

# An Exploration of Cultural Perspectives Related to Gender and Anger Expression

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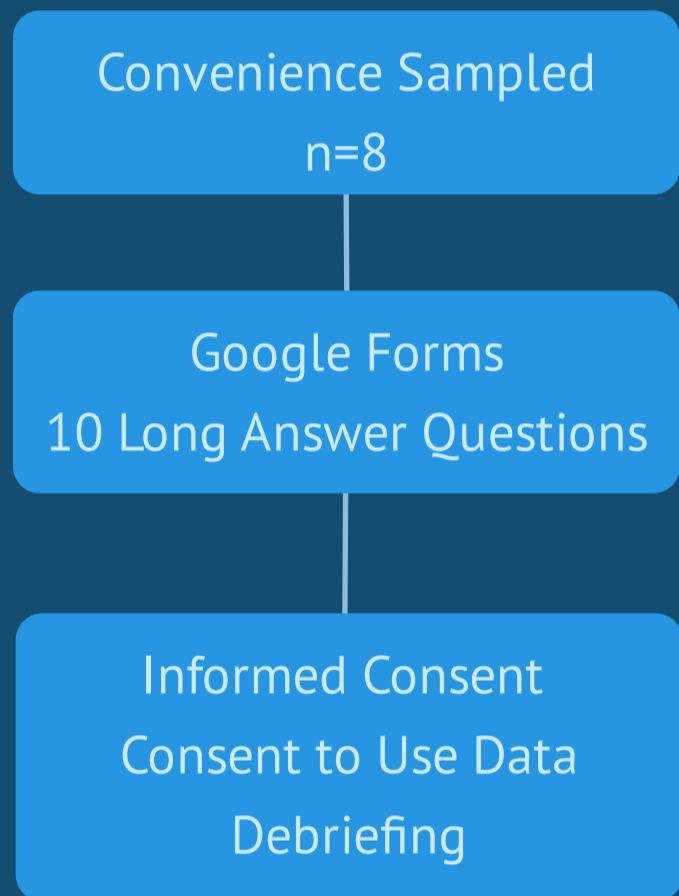
## Abstract

Our project focused on exploring cultural perspectives related to anger and gender. For our research, we utilized thematic analysis to reflect on, interpret, and present our findings. We had participants complete a Google Form with our qualitative questions. Among our eight participants, we had four who identified as South Asian (Punjabi, Pakistani, Bangladeshi), and four who identified as Caucasian. We have found that there are notable cultural influences on perspectives of anger, as well as shared gender effects. Our results indicated recurring themes of “act like a lady,” facing fear and risk, key supports, cultural stereotypes, personal reflections, and self and other. Our analysis is consistent with the literature on the challenges women face when managing and expressing anger.

## Introduction

We predicted that women from South Asian descent will have greater challenges expressing their anger in social settings compared to Caucasian women due to ethnic discrimination and stereotypes. We expected to find consistent results among women and shared challenges expressing anger in social settings. We anticipated that individuals, irrespective of ethnicity, would feel comfortable expressing and articulating their anger with those within their social circle and with shared demographics.

## Methods



### Sample Questions

1. Have you ever experienced a time when you felt you could not express your anger because of your gender? If so, please explain.
2. Have you ever experienced a time when you felt you could not express your anger because of your ethnicity or culture? If so, please explain.
3. What emotions are you comfortable expressing openly and why? What types of anger?
4. Tell me about a time you expresses anger. How did it feel in the moment? How do you feel after?

## Results

We employed Thematic Analysis to examine participant responses, create codes and categories and formulate the following themes:

### 1. Acting Like a Lady

"As a woman, I feel sometimes I am expected to be polite and I am not allowed to convey anger or frustration."

### 2. Facing Fear and Risk

"Moments when I feel uncomfortable type some expressing anger to a man in fear of retaliation."

### 3. Drawing on Key Supports

"My friends and family are people who I know with certainty will allow me to express my anger without judgement."

### 4. The Role of Cultural Stereotypes

"Ethnicity and culture shapes one's identity and plays a part in shaping my anger."

### 5. Power of Personal Reflections

"I express my anger through my feelings. If I do not physically exercise or try to meditate, I will continue ruminating over the thoughts."

### 6. Perception of anger in Self and Others

"I don't express anger often but even times when I have expressed so much as disagreement or views that contradicted that of another person or a group of people, I have sensed an underlying tension and judgement for having spoken my mind."

## Conclusion

In summation, we observed that the lives of our participants were significantly influenced by the cultural narratives related to anger expression from women. Our results indicated that participants were apprehensive to effectively express their anger in a public setting due to fear of repercussions, and gender stereotypes and roles. Participants with a South Asian background did report experiencing limits to overtly expressing their anger due to perceptions of how women, particularly women of colour, should behave. Our findings are consistent with results from past research, indicating that women within a social setting are less likely to express their anger for reasons directly related to their gender, which is further extended for women of colour (Bailey et al., 2020). Nevertheless, women who claimed to be unable to express anger openly find other means of expression such as through writing notes and venting to family and friends.

## Further Research

It is imperative to foster complete equality in our society. Women are one of the most affected populations, especially if they are a person of colour. The cultural and gender stereotypes placed on women hinders their ability to convey their frustration and therefore, their ability to take action. This issue is reflected in workplace, academic, politics and home settings. Thus, it impacts the day-to-day operations of women which affects their overall quality of life and must be further investigated.