would be disgraced amongst the broader community by the youth leaving the family home. Therefore, the youth may be allowed to stay in the home and continue his criminal gang-affiliation to keep family honour intact, even if it is a façade.

In situations where there is parental control and demand, it seems that some South Asian gang members continue to choose the gang lifestyle over living in the family home and maintaining family connections. At least for the gang members interviewed by Brar (2017), most (four of the five) had pre-existing strained relations with parents and identified being raised in a high conflict environment where physical abuse, yelling, arguments, and domestic issues between parents existed. In these instances, Hirschi (2002) would argue that the bonds with family were weak to begin with and would fail to prevent association with delinquent peers, while stronger social bonds would act as a protective barrier. Given the small sample size of Brar's (2017) study and the lack of confirmation related to the parenting styles involved, it would be extremely valuable to further explore and understand the extent to which lack of attachment to family is an underlying factor pushing youth to seek out connections in others, and finding themselves more closely bonded with delinquent peers with similar detachment from family.

Le, Monfared, and Stockdale (2005) identified that much research had been conducted to explore the predictive variables of school, family, and peers on delinquency. However, the researchers found that most of these empirical studies were in relation to African American and European American samples (Smith & Krohn, 1995; Thornberry, Lizotte, Krohn, Farnworth, & Jang, 1991, 1994, cited in Le et al., 2005). The researchers questioned whether the results of these studies could be generalized to other ethnic groups, such as Asians, and further identified that there were few studies on Chinese and Southeast Asian youth. With gangs becoming more ethnically diverse and youth banding together to achieve common gang outcomes, future research on these populations, within the context of hybrid gangs, might now evolve. The research conducted by Le et al. (2005) explored the relationship of schools, family, and peers in relation to delinquency in Cambodian, Chinese, Laotian or Mien, and Vietnamese youth, and

found that peer delinquency was the strongest predictive factor while parental attachment and parental discipline were found to be non-significant predictive factors. However, a major weakness of this study is that the sample was taken from a specific geographical area that was similar in socioeconomic status. As such, there was little variety with respect to socioeconomic status, making it difficult to generalize the results to those who do not fall within the particular socioeconomic group from which the sample was derived. Considering that the researchers were unable to generalize their findings to other geographical regions in the United States, it is equally difficult to generalize these findings to other ethnic groups outside of the United States, including the South Asian male youth in the Lower Mainland.

Kakar (2005) identified that the family's role was central to predicting and preventing juvenile delinquency. Families teach children about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, gratification deferral, and respecting the rights and property of others (Kakar, 1998; Sirpal 2002, cited in Kakar, 2005). A meta-analysis conducted by Loeber and Dishion (1986, cited in Kakar, 2005) revealed that one of the most powerful predictors of delinquency was a lower degree of parental supervision. Le et al. (2005) also contended that most delinquency theorists and researchers found that family played an important role in the development of delinquency (Baker & Mednick, 1984; Farrington, 1989; Hirschi, 1969; Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986; Maguin, Hawkins, Catalano, Abbott, & Herrenkohl, 1995; McCord, 1979; McCord, McCord, & Zola, 1959; Snyder & Patterson, 1987; Wells & Rankin, 1988; cited in Le et al., 2005), and that parental variables, such as parental attachment, hostility, rejection, supervision, and involvement, influence adolescents' antisocial behaviour.

A review of 66 studies in addition to a longitudinal data set analyzing risk and protective factors in relation to youth violence also concluded that high levels of parental involvement

could act as a protective factor against youth violence (Hawkins, Herrenkohl, Farrington, Catalano, Harachi, & Cothern, 2000). Other research has demonstrated that parenting practices defined as uninvolved, distant, and with poor supervision and control were often characteristic of families with delinquent youth (Cernkovich & Giordano, 1987; Hirschi, 1969; Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986, cited in Le et al., 2005). To summarize, parents who are involved in their children's lives, monitoring their activities and friendships, who have strong expectations for their children's success and who support their children in reaching these expectations, and who teach their children values offer a strong counterbalance to the attraction of gang life. Unfortunately, the degree to which these same parental variables play a role in facilitating South Asian youths' transition towards criminal activity remains unclear due to the lack of research and evidence. Still, researchers maintain that parental involvement and control can protect against youth delinquency, and this is likely to also be evident for South Asian families. Heidt and Wheeldon (2015), Kakar (2005), and Brownfield (2003) maintained that exposure to delinquent peers in adolescent years remained a stronger predictor for adolescent violence than negative family experiences.

Learning Criminal Behaviour through Delinquent Association

Research by Tyakoff (2003) suggested that delinquent peers exerted strong effects over the attraction to gang life for a youth. Through focus groups conducted with members of the South Asian community, including youth, as well as with police officials, Crown prosecutors, social workers, multicultural planners, and park board youth workers, Tyakoff (2003) explored the issue of gang formation and activities. Participants represented the areas of Vancouver, Surrey, Burnaby, Richmond, or Delta; these communities were considered to have experienced the most violent crime at the time of the focus group sessions. Six group sessions were held and

each consisted of at least 10 individuals from various social, economic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. One group session was dedicated to young males between the ages of 13 to 23, some of whom associated with gang members but were not affiliated with a gang. Similar to the adult community member session, the youth session revealed the perceived the primary causes of violence among South Asian youth to be power, status, and control instead of money and drugs. Further, it revealed that, while some of the contributing factors to violence were, as previously discussed, communication barriers with family members, domestic problems within the family, and cross-cultural conflict, the major contributing factors of violence were perceived as peer pressure, bullying, and racism.

The focus group sessions further revealed that youth joined criminal groups most often to commit crimes of opportunity, such as drug trafficking and extortion. Tyakoff (2003) maintained that peer pressure and exposure to criminal opportunities were likely the reasons for youth joining criminal activities. Supporting Hirschi's (2002) theory, Tyakoff also reported that South Asian male youth and young adults made a rational choice when deciding to join a criminal organization, usually for the advantages of wealth, status, and power. All five of the gang members interviewed by Brar (2017) revealed their primary motivation was financially driven – to make fast money, followed by becoming someone who is known. Other reasons for joining a criminal group included enhancing one's social standing among friends, thrill seeking, selling drugs, and making money (Tyakoff, 2003). Belonging to a group also allowed youth to rebel against tradition, offered a degree of security and structure that was lacking in some families, and gave a sense of identity while trying to integrate into Canadian society. Tyakoff (2003) did not comment on whether social and economic status, class, poverty, cross-cultural conflict, racism, or bullying primarily accounted for the onset of youth group crime. In considering Tyakoff's

conclusions, it is important to keep in mind that his findings were based on the information relayed to him through the focus groups. A limitation of his approach was that he held only one focus group session with 10 youth participants who were not directly involved with gangs or criminal activity. The remaining sessions were held with community members and law enforcement representatives who were not able to speak on behalf of the youth. As such, the sample size was small and the qualitative focus group approach hindered generalizability of the findings.

Delinquent friends and family criminality have been identified as significant factors contributing to gangs in several research findings (Heidt & Wheeldon, 2015; Brownfield, 2003; Kakar, 2005). Brownfield (2003) analyzed data from a 2001 study of urban Canadian youth attending schools in neighbourhoods afflicted by gang activity. Based on the 543 respondents, Brownfield found that peer delinquency was the predominate correlate of gang membership with the odds of being a gang member doubling if one also had delinquent peers. Tyakoff (2003) identified that criminal groups often consisted of family members and schoolyard friendships. The extent to which delinquent or criminal family members or peers have influence on South Asian gang recruitment specifically is relatively unknown. However, it is notable that, as previously indicated, a number of well-known South Asian gangster siblings have been involved in high profile criminal activity across the Lower Mainland.

Sutherland's theory of differential association serves to explain peer influence and the mechanisms through which youth are socialized to criminal behaviour (Heidt & Wheeldon, 2015). Specifically, criminal behaviour is learned through interactions with intimate groups who have criminal ties and skillsets (Brownfield, 2003; Heidt & Wheeldon, 2015). Through this interaction, individuals gain the opportunity to learn the techniques of committing crimes as well

as learning how to rationalize their actions. Sutherland's theory (1939) argued that those who interacted with criminals were more likely to engage in crime because their deviant peer experiences yielded greater favorable outcomes than unfavorable outcomes, thereby creating positive associations with criminal activity (Heidt & Wheeldon, 2015). In effect, the greater one's exposure to positive definitions of crime, especially from those one respects, the more likely one is to engage in crime. Le et al. (2005) also contended that peers have an influence on a youth's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour with regards to appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Kakar (2005) identified that gang members with delinquent friends and with a family member who had a criminal history had a higher rate of offending, in the year prior, when compared against non-gang adolescents with delinquent friends and non-gang adolescents with no delinquent friends. Rebellon (2006) noted that delinquent youth may be considered entertaining by other youth as a result of their pranks, spectacles, and other delinquent actions. The researcher contended that if delinquent youth are considered to be "fun", other youth may be enticed by their peers to join in the "fun" by similarly committing delinquent acts.

Sutherland and Cressey (1978, cited in Le et al., 2005) documented that a causal relationship does exist between association with delinquent peers and delinquent behaviour. However, they also recognized that youth may associate with delinquent peers and learn the criminal behaviour and acts, but not necessarily engage in the activities themselves. In such instances, Hirschi (2002) would argue that youth made a rational decision to avoid criminal behaviour as a result of their social bonds and attachment. While youth teach and learn delinquent behaviour, it is possible for youth with strong social bonds to avoid the delinquent acts, as they prioritize maintaining the relationship or bonds with other attachment figures or institutions, while those with weaker social bonds may be more susceptible to both the negative

peer association and the positive definition of the criminal behaviour; they have nothing to lose by engaging in these antisocial behaviours, but everything to gain. All of the gang members in Brar's (2017) study reported that their relationship with their gang peers began in middle or high school and transitioned from being friends to being in a gang together. Similar to Singh et al's (2006) findings, while these gang members had friendships with non-gang members, those relationships faded and the gang relationship became the primary network of support.

Although not exclusively focused on South Asian gang members, Descormiers (2013) gathered data from 73 in custody gang members who were a part of a larger study on Incarcerated Serious and Violent Young Offenders in British Columbia. The 73 gang members were interviewed via a "Youth Group Activities" questionnaire in order to capture and validate their gang involvement from pre-gang to exit processes. The sample group was an average age of 16.4 years, were mostly males (87.7%), and were racially diverse consisting of Caucasian (42.5%), Aboriginal (24.7%), South Asian (12.3%), and other ethnicities (20.4%). The average age at which these gang members first joined a gang was 13.3 years, with 53.4% entering at age 13 or under and 46.6% entering at 14 years or older. Most gang members were still active and their average time spent in a gang to date was three years. The results indicated that 32.9% of gangs were formed of mixed ethnicity members. Descormiers identified that the top motivating factors amongst the male gang members to join a gang to be money (78.1%) and respect (60.9%). These motivations are similar to the ones identified among South Asian gang members observed or interviewed by Singh et al (2006) and Brar (2017). Other motivations identified by Descormiers included dealing drugs, for protection, to make friends, and forced involvement. Descormiers' (2013) noted that the criminal social capital, or introduction or involvement of family or friends with gangs, was key to predicting future gang involvement.

With respect to criminal social capital, the results showed that 60.9% of the males were introduced to gangs by friends, 31.3% were introduced by family, and 68.8% had family members in gangs with the majority involvement from within the immediate family structure. It was further noted that early entry into gangs was accelerated if family versus friends made the introduction to gangs. Two-thirds of the gang members revealed that they had a family member involved in gangs. This is similar to what others have learned about some South Asian gang members whose older siblings or cousins were also in gangs; however, the information has historically been either anecdotal or based on small sample sizes. In addition to family members having a greater impact on gang membership than friends, Descormiers (2013) also found that family members in gangs did not need to formally introduce youth to gangs to initiate involvement specifically; having a family member in a gang was a factor in and of itself that increased the youths' likelihood for early gang involvement.

These findings are in conflict with the research concluding that peer delinquency is associated to criminality. Interestingly, Sutherland contended that merely associating with criminals is not indicative of one becoming involved, but rather that the learning and interactions process were necessary components (Heidt & Wheeldon, 2015). Descormiers' (2013) findings appear to refute these accounts in that it is criminal family members, not peers, who appear to have the greatest influence and further, that it is possible to become involved through early association, rather than direct participation, if the association is with a family member. Future studies would be served well by clearly defining the term "peer" as for some it may include only friends but for others it may refer to any person you is of the same age group or profile including a family member (i.e. brother, cousin).

Although Descormiers' (2013) study did not focus on South Asian youth gang members, five of the participants were identified as South Asian. The results for these five closely resembled the pattern of gang involvement previously described for South Asian youth, in that they become involved at a young age for the purposes of wealth and status, and appeared to be predisposed to gang lifestyle if a family member was also involved in gangs. Still, before generalizing the results to South Asian youth gangs, it is important to note that Descormiers' study included nine female participants as well but it is not known if any of them were South Asian. To date, female participation in South Asian youth gangs has not been explored by any published research. Further, Descormiers' study did not speak to factors such as level of education, socioeconomic status, or levels of family attachment. As a result, whether the incarcerated youth participants' demographics are similar to those of South Asian gang members outside of prison is not certain, which limits the ability to confidently generalize the results to a broader population of gang members across the Lower Mainland.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Over the past two decades, researchers have been hard pressed to gather reliable data on South Asian gang-affiliated youth and violence in the Lower Mainland. This major paper reviewed the available media, anecdotal information, and research studies conducted over the years by Tyakoff (2003), Singh et al. (2006), McConnell (2015), Descormiers (2013), and Brar (2017) in an effort to collate and describe the general composition and characteristics of South Asian youth who become gang-affiliated. Specifically, the available materials suggest that most South Asian gang-affiliated youth are young males between the ages of 16 to 29, who were raised in two-parent homes in middle-class neighbourhoods, and who have the potential to excel both academically and professionally. Their primary motives for affiliating with gangs appear to

be driven by financial gain and to garner respect. In search of the causal factors leading youth to choose an illegal and volatile gang existence over pursing a safer and more stable lifestyle, the available anecdotal information and observation studies suggested a combination of elements contributed to gang recruitment. The causal factors potentially impacting gang lifestyle choice include lack of attachment to or interest in academic achievements, low levels of parental attachment and supervision, and gang-affiliation and delinquency within family and peer networks. However, as stated several times throughout this major paper, empirical data is lacking and researchers have not been able to validate the characteristics of South Asian gang members or the factors influencing their apparent voluntary pathway to gang life.

Efforts have been made to understand, prevent, and curb South Asian gang violence from expanding through community discussion forums, community based programs, and increased law enforcement. However, in order to establish promising intervention strategies, it is critical to assess the severity of the problem and understand the causal factors of the target population (Cohen, Plecas, McCormick & Peters, 2014; Petersen, 2000). Given the complexity of the South Asian gang phenomenon, intervention strategies applied in the Lower Mainland to date included not only the gang-affiliated youth but also include their parents, school administrators, community based organizations, and law enforcement. This type of wraparound approach is intended to safeguard youth from gang recruitment by insulating them against the attraction of gang life through an assessment of their needs and a provision of a service plan that responds to their unique risk factors, and which encapsulates both the youth and their family. This approach has been implemented in two Lower Mainland cities to date, Surrey and Abbotsford, where South Asian gang recruitment was seen to be a rising problem (Public Safety Canada, 2002; Cohen et al., 2014). The success of wraparound programs in preventing recruitment and curbing

gang activity amongst South Asian youth in these cities was not explored in this paper, and both of these sites are currently undergoing evaluation; however, it has been noted in previous research that this approach has achieved mixed results (Cohen et al., 2014; Public Safety Canada, 2012).

To unpack the realities of the South Asian gang phenomenon, and to establish responsive anti-gang strategies for both susceptible and gang-affiliated youth, it is recommended that further targeted research, both qualitative and quantitative, be funded specifically for the South Asian community. The specific targets of this research should include:

(1) active or former South Asian gang members - to better understand their reasons for becoming involved in gangs when alternative lifestyle options are viable; to validate the supposed motives related to financial gain and respect, and understanding why these elements are important to them; to confirm recruitment methods (i.e. familial ties, friends, or other); and to learn about what would push them away or out of gang life;

(2) parents of active or former gang members – to quantify the amount of time they are available for their children on a weekly basis; to determine patterns in parenting styles; and to validate whether a code of silence exists and the threshold for violating the code (i.e. when would parents call the police);

(3) school administrators – to identify the number of South Asian youth at risk for gang recruitment based on academic disenfranchisement and to identify the number of gang-affiliated youth who are known within the school system, and;

(4) police – to quantify the number of gang-affiliated South Asian youth in the criminal justice system; to identify the impact of enforcement activities to combat gangs; and to learn about the role of school liaison officers in identifying youth at-risk.

While this would require substantial investment in this line of research investments, South Asian gangs have been in existence since 1988 and yet empirical data on this issue is severely lacking despite the history of South Asians in Canada (Singh et al., 2006). Concentrated efforts and financial investments will need to be made to better understand the issues at play with the South Asian community in order to develop effective intervention strategies involving all four of the target research populations.

The second recommendation focuses on parenting and more specifically, mentorship and support strategies for families of gang-affiliated or at-risk youth (Kakar, 2005), particularly mothers who are considered as most affected (Aldridge, Shute, Ralphs, & Medina, 2011). Jheeta (1988) indicated that South Asian families rely on the mother to maintain social control and ensure compliance with cultural values. In the South Asian community, many of the household chores and child-minding responsibilities may belong to the mother, in addition to working outside of the home and maintaining social order within the home. Mothers, who may be pressed for time and may lack energy, may benefit from additional support and mentorship to manage the challenges they face against their at-risk or gang-affiliated children. This support and mentorship could include culturally appropriate tools and training on how to apply a more authoritative style of parenting to promote the expectation of compliant behaviour when they are not available to supervise their children. As well, one-on-one counseling sessions, group parenting classes with mothers in similar situations, and possibly a 24/7 helpline offered in a variety of languages for mothers seeking immediate support without involving the police, similar to youth suicide hotlines or Health Link B.C.'s 811 health information line. While a helpline exists in British Columbia, Youth Against Violence Line (www.gangprevention.ca), it appears to be geared towards youth as evidenced by a statement on the website: "Concerned parents, teachers,

caregivers, service providers and others are also welcome to call for information and assistance". While parents are "welcome to call" the helpline, it does not appear to be established specifically for parents or other caregivers. Better marketing of this helpline in general to the South Asian community in temples, community centers, and doctors' offices would be beneficial. Similar to predictive policing (Cohen et al., 2014), establishing a gang parent hotline may enable predictive intervention resources to be deployed in real time to support those parents who become aware of criminal activities that they suspect or know will be carried out by their at-risk or gang-affiliated youth and who wish to stop it from occurring in real time. In order for this recommendation to materialize, it will be important to establish a relationship of trust and confidentiality with mothers, similar to police informants (Cohen et al., 2014), who are otherwise accustomed to managing their family affairs within the home to avoid judgment and to save family honour (Jheeta, 1988).

In reviewing the data collected by Brar (2017) and Singh (2006) from South Asian gang members, it was interesting to note that most of the gang members felt they could freely exit the gang without repercussions from their gang leaders. While exiting might leave them vulnerable to retaliation from rival gangs, they did not fear backlash from their own gang. In this case, gang life may be even more appealing to youth who may not fully appreciate the risk factors (i.e. death) and who focus on the temporary ability to make fast money. With gang recruitment being facilitated through networks of family and friends, and younger siblings observing the lucrative style of gang life (Brar, 2017), wraparound approaches may consider specifically targeting the siblings and close family relations (i.e. cousins), of gang-affiliated youth. Furthermore, the friends of the siblings would also be an appropriate target population given that gang recruitment is believed to occur within close networks of family and friends. Also, law enforcement efforts

may also need to focus on the youth at-risk and siblings in particular through frequent street checks in schools and on the streets as reminders that their activities are being monitored with the intent of distancing them from the desire to become gang affiliated. Whether this type of enforcement strategy would be successful or unnecessarily complicate the police-community trust dynamics will require further exploration outside of this major paper.

Lastly, more creative measures may be required to incentivize youth away from gang life. While gang ties emerged for some youth in middle or high school, the end of high school was identified as a turning point for many others (Singh et al., 2006). Roman, Decker and Pyrooz (2017) indicated that the push and pull factor for gang disengage were primarily subjective on the part of the affiliated gang member, turning points had the potential to change the trajectory of one's criminal life course as they provide new opportunities with new social supports. Turning points were identified as important life or socialization events and experiences, traditionally associated to events such as graduation and marriage although some researchers questioned whether these were applicable for young gang members. However, as seen amongst some South Asian gang-affiliated youth in the Lower Mainland, many of them do attend high school and achieve graduation (Brar, 2017; Singh, 2006). There may be an opportunity to leverage high school graduation as a turning point by offering tuition reimbursements to at-risk and gang-affiliated youth provided they sever their ties to pursue higher learning. There may be an opportunity to engage the broader South Asian community and incorporate cultural support in order to realize this recommendation. Community leaders and businesses could establish an education fund or offer paid internships to at-risk or gang-affiliated youth interested in attending college, university, or training in a specific trade. Research has shown that South Asian youth are capable of attaining higher education but choose gang life instead (Brar, 2017; Singh et al.,

2006). It is unknown whether tuition expenses are a barrier for these youth; however, having tuition and internship programs in place for South Asian at-risk youth may reinvigorate their attachment to educational institutions and provide immediate financial support through means other than gang activity.

In conclusion, while anecdotal information and limited research on South Asian gangs have offered some insights to the general composition and characteristics of South Asian gang-affiliated youth, there are still too many unknowns with respect to the risks, causal factors, and motivations driving these youth towards gang life. Similarly, little is known about the protective factors, or lack thereof, that exist in order to develop and implement effective intervention strategies. While it may be difficult for some members of the South Asian community to acknowledge that gang violence is a problem of greater disproportion specific to this community, there appears to be more willingness today, than some 15 years ago, to address the issue through collaborative approaches involving researchers, community workers, school administrators, families, community leaders, and law enforcement. In order to ensure that intervention strategies are appropriately responsive to the youth at-risk, there is a need to gather qualitative and quantitative data on a continual basis not only from gang members themselves, but also from their parents, peers, and school network. Therefore, future collaborative anti-gang efforts involving South Asian youth should seek out and integrate opportunities for data collection in various environments and across diverse networks to reach this otherwise inaccessible target population at the broadest level.

Reference List

Aldridge, J., Shute, J., Ralphs, R. & Medina, J. (2011). Blame the Parents? Challenges for Parent-Focused Programmes for Families of Gang-Involved Young People. *Children and Society, 25*, 371-381. doi:10.1111/j.1099-0860.2009.00282.x

Astwood Strategy Corporation. (December 2003). *Results of the 2002 Canadian Police Survey on Youth Gangs*. Under contract to the Department of the Solicitor General Canada. Accessed from: http://www.astwood.ca/assets/gangs_e.pdf.

Bakshi, R. (2002, December 23). The Roots of Gang Warfare: B.C.'s Sikhs must look hard at themselves. *Maclean Hunter Canadian Publishing Ltd*. Accessed from: https://sikhpioneers.org/roots-gang-warfare/.

Bolan, K. (2005, June 10). A history of organized crime in the Indo-Canadian community: Dozens of young Indo-Canadian men have been slain in recent years, caught in the violent world of organized crime and drug trafficking. Most of the cases remain unsolved. *The Vancouver Sun* (Canada).

Bolan, K. (2005, June 10). He ran a death squad: Former gangster Bal Buttar reveals how he arranged the murders of Indo-Canadian rivals in a brutal, drug fuelled underworld that has claimed dozens of young lives. *Vancouver Sun* (Canada).

Bolan, K. (2005, October 01). Stepping up the ranks. *Vancouver Sun* (Canada). Accessed from: http://www.primetimecrime.com/Recent/Organized%20Crime/VS20051001Indo.htm.

Bolan, K. (2005, November 21). This is a cancer in our society. Attorney-General Wally Oppal calls on Indo-Canadian lawyers to tackle gang problem. *Vancouver Sun* (Canada).

Bolan, K. (2012, May 2). Ranjit Cheema's Two Decades on Vancouver's South Slope. *The Vancouver Sun* (Canada). Accessed from: http://vancouversun.com/news/staff blogs/ranjit-cheemas-two-decades-on-vancouvers-south-slope.

Bolan, K. & Eagland. N. (2017, March 11). Sanghera crime family member among two slain in Vancouver on Thursday". *Vancouver Sun* (Canada). Accessed from: http://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/vancouver-police-investigate-fifth-and-sixth-homicide-of-2017.

Bouchard, M. & Hashimi, S. (2017). When Is a "War" a "Wave"? Two Approaches for the Detection of Waves in Gang Homicides. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice, 59*(2), 198-226. doi:10.3138/cjccj.2015.E09.

Brar, G. (2017). Under the Hood: Understanding Pathways In and Out of Gang Life from the Point of View of Gang Members' Experience. Unpublished Thesis. University of the Fraser Valley.

Brownfield, D. (2003). Differential Association and Gang Membership. *Journal of Gang Research 11*(1), 1-12.

Brownfield, D. (2006). Defiance Theory of Sanctions and Gang Membership. *Journal of Gang Research 13*(4), 31-43.

CBC News. (2015, April 14). Gangs appeal to youth because of quick cash, adventure: expert. *British Columbia* (Canada). Accessed from: http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/gangs-appeal-to-youth-because-of-quick-cash-adventure-expert-1.3034420.

CBC News. (2017, August 30). IHIT identifies victim of targeted Surrey shooting". *British Columbia* (Canada). Accessed from: http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/ihit-identifies-victim-of-targeted-surrey-shooting-1.4268911.

CBC News. (2017, September 01). Abbotsford shooting victim identified as 18-year-old. *British Columbia* (Canada). Accessed from: http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/abbotsford-shooting-1.4272828.

Cohen, I., Plecas, D., McCormick, A. & Peters, A. (2014). *Eliminating Crime: The Seven Essential Principles of Police-based Crime Reduction*. Canada: Len Garis, University of the Fraser Valley.

Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit – British Columbia. (2015). Gangs in BC. Accessed from: http://www.cfseu.bc.ca/gangs-in-b-c/.

Cotter, A. (2013). Homicide in Canada, 2013. *Juristat, 34*(1). Statistics Canada. Catalogue number: 85-002-X.

CTV News Vancouver. (2018, January 18). Missing teenager found murdered in trunk of stolen car. *Vancouver* (Canada). Accessed from: https://bc.ctvnews.ca/missing-teenager-found-murdered-in-trunk-of-stolen-car-1.3766239.

David, J.D. (2017, November 22). Homicide in Canada, 2016. *Juristat*, *37*(1). Statistics Canada. Catalogue number: 85-002-X.

Decker, S.H. & Curry, G.D. (2000). Addressing key features of gang membership: Measuring the involvement of young members. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, *28*, 473-482.

Descormiers, K. (2013). From Getting In to Getting Out: The Role of Pre-gang Context and Group Processes in Analyzing Turning Points in Gang Trajectories. Unpublished Dissertation. Simon Fraser University.

Dhillon, S. (2015, April 20). Surrey mayor urges gangs to end deadly turf war. *The Globe and Mail* (Canada). Accessed from: https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/mayor-of-surrey-bc-urges-gangs-to-end-deadly-turf-war/article24039418/.

Estep, H.M., Avalos, M.D., & Olson, J.N. (2017). The relationship between parenting styles, general deviance, academic dishonesty, and infidelity. *College Student Journal*, *51*(4), 473-482.

Gordon, R.M. (2000). Criminal business organizations, street gangs and 'wanna-be' groups: A Vancouver perspective. *Canadian Journal of Criminology*, *42*(1), 39-60.

Group of 10 Report. (2005, November 21). Community Response to South Asian Youth Violence. Integrated Action Plan. *Commissioned by the Department of Canadian Heritage, BC/Yukon District* (Canada).

Hawkins, J.D., Herrenkohl, T.I., Farrington, D.P., Catalano, R.F., Harachi, T.W., & Cothern, L. (2000). *Predictors of youth violence*. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Hirschi, T (2002). *Causes of Delinquency*. New Brunswick (U.S.A.): Transaction Publishers.

Heidt, J. & Wheeldon, J.P. (2015). *Introducing Criminological Thinking*. California (U.S.A.): Sage Publications, Inc.

Howell, J.C. & Egley, A. (2005). Moving risk factors into developmental theories of gang membership. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, *3*(4), 334-354. doi: 10.1177/1541204005278679.

Jheeta, S.K. (1988). Disownment of Indo-Canadian Women. Unpublished Thesis. The University of British Columbia. Accessed from: https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/831/items/1.0056008.

Jingfors, S., Lazzano, G. & McConnell, K. (2015). A media analysis of gang-related homicides in British Columbia from 2003 to 2013. *Journal of Gang Research*, Summer, 1-18.

Kakar, S. (2005). Gang Membership, Delinquent Friends and Criminal Family Members: Determining the Connections. *Journal of Gang Research, 13*(1), 41-52.

Kelly, K. & Caputo, T. (2005). The Linkages Between Street Gangs and Organized Crime: The Canadian Experience. *Journal of Gang Research, 13*(1), 17-32.

Kwong, M. (2015, January 19). Canada's gang hotspots – are you in one?. *CBC News* (Canada).

Le, T.N., Monfared, G., and Stockdale, G.D. (2005). The Relationship of School, Parent, and Peer Contextual Factors with Self-Reported Delinquency for Chinese, Cambodian, Laotian or Mien, and Vietnamese Youth. *Crime and Delinquency, 51*(2), 192-219.

Lindsay, C. (2001). *The South Asian Community in Canada*. Analytical Paper, Statistics Canada. Catalogue number: 89-621-XIE-No. 6.

Matas, R. (2002, November 30). Drug trade fuelled spate of revenge slayings. *The Globe and Mail* (Canada). Link: https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/drug-trade-fuelled-spate-of-revenge-slayings/article4140536/.

McConnell, K. (2015). *The Construction of the Gang in British Columbia: Mafioso, Gangster, or Thug?* An Examination of the Uniqueness of the BC Gangster Phenomenon. Unpublished Thesis. London Metropolitan University.

McLaren, S. (2004, October 27). A 10-year nightmare. *The Now Newspaper* (Canada).

Petersen, R.D. (2000). Definitions of a gang and impacts on public policy. *Journal of Canadian Justice (28),* 139-149.

Pezzella, F.S., Thornberry, T.P., & Smith, Carolyn. (2016). Race Socialization and Parenting Styles: Links to Delinquency for African American and White Adolescents. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 14*(4), 448-467.

The Province. (2006, April 12). Steal hand in velvet glove needed to tackle gang violence. *Vancouver* (Canada).

Public Safety Canada. (2012). *The Surrey Wraparound: A Youth Driven Plan for Gang Violence Prevention*. Government of Canada. Accessed from: https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/srr-wrprnd/index-en.aspx.

Public Safety Canada. (2016, January). *Abbotsford Youth Crime Prevention Project*. Government of Canada. Accessed from: https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/bbtsfrd-yth-prvntn/index-en.aspx.

Raptis, M. (2012, February 06). Duhre gang: Who are they?. *Vancouver Province* (Canada).

RCMP Environmental Scan. (2006). *Feature Focus: Youth Gangs and Guns*. Government of Canada. Catalogue Number: PS64-99/2006E-PDF.

Rebellon, C.J. (2006). Do Adolescents Engage in Delinquency to Attract the Social Attention of Peers? An Extension and Longitudinal Test of the Social Reinforcement Hypothesis. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, *43*(4), 387-411.

Roman, C.G., Decker, S.H. & Pyrooz, D.C. (2017). Leveraging the pushes and pulls of gang disengagement to improve gang intervention: findings from three multi- site studies and a review of relevant gang programs, *Journal of Crime and Justice, 40*(3), 316-336.

Skelton, C., Culbert,L., and Lavoie, J. (2005, June 10). The RCMP's gangster 'hit list': Today we launch an exclusive six-part series on the violent and profitable world of organized crime in B.C. – from the notorious Hells Angels to Asian gangsters. *Vancouver Sun* (Canada).

Singh, H., Waterhouse, T., & Plecas, D. (2006). Violence & Silence: Exploring the Development of South Asian Street Gangs in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. Draft Article. University College of the Fraser Valley.

Statistics Canada. (2011). *National Household Survey, Immigration and Diversity in Canada*. Government of Canada. Catalogue number: 99-010-X2011001.

Totten, M. (2008). Promising Practices for Addressing Youth Involvement in Gangs. In support of the Strategy, Preventing Youth Gang Violence in BC: A Comprehensive and Coordinated Provincial Action Plan. Catalogue Number: C2008-960072-X. Accessed from: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/crime-prevention/community-crime-prevention/publications/totten-report.pdf.

Tyakoff, A. (2003). South Asian-Based Group Crime in British Columbia. Focus Group Report. *Commissioned by Strategic Research and Analysis, Strategic Policy and Research, Department of Canadian Heritage, BC/Y District* (Canada).

Vancouver Courier. (2006, October 20). Police investigating 10 drive-by shootings between Sept. 5 and Oct. 10 in city's southeast. *British Columbia* (Canada).

Vancouver Police Department. (2009, March 06). Project Rebellion – Gang Arrests. Accessed from: http://mediareleases.vpd.ca/2009/03/06/project-rebellion-gang-arrests/.

Vancouver Police Department. (2010, February). Taking Back Vancouver's Streets: The Truth About Gangs. Accessed from: http://vancouver.ca/police/media/2010/report-gang_report.pdf.

Vuk, M. (2017). Parenting Styles and Gang Membership: Mediating Factors. *Deviant Behavior, 38*(4), 406-425. doi: 10.1080/01639625.2016.1197011.

Youth Against Violence Line. (n.d.) . Accessed from: http://youthagainstviolenceline.com.