Exploration of Immigrant Fathers' Parenting Experiences Following an Offence Against an Intimate Partner Violence: A Narrative Inquiry

by

Vincenza Virginia Alba Martinovich

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Abstract

To date, our understanding of the parenting experiences of immigrant fathers with a history of intimate partner violence (IPV) is severely limited. Given the cultural considerations and circumstances of immigration associated with IPV and recent emergence of separate interventions for immigrant offenders, generating insight into these fathers' experiences is essential to support these men in their role as parents. The purpose of this narrative study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the parenting experiences of immigrant fathers with a history of IPV based on the collection of their stories. The participants included seven immigrant fathers ranging in age from 30 to 62 who were attending or had previously completed group IPV treatment in a Western Canadian province. All participants had at least one biological child under the age of 18. The majority of fathers lived with their children and had some form of contact with them at the time of their first interview. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant in which they were asked to share their parenting stories and experiences. A second interview was completed with a subset of two participants to ensure their stories were accurately represented. Fathers' narratives illustrated co-parenting challenges and stressors post-IPV, characteristics of "good" fatherhood, as well as the role of culture in shaping fathers' understanding of familial relationships and gender roles. For some, children served as a motivator toward change and rehabilitation, whereas others did not acknowledge any changes in their parenting relationship post-IPV. Findings are discussed in relation to implications for IPV treatment with immigrant populations and future directions for research are identified. Recommendations for practitioners which integrate findings from this study in the context of the existing model of service delivery for offenders of IPV are also provided.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Vincenza Virginia Alba Martinovich. The project received ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project name "Exploration of Immigrant Fathers' Parenting Experiences Following an Offence Against an Intimate Partner: A Narrative Inquiry," (No. Pro00094527) on December 17, 2019. Administrative Approval for Clinical Research through the Northern Alberta Clinical Trials and Research (NACTRC) was also obtained (PRJ: #36823) on December 23, 2019. Several amendments to the original study protocol were made during Spring/Summer of 2020 due to the social distancing requirements and public health guidelines associated with COVID-19.

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

Intimate partner violence (IPV) has a severe and negative impact on Canadian society, accounting for 30% of police-reported violent crimes (Burczycka et al., 2018; Conroy et al., 2019). IPV refers to "violent offences that occur between current and former legally married spouses, common-law partners, dating partners and other kinds of intimate partners" (Burczycka et al., 2018, p. 22). IPV is also inclusive of non-physical forms of abuse, such as uttering threats toward a partner or using intimidation. The Duluth Model *Power and Control Wheel* is a useful framework in outlining forms of abuse, all in relation to men's power and control over women: economic abuse (e.g. restricting women from accessing money), coercion and threats (e.g. threatening to leave), intimidation (e.g. destroying women's personal belongings), emotional abuse (e.g. name calling and mind games), isolation (e.g. controlling who women speak to, what they do, etc.), minimizing, denial and blame (e.g. shifting responsibility of their actions), using children (e.g. threatening to take the children away), and using male privilege (e.g. deciding men's and women's roles; Ali & Naylor, 2013; Pence & Paymar, 1993).

Although IPV is defined within the context of an intimate relationship, the impact of violence is often experienced beyond the victim-perpetrator relationship. Being witness to violence or residing in a home with heightened stress and parental conflict has a longstanding negative impact on children. Victims and perpetrators of IPV may also experience parenting stressors and challenges following an offence. To date, parenting studies have focussed primarily on the practices and experiences of female victims in IPV relationships (i.e., Greeson et al., 2014; Herbell et al., 2020). This mother-centric perspective has resulted in an underdeveloped understanding of the parental relationship between children and male perpetrators. Within the existing body of literature, researchers reported that fathers with a history of IPV may place great

meaning in their role as parents and seek an improved relationship with their child (Holt, 2015; Perel & Peled, 2008). The occurrence of violence, however, greatly impedes these desired fathering experiences (Perel & Peled, 2008). Although the importance of studying fatherhood in the context of IPV has gained increased recognition, researchers have yet to explore the parenting experiences of immigrant fathers residing in Canada who are court-mandated to attend IPV treatment. As noted by Stover and Morgos (2013), "fathers who have perpetrated domestic violence often remain in the lives of their children and excluding them from interventions creates a patched attempt at best in bringing an end to abuse" (p. 11). Given the prevalence and negative consequences associated IPV, research geared toward supporting all members of the family following violence in the home is warranted. I plan to disseminate the information gathered from this study with the agencies involved in recruitment, with the intention of informing interventions for immigrant fathers with history of IPV.

Overview of Study

This qualitative, narrative study offers an exploration of the parenting experiences of immigrant fathers following an offence against an intimate partner. The overarching question guiding this study is as follows: "What are the parenting stories of immigrant fathers who are court-mandated to attend IPV treatment?". Through the collection of fathers' stories, I sought to understand how fathers conceptualized "good" parenting, as well as the types of lived experiences that contribute to their understanding of fatherhood and IPV. I also looked at how immigrant fathers' stories reflected cultural and societal beliefs surrounding IPV. The information I gathered from this understudied population of fathers can be used to inform intervention and prevention programs with immigrant families.

All participants this study were involved in an IPV treatment program at the time of recruitment or had previously completed court-mandated programming. Although participants' children were not identified as the primary victim in any of the offences disclosed, some children were witness to the violence or experienced indirect effects (i.e. not being in contact with their father for a period of time following the offence, fear resulting in exposure to IPV between their parents) following the offence. Given these circumstances, fathers reported varying levels of direct and indirect contact with their children at the time of our first interview.

In light of the above, this narrative study provided a voice to an understudied population of immigrant fathers and allowed them to share their stories, beliefs, and perspectives. Many participants viewed the opportunity to take part in this study as a way of helping other fathers in their cultural or ethnic community and raise awareness on a broader societal level.

Overview of Contents

Within the second chapter, I provide a review of the literature on IPV and describe the prevalence in a Canadian context. I outline negative consequences associated with children's exposure to IPV, as well as characteristics of parenting in the context of IPV. I also discuss multiple theoretical perspectives in relation to the perpetration of IPV alongside consideration of the role of masculinity, culture, and circumstances of immigration. This chapter concludes with a description of the current body of literature on fatherhood and IPV and emphasizes the absence of research exploring the parenting experiences of immigrant fathers residing in Canada. Lastly, I outline the purpose of this qualitative and describe how I addressed gaps in current understandings of IPV and fatherhood.

The third chapter contains an overview of my methodology and methods. I begin with a discussion of my epistemological and ontological perspective, and then transition into how these

beliefs relate to my theoretical lens, positionality as a researcher and clinician, and chosen methodological approach. Next, I provide a description of narrative research and how this methodology aligns well with the purpose of my study, population of interest, and methods. Participant demographics and recruitment strategies are outlined followed by the steps I adhered to when conducting interviews and analyzing the resulting data. Lastly, I document the strategies adopted to ensure quality and rigor of my qualitative analyses and uphold the principles of ethical research with human participants.

Chapter four includes an analysis of each interview, presented in two segments: (1) narrative analysis and (2) thematic analysis. Fathers' narratives offer an in-depth, rich description of their stories and lived experiences, whereas the thematic analysis provides an overview of the common elements across the 7 participant interviews. In total, nine overarching themes were generated, as outlined within this chapter. This combined approach offers a holistic depiction of fathers' stories as well as the shared ideas and patterns of meaning that emerged.

Chapter five begins with an overview of the key findings and unique contributions of this study. Interview data and resulting interpretations are discussed in relation to previous research with immigrant populations and the existing literature on fatherhood and IPV. I outline implications for research and practice, as well as directions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review

Intimate Partner Violence

According to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, approximately 96,000 Canadians between the ages of 15 to 89 disclosed experiencing IPV in the year 2017 (Burczycka et al., 2018). In 2018, over 99,000 victims of IPV in the same age range were reported to the police (Conroy et al., 2019). Most instances of IPV brought to the attention of the police took place within a private dwelling and were experienced by those between the ages of 25-36 years old (Conroy et al., 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic also brought about unique challenges with regard to the ability to safely connect with services (i.e., limited capacity for movement, closing of shelters, etc.), along with an overall increase in social isolation and familial stress (Evans, Lindaeur & Farrell, 2020). Moreover, changes in daily life that led to decreased in-person contact with outside individuals (i.e., medical professionals, teachers, childcare providers, etc.) impacts the capacity for identification and intervention of IPV (Evans et al., 2020).

Although IPV is perpetrated across genders, the majority of Canadian victims are female (Burczycka et al., 2018; Conroy et al., 2019; Sinah, 2012). Women residing in rural areas in Canada are also highly represented as victims of IPV (Conroy et al., 2019). Moreover, based on a profile of offenders in Ontario published by the Canadian Department of Justice, males are over-represented as offenders of domestic violence (Quann, 2006). Given the high proportion of male offenders (92%; Quann, 2006), continued research with this population is warranted.

Consequences of Exposure to IPV. The detrimental consequences associated with witnessing IPV have been well-established in the literature. Exposure to IPV places children and adolescents at greater risk for adjustment, academic, and emotional difficulties; internalizing and externalizing problems; and post-traumatic stress (DeJonghe et al., 2011; Evans et al., 2008;

Fantuzzo & Mohr, 1999; Harding et al., 2013; Hunter & Graham-Bermann, 2013; Kilpatrick & Williams, 1997; McDonald et al., 2009; Moylan et al., 2010; Kitzmann et al., 2003; Wolfe et al., 2003; Wood & Sommers, 2011). An increase in aggressive and antisocial behaviours may also be displayed by children whose fathers engage in more violent behaviours (Stover et al., 2003). Additionally, the presence of IPV negatively impacts the parent-child relationship and is associated with maladaptive or harsh parenting (Grasso et al., 2016; Murray et al., 2012). Children's capacity to regulate, both biologically and behaviourally, is facilitated by home environments that are safe and predictable, and that allow children to have their needs consistently met (Carpenter & Stacks, 2009). The occurrence of IPV, however, has the potential to impact a parent's ability to provide such a predictable and responsive environment.

Parenting and IPV. The current body of literature in relation to IPV and parenting remains overwhelmingly mother-centric. This critique is not entirely surprising, however, given the historical emphasis on studying parenting and child development from the perspective of mothers. Researchers have investigated the parenting practices, strengths, needs, and experiences of mothers with a history of IPV (Gewirtz et al., 2011; Greeson et al., 2014; Herbell et al., 2020; Lanier et al., 2016) as well as how they navigate shared parenting following the termination of an abusive relationship (Tubs & Williams, 2006; Hardesty & Ganong, 2006) The ways in which mothers and make decisions surrounding paternal involvement and custody (Fogarty et al., 2019; Hardesty & Ganong, 2006) has also been a topic of exploration. In addition, researchers have investigated the parenting strategies employed by mothers to promote their child's well-being and foster resilience following exposure to IPV (Fogarty et al., 2019). Some examples described by mothers include role modelling, establishing a sense of stability and predictability, and engaging in discussions with their children surrounding what constitutes healthy and unhealthy

relationships (Fogarty et al., 2019). Although there is evidence to suggest that female victims of IPV do not necessarily provide lower quality parenting (Casanueva et al., 2008), the presence of violence in the home has the potential to negatively affect the parent-child relationship. Ehrensaft and colleagues (2017) reported the IPV was related to decreased positive parenting practices (i.e., involvement and closeness) and increased negative parenting practices. Due to the reciprocal nature of IPV and the overlap between perpetration and victimization in the sample, these findings were not specific to either group (i.e., victim or perpetrator) and, instead, were interpreted as representative of mothers and fathers involved in a violent relationship.

Moving forward, further examination of parenting in the context of IPV is imperative, particularly from the perspective of male perpetrators, as these fathers typically remain connected and in contact with their children following their offence (Bourassa et al., 2017; Bunston, 2013; Salisbury et al., 2009; Stover, 2015). Given their circumstances, families with a history of IPV might also experience parenting challenges that require specialized intervention and support (Stover & Morgos, 2013). For example, parents may have questions surrounding how to engage in developmentally appropriate conversations with their children regarding the offence. Fathers may also be unsure of how to rebuild their sense of trust and security after the occurrence of violence in the home. Additionally, mothers might be in a position in which they are seeking contact with their child's father – a decision influenced by their personal beliefs surrounding what is in the best interest of their child (Edleson & Williams, 2006; Tubs & Williams, 2006). The choice to initiate shared parenting is perceived by some mothers with a history of abuse as beneficial for their child's mental health and development, and corresponds with the belief that it is inappropriate for them to withhold a fathers' right to see his child, or a child's right to have a relationship with their father (Tubs & Williams, 2006). Researchers have

also cited mothers' adoption of a "nuclear family ideology" (Hardesty & Ganong, 2006, p. 559) as a factor that impacts their decision making surrounding custody and co-parenting. The extent to which contact with a child's father places a mother's safety at risk, however, is an important consideration in any reunification or joint parenting efforts. It is imperative that the safety of mothers and children be prioritized, and that risk associated with visitation be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In addition, children's attachment and desire to maintain a relationship with their fathers should be acknowledged (Stover et al., 2003).

Theoretical Perspectives and Contextual Factors

Various theoretical frameworks have been adopted in the explanation of IPV (Ali & Naylor, 2013). From a feminist perspective, violence is understood in relation to men's pursuit of control over women (Ali & Naylor, 2013). The Duluth Model, developed in the 1980s, presents a depiction of men's abusive behaviours (i.e., economic abuse, coercion and threats, intimidation, emotional abuse, isolation, minimization, denial and blame, using children, and using male privilege), all as a means of sustaining men's power and control (Ali & Naylor, 2013; Pence & Paymar, 1993; Stover et al., 2009). In line with this perspective, violence against women has been described as "a demonstration of male power juxtaposed against the lesser power of women" (Jewkes, 2002, p. 1427). In this sense, IPV is conceptualized as a larger sociopolitical, systemic factor in terms of suppression and power. Consideration of this power dynamic and patriarchal domination is therefore critical in understanding the perpetration of IPV. The sociological perspective emphasizes the role of broader contextual factors including social situations and norms in understanding the perpetration of abuse in intimate relationships (Ali & Naylor, 2013). The occurrence of IPV is reportedly higher in environments in which violence is considered an acceptable form of behaviour that is impacted by one's prior experiences and

exposure (Jewkes, 2002). For example, witnessing IPV reinforces the notion that such behaviour is normative, particularly in the absence of consequences. Lastly, ecological frameworks have been applied to conceptualize violent behaviour in relation to the interaction amongst personal, situational, and sociocultural factors, thereby recognizing the role of the individual and their surrounding environment (Ali & Naylor, 2013; Heise, 1998). Heise (1998) depicted these factors within a series of four interconnected ecological systems. The innermost level includes an individual's personal history and factors that influence the way in which they respond to surrounding systems, for example, witnessing or experiencing abusive behaviour (Heise, 1998). The next level, the microsystem, involves characteristics of the family such as male dominance and control of wealth; marital conflict; and use of alcohol (Heise, 1998). Factors within the exosystem include unemployment/low socioeconomic status, isolation of the woman and family, and peer group influences (Heise, 1998). Lastly, Heise (1998) conceptualized the macrosystem as encompassing broad social factors including cultural values and beliefs. Examples include male supremacy and entitlement over women, adoption of rigid gender roles, and beliefs surrounding the use of violence to solve conflict and acceptability in relationships (Heise, 1998). For the purpose of this study, I draw on the ecological perspective, as I view the feminist and sociological perspective as embodied within this systemic model. Moreover, the ecological perspective allows for consideration of the individual as well as their social setting, cultural beliefs and values, and historical background. In this sense, context is taken into account in understanding the perpetration of domestic violence.

Masculinity and IPV. Masculinity and ideologies pertaining to male rights, gender roles, and superiority over women have been discussed in relation to the perpetration of IPV (Heise, 1998; Jewkes, 2002; Moore & Stuart, 2005; Próspero, 2008; O'Neil & Harway, 1997; Reidy et

al., 2014; Santana et al., 2006). O'Neil and Harway (1997) discussed the contextualization of gender role socialization and gender role conflict in relation to violence against women. Misogynistic attitudes and socialization of sexist values and stereotypes (i.e., power, restrictive emotionality) were identified in research studying the perpetration of abuse (O'Neil & Harway, 1997). Another belief related to the use of violence against women is the mindset that violence as a mode of interacting is man's right, justified by the violation of socially constructed gender norms and expectations. The following quotation from Heise (1998) illustrates this concept:

> Beatings for just cause are considered a man's right. Others will intervene only if the beating is interpreted as being without cause or as excessively brutal. Generally, any transgression of a gender norm, such as disobeying a husband, failing to prepare meals on time or sexual infidelity, is considered just cause for abuse. (p. 281)

Such beliefs surrounding the acceptance of physical abuse toward women can be interpreted as contributing to the perpetration of IPV. Moreover, the adoption of traditional gender norms and roles relate to the manifestation of IPV, which are influenced by culture and context.

Culture, Immigration, and IPV. Consideration of culture is necessary in understanding the perpetration of IPV (Montalvo-Liendo et al., 2018; Vandello & Cohen, 2008; Welland & Ribner, 2010). As stated by Vandello and Cohen (2008), "meanings of violent acts cannot be understood outside of their cultural context" (p. 652). As such, fostering an appreciation of cultural expectations and beliefs surrounding masculinity, femininity, and romantic relationships is important in constructing a comprehensive understanding of IPV (Vandello & Cohen, 2008). Within cultures of honor, for example, men are expected to control and protect those around them, which may involve the use of violence (Vandello & Cohen, 2008). Cultures of honor exist throughout the world and share a common belief in the importance in preserving of a man's

reputation as strong, tough, or honorable (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994; Cohen, 1996; Moritz, 2008, Shackelford, 2005; van Osch et al., 2013; Vandello & Cohen, 2008). For women, there is an emphasis on the maintenance of female purity, loyalty, and refraining from behaviours that may be interpreted as disreputable or shameful (Vandello & Cohen, 2008; Vandello & Cohen, 2003). As noted by Vandello and Cohen (2003), "because male honor often requires female deference and fidelity, relationships between men and women can carry an underlying tension that can serve as a precursor or catalyst to domestic violence" (p. 998). In this sense, honor cultures may reinforce and condone the use of male violence in the context of intimate relationships.

Certain cultural norms with regard to acceptability of violence in relationships alongside male/female gender role expectations and imbalance of power have also been discussed (Gennari et al., 2017; Raj & Silverman, 2002). Gennari and colleagues (2017) investigated the attitudes of immigrant men and women from Morocco, Egypt and Pakistan residing in Italy with regard to domestic violence. Some participants communicated their perception of men as holding a privileged position relative to women, who are expected to remain devoted to their husbands regardless of their circumstances (Gennari et al., 2017). The importance of preserving family unity and condemnation of divorce was expressed by some participants as well (Gennari et al., 2017). Montalvo-Liendo and colleagues (2018) also identified cultural expectations, norms, and beliefs surrounding violence and masculinity as contributing to the use of violence by men of Mexican origin. In their qualitative study, the researchers included statements from the men describing what they observed during their childhood and how they were raised. Thus, the study's findings drew attention to the influence of early experiences in shaping future behaviours and expectations. Additionally, some of the participants described their abusive actions in a way that downplayed their impact and severity. This may be interpreted as a reflection of cultural

norms or beliefs surrounding violence in relationships, or as a lack of understanding in terms of what constitutes abuse. Such findings also highlight the need for more in-depth research with immigrant men.

Circumstances of immigration, acculturation, and the post-migration context should also be considered in understanding the perpetration of IPV and vulnerability to spousal abuse (Abraham, 1998; Adames & Campbell, 2005; Gennari et al., 2017; Guruge et al., 2009; Kim & Sung, 2016; Okeke-Ihejirrrika & Salami, 2018). Researchers have identified specific barriers in disclosing IPV within immigrant populations including: cultural prohibitions or practices, isolation, economic barriers, and fear of immigration or deportation (Alaggia et al., 2009; Skirwadkar, 2004).

Methodological challenges such as accessibility and language barriers in collecting this information from women are also present (Alaggia et al., 2009; Skirwadkar, 2004). In addition, cultural and contextual considerations related to immigrant women's vulnerability to IPV including justification of abuse, isolation, economic insecurity, male/female gender roles, and immigration/legal status have been documented (Raj & Silverman, 2002). Bui and Morash (2008) conducted a qualitative study with Vietnamese women and service providers to better understand the perpetration of IPV in immigrant populations. Based on the information collected, the researchers described men's loss of economic power, which included changes in their employment, occupational status, and ability to provide financially for their family, as challenging their masculine identity and gender norm expectations, thereby contributing to their violent behaviour (Bui & Morash, 2008). Men's inability to provide for their family, as well as the downward mobility following immigration took away from their traditional notions of masculinity (Bui & Morash, 2008). Violence, therefore, was conceptualized as a means for men

to reassert their male power and authority (Bui & Morash, 2008). Some women also reported that their husband's behaviour changed after to coming to the United States, noting that their husband began to behave more violently (Bui & Morash, 2008). Perceptions of shifting gender relations, power, and role reversal are therefore important considerations in understanding the manifestation of domestic violence and how such changes might threaten certain forms of masculinity (Adames & Campbell, 2005; Alcade, 2011; Bui & Morash, 2008; Jin & Keat, 2010). Although the presence of IPV prior to migration is not always known or explored within the context of research, shifts in traditional power dynamics and stressors associated with immigration are prominent themes in the perpetration and justification of violence.

Challenges for immigrant men in terms of adapting to the new host culture and personal trauma associated with the migratory experience have also been reported (Hancock & Siu, 2009). Shifting gender roles due to migration were identified by Latino immigrant men as a source of marital conflict, as women had the potential to acquire greater physical and economic freedom (Hancock & Siu, 2009). In the absence of their family of origin, immigrant men may also feel isolated and overwhelmed with their familial responsibilities (Gennari et al., 2017).

Within a Canadian study conducted with immigrant and refugee men, changes in power dynamics, diminished status and heightened financial stress due to lack of employment, and challenges associated with the experience of culture shock were identified by participants as contributing to the perpetration of domestic violence (Simbandumwe et al., 2008). Participants also expressed difficulty adapting to and understanding cultural norms with regard to the use of violence in familial relationships (Simbandumwe et al., 2008). Disciplining children, for example, emerged as a topic of contention amongst participants, with some arguing for the use of behaviours such as spanking and others disputing its acceptability in childrearing

(Simbandumwe et al., 2008). Participants also expressed concern surrounding the disruption of "family unity" following domestic violence (Simbandumwe et al., 2008), a sentiment that can be interpreted as a reflection of the importance of family stability and cohesion for immigrant men. Moreover, some participants espoused the belief that in Canada, women are afforded more power, economic opportunities, and preferential treatment in the legal system, whereas others disputed this perspective and spoke in support of women's enhanced rights (Simbandumwe et al., 2008). Researchers exploring the post-migration experiences of African immigrant men reported perceptions of women as having "empowered status" in Canada, as well as shifts in the financial balance of power, division of labor, and gender roles (Okeke-Ihejirrrika & Salami, 2018). Participants in Okeke-Ihejirrika and Salimi's (2018) study described these stressors as negatively impacting family life and contributing to conflict in the marital relationship. The absence of a support system and culturally appropriate strategies for dealing with family conflict were also discussed by participants. As such, "participants unanimously recommended the development of support systems within African communities, including a 'council of elders' to assist in resolving marital conflict" (Okeke-Ihejirrrika & Salami, 2018, p. 103). Taken together, circumstances associated with immigration and IPV are complex and require unique consideration by researchers and practitioners.

Specific forms of immigration-related abuse including isolation, restricting women's integration into their host society, and threats of deportation have also been discussed (Raj & Silverman, 2002). In moving to a new country, immigrant women experience a form of "dual subordination" (p. 221) stemming from patriarchal norms and gender role stereotypes, and their social position as an ethnic minority (Abraham, 1998). Bui and Morash (2008) reported that some Vietnamese immigrant men attempted to restrict their wife's employment opportunities in

order to maintain their sense of dependency. Such behaviours were interpreted by the researchers as preventing women from straying from the rigid prescriptions of femininity these men ascribed to (Bui & Morash, 2008). Abraham (1998) defined isolation for South Asian immigrant women as a lack of meaningful connections, social relationships, and sense of connectedness to one's culture and support system. Participants described being locked in their homes, disconnected from their family of origin, or denied the ability to seek employment or further their education (e.g. take English classes; Abraham, 1998). Although some of these abusive behaviours can and do occur within non-immigrant couples, many of them are considered specific to the circumstances and societal positioning of immigrant women. Given this emerging body of literature and identification of risk factors associated with immigration, culturally specific treatment programs are needed. To date, however, the existing body of literature informing and evaluating such programs is severely limited.

Hancock and Siu (2009) described the implementation of a culturally sensitive group intervention for Latino immigrant men with a history of domestic violence and highlight various benefits (e.g. enhanced positive engagement in the group) relative to the traditional Duluth model. Several limitations (e.g. lack of attention to environmental factors, not allowing for exploration of childhood traumas, etc.) are described in relation to the Duluth model, raising awareness of the importance of providing culturally sensitive interventions with immigrant men (Hancock & Siu, 2009). As noted by the researchers, "personal crises related to the loss of cultural identifiers, loss of extended family and familiar supports, and the difficulty of adjusting to a new culture with limited resources were salient issues the group leader could not address within the Duluth framework" (Hancock & Siu, 2009, p. 125). This omission is problematic given the potential role of these factors in the perpetration of IPV with immigrant populations.

Immigrant men's beliefs surrounding hierarchical authority were also considered incompatible with the Duluth model's emphasis on egalitarianism in relationships (Hancock & Siu, 2009). In response, the intervention began with an acceptance of the men's cultural background: an approach rooted in a strong commitment to fostering a working alliance with the men (Hancock & Siu, 2009). Elements of the Latino culture were also incorporated and strengthening family life was identified as a goal of the group (Hancock & Siu, 2009). Hancock and Siu (2009) describe this approach as follows:

> The approach built on the values and traditions of the Latino culture. It did not challenge the hierarchal nature of the men's traditional relationships but stressed the concept of respect to define and insist upon non-abusive, more compassionate relationships expected of men as family leaders. The men were motivated by the value of the family to learn new ways to control destructive emotions and contribute to family values of respect, loyalty and cooperation. (p. 130)

Future efforts to draw on positive aspects of offenders' cultural values and traditions in a treatment context should be considered by practitioners working with immigrant populations. Implementing this approach, however, calls for further research geared toward uncovering and understanding these cultural components. Men's desire to preserve their family life, for example, can be drawn upon as a motivator in IPV treatment. Based on interviews with Latino-immigrant men, Welland and Ribner (2010) identified the following cultural additions to IPV programming in their study:

> Learning to be a good father; the concept of gender equality versus *machismo*; couple conflict related to changes in gender roles after immigration; the experience of

> discrimination as it relates to their lives in the United States; the use of force in sexual relations with their partners; and spirituality as a deterrent to violence. (p. 806)

The researchers also reported family and fatherhood as highly important to participants who viewed parent education as appropriate within the context of IPV treatment (Welland & Ribner, 2010). Relatedly, a desire for parent education and training was identified by Latino men involved in a culturally informed batterer intervention program (Parra-Cardona et al., 2013). Participants described wanting to learn how to be a "good" parent and to be more attentive and patient with their children (Parra-Cardona et al., 2013). As such, the way in which immigrant fathers with a history of IPV conceptualize "good" parenting and the associated skills or strategies requires further investigation.

Overall, recognition of the role of culture and immigration is important in understanding the experiences of victims and perpetrators of IPV, and for developing responsive intervention and prevention programs. Researchers and practitioners are also tasked with the challenge of exploring the adoption and acceptance of these cultural beliefs on the individual level. Additionally, further exploration of the intersectionality between fatherhood, IPV, and immigration is imperative.

Fathering by Men with History of IPV: A Neglected Area of Research

Our current understanding of the parenting role, practices, and experiences of male perpetrators of IPV is limited. Information on men's parenting has been presented from the perspective of mothers with a history of IPV, revealing concerns surrounding fathers' knowledge and skills as parents, as well as observations of their children emulating their father's abusive behaviours (Humphreys et al., 2019). In order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of familial dynamics and parenting in the context of IPV, it is important for fathers to be provided

with the opportunity to share their experiences. To date, relatively few studies have explored fathers' beliefs and perceptions regarding the negative consequences of children's exposure to IPV and how the men attempt to mitigate these effects (Bourassa et al., 2017; Rothman et al., 2007; Salisbury et al., 2009). Research investigating the parenting perceptions, attitudes and behaviours of male perpetrators of IPV is also scarce (Baker et a., 2001; Burnette et al., 2017), thereby limiting practitioners' ability to meaningfully respond to and support fathers' parenting needs. With regard to interventions, few programs have been designed specifically for fathers with a history of IPV, some of which have not been formally or extensively evaluated (Labarre et al., 2016). There is also a paucity of information pertaining to the impact of father-child contact post offence regarding children's adjustment (Hunter & Graham-Bermann, 2013) and the role of fatherhood as a motivator toward change (Meyer, 2016). Research examining involvement of fathers in an intervention context with children exposed to domestic violence is also limited (Stover & Morgos, 2013). Some examples include father-child treatment, in-vivo modeling of parenting skills with fathers, or the inclusion of father-child sessions within an intervention model (Stover & Morgos, 2013).

Provided that offending fathers and their children continue to remain connected and in contact with one another following the offence (Bourassa et al., 2017; Bunston, 2013; Humphreys, et al., 2019; Salisbury et al., 2009; Stover, 2015), ongoing research aimed at supporting this population of fathers is warranted. Intervention work conducted with fathers with a history of IPV might also send the message to children, as well as others in the family system, that change and rehabilitation are possible. As noted by Stover and Morgos (2013), "involving abusive fathers in treatment needs to be viewed not only as an intervention method but also as a preventative measure for future abuse" (p. 9). Additionally, there is evidence to suggest that non-

resident father visitation can be associated with positive behavioural outcomes. Within a sample of preschool aged children exposed to domestic violence, fewer internalizing symptoms (i.e., withdrawal, depression) were reported as the frequency of father visitation increased (Stover et al., 2003). A positive correlation between mother-child relationship functioning and frequency of father visitation was also documented (Stover et al., 2003). Taken together, it is important for practitioners to be responsive to the reality of ongoing contact between fathers and their children following IPV, and for researchers to study these fathers' experiences to help inform intervention efforts.

Fatherhood and IPV: What Do We Know?

Fathers with a history of IPV report a plethora of emotions including shame, guilt, regret, remorse, and sadness, alongside concern regarding the consequences of children's exposure to violence and its impact on their parenting relationship (Bourassa et al., 2017; Fox, Sayer, & Bruce, 2002; Haland et al., 2016; Holt, 2015; Rothman et al., 2007). Fatherhood has been identified as a motivator toward change, with fathers' reporting a strong desire learn how to be parents, prove themselves in this role, and sustain a meaningful, involved relationship with their children (Broady et al., 2017; Haland et al., 2016; Meyer, 2018; Veteläinen et al., 2013). Researchers have also identified the fatherhood role as having great meaning for some fathers with a history of IPV who may desire an improved parenting relationship (Holt, 2015; Perel & Peled, 2008). Relatedly, the father role has been characterized as a source of "re-entry into the moral community" (Fox et al., 2002, p. 137) and intrinsic motivation (Stanley et al., 2012). Fathers' acknowledgement of their violent behaviour and consideration of their child's perspective have also been discussed as a "turning point" and motivator toward self-reflection (Fox et al., 2002). In their study with men's batterers groups, Fox and colleagues (2002) noted

fathers' feelings of remorse, particularly in relation to the impact of their offence on their family and fathering role. Responsibility also emerged as a theme in terms of men's accepting and taking accountability for their violent behaviour, upholding the traditional provider role, and "being there" for their children. Moreover, participants described fatherhood as facilitating a pathway toward redemption, both internally and on a broader societal level. Taken together, fathers' desire to foster an identity as a positive, engaged parent surfaced as a powerful instigator toward change. The researchers also proposed that men's role as a father could be separated from their position as an intimate partner/spouse, the context in which the violence occurred. In this sense, IPV was not seen as impeding the development of positive father-child relationships.

Within a recent qualitative study that utilized semi-structured interviews (Bourassa et al., 2017), some offending fathers described a painful "emotional distance" (p. 266) between themselves and their children. The majority of fathers also acknowledged their child's feelings of fear and insecurity, and the impact of these emotions on their subsequent interactions (Bourassa et al., 2017). Surprisingly, most fathers did not disclose concerns surrounding the long-term, negative consequences of IPV, and others denied such consequences due to their child's age, low severity of violence, or lack of direct exposure (Bourassa et al., 2017). Similar results in terms of fathers' lack of awareness or minimization surrounding the implications of their violence have been reported (Broady et al., 2017; Smith & Humphreys, 2018). In Bourassa et al.'s (2017) study, although many fathers reported engaging in conversations with their children as a means of demonstrating their efforts toward non-violence and mending their relationship, others downplayed their responsibility or chose not to discuss their offence. Relatedly, Haland and colleagues (2016) depicted some fathers in as state of denial evidenced by their justifications for their violent behaviour. Such findings highlight the importance of educating fathers about how

their offence affects the parent-child relationship. It is important, however, for researchers to consider how the timing of interviews might influence the information collected and fathers' ability to meaningfully reflect on their behaviour and relationship with their child. For example, fathers may hold a different perspective depending on their stage of change and whether or not they have attended therapy or mandated programming.

Researchers have also examined the parenting attitudes and beliefs of men with a history of IPV (Burnette et al., 2017; Haland et al., 2014). Burnette and colleagues (2017) found that this group of fathers tended to report negative parenting attitudes (e.g., inappropriate expectations given the child's developmental age), thereby placing their children at greater risk for maltreatment. IPV has also been identified as a predictor of higher levels of negative parenting practices (Ehrensaft et al., 2017). Moreover, fathers with a history of IPV have disclosed fears surrounding the violence continuing in subsequent generations alongside a desire to protect their children from violence and provide them with a sense of safety (Haland et al., 2014). Further research geared toward understanding parenting attitudes, beliefs, and practices from the perspective of perpetrators of IPV, however, is warranted.

Interventions with fathers with a history of IPV are a central component of society's response to domestic violence. Recently, researchers have identified a need for the creation and formal evaluation of programs that address the intersectionality of family violence and fatherhood (Labarre et al., 2016). Within a recent examination of programs designed for fathers with a history of violence, Labarre and colleagues (2016) reviewed a total of 10 programs, only two of which were reported as Canadian. The researchers did not exclude programs designed for men who behave violently toward their children, further limiting the number of programs specifically designed for fathers with a history of IPV. Furthermore, the majority of the programs

were not formally or extensively evaluated, thereby impacting the researchers' ability to assess their efficacy and effectiveness (Labarre et al., 2016). Relatedly, following their review, Stover and Morgos (2013) identified "no published studies presenting rigorously evaluated intervention programs targeting parenting for fathers who perpetrate IPV" (p. 10). This is a noteworthy omission given the reality of ongoing contact between fathers and their children following IPV.

In terms of participant demographics, research exploring IPV and fatherhood within immigrant populations and culturally diverse samples is scarce. One notable exception is Baker, Perilla and Norris (2001) who investigated the relationship between men's perpetration of violence (i.e. psychological and physical abuse) and parenting stress and competence in Latino immigrant couples. Each couple belonged to an intervention (N= 26) or comparison group (N =17), although the majority of analyses reported were representative of the total group of men and women (Baker et al., 2001). Men in the intervention group had a history of domestic violence and were court-ordered to participate in a batterers' program (Baker et al., 2001). For these men, a significant predictive relationship between psychological abuse and parenting competence was reported (Baker et al., 2001). This relationship was negative in directionality meaning that men felt less competent as parents when they exhibited higher levels of psychological abuse in their relationships (Baker et al., 2001). For women, the relationship between men's abusive behaviours, physical or psychological, and women's reports of parenting competence was not statistically significant (Baker et al., 2001). With regard to parenting stress, men's physical abuse was a significant predictor of parenting stress for women, whereas men's level of parenting stress was not influenced by their use of physical or psychological abuse toward their partner (Baker et al., 2001). These findings suggest that the presence of violence in the home is differentially related to men's and women's perceptions of their parenting stress and

competence (Baker et al., 2001). Moving forward, efforts to better understand and address fathers' diminished parenting competence following the perpetration of psychological abuse can be embedded in IPV treatment programs. Researchers can also investigate how immigrant fathers conceptualize parenting competence and the meaning they ascribe to this construct, as well as explore potential shifts in their beliefs surrounding competency given their past and present circumstances (i.e., perpetration of IPV, attendance in court-mandated programming, etc.). As emphasized throughout my review of the literature, further research exploring immigrant men's parenting experiences in the context of domestic violence is critical in order to understand their familial dynamics and inform the development of programming that is culturally sensitive and responsive to their needs.

Current Gaps in the Literature

The existing IPV literature paints a comprehensive picture of fathers' emotions post-offence (e.g., guilt, shame, remorse) and highlights the paternal role as a powerful mechanism toward change. This knowledge, however, is based almost exclusively on data collected with fathers born in their offending country (i.e. non-immigrant populations) or culturally homogenous samples. In fact, a search across multiple disciplinary databases (i.e. psychology, sociology, social work) found no published qualitative studies specifically investigating the parenting experiences of immigrant fathers court-mandated to attend IPV treatment in Canada. Although Montalvo-Liendo and colleagues (2018) asked men of Mexican origin to reflect on how their abuse affected their children, understanding the men's perceptions surrounding the perpetration of IPV in relation to their parenting relationship was not the focus of their study.

Moreover, there is a need to study the intersectionality of IPV and fatherhood in order to better understand and contextualize these fathers' parenting experiences. The goal of the present

study is to generate insight into father-child relationships following IPV and generate implications for practitioners working with this population. Despite growing recognition of the importance of father-child intervention efforts and the development of programs for fathers with a history of IPV, there remains a paucity of primary prevention and intervention programs designed to meet the needs of immigrant and refugee groups, both in terms of addressing the violence in their intimate relationships as well as supporting their role as a parent (Featherstone & Fraser, 2012; Hancock & Siu, 2009; Labarre et al., 2016; Montalvo-Liendo et al., 2018; Simbandumwe et al., 2008; Stover & Morgos, 2013). Within Canada, there are also few specialized policies or guidelines for working with immigrant and refugee families experiencing domestic violence (Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2018). This is problematic as these men are being court-mandated to attend IPV treatment programs through the Canadian justice system. Going forward, it is important for researchers to conduct studies designed to better understand fatherhood in the context of immigration and IPV in order to help inform research and practice with this population from a culturally sensitive lens.

Present Study

In order to address the aforementioned gaps in the literature, the purpose of this study was to develop an in-depth understanding of the parenting experiences of immigrant fathers who were charged with an offence against an intimate partner and court-mandated to attend treatment. Guided by an ecological framework, the exploration of the intersectionalities between IPV, immigration, and fatherhood provides a unique and important contribution to the literature. I utilized a narrative approach informed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000)'s narrative inquiry, which is an appropriate methodology for generating knowledge and understanding based on the stories that individuals share and live by. Moreover, the collection of stories allowed me to

explore the complexity of IPV in a manner that is relatable and accessible to participants. The overarching question guiding this study is as follows: “What are the parenting stories of immigrant fathers who are court-mandated to attend IPV treatment?”: (1) What do such stories tell us about the fathers’ parenting experiences and understandings of what it means to be a “good” parent? (2) What types of lived experiences (e.g., immigration, relationship with their father as a child, etc.) contribute to these men’s understanding of fatherhood and IPV? and (3) How do fathers’ stories reflect cultural and societal beliefs surrounding IPV?

CHAPTER THREE: Method

My Epistemological and Ontological Perspective

Consideration of one's philosophical assumptions is essential in qualitative research. As outlined by Hitchcock and Hughes (1995), "ontological assumptions will give rise to epistemological assumptions which have methodological implications for the choice of particular data collection techniques" (p. 21). Epistemology refers to beliefs surrounding "what counts as knowledge and how knowledge claims are justified" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 19). From a research standpoint, one's epistemological beliefs relate to perceptions surrounding how knowledge is formed, obtained, and communicated; essentially, how do people come to know what they know and what, in fact, can be known (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995)? Consequently, our epistemological stance "bears mightily" (Crotty, 1998, p, 9) on how research is conducted. Ontology involves beliefs surrounding the nature of reality and subject matter (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). An example of an ontological question is: "what is a human being?" (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995, p. 19).

Maxwell (2013) defines epistemological constructivism as "our understanding of this world as inevitably our construction, rather than a purely objective perception of reality and no such construction can claim absolute truth" (p. 43). This constructivist perspective aligns with my philosophy as a researcher, as I believe that individuals develop subjective and varied meanings of experiences by interacting with others and in the context of their surrounding social, cultural, and historical setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I also believe in the value of uncovering the subjective meaning and interpretations that participants ascribe to life events. Moreover, I hold that the same experience can be understood and interpreted differently depending on the individual and that is essential for researchers to capture these varied perspectives. In this sense,

I consider reality to be socially constructed (i.e. ontological perspective) which is central to the constructivist approach (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). Overall, my philosophical assumptions align with my qualitative research orientation and proposed methodology for this study, as outlined below.

Researcher Positionality

As a parenting researcher, I have a vested interest in conducting studies that foster positive father-child relationships. Throughout my graduate training, I worked as a research assistant on various projects involving children, youth, and families in school and community settings. Moreover, in my clinical work I provided assessment and intervention services to children and families presenting with a range of mental health challenges and life circumstances. Many of the children I counselled experienced severe developmental trauma and disruptions in their early attachment, whereas others were coping with changes in their familial dynamics (i.e., parental separation or divorce) and home life. In working with these families, I gained an appreciation of the power of taking a collaborative approach as a therapist and engaging the family system in the context of treatment. I believe that the majority of fathers desire a close, connected relationship with their children and should be supported in their efforts, provided that they do not pose a risk to the well-being of their child. Prior to attending graduate school, I also co-facilitated treatment groups for immigrant fathers charged with an offence against an intimate partner who were court-mandated to attend treatment. In this role, I identified a lack of culturally informed knowledge and understanding surrounding immigrant fathers' parenting experiences following their offence. These experiences inspired me to conduct research that has the potential to meaningfully inform IPV treatment programming and respond to the needs of this understudied population of fathers. On a more personal level, I am a third-generation Canadian

citizen and identify as female. My grandparents immigrated to Canada from Italy following the second world war with the intention of building a new life in Canada. Upholding the traditions and values my grandparents shared with me is important, and part of my cultural identity.

My Theoretical Perspective: Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics as a mode of understanding is a form of interpretivism situated in a particular cultural and historical context (Crotty, 1998; McLeod, 2001). As noted by McLeod (2001), "all the questions we ask and words we use to articulate our understandings are embedded in culture" (p. 56). It is, therefore, seemingly impossible to separate one's experience and realities from their socio-cultural roots and surrounding environment. The way in which a phenomenon is understood is also conceptualized as a form of tradition-informed interpretation (McLeod, 2001). The process of inquiry, referred to as the hermeneutic circle, involves a repetitive inward and outward analysis that incorporates segments of and the entirety of a text in relation to one another (McLeod, 2001).

I adopted the hermeneutic perspective, as it goes hand in hand with the methodology utilized within this study, narrative inquiry. Hermeneutics aligns with a narrative approach given the emphasis on context and consideration of one's cultural-historical background, as well as the perception of texts as a form of transmitting or communicating meaning (Crotty, 1998; McLeod, 2011). McLeod (2001) speaks of "sensitive interpretation" (p. 27) on behalf of the researcher which calls for an awareness of the "emotional and interpersonal worlds" (p. 27) of those who created the texts. For the purpose of my study, I conceptualized the interview transcripts as a form of texts that contain stories of fathers' lived experiences and embody these "worlds." My role, therefore, was to create a comprehensive narrative and interpretation of these texts. Context in relation to the researcher is also acknowledged in the hermeneutic approach, particularly in

terms of how it might relate to the process of inquiry and interpretation of texts (McLeod, 2001) – a sentiment which corresponds with the active role of the investigator in narrative research.

Narrative Research

Narrative research is rooted in the idea that individuals construct stories as a means of understanding their lives (Josselson, 2011; Wertz et al., 2011). Bruner (1991) describes narrative text as functioning as "an instrument of mind in the construction of reality" (p. 6). Essentially, the stories people tell provide a pathway toward comprehending how they create a sense of meaning and connect various life events and experiences (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019; Josselson, 2011). The narrative mode of thinking captures an individual's perceptions, thoughts, and beliefs and helps generate as well as gain insight into the intricacies of human behaviour (Kim, 2016). This emphasis on collecting stories differentiates narrative research from other qualitative methodologies, as reflected in the type of research questions which are typically chronological/story-oriented (Creswell et al., 2007; Wertz et al., 2011). Narrative research is also an emergent and collaborative approach in which researchers and participants are actively involved in the process of inquiry (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019; Kim, 2016). This dynamic is reflected in Kim's (2016) description of participants as potential "co-researchers, co-constructors, co-narrators, and co-storytellers" (p. 99).

In the context of narrative research, method refers to "ways of thinking about inquiry, modes of exploring questions, and creative approaches to offering one's constructed findings in the scholarly community" (Wertz et al., 2011, p. 66). Wertz and colleagues (2011) describe narrative research as an inductive approach that aligns with a postmodern perspective with regard to the construction of knowledge. As such, narrative researchers are not generally concerned with the factual accuracy of a participant's recollection, and are more interested in

how participants understand, organize, and generate meaning from their lived experiences (Josselson, 2011; Wertz et al., 2011). Relatedly, the goal of narrative research is not to make claims of certainty or generalize findings outside of the study itself (Webster & Mertova, 2007; Josselson, 2011). The information gathered, however, helps illuminate an individual's experience and may be extended to understand similar situations or phenomenon.

The narrative approach I utilized in this study is informed primarily by Clandinin and Connelly (2000). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) describe narrative inquiry as a means of understanding, thinking about, and drawing meaning from experience. In this sense, narrative inquiry allows researchers to capture the complexity and richness of an individual's experience. This level of depth is particularly important for understudied phenomenon such as the intersectionality of IPV and fatherhood in immigrant populations. Moreover, through narrative inquiry researchers gather individual storied experiences in a manner that takes personal, historical, and cultural context into consideration (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As outlined by Bloomberg and Volpe (2019), researchers "inquire into the institutional, social, cultural, familial, and linguistic narratives in which each participant's experiences are embedded and that shape each individual experience" (p. 58). This sentiment is echoed by Bell (2002) in her discussion of interconnectedness and reorganization of stories over time and aligns with ecological frameworks of IPV, as previously discussed. Essentially, although stories serve as a reflection of the individual's perception of an experience, they are also shaped by broader factors. In the context of this study, I argue that such contextual considerations are essential when working with immigrant men in order to foster a holistic understanding of their experiences.

Rationale for Selecting a Narrative Approach

Narrative inquiry is an appropriate methodology for conducting research with immigrant fathers from diverse cultural backgrounds. Firstly, the universality of storytelling is a particular strength of this approach. As outlined by Webster and Mertova (2007), "we all have a basic need for story, for organising our experiences into tales of important happenings" (p. 10). Individuals lead storied lives; through sharing stories, people communicate their knowledge and how they perceive themselves, as well as generating meaning from their experiences (Kim, 2016). Collecting information through stories is also an approachable method for participants who may be unfamiliar with the research process, or those with limited reading and writing abilities. Lieblich and colleagues (1998) describe people as "storytellers by nature" (p. 7), thus highlighting the universality of this method. Moreover, this method of data collection creates a space for participants or researchers to ask clarifying or follow-up questions as required. Previous studies with immigrant populations have utilized narrative inquiry with great success (Dastjerdi, 2012; Phillion, 2008; Obeng, 2007; Phillion, 2003; Xu et al., 2007), demonstrating the suitability of this approach. Additionally, within a recent study on Mexican immigrant women's experiences of intimate partner sexual violence, narrative inquiry was effectively utilized as a means of gathering participants' stories and generating themes (Kim et al., 2017). I hold that narrative inquiry offers a voice for marginalized individuals whose stories might not be heard or well understood. The stories of immigrant fathers stories are neglected in the current IPV literature, thereby creating a deficit in our ability to understand their parenting experiences and, therefore, respond therapeutically in the context of domestic violence.

Lastly, the process of narrative inquiry aligns with my orientation as a researcher in terms of the importance of being actively involved in the collection and interpretation of data. To date, my research training and experience has been primarily from a quantitative framework. I

have yet to be afforded the opportunity to engage with participants to the extent that narrative inquiry permits and encourages. Phillion (2008) describes the role of the researcher in narrative inquiry as follows:

> With the lived experience of the participants and the researcher at the forefront of all stages of the inquiry, the researcher is not a distant, detached person, but one who is passionate about the phenomena under study and invested in the participants. The researcher is often able to get 'up-close and personal' with the participants and get their perspective on the phenomena of interest in the inquiry. (p. 290)

As a researcher with a keen interest in parenting in the context of IPV, narrative inquiry aligns with the purpose of this study as well as my desire to be actively involved in the research process and involve participants as co-constructors of their stories. I believe that this relational approach serves to generate rich, descriptive data, thereby illuminating the parenting experiences of these fathers.

Narrative Interview Process

As described by Kim (2016), the narrative interview can be divided into two phases: (a) narration phase and (b) conversation phase. Within the narration phase the interviewer's primary objective is to actively listen and observe, thereby encouraging participants to share their experiences (Kim, 2016). As stories are revealed, the interviewer facilitates the continuation of the narration but refrains from interjecting with questions, similar to that of an open-ended interview (Kim, 2016). During the conversation phase, the interviewer poses narrative questions designed to build upon information shared in the initial narration or encourage additional storytelling and elaboration (Kim, 2016). Similarly, Creswell and Poth (2018) recommend the use of sub-questions as a means of further probing the meaning of participants' stories. The

interview template for this study was created to align with these phases (Kim, 2016). Kim (2016) acknowledges, however, that these phases do not necessarily occur sequentially. Fluidity, therefore, is to be expected (Kim, 2016). Additionally, interview questions were designed to gain insight into the past, present, and future to align with Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) notion of continuity and temporality.

Participants

Participants included seven immigrant fathers residing in a Western Canadian province who were court-mandated to attend group treatment following an offence against an intimate partner. Purposeful sampling was used to recruit fathers who were currently attending or who had previously completed court-mandated IPV group treatment. Some of the IPV treatment groups were specific to immigrant men, whereas others were composed of a more heterogeneous group (i.e., immigrant and non-immigrant men). Participants ranged in age from 30 to 62 years old and immigrated to Canada from the following countries: Ethiopia, Nigeria, Grenada, Afghanistan, Egypt, and India. No restrictions were placed on the amount of time that fathers had to be residing in Canada in order to participate, or their citizenship status. Four of fathers were Canadian citizens and the remaining three were permanent residents. Participants disclosed being charged with a variety of offences (i.e., assault, sexual assault, assault with a weapon, uttering threats, etc.). At the time of the first interview, three fathers had a no-contact order in place with their former/current partner. A complete summary of the demographic questions asked and corresponding responses for each participant can be found in Appendix A.

Ethical Considerations

According to the Canadian Tri-council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (2018), three core principles should be taken into consideration when

engaging in research with human participants: (a) respect for persons, (b) concern for welfare, and (c) justice. The protocols and procedures of this dissertation study were designed to align with these core principles, as outlined below. My primary supervisor was also consulted throughout the duration of this study to ensure that these guidelines were adhered to.

Intimate partner violence is a highly sensitive and personal topic. As such, this study was deemed to place participants at a greater risk than they would encounter in their everyday lives and was subject to a thorough review by the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Health Panel. Steps were taken to ensure that participants were aware of the risks involved in participating prior to beginning their interview. I explained that some of the interview questions might cause them to feel different emotions such as sadness, shame, or anger. Fathers were made aware that they could chose to reschedule or end their interview at any time, without penalty, or decide not to answer a particular question. Information regarding how to withdraw their data and when this could be done was also provided. Additionally, I gave fathers the option of requesting that the audio recorder be turned off at any point during their interview. Limits to confidentiality were also reviewed prior to conducting the interview. For example, I explained that if information was disclosed indicating that a child is being harmed or at risk, I would be obligated to report that information to children's services immediately. Lastly, I told fathers how their information would be stored, who would have access to their data, and when it would be destroyed. I explained that the information collected in this study may be used in research articles, summaries, and presentations and that they will not be personally identified in any way. I also highlighted that they were welcome to contact me once the study is complete should they be interested learning about my findings. One father declined participating as he did not feel comfortable with such personal information being recorded. Other fathers had questions about

the online platform and asked if the interview could take place in person. I addressed these questions and tried my best to establish a level of comfort with participants prior to each interview. This involved explaining my background and the reason why I was interested in learning more about their experiences. In the interview itself, I drew on my clinical skills to establish a warm, non-judgemental space.

As ethical dilemmas emerged within the context of this study, I consulted with my supervisory committee and sought their feedback. For example, a situation arose in which I decided not to continue with a participant who had completed part of their first interview. This choice was discussed with my committee who provided their feedback in terms of my decision to terminate their involvement and how to proceed moving forward. The transition from collecting interview data in person to over a video conferencing platform (doxy.me) due to COVID-19 also required that I familiarize myself with the necessary security features in order to ensure the privacy and protection of participant information. The platform I selected (doxy.me) is compliant with HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act), GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), PHIPA/PIPEDA (Personal Health Information Protection Act), and HITECH (Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act) and meets worldwide security requirements, according to the information provided on their website.

Furthermore, I had to consider the ethical implications of asking practitioners to share information about the study with fathers with whom they were providing services to (see strategy #4 of recruitment below). It was important that fathers did not feel pressured to participate in my study and understood that their involvement was not a condition of their treatment or court-mandate. Practitioners made it clear to potential participant(s) that I would not disclose whether or not they decided to take part in the study, and that this information is kept private. Some

practitioners, however, expressed that they did not feel comfortable directly providing information about the study to their clients and, instead, asked to implement more distant recruitment techniques (e.g., inviting me to join a group to introduce the study, providing a recruitment flyer at intake, etc.). I respected their decision to utilize whatever strategies they felt comfortable with and sought their feedback when designing new recruitment materials or techniques (e.g., scripts, flyers, etc.). Prior to submitting an ethics amendment involving an updated recruitment script or protocol, I consulted with practitioners and often sent a draft of these recruitment materials to them to review. A detailed description of each recruitment strategy is provided below.

Recruitment Strategies

Participants were recruited between the months of February 2020 and November 2020. Additional recruitment strategies were added as the study progressed and in response to the social and physical distancing requirements associated with the COVID-19. In March 2020, restrictions were placed on all in-person activities, including research-related tasks (i.e., interviews, in-person recruitment) to help curb the spread of the virus. Canadians were encouraged to stay at home as much as possible, and to not engage in non-essential travel or socialization activities with anyone outside of their household. This meant that the study had to be adapted in order for data collection and recruitment to occur through the use of virtual platforms.

Additionally, this population of fathers was also challenging to locate and engage, calling for a widespread recruitment approach that involved connecting with agencies and practitioners on a provincial level. A detailed description of each recruitment strategy in the order in which they were developed (i.e., strategy #1, strategy #2, etc.) is outlined below, alongside references

to the corresponding scripts and handouts. I developed recruitment strategies in consultation with service providers given their experience and knowledge of the population of interest. I informed each agency of the available recruitment strategies and gave them the option of selecting which to implement. For the purpose of maintaining the privacy of practitioners and participants, the names and locations of the agencies involved in this study are not reported.

Strategy #1. I attended a specialized IPV treatment group composed of immigrant men who had been charged with an offence against an intimate partner and court-mandated to attend treatment. I introduced myself as a student researcher, provided a description of the study and its purpose, and invited fathers to participate. During this introduction, I made it clear to the men that participation in this research project was optional and not a part of their court-mandate or treatment program. I highlighted my role as a student researcher from the University of Alberta who was interested in learning more about their parenting stories and experiences. I also expressed my hope that the information gathered could be used to assist other immigrant fathers that find themselves in a similar situation, as well as to help inform IPV treatment programs across the country. All group members were provided with a recruitment sheet (see Appendix B) and those who expressed interest in participating were asked to provide their name and preferred interview location (see Appendix C). Afterwards, I contacted those fathers and arranged a time to set up their interview.

Strategy #2. At this point in recruitment (Spring 2020), all in-person research activities had been suspended indefinitely given the social distancing requirements associated with COVID-19. Additionally, all agencies I was in contact with were delivering IPV treatment digitally (i.e. Zoom, Microsoft Team Meetings, etc.) or over the telephone. I attended several online groups provided by agencies that offered IPV treatment to immigrant and non-immigrant

offenders. I introduced myself as a student researcher, provided a description of the study and its purpose, and invited fathers to participate. All group members were provided with a digital copy of a recruitment handout (see Appendix D) that included my contact information and were asked to call or email me if there were interested in participating.

Strategy #3. Requiring fathers to directly contact me themselves was identified by myself and my supervisor as a potential barrier to participant recruitment. As such, I provided practitioners with an updated recruitment scripts to be used with immigrant fathers with a history of IPV. These scripts allowed them to directly provide me with fathers' contact information (i.e. first name and phone number). The first script was designed to be read aloud in individual or group settings, as well as in-person or online (see Appendix E), whereas the second was created for fathers who previously completed IPV treatment (see Appendix F). In either circumstance, practitioners made it clear to potential participant(s) that I would not disclose whether or not they ended up taking part in the study, and that this information is kept private. Additionally, practitioners were asked to give fathers my contact information in the event that they wanted to contact me themselves. Some agencies did not feel comfortable directly providing me with fathers contact information and, instead, left it up to fathers to contact me if they were interested in participating.

Strategy #4. All fathers from the group I attended as part of strategy #1 were reminded of the study by their therapist during their final session (see Appendix G). This session occurred over the telephone due to the social distancing requirements at the time and cancellation of the in-person IPV treatment group. The practitioners directly provided me with the contact information (i.e. first name, telephone number) of those fathers who agreed and expressed

interest in participating. This information was provided over the telephone or sent via a password protected, encrypted email. Afterwards, I contacted these fathers to schedule their interview.

Strategy #5. A recruitment flyer was developed that could be provided to eligible fathers during their intake interview (see Appendix H). Intake interviews took place across agencies prior to commencing individual or group treatment. Practitioners handed out the flyer at the end of their interview and fathers contacted me if they were interested in participating. This strategy was added following the suggestion of a psychologist from an agency that I was recruiting participants from.

Strategy #6. At the end of their first interview, participants were told that if they knew of another father who (1) meets criteria for the study and (2) they believe would be interested in participating, that they were welcome to provide this father with my name, phone number, and email address. I hypothesized that hearing about the study from someone they knew and who was already participating might assist with recruitment. This final strategy was not implemented until late Summer 2020.

Data Collection

I conducted individual, semi-structed interviews with participants. Each interview lasted approximately 45 min to 1.25 hours in length. The data collection procedures shifted early in the project due to the social distancing requirements of COVID-19 and restrictions placed on all in-person research activities. The first participant completed his initial interview in-person in a private room at the university library. A graduate volunteer sat outside this room for the duration of the interview and the participant was made aware of this. Information regarding the time and location of this interview was recorded on a google drive document that was accessible to my supervisor. I also sent my supervisor a message before the interview started and after it had

finished. I arrived at the interview location ten minutes prior to the starting time and exited the room after the participant had left. These safety precautions were requested by the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board upon their review of this study. For the remaining participants, all interviews took place over a secure and encrypted video conferencing platform (doxy.me). Participants were emailed a link that connected them to the platform and could be opened on a cell phone, ipad or computer.

At the beginning of each interview, I read the information letter and consent form aloud to participants and obtained their consent. For those interviews that took place digitally, verbal consent was documented. I provided participants with a copy of the information letter and consent form for their own records (see Appendix I; Appendix J; Appendix K) and asked if they had any questions prior to commencing the interview. Multiple consent forms were created as recruitment expanded and the study protocol changed (i.e. switch from in-person to online interviews). In the event that during the interview information was disclosed indicating that a child is being harmed or at risk, the following steps were set in place (see Appendix L for steps). Next, I asked participants a series of demographic questions (see Appendix M) followed by the narrative interview questions (see Appendix N; Appendix O). The interview was semi-structured and created to align with the narrative interview phases outlined by Kim (2016). Within the narration phase, I posed questions such as: “tell me about your move to Canada”, “tell me about your experience being a father” and “tell me about your relationship with your children before/after your offence.” I used active listening skills as fathers shared their stories, which allowed me to better understand experiences from their perspective (Kim, 2016). In the conversation phase, my questions focused on eliciting participants’ stories (Kim, 2016). In some circumstances, I also asked clarifying questions or requested that participants elaborate on an

experience. Examples of questions posed include: “tell me a story of a time you felt like a “good” father?” and “what do you think it means to be a “good” father?”. I found that I moved fluidly between these two phases, which is expected (Kim, 2016). Doing so also allowed me to adopt more of a conversational tone when engaging with participants.

At the end of this first interview, I emailed participants a $20 grocery store gift-card at as well as a list of accessible community counselling resources. I also reminded participants at the end of the first interview that I would contact them a second time to review the findings from the initial interview. After each interview, I wrote field notes in a digital journal to capture my thoughts and reflections. Reflective notes were added to this journal as the project unfolded. I also created a separate file containing participant names and corresponding ID numbers that was only accessible to myself and my primary supervisor.

The second interview took place approximately 14 to 18 weeks following each father’s initial interview. Two out of seven fathers responded to my efforts to schedule a second interview. During these interviews, I reviewed the interim texts (i.e., narrative, emerging themes) in order to gather each participant’s thoughts and feedback, and to check the accuracy of my interpretations. This strategy aligns with Clandinin and Connelly’s (2000) collaborative approach to narrative research. I decided to read the narratives aloud as a way to minimize the potential impact of literacy on their ability to provide feedback. Presenting this information orally was also consistent with my approach during the first interview in which I read the information letter and consent form. Afterwards, I posed questions such as “does this summarize what we talked about before?”; “does this story/narrative capture your experience?”; “was anything I read today inaccurate?”; “does any of the information I shared today not fit with your experience?” and “is there anything I missed and you would like me to add?” I explained to participants that I placed

great value in their feedback and wanted to ensure that the narrative I created depicted their story in a way felt comfortable with. Individualized follow-up questions stemming from the information provided in the first interview were also posed. Reviewing my analyses (i.e., themes and narrative) with participants and requesting their feedback served as a member check and helped to support the trustworthiness of my findings. The follow up interviews lasted between 36 minutes to 1h and 10 minutes. I emailed all participants a $20 grocery store gift-card at the end of their second interview.

Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed verbatim and all identifiable information was removed. Transcription was completed by myself and two volunteer research assistants, and then double-checked against audio recordings to ensure accuracy. Participants were given a pseudonym, and names of their family members (i.e. wives, children) or practitioners (i.e. group counselors, psychologists, etc.) were removed from the transcript. Additionally, I excluded any information that identified the clinic they were recruited from. I assigned transcript an ID number in order to distinguish interviews.

Data analysis was completed in two phases: (a) re-storying (narrative analysis) and (b) thematic analysis (analysis of narrative). Guided by Polkinghorne (1995), this bricolage approach was designed to capture two analytic strategies for narrative inquiry: (a) analysis of narrative (paradigmatic mode of analysis) and (b) narrative analysis (narrative mode of analysis). Combinations of these approaches have been discussed in the literature, with each providing unique information that serves a different purpose (Sharp, Bye, & Cusick, 2018). Within the paradigmatic mode of analysis, researchers draw upon a collection of narratives to uncover themes or constructs that emerge across stories (Kim, 2016; Polkinghorne, 1995). Paradigmatic

analysis also seeks to uncover relationships among themes and can help reveal commonalties amongst data sources (Kim, 2016; Polkinghorne, 1995). In contrast, the narrative mode of analysis results in the creation of stories illustrating participant's lived experiences (Kim, 2016). The purpose of the narrative mode of analysis is to "help the reader understand why and how things happened in the way that they did, and why and how our participants acted in the way they did" (Kim, 2016, p. 197). From this perspective, experiences are conceptualized as occurring within a certain context and setting; elements that are incorporated in the narrative storyline. Polkinghorne (1995) describes this process as the integration and configuration of data into a coherent whole, resulting in plot advancement and a comprehensive explanation of events.

My bricolage approach incorporates elements of Clandinin and Connelly's narrative inquiry (2000) and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Employing both modes of analyses allowed me to generate a holistic understanding of fathers' parenting experiences while addressing my overarching research question and sub-questions. Analysis of interview data, therefore, occurred in two phases: (a) re-storying followed by (b) thematic analysis.

Phase 1: Re-storying (Narrative Analysis)

Narrative analysis was guided by the writing of Clandinin and Connelly (2000). I began this process by reading and rereading all of the field texts including interview transcripts as well as my field notes. Doing so allowed me to gain an appreciation for the information collected (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Next, I started the process of re-storying, which involved reorganizing stories in a comprehensive framework and reconstructing them chronologically (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The setting and context of participants' experiences were also taken into consideration during this transition from field texts to research texts, as outlined below.

Field Texts to Research Texts. In *Narrative Inquiry,* Clandinin and Connelly (2000)

describe the analysis of field texts as occurring in a three-dimensional space with three domains: (a) interaction, which is the personal and social dimension of narratives; (b) continuity, which pertains to temporal dimensions such as the past, present and future; and (c) situation, which refers to the place or sequence of places (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). These domains were incorporated in my re-storying process, resulting in a text that "looks backward and forward, looks inward and outward, and situates the experience within place" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 140). I also re-organized the information shared chronologically, as some participants shifted backward and forward in time when telling their story. Sometimes I asked clarifying questions to ensure I was understanding their timeline correctly (e.g., "so you married your wife in India, and then moved to Canada?"). I also summarized information at various points in the interview as another means of checking for understanding.

In constructing the narratives, I included quotations to capture participants' voices (i.e., ways of speaking). I made a point of preserving fathers' language by retaining most grammatical and stylistic errors in quotes. In line with Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) approach, I also situated myself in the written narrative by including my own thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the information fathers shared. For example, there were times in which I expressed empathy for participants or described feelings our conversation evoked. In addition, I made an effort to incorporate aspects of fathers' stories that pertained to culture and immigration. Regarding the interaction dimension, I focused on fathers' interactions with their children and their partner.

As I transitioned from field texts to research texts, I reached out to participants to review interim texts as part of their second interview. This step aligns with the collaborative nature of the narrative approach and allowed me to gain fathers' insight and feedback (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). During our discussion, I asked broad questions such as "does this summarize

what we talked about before?" and "does this story capture your experience?". The intent behind this conversation was ensure that the stories of participants had been effectively captured and communicated.

Phase 2: Thematic Analysis (Analysis of Narrative)

Next, I employed thematic analysis to analyze fathers' narratives. Thematic analysis is a flexible qualitative analytic method for generating, interpreting, and describing themes that emerge within a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Broadly speaking, a theme "captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). I conduced thematic analysis across cases, thereby generating themes that are representative of shared elements across participant interviews. Since the narratives offered an individualized account of each fathers' parenting stories and experiences, exploration of the themes that emerged across interviews provided a new lens to view and interpret the data. The initial themes from each individual interview were also reviewed with some fathers during their second follow-up interview

I followed the six phases for thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006): (a) becoming familiar with the data, (b) generating initial codes, (c) searching for themes, (d) reviewing themes, (e) defining and naming themes, and (f) producing the report. I became familiar with the data by reading through the transcripts several times (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I also looked for patterns and wrote down initial ideas as they emerged. All interviews were transcribed and analyzed in a google document shared with myself and my primary supervisor. This allowed my supervisor to review my analytic process throughout and share her own thoughts and impressions. Next, I generated initial codes, one transcript at a time. Codes

"represent and capture a datum's primary content and essence" (Saldana, 2016, pg. 4). Saldana (2016) defines a code as a "a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (pg. 4). In this study, interview transcripts served as the language-based data. I manually went through each transcript and coded the data in the google document by using the "comment" function. This function highlighted the text that the code was referring to. After going through each transcript, I had a list of codes for each interview. I assigned codes to entire sentences or paragraphs that communicated an idea. These short segments of text represented meaning units, and the codes I generated captured the "essence" of the text. Next, I sorted the codes into different themes and subthemes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I created a google document with a list of codes across the data set and moved the codes around to see how they could combine to create a larger theme. I grouped codes into themes if they represented similar ideas and "fit" together. For example, the codes "financial stressors", "stress as a newcomer," and "communication challenges" were part of the theme *the immigration experience.* The themes/subthemes evolved over time and in conversation with my primary supervisor. I then reviewed and refined each theme, making sure that I did not miss any data or have any overlapping themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Lastly, I defined and named each theme. In doing so, I looked at how each theme aligned with the overall story and fit with the data as a whole (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Establishing Quality and Rigor

Limitations regarding the information collected were taken into consideration throughout the present study. First, I acknowledge that the stories gathered reflect the way in which fathers decided to present themselves and their experiences; representations that may be subject to feelings of social desirability, shame, or discomfort. Prior to beginning each interview, I took

time to develop rapport with participants and explain the purpose of the study with the intention of ameliorating these factors. Second, narrative research calls for interpretation on behalf of the researcher, particularly in terms of how stories are constructed and represented (Kim, 2016). I followed the criteria for establishing trustworthiness outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to provide evidence of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Several validation strategies outlined by Creswell and Poth (2018) were also followed. Credibility "refers to whether the participant's perceptions match up with the researcher's portrayal of them" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 202). To ensure credibility, I conduced member checks with participants as part of their second interview (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This formal check provided fathers with the opportunity to judge the accuracy of the texts, correct any faulty interpretations or conclusions, and offer additional information that may have been omitted during our initial conversation (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). During the second interview, I also asked individualized follow-up questions to enhance my own understanding of the data and fill in any gaps that emerged as I generated the interim texts (i.e., narratives and emerging themes). Collaborating with participants and requesting their feedback was an important validation strategy (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I wanted to ensure that I was representing fathers' lived experiences in a way that they felt comfortable with and considered to be an accurate reflection of our conversation. Connecting with each participant twice for a notable duration of time also relates to the criteria of prolonged engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). With regard to transferability, thick, detailed descriptions were written that can be utilized by other researchers or practitioners to make transferability judgements (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability refers to "how well the study has made it possible for readers to decide whether similar processes will be at work in the own settings and communities by understanding in depth

how they occur at the research site" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 205). Creswell and Poth (2018) define a "thick description" as including specifics of the writers' overview of a case or explanation of a theme – elements which were included in my analyses. One way that such details can be captured is through the use of quotations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Quotations were therefore embedded throughout the narrative and thematic analyses, providing evidence of my conclusions and interpretations (Brantlinger, et al., 2005). Furthermore, members of my supervisory committee with expertise in qualitative research were consulted throughout the research process. My primary supervisor also reviewed my interview transcripts and was highly involved throughout the research process. Since my supervisor was closely connected and familiar with the study, her role was considered that of a peer reviewer/debriefer (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My supervisor provided ongoing feedback regarding the codes, themes, and narratives I constructed and whether or not they "fit" with the data. When alternative interpretations arose, we had a discussion and came to a mutual agreement in terms of how to best proceed. Deciding on the overarching themes, for example, involved multiple meetings and iterations of the final thematic analysis.

Lastly, I kept a detailed audit trail which helped to satisfy the condition of confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Confirmability is "concerned with establishing that the researcher's findings and interpretations are clearly derived from the data, requiring the researcher to demonstrate how conclusions have been reached" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 204). Throughout this study, I kept an audit trail which documented my thoughts and reflections, helping to establish trustworthiness (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I consistently documented methodological notes (i.e., notes about the process, sampling, recruitment, interviews, etc.), analytic/theoretical notes (i.e., interpretations, insights, hunches, etc.), and personal notes (i.e.,

feelings about and experiences of the research, interviews conducted, etc.). I also recorded the contact information of organizations or individuals whom I reached out to during the recruitment phase and wrote notes following our conversations. Similarly, any consultation that occurred between myself and my supervisory committee was documented. Interim texts as well as a description of emerging themes with corresponding codes following the analysis of each interview were also included. Additionally, I journaled my thoughts, biases, assumptions, and other reflexive notes as the study progressed. Acknowledging researcher bias and engaging in reflexivity is an important strategy for establishing trustworthiness (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This required that I take the time to reflect upon the biases, beliefs and experiences that I brought to this study, and how they might influence my process of inquiry or interpretation. Documenting the research process so that it is traceable also relates to dependability (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 204).

One example of a situation I reflected on was how I posed interview questions, particularly follow up questions. I encouraged myself to be cognizant of how I phrased statements in order to ensure that I was not leading the conversation, and instead allowing for participants' voices to be captured. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) discuss how researchers should be mindful of not focusing too much on their own experience at the expense of participants'—a balance that is often challenging to achieve. I found that given my clinical experience and strong belief in a family-based approach to IPV treatment, I held a desire to explore this idea, particularly when it arose within the context of an interview. This reoccurring inclination is something that I documented in my field journal to encourage reflection and self-awareness.

CHAPTER FOUR: Findings

This chapter presents an analysis of fathers' interviews in two stages: (a) narrative analysis followed by (b) thematic analysis. Each narrative provides a rich, detailed description of the individual stories and lived experiences of seven immigrant fathers with a history of IPV, whereas the themes are representative of the common elements across their interviews. The intent behind utilizing both approaches was to highlight these fathers' unique stories while also generating an understanding and awareness of the shared ideas and patterns of meaning that emerged.

In constructing the narratives, I employed pseudonyms to protect the identity of participants. I selected these pseudonyms based on each fathers' country of origin. I also used the present tense to describe participants' expressed attitudes, feelings, and beliefs at the time of their interview. To preserve participants' voices as much as possible, I decided to retain most grammatical and stylistic errors in participants' quotes. Moreover, in some narratives the abbreviation "R" and "I" are used, which stand for respondent and interviewer.

Narrative Analysis

Narrative 1: Arjun

My interview with Arjun took place in a room within a library on the university campus. He arrived a few minutes early and we began our interview shortly after. Arjun spoke softly but with intent and purpose. Our conversation progressed naturally as Arjun shared his story with me, starting with his journey to Canada.

Arjun is a 43-year-old father, who was born and raised in India, and who immigrated to Canada over 15 years ago. Arjun relocated to Canada with hopes of better opportunities for himself and his future family. Much like other families in India at the time, Arjun was in search

of "a better life." Prior to moving to Canada, Arjun married his wife who served as his sponsor. Five years later, the couple gave birth to two twin boys. Arjun's parents joined his family in Canada when his children were around five years old. Arjun described his father as a loving individual with whom he has always been able to talk openly and honestly: "We can talk about some personal, very personal things like sexual relationships or something or love relationships." Arjun believed his father did the best that he could as a parent, a sentiment that he hopes holds true for all fathers: "I think he did the best he could do at that time, and I hope that is true for everybody." Arjun described himself as embracing a highly involved role with his children, one that he considers atypical for fathers in his country of origin. He explained that in India, mothers and grandmothers were traditionally responsible for child rearing while men took on the financial responsibilities. Arjun expressed feeling lucky to have the opportunity to care for his children and recalled memories of his early involvement (i.e. changing their first diapers in the hospital). For Arjun, the transition to fatherhood felt as if it came "really naturally," and he spoke fondly of his early memories with his children.

As his children grew older, Arjun's involvement as a father continued to evolve. He described dropping them off and picking them up from school as a way to stay connected and in-tune with their lives. Arjun regularly asks about their day, what they have for homework, etc. He expressed great pride in having the educational background to be able to help his children with their work and explain concepts to them. I noticed Arjun's eyes widen and the pace of his speech increase as he continued to share stories of his children and their time together. Arjun reported feeling "blessed" to have them in his life and noted that becoming a father was a day filled with great joy. I sensed that Arjun felt great pride in being a father and was closely connected with his

children: “The day that I became a father, that is one of the very, I mean, the most memorable day of my life, I think, the most happiest days of my life.”

As our conversation progressed, Arjun asked if he could share what happened on the day of his offence. Arjun recalled drinking the previous night with his brother and father. When his brother tried to take the bottle away, Arjun became upset and a fight broke out. A call was then made to Arjun’s wife who suggested that her husband spend the night at his brother’s house. Arjun slept there and returned home the next morning. He purchased more alcohol on his way and started drinking on the driveway. Upon trying to go inside, Arjun realized that the door had been locked. He continued drinking and finally barged in through the door. He then found his wife and recalled feeling angry toward her. Arjun acknowledged that although these feelings were directed toward his brother, they “got vented out” on his wife: “I kinda start hitting her. I was, somehow I was very angry at her.” His wife called for help and his children, upon hearing their mother, came to find their parents downstairs:

> They [his children] told me to back off … I just went to the den, like downstairs room and sat there. And I waited till the police came and they arrested me and took me away. So, I kinda listened to my kids.

Arjun described his children’s response as helping him realize what was happening: “When I saw my kids’ reaction that I am doing something really- or I have done it and it was the kids who kinda made me cool off right away.” The day after the assault, Arjun was not able to return to his home. Instead, he went to his father’s house for three weeks. Arjun did not contact his wife or children during this time and remained with his father. Arjun recalled having the option of calling a third-party to help arrange a meeting with his children, but decided against this. After the three weeks had passed, Arjun began seeing his children at recreation centers, as coordinated

by this father. He recalled feeling "really awkward" initially as he struggled to find the words to start a conversation with his children. Arjun also felt shame and regret surrounding his actions and what they had witnessed. As time passed, things started getting better and their relationship shifted to resemble one that was closer to what it once was. With the help of his therapist and children, Arjun also came to recognize the role of alcohol during the night of his offence and how his drinking might make his children fearful "that dad's going to go in the same state of something." He made an effort to change his drinking habits. A condition was imposed by the courts preventing him from consuming alcohol for a year.

Shortly after his offence, Arjun began attending individual counselling with a psychologist, as suggested by his father: "Yeah, my father especially encouraged me like - it's like [the] saying that goes, 'you cannot braid your own hair sometimes,' right?" After hearing his story, the psychologist recommended that Arjun bring his children to one of their sessions. Arjun recalled that it was not until he took his children to counselling that he became aware of how disturbed they were:

> So… Mr. X asked them, their biggest fear at that time, that anything could happen- anything could [have] happened there that night. That dad could have severely hurt or even killed mom, right. That was their fear that time. But [pause], even Mr. X, the psychologist, he talked to us that you have to get out of this situation and as a *family*. Because this is, this happened in the family and you have to work all together and gain their trust so apologize to them and start, um, building relationships again. So, I can win their trust.

For Arjun, through involving his children in counselling, apologizing for his actions and acknowledging their fears he hoped to win back their trust and slowly rebuild their relationship

within one another. Arjun acknowledged the benefit of seeking what he described as "third party help" and the important role that having a psychologist played in his healing journey, as well as his children's. He recognized that given his violent behaviour, his children might not have felt comfortable sharing how they felt with him or opening up about what they had witnessed. Having a space where someone else could help to facilitate these conversations and ask such questions was helpful.

Shortly after attending counselling, Arjun also began practicing meditation and reconnecting with parts of his spirituality. Arjun found himself to be more "at peace," not only with himself, but within his relationships. Arjun expressed a desire to teach his children how to meditate as a strategy for helping them to calm down and relax. For him, it was a way to share a meaningful practice that might bring his children a similar sense of stillness and relief.

As Arjun continued to tell his story, I reflected on his display of emotion and thanked him for sharing. Arjun communicated with me his belief that individuals possess "blindspots" that they are unaware of, a concept first introduced in the IPV group he was attending at the time of our first interview. Arjun was court-mandated to attend this group several months after his offence. By encouraging him to see parts of himself that he was unaware of, Arjun described his children as showing him "the mirror" and encouraging him to take a look inward. This idea of introspection came up several times during our conversation, often in relation to his children. Arjun also reflected on his actions in terms of the message his behaviour communicated as a parent, and the impression he was leaving:

> This bad alcohol abuse and this assault incidence and the fight, that kinda made me realize that, I don't know, I'm kinda leaving them a bad impression. I should be their role model. They should look to me, actually, so that they can be good fathers too [pause]. So

> that incident kind of [pause] helped me, how do you say, made me really introspect or something.

Arjun also shared his beliefs surrounding what it means to be a "good" father. He expressed a hope to instill "good values" in his children, provide them with a "good education," and show them "the reality" of the world around them. Having the ability to help them with their homework and be someone with whom they share their questions, queries, and curiosities is something that is a source of great pride for Arjun:

> They always gonna ask me "what is this, what is the meaning of this or that." And I try to explain them. I really feel happy inside and that I can help them. They always gonna keep asking questions about their studies or any help. And even if they have any issues with growing up, like, right now, puberty, they're gonna show me before they can show to their mother.

Arjun also spoke of the importance of communicating the message to his children that they should strive toward living a life of happiness:

> And I just want to teach them in life [pause] the most important thing is to be happy. And you should work towards it.

Toward the end of our interview, the conversation shifted toward the IPV group Arjun was participating in, and what supports it can offer to parents. Being only four sessions into the group, Arjun hypothesized that there would be a future "chapter" of some sort about parenting. He mentioned a desire to learn during this future session how to better "communicate" with his children. Arjun also expressed uncertainties surrounding the steps taken or services provided when children witness violence in the home. Although Arjun felt as if individuals in the

justice system make their concerns for children's physical safety clear, the corresponding psychological support is lacking:

> I think their [individuals in the justice system] only main concern would be there is no harm to the children, like physical harm, or something that he is or she is not in danger. But [pause] I think, umm, I think they need to give them more support as well, like, more psychological support. And especially for the persons too, involved, right? They should work on [pause] work on the *whole family* as a unit, actually, everybody involved. Because this is the family, right?

Arjun spoke of this "whole family" approach to IPV treatment several times throughout our interview, linking this idea back to the approach advocated by his psychologist. He also communicated the importance of going beyond the "husband-wife" relationship. Arjun expressed that a desire to remain with one's family following the perpetration of violence should be paired with familial involvement and communication. This belief aligns with his own story and decision to actively involve his children in therapy. When our time together ended, I thanked Arjun for meeting with me. I also expressed gratitude for his honesty and willingness to share.

Narrative 2: Berhanu

In the Spring of 2020, I joined a virtual IPV group to introduce myself and share information about the study. Berhanu contacted me shortly after to express his interest in participating. Our interview took place over an online video conferencing platform and lasted well over an hour. Berhanu was eager to tell his story and hoped that in sharing his experience he could help other fathers like himself.

Berhanu is a 42-year-old man who was born and raised in Ethiopia. At the time of our interview, he had been living in Canada for approximately two and a half years. Berhanu recalled growing up in a small home in Ethiopia and sharing a bed with his four siblings. He noted that his parents faced many challenges and tried their best to provide food, shelter, and clothing for their children. In describing his upbringing, Berhanu expressed gratitude for his parents and their unconditional love. He acknowledged the sacrifices they made and utmost dedication to their family:

> So, I know, we passed a lot of hardship. We pass a lot of hardship - from drinking water, for living conditions, for everything. But I am not regret or just upset by my family journey, that's my part of history. I can't change that one. But, they give me *unconditional* love.

Berhanu met his wife in high school while they were both living in Ethiopia. She immigrated to Canada over 15 years ago and reconnected with Berhanu during a trip to Ethiopia to visit her family in 2017. A few days later, they started dating and she sponsored Berhanu to immigrate to Canada. In 2019, the couple returned to Ethiopia for their wedding ceremony. Behanu stayed in Ethiopia for two months, while his wife, who was on maternity leave at the

time, remained slightly longer before returning to Canada. Berhanu described Canada as a place of opportunities in which everything is accessible, even for newcomers:

> There is no special place for rich people, no special place for poor people. Everything is available for *everybody*.

Upon his arrival in Canada, Berhanu enrolled in English classes at a local college with the goal of increasing his "benchmark score." He explained that by increasing this score, he would be able to improve his future career prospects. During his last semester, his wife requested that he quit taking classes so that she could stop working and spend time with their son. Berhanu agreed, and began working as a cashier. In addition, Berhanu acquired a second job in the evenings as a dishwasher. Berhanu recalled his wife being unhappy at the time and noted that she made regular trips back and forth to the States with her mother. He remembered feeling confused by her behaviour, as he was trying his very best to ensure that his family was well taken care of. Berhanu spent all of his money meeting their needs and providing them with a home and food on the table.

Berhanu described his fathering role as one that included a strong desire to provide financially for his son. He also spoke of engaging in more non-traditional forms of paternal involvement during the early years of his marriage. For example, Berhanu recalled teaching his wife how to "handle" his son when he was crying, bathe him, etc. Berhanu attributed this knowledge to his prior experience caring for young children, knowledge which he willingly passed on to his partner as they were raising his son. As Berhanu spoke of these early caretaking behaviours, I sensed that he felt great pride in his ability to take on this role.

Berhanu and his now former wife have now been separated from one another for 7 months. Despite the termination of his marriage, Berhanu possesses a strong desire to maintain a

relationship with his son and continue to remain an active part of his life. As a newcomer to Canada, his son is the only family Berhanu has in Canada: "Yeah, just he's my everything. I have *only one* close person, that one's my son."

In reflecting on the early years of his marriage, Berhanu recalled frequent disagreements with his wife over finances. Berhanu worked long hours to provide for his family, leaving him with little time to spend with his son in between his daytime and evening job. Berhanu shared that his wife began to take their son to her brother's house during the times in which Berhanu was not working and able to see him. This greatly frustrated Berhanu, who described having a very close relationship with his son. He felt that it was unfair for him to lose his "son-relation" because of the conflict in his marriage. Berhanu also interpreted his ex-wife's behaviour as intending to hurt him, as she knew how much he valued spending time with his son:

> Okay, so I don't have access to visit him, to spend time with my son. So, she is doing this one purposely, she knows we have a good intimacy. Yeah, he is my everything.

Berhanu recalled expressing his unhappiness with his wife and attempting to reach an agreement regarding when he could spend time with his son. Maintaining two jobs was necessary, and something that Berhanu was happy to do in order to ensure that his family was well taken care of. Berhanu's wife also began bringing food from her brother's house into their home during their marriage, which became another source of conflict. Berhanu did not see himself in a position in which he needed assistance from others and took great pride in being able to independently support his family. For Berhanu, providing for his child was his responsibility as a father, and a responsibility that was his alone:

> But she bring some stuff from her brother house for my son. Just like egg, meat... [inaudible]. This is not Africa, this is Canada. Everything is available if you're working,

> if you don't have financial issue, everything is available. So, I told her, I call you from Safeway. If you told me he need this egg, I can bring for him. Why you bring him milk, egg, other stuff from your brother? This is *my* son. He can grow by *my* money.

This situation was a source of recurring conflict during his marriage. Berhanu described one evening in particular, approximately 7 months ago, which resulted in the police being contacted. Berhanu recalled asking his wife why she brought food into his home for his son. He knew that she had not gone shopping herself and was upset when he noticed these items. During their conversation, his wife called the police and Berhanu attempted to stop her. The next morning, he asked his wife why she tried to call the police. As they were speaking, she called 911 again. Berhanu's wife hung up the phone shortly after dialing 911 and someone called back to make sure that she was okay. Berhanu remembered feeling confused as to why his wife contacted the police in the first place and reached out to her friends to share his concerns. He did not want to lose his marriage and was fearful that if the police became involved the couple would "break forever."

The next day, Berhanu received a call from the police. He was at the gym at the time and agreed to meet the police at his home in 10 minutes. When he arrived, the police informed him that he was under arrest for assault and brought him to the police station. Berhanu remained at the station for one night and was released the next morning with several conditions (e.g., he was not allowed to contact his wife, go to her church, workplace, etc.). Berhanu remembered not having anywhere to go or anyone to reach out to, as he did not have any family or close friends in Canada. I felt for him in this moment, as I imagined how lost and isolated he must have been.

Berhanu decided to go to a local coffee shop and call a friend from work who also immigrated from Ethiopia. His friend picked him up and contacted Berhanu's wife to see if he

could pick up some of his belongings. She refused, and told him that she would not allow Berhanu to return home without "police access." Berhanu bought some essentials and stayed with his friend and his family for a month. As time went on, Berhanu found his new living situation to be challenging, as his friend had a child of a similar age to his own child, and he began to miss being with his son:

> When I see him [friend's child], I remember my son. When they open TV, YouTube, kid's music for him, just I remember my son. Finally, I ask him, "I miss my son. I need to see him."

Berhanu's friend contacted his wife a second time and tried to convince her to allow Berhanu to see his son. His efforts, however, were unsuccessful and she refused. Berhanu then sought legal counsel and received a court order to visit his son twice a week. However, despite being granted legal access, his wife continued to prevent him from seeing his son. Berhanu recalled that she would often not answer her telephone during his visitation hours, causing him to lose out on the few hours per week he had to spend with his son. His attempts to reschedule were also denied and causing him to seek outside involvement:

> "Okay sorry, so I missed my mandated visiting, can I visit him tomorrow?" - "No, Wednesday" - Then Wednesday, she said, "He's sick. He doesn't go outside. He's cold," something like that. I asked police officers. They said there is no police enforcement here. So, I called again, ask for police enforcement.

In explaining his frustration, Berhanu shared a story of an incident that occurred prior to Christmas of 2019. It was his visiting day, and he had planned to take his son to the mall to have pictures taken with Santa Claus. His now former wife refused, claiming that it was too cold and that she had already taken him for photos with Santa:

> She said, “No.” This time I went to court order, called my correction officer. I talked to her, she don’t have the right to do this. She told me to come back to court. I went in court.

Following this incident, Berhanu’s corrections officer scheduled a court date in the Spring of 2020 to discuss his challenges with visitation. Spending time with his son was important to Berhanu who felt as if this right was being taken away from him:

> They stop me from visit my son. That is my priority. That’s *my* baby. Yeah, it’s not only in Canada. Even we are in Ethiopia back home I need to visit - he’s my part of [my] blood.

Prior to his court-date, Berhanu’s ex-wife asked him to watch their son in the morning while she was working. Their son’s daycare closed suddenly due to the pandemic (COVID-19), and she needed someone to take care of him during the day. Upon hearing this news, Berhanu immediately quit his day job so that he could watch his son.

Shortly after, Berhanu heard back from a college he had applied to and was invited to start his degree in a few months' time. He informed his ex-wife that he would no longer be able to watch his son after he started his schooling. The next day, she took their son elsewhere and did not share with Berhanu who would be taking care of him instead. Again, Berhanu lost contact with his son with whom he had just started to reconnect. I could sense sadness in his voice as he described losing access to his son once again.

As the pandemic worsened, Berhanu became fearful of potentially infecting his son. Given the nature of his work, he was interacting with multiple people on a daily basis and felt worried about contracting the virus. Berhanu asked his ex-wife if he could speak with his son on

Facetime until the situation improved. She agreed, and they currently speak two to three times per week:

> If he's infected by directly or indirectly with me, just I'm not feel good. So, that's why I just try [to] quit direct contact with him. Honestly speaking, I cry when I talk to him on Facetime. Just, he doesn't know, he's confused - who's this one? Yeah, yeah. So, I visit him like this.

When asked to share a story of a time he felt like a "good" father, Berhanu recalled his son's first birthday. Berhanu described planning a party for his son and inviting a few friends of his who also had young children. He cooked for his guests and hired a professional photographer to take pictures of everyone. For Berhanu, these actions demonstrated his love and care for his family.

In describing his understanding of "good" fatherhood, Berhanu shared the belief that his actions and choices directly affected his son, as well as the course of his son's life. For Berhanu, the change in his relationship status (i.e. married to single) also impacts his son. This sense of interconnectedness came across throughout our interview, and appeared central to his understanding of parenthood. Berhanu explained that although his African origin remains a part of his identity, he considers his son to be Canadian. He expressed that it is important to him that his son be able to "compete" with those children raised in Canada. According to Berhanu, family represents the "foundation" for his son's life. As a father, Berhanu also sees himself as having an obligation to consider his son's future:

> If I spend my investment in my son, he will be a good citizen, he will be a good son. That's it. Already our pay wages is 50% changed. Just, our chapter is changed from single to married, from married to mother and father. So we have to spend our time for

him…If you are a father, you have to think about your son's future and that. *Every moment* affects his life.

For Berhanu, "good" fatherhood also involves more than providing financially: "A good father means not just only buy milk, give food, clothes. It means love, it's about love." This belief became increasingly apparent as Berhanu described his relationship with his son and the memories that they shared. It became clear that Berhanu placed great value on the importance of parents spending *time* with their children, a sentiment that made his challenges regarding visitation with his son particularly challenging.

Berhanu's understanding of good fatherhood also involves continuing to make sure that his ex-wife is well taken care of. He described ensuring her safety as being related to the well-being of his son and, therefore, a responsibility he continues to uphold. Berhanu regularly checks in with his ex-wife to see if their son needs anything (i.e., wipes, diapers, milk, etc.) and drops off these items as requested: "When I'm doing shopping, I will text for her, if she wants something at Costco."

As our conversation progressed, Berhanu shared some of his thoughts surrounding the IPV group he was court-mandated to participate in. At the time of our conversation, Berhanu was halfway through his 13-week group, which was being delivered over an online platform. In describing his experience, Berhanu mentioned a disconnect between what he described as "real life" and "theoretical life." Although he believed his therapists to have the best of intentions, he noted that they lacked an understanding of his *true* experience. In explaining this idea, Berhanu recalled his prior request to involve his church community in resolving the conflict between himself and his ex-wife. Berhanu did not have any family in Canada and, therefore, viewed his church community as the closest people to him. His appeal to involve his faith community was

denied by his duty counsel. This was disappointing, as he desired their involvement and believed that his elders had a religious obligation to assist him. Berhanu explained that involving members of the community is common practice in Ethiopia. For example, Berhanu recalled his mother and father calling on their priest as a mediator when they experienced marital difficulties: "And they explain about the marriage, what the bible says about the marriage."

In building upon this idea of "real" versus "theoretical" life, Berhanu explained his prior experiences with the family and criminal court system. His challenges draw attention to the fact that men charged with IPV might also be fathers who desire a relationship with their children despite the termination of their intimate relationship. For Berhanu, facilitating this request was complicated due to the year-long no-contact order between himself and his ex-wife directly following his offence:

> Criminal court, I asked them, "Please guys, give me a chance. This condition is not working for me. Because I have a son. I have a close relationship, close intimacy with my son. I don't care about her. Now, I'm not asking anything. I don't have a financial problem. I don't have another interest, just to back to home, just only to visit my son." I tried to explain [this] for my duty counsel.

Berhanu's request to see his son immediately after his offence was denied in criminal court. Berhanu recalled his duty counsel advising him "not to say anything" inside the courtroom. He was told that he did not have the right to speak and was asked to remain quiet as his case was presented. Berhanu was then advised to hire a lawyer to appeal this decision in family court. A representative from the family court system advocated for Berhanu to see his child, and he was granted visitation access. Finally, he felt as if parental rights were being

acknowledged and respected. Berhanu also spoke of "rights" in relation to his son, as well as his son's "right" to have ongoing contact with his father.

At the time of our interview, Berhanu was participating in an online IPV group. He shared with me some of the topics they discussed (i.e. anger management, communication, etc.), and noted that he found the strategies taught to also be applicable outside of his marital relationship. Berhanu appreciated that the group was made up of men from different countries who shared their varying experiences. For some men, their use of violence was related to financial issues, whereas for others this was not a factor. Berhanu also acknowledged that not all fathers desired continued contact with their children following IPV.

Berhanu also shared with me his belief that his former partner would have benefited from counselling. He expressed that this would have allowed them to move forward with a *common* understanding. Berhanu felt as if it was important for both parents to work together to care for their son, regardless of whether or not they remained married: "He need[s] our protection. He doesn't need only my protection or her protection. He need[s] *our* protection."

In describing the resources available to families following IPV, Berhanu mentioned the presence of a "family dispute resolution" office in the court-system. He perceived their role, however, to involve mostly paperwork. As such, Berhanu advocated for the importance of family counseling after the occurrence of IPV. This service would allow parents to come together to discuss their issues and communicate their perspective. Berhanu described this setting as a place for "reconciliation." During the sessions, the "foundation" of the family and their individual situation can also be explored:

> R: What [does] he need? What [does] she need? Even no one tried to talk to us in the same room. What's your issue? What's your issue?

I: Oh okay, so you're saying bring people together in the same room, the whole family, and talk about what –

R: Yeah do *reconciliation*

I: Okay

R: *Before* separation

Berhanu also expressed a preference for "church counselling" to his current treatment. He shared a desire for members of his cultural and religious community to be involved in his reconciliation efforts, a practice which is common for African families:

> In Africa it's not like in Canada, maybe your grandma she don't have any involvement in your father or mom. But Africa, it's not like that. A lot of third person, they have rights. This one is my wife, this one is my sister's life, this one is my brother's life. They need to [be] involve[d] in that life. So, we need to protect that one. Just, this justice system they doesn't understand this one.

Being a father is an important part of Berhanu's identity, and his story is one of dedication to remain involved in his son's life. I admired his tenacity as he persisted to gain visitation amidst challenges with his former partner and barriers navigating the legal system. At the end of our interview, I thanked Berhanu for taking the time to speak with me and for sharing his story. We both expressed a shared hope that the results generated from this study could be used to assist others: "Yeah maybe this research help[s] other people's lives."

A few months after our initial conversation, I scheduled a follow-up interview with Berhanu. He shared with me that he continues to experience difficulty seeing his son. Despite being granted an "order" in family court, Berhanu reported that his ex-wife continues to deny him visitation access. He expressed feeling fearful of contacting his ex-wife and breaching his no

contact order which does not expire for another 5 months. Berhanu is afraid that his wife might call the police if he goes to her house to see his son, or speaks to her aggressively: "I don't have any confidence to say anything or to do anything."

> I [am] scared to breach that one. I am not doing anything because I am restricted from her home, her workplace, church, something like that. If I say something aggressively, maybe she call[s] the police and they say, "You breached the law." So, always just I scared. I don't have any confidence to say anything or to do anything.

Berhanu mentioned that he recently sought legal assistance but was told that there were limited services and individuals available to help him, given the court closures amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. I sensed frustration in his voice as he shared his custody challenges, many of which echoed those shared within our initial interview. Berhanu expressed sadness over recently missing his son's second birthday and noted that he has not seen him for 2 months. He explained that since he and his ex-wife have a "common interest' (i.e. their son), that it is important for them to try their best to "understand each other."

Additionally, Berhanu disclosed that his ex-wife recently gave birth to a baby girl. When asked, Berhanu told me that he did not know whether or not she is his biological child. He recalled his ex-wife's uncle calling him around 2 months after the offence to tell him that she was pregnant but noted that the identity of the father was never revealed:

> Maybe I have a daughter now.... I understand now it's really hard for her to handle two kids. As a human, I have to share this responsibility, just they are our responsibility. They came because of us in this world. We are the reason for this one. Why do they suffer because of us?

Taking the time to speak with Berhanu and revisit our initial conversation allowed him to verify the contents of the story, as well as add additional elements. I was grateful to receive his feedback and to hear that he was content with the narrative I created: “Thank you for your service, thank you for your study, thank you for your topic.”

Participant 3: Adewale

Adewale is a 30-year-old man who was born in Nigeria and immigrated to Canada 10 years ago. Adewale moved after graduating from high school in order to pursue post-secondary education. According to Adewale, universities in Nigeria regularly had strikes for long periods of time. The frequency of these strikes was concerning to him, and Adewale made the decision to move to Canada for school. He shared that immigrating to Canada was difficult and more expensive than he had anticipated. At the time of his arrival, Adewale had a few friends living in Canada and no family members. He lived with a friend for a few months prior to meeting his current wife. Adewale now has two biological children and one stepdaughter.

Adewale described having a close relationship with his mother growing up. The two were in regular contact with one another, and Adewale recalled calling her almost every day when he was away from home. When Adewale got into trouble, he knew that he could always rely on his mother for help. Adewale's relationship with his father, however, was quite different. Although Adewale knew that his father cared for him, he stated that his father did not outwardly show his love. In fact, Adewale was unable to remember a time where his father said, "I love you." He also recalled his father struggling to express his feelings: "I don't know, maybe it's a man thing or something, but I don't know. Me, I'm different, but he maybe doesn't know how to show emotions or whatever."

In reflecting on his childhood, Adewale spoke of his relationship with his father in relation to other son-father relationships he observed in Canada. He recalled one friend in particular whose relationship with his father was similar to that of a friendship. The two shared almost every detail with one another, talked about their days, and had a closeness that Adewale admired. Adewale described his relationship with his biological son as having this "friend"-like

quality. He shared recent stories of times in which his son cried in his absence and had a hard time parting from him. As our conversation progressed, I developed the impression that Adewale's son was a very important part of his life:

> I didn't get back home until about past 12am. So, apparently, he was mad, he was crying …he was crying because I told him that I was going to be back soon and I wasn't back. His mom told me that every car that went by he always would go to the window and go check before he fell asleep, right. So, we're very good, we're bonded like really close, like, we have like a very good bond, like, really, really good one. Always been that way too.

Adewale described conflict in his marital relationship as ongoing, and mentioned that his children have witnessed arguments between himself and his wife. Adewale was charged with breaching a restraining order and was court-mandated to attend an IPV treatment group. Following the incident, Adewale did not return home for about a month and a half. Adewale did not speak to the specifics of his charge or the events leading up to his restraining order, and I respected his decision.

When asked to describe his relationship with his children following his offence, Adewale stated that their relationship did not change. Regardless of the conflict in his marriage, Adewale reported that his relationship with his children continued to remain the same:

> Like when I wasn't home or whatever like, before, just after that she dropped the charges and after that the charges were dropped and all that I wasn't home for a while. I would come home, spend time with them sometimes, come pick them up, take them like you know to the park, or you know, take them for a drive, go get an ice cream or something. It never changed like, you know, like my relationship with them *never* changed, like. The

> fact that I had issues with the mom or we were having our differences. As much as, there were times when, when they walked into maybe an argument talking about something maybe like in a heated way or something. We *never* made it affect the relationship with them.

When asked to share a story of a time he felt like a "good" father, Adewale described his reaction following a heated argument with his wife. He recalled this fight escalating to the point that the police and children's services became involved and expressed that his main concern was to make sure that his children were safe. Adewale was in another province at this time and decided to keep his son with him when his wife returned home. For Adewale, being a "good" father involves making children feel taken care of and supported, regardless of what might be going on around them:

> You give that support to them and you know, they feel protected by you. Like, my dad, you know as long as my dad is there I'm good, like, you know?

Towards the end of our conversation, Adelwale and I discussed the treatment he completed in the past month. Originally, Adewale was part of a 16-week, in-person IPV treatment group. Due to the pandemic, the group was cancelled and the remaining sessions were delivered individually over the telephone. In describing his group experience, Adewale recalled discussing communication strategies. He learned, for example, about the importance of meeting his wife "in the middle" and expressing his feelings in the moment. This was important for Adewale, as he and his wife would often go weeks without speaking with one another following an argument. Being a part of the group was also an opportunity for Adewale to push himself out of his comfort zone. He described himself as someone that was shy and more withdrawn. Being in this group, however, encouraged him to open up:

> Actually, you know, the funny thing is, I think this group actually helped me too, right. Because I am a very shy person. I don't talk very much. And now I'm starting to loosen up a little bit.

Within the group, Adewale also gained knowledge surrounding abuse toward children. Child abuse was explained as involving more than "physical" abuse, and the men in the treatment program were taught about different types of abusive behaviors. Hearing the experiences of the others in the group broadened Adewale's perspective. Adewale noted, for example, that it can be easy to become comfortable with a certain way of behaving, especially when you observe it happening around you. Being exposed to something, however, does not make it right:

> You know, ah, you could be so used to something and maybe that's what you've been around and then you're just so used to it and in your head it's just the right way, right? Until you are around other people you hear someone else's opinion. And, umm, and in the group, like, there was one section there, that's when we were still together then I realized like, like, umm, abusing a child isn't all about like physically abusing them it can be in a way that you're not even aware of, like, not even aware you're doing it, but, you are doing it, it's just like in your "*blind spot*." You know, you are doing it, but you don't even know, but you are actually doing it.

Due to the pandemic and shifts in treatment delivery, Adewale reported that the group facilitators did not have time to address all the parenting topics planned for the IPV group. Had it been possible, Adewale expressed wanting to learn more about parenting in blended families. He shared that in Africa there are certain beliefs surrounding what stepparents can and cannot do.

Adewale was unsure of what was expected of him in Canada, and desired further education about his role as a stepfather.

As Adewale described his relationship with his son and stepdaughter, I developed the impression that he experienced different parenting challenges with each child: "I've always felt that, like you know, that imbalance with my stepdaughter." Difficulties with transitions in family life were also mentioned, and Adewale recalled his step-daughter struggling to adjust when her eldest brother was born as she was no longer an only child. According to Adewale, all parents could benefit from learning about "working around kids," as no one "100% prepares you" for being a parent. Adewale described his early parenting experiences as trying to go with the "flow" while being uncertain in terms of what is right or wrong. I interpreted this reflection as similar to the experiences of many new parents I have encountered in my clinical work and personal life.

Adewale also spoke of the importance of "educating" immigrant men. He noted challenges for some immigrant fathers, particularly those who were exposed to a way of behaving in their country of origin that is unacceptable in Canada. Adewale explained that witnessing such behaviours within one's circle of friends can lead to the belief that the behaviours are, in fact, acceptable. That being said, Adewale expressed that certain actions are clearly wrong:

> So, I think a lot of people need this education, like, they feel like "okay, I'm from Africa and that's how it's done in Africa", because I'm in Canada, I can, just because of that, like, I can't adjust or whatever. Those are…like, it doesn't really matter where you are Canada, or Africa, or whatever. There are some things you just can't say or do to your kids or your spouse.

Toward the end of our conversation, Adewale reflected on comments made by other men in his IPV group surrounding men's and women's roles: "I'm a man, she's a woman"; "this is how it's done". He referred to these beliefs as playing a role in the use of violence in intimate relationships. Although it was unclear whether or not Adewale possessed this perspective prior to attending IPV treatment, his ability to make connections between socialization experiences and behaviour came across.

Adewale also discussed the perpetration of IPV in the context of immigration. He shared his belief that "most immigrant families deal with stuff like this," but that not all immigrant women make the decision to involve the police. Adewale hypothesized that being around this "cycle of events" might cause these women to not see certain behaviours as abusive. Again, the recurring theme surrounding the role of education for immigrant families emerged. Although Adewale was unsure when exactly this education should occur, he was confident in its importance. I connected with his sense of forward thinking and with his beliefs regarding facilitating change.

At the end of our interview, I thanked Adewale for his time and willingness to speak with me. In response, he shared with me his desire to share his story:

> You know, I'm not sure if my, my umm, my opinion is going to make a difference or not, but, I just wanted to share my like, you know, my own story.

Participant 4: Tomas

In Summer 2020, Tomas' contact information was provided to me by a practitioner in the community. I then got in touch with Tomas to offer more information about the study and to find a time to schedule his first interview. Tomas expressed an eagerness to participate and told me that he had a long story to tell. I replied with a desire to hear his story, regardless of its length. I also shared with him that my study would not be possible without fathers like himself and that I was grateful for his time and willingness to share.

Tomas is a 43-year-old man who was born in an island country in the Caribbean. He immigrated to Canada four years ago with his wife and daughter. While in the Caribbean, Tomas had an affair with another woman with whom he had a daughter. Tomas shared that he made the decision to move to Canada with his wife and daughter in order to put an end to his affair. Tomas' daughter is in her preteens and is no longer in contact with her biological mother in the Carribbean. Looking back on his decision to move to Canada, Tomas expressed some regret:

> So, moving to Canada to me was a bit of a mistake because I didn't know, I didn't know that, I actually get myself, get myself in this, in this, ah, system….so, that's just my experience of Canada, like, I've been here on my own, I don't know the place and I've been in trouble with the law which was really stressful. I knew nothing at all, right? So yeah. It's just sad.

Tomas' family currently lives in San Francisco. Tomas is no longer in touch with his father and described having a difficult relationship with him growing up: "I have no contact with him because I have no feelings for him." Tomas recalled his father taking advantage of him "emotionally" as a child and noted that he displayed a preference toward female children. As we spoke of his father, I noticed a shift in Tomas' tonality. I sensed that asking him to speak about

his father might have triggered some painful memories, and so I shifted the conversation toward his own experience as a father.

Tomas recalled having a difficult relationship with his daughter upon their arrival in Canada. He expressed remorse for his actions and spoke of the "stress" he was experiencing at the time. Tomas remembered feeling overwhelmed as he was struggling to deal with his wife, as well as the mother of his child in his home country. This stress got in the way of Tomas' ability to be attentive toward his daughter, and to be present with her: "It was full of sadness, like, I just couldn't see her. She was there, but I couldn't see my daughter."

Five months after arriving in Canada, Tomas was charged with assault with a weapon and sexual assault against his wife. Tomas was also sentenced to 6 months in prison. Tomas did not share any details surrounding the offence or the events leading up to it, and I respected his decision. Instead, our conversation focused on his experience and the impact of the offence in relation to his parenting. Tomas described his relationship with his daughter prior to the assault as "aggressive" and recalled that he would often get angry at her for no reason. Tomas remembered not feeling as if he was doing a "good job as a parent" and that he was neglecting his daughter and her needs. As our conversation progressed, I acknowledged the difficulty in reliving such memories and thanked Tomas for sharing these personal reflections:

> Yeah, I used to, like, make her feel scared at times because of the stress and the way I talked to her or behaved. It was just too much. So, it was not nice. It was, actually, something every time I think about it makes me feel sad because of how I treated her when I was under all this stress.

Tomas attributed his involvement with the Canadian legal system to his lack of knowledge of Canadian laws. He reported that if the same incident were to have happened in his

home country, the consequences would have been incomparable: “They probably would have said don’t do it again or something like that.” Moreover, Tomas felt as if he did not have a voice in the legal process and that the system itself favored women. Exposure to violence against women was also something that Tomas witnessed growing up in multiple familial relationships (i.e., father-mother, brother and women, etc.). Tomas recalled women asking him to behave differently, but noted that he believed that he was treating them “just the way they should be treated”:

> All I saw all my life was how to hit a woman. For some reason, it’s wrong but it don’t feel wrong because that’s all you know.

Following the assault, Tomas and his wife separated from one another after and are no longer in contact. When asked who his daughter lived with during his time in prison, Tomas described her as “just some lady I met, randomly.” Tomas reported not having any information regarding the woman who took care of his daughter and noted how this lack of knowledge was distressing for him. While incarcerated, Tomas participated in two programs, one of which was geared specifically toward positive parenting. In this group, Tomas learned about the importance of listening and establishing a sense of trust so that children feel comfortable expressing themselves. Feelings of shame and guilt also surfaced in the group as Tomas reflected on his past behaviour as a parent:

> So, it teach me how to be a good dad and I just felt nothing but shame, you know. Shame and guilt. After I did the program, it actually did good to me because now I know that I need to support my daughter. You have to do it, you know. It builds me.

Within these groups, Tomas was also provided with the necessary space to reflect on his experiences growing up. In turn, he developed the intention to make changes in his own behaviour:

> That's when I can start making changes because I realized, okay I didn't grow properly as a child. That's why I was so negative. But since they taught me, I have actually rewired my brain by replacing bad habits with good habits. I tried doing it and it makes me feel much, much, much better than how I used to feel in the past.

After spending 6 months in prison, Tomas was released into the community. Upon seeing his daughter "well and happy" for the first time, Tomas recalled a strong sentiment of not wanting to "lose her ever in life again." Tomas' daughter asked where he had been and Tomas explained that he did "something bad and had to be put away for some time" to serve his "punishment." Tomas also assured his daughter that it would never happen again.

Following his release, Tomas attended a 16-week court-mandated IPV treatment program. This group was composed of other immigrant men who had been charged with a domestic offence. Tomas did not remember discussing parenting in this group and stated that it was mostly focused on "stress, emotions and how to diffuse a situation" within adult relationships. When asked if he would have liked to learn about parenting in the group, Tomas shared the following:

> Yes, this would help because men coming from my situation really don't know how to take care of a child, how to show a child that you love them, how to appreciate a child, how to grow a child, you know. They don't know - this is important for men because being a single dad it's tough to grow a girl child. They don't know how to braid hair. Yeah, so it would be nice if they could have a group for people who want to be [a] good

> parent. Because I want to even *learn more* about being a better parent. There's so many things I don't even know yet.

Currently, Tomas lives with his daughter who is in her preteens. He described being a single father as stressful and lonely, and expressed a desire to have some sort of female caregiver or role model in his daughter's life. For Tomas, women possess a sort of natural ability to communicate feelings and engage with children: "women just know how to do it. I don't know why." Tomas also shared his intention to provide his daughter with a life that is "better" than his own and what he experienced as a child: "So, I do whatever it takes to make her happy, ah, to give her what she needs. And to make sure she feels safe and secure. Unlike how I had it as a youth, right."

Throughout our conversation, I noticed a tendency for Tomas to circle back to his own childhood and negative relationship with his father, particularly when describing his parenting goals for the future. Tomas described being motivated to change his behaviour toward his daughter following his incarceration, a desire stemming from his mistreatment by his own father and reflection with regard to his own parenting:

> I felt like I had to make up how I treated her before the offense. Try to be the best I could because I knew I haven't been nice to her before the offense. And that kind of made me think about my father and how he used to treat me.

Tomas' identity as a father appeared to be shaped, in part, by his recollection of his own childhood experiences and opportunities that were not afforded to him. For example, Tomas described purposely engaging in certain behaviours (i.e. providing and building savings for his daughter) that were contrary to those displayed by his own father (i.e. his father did not give him

any money). In a sense, his idea of fatherhood became defined as an accumulation of the experiences and supports he went without, compounded by a strong desire to be different:

> And then my father never guide[d] me to go to school. He never did nothing for me, so, I try my best to involve myself into her school as well. Because these are the things I wish my father did with me. So, I be with her.

Additionally, Tomas shared that by engaging in acts of affection such as hugging his daughter and telling her that he loves her, he is able to instill a sense of safety and security. Tomas also spoke of his efforts to keep in touch with what is going on in his daughter's life (i.e. asking her questions about her day, what might be bothering her, etc.), spend quality time with her (i.e reading together, playing video games, biking, etc.) and enroll her in programs to help develop her "skills." For Tomas, being involved and ensuring that his daughter feels protected and cared for is an important part of his role as father. "Good fatherhood" also relates to instilling values such as respect and consideration for others:

> So, it means, trying the best to make the right decision and doing the right thing, so that in turn, she will grow up and embed the good, the good character. You know? So she can be a strong person that knows what is wrong from what is right. That's the main thing for me. She respects people for who they are and she could understand that everybody has feelings, they have emotions, everybody, and you need to know how to deal with it in a good way.

Tomas shared that being a "good" father also involves modeling certain skills and behaviours with the intention of his daughter adopting them herself. Moreover, Tomas connected this idea of modeling in relation to shaping his daughter's understanding of healthy male-female relationships:

I guess she [is] actually going to know how a man [is] supposed to treat a woman. By me treating her this way. So, she could actually know what's a good man.

Although Tomas felt grateful for his opportunity to take on an active parenting role, he described fatherhood as foreign to other men around him: "But most men I know, they don't have their kids with them. They don't even know they have a child." When asked to describe what he would like to learn in the context of a parenting group, Tomas referred to the various ways in which women interact with children (i.e. play, laugh with kids, etc.). Tomas expressed wanting to learn how to embody this way of being himself, as he saw it as coming naturally to women.

Toward the end of our conversation, Tomas disclosed that he is worried about being forced to leave Canada. He shared his ongoing battles with immigration and noted that they are trying to "send me back and keep her here."

R: It never gets easy. Everyday it just comes into mind like you'll be chilling and it'll just come to your mind. Can't stop thinking about it

I: So you're worried about having to leave Canada?

R: I worry about my daughter. I worry about leaving without her. Yeah, that would kill me. That would make me a monster. And I don't want them to make me a monster. So that's why I want to share because they don't understand how I'm feeling. Like, they're taking away my only child from me. That could never be fair.

Tomas' desire to share his story stemmed from his experiencing a lack of understanding from those around him, as well as his feelings of powerlessness. Tomas described himself as someone who made mistakes and engaged in rehabilitation (i.e. groups, counselling), but who continues to be perceived as "high risk" or as a "predator." I felt for Tomas in this moment as he

shared his worries surrounding being separated from his daughter and the belief that, despite his learnings, he is still seen as a "criminal."

Four months after our first interview, I met with Tomas a second time to review our conversation and my resulting interpretations. I expressed to Tomas that it was important that what I wrote fits with his experience and accurately summarized our conversation. One note that he added was the belief that the "system" itself needs to change and that men like himself do not "have a voice." Moreover, Tomas expressed that he did not understand his actions toward his wife as constituting an assault: "That's my problem, you don't have a voice. You cannot say anything. So regardless of whether they lie or not, you can't win."

Tomas also shared that he is still uncertain whether or not he will be deported, and that it is an ongoing stressor for him. He mentioned that in the event he does return to the Caribbean, his daughter will stay with the woman she lived with while he was in prison. Tomas reported that his daughter is attached to this woman and refers to her as her mother ("they got attached, so they have a friendship").

At the end of the conversation, Tomas shared his appreciation for my effort to "investigate and help people" that find themselves in a "situation" like his. In return, I thanked him for his time and for his willingness to tell his story.

Participant 5: Sahib

My conversation with Sahib took place in Fall 2020. Information about the study was presented to Sahib by the facilitators of an IPV group that he was participating in at the time. This 16-week group was exclusive to men who were raised outside of Canada and court-mandated to attend treatment following an offence against an intimate partner. At the time of our first interview, Sahib reported that he had completed "only three or four" group sessions. I shared with him the process of the study and how he would participate in a second interview after our conversation today.

Sahib is a 46-year-old man who was born and raised in India. Growing up, Sahib lived in a multigenerational home with his parents, uncles/aunts, cousins, siblings, and grandparents. Sahib recalled having a positive and "friendly" relationship with his father growing up and described him as a "very cool father." In 1998, Sahib was first introduced to his wife while at her family's house in India. His wife was living in Canada at the time, but travelled to India to meet Sahib. The two families knew one another well and arranged the marriage between Sahib and his wife. For the first three years of their marriage, Sahib's wife travelled back and forth between India and Canada. In the early 2000s, the sponsorship officially went through and Sahib immigrated to Canada. Sahib described his adjustment to life in Canada as "slow." At the time, Sahib's only family members in Canada were his wife as well as an uncle. Sahib and his wife had three boys together that are now teenagers.

Approximately 1-year prior to our first interview, Sahib was charged with uttering threats toward his wife. Sahib recalled that he had recently lost his job and had "a little bit to drink" when his wife stopped him from going out. Sahib's youngest child called the police and then hung up. After receiving this call the police came to the home. No additional information

surrounding the incident was disclosed by Sahib and I refrained from asking. Sahib described his offence as an "accident" and stated that nothing similar had occurred in his 20+ years of marriage. Sahib noted that his family was not one that had longstanding family issues: "It's not like everyday fight[ing] in your home, everyday family problem[s]… or "kid problem[s]." For Sahib, the incident was not "big" nor was it on purpose. Instead, it was an isolated incident that happened quickly and in the heat of the moment: "It's just accident, accident. It's just (snaps fingers) happened like this, it's gone."

Following the offence, an 18-month "no contact order" was put in place. This order meant that Sahib was not able to see his wife and children for this period of time. At the time of our first interview, Sahib shared that he had 6 months of this condition remaining before he was able to return home. Sahib mentioned that he spoke to his lawyer about the possibility of submitting an application to go home following the completion of his IPV treatment group. However, given the delays in the court-system due to COVID-19, Sahib stated that this process could take around 2 to 3 months. He decided, therefore, to wait until his no contact order is over to reunite with his wife and children.

Sahib is currently living with his brother who resides two blocks away from his family. Sahib reported that his family is aware of what happened between him and his wife, and that his brother offered him a place to stay. According to Sahib, no one in his family is trying to place blame regarding what happened. Instead, they are helping him move forward and supporting him during this difficult time. When asked to comment on his relationship with his children prior to the offence, Sahib reiterated that this incident was an exception to the norm. He did not comment on any differences in his relationship with his children, apart from the fact that he is no longer able to see them. Sahib expressed that it is difficult it is for him to go without seeing his children

for so long and noted that he is respecting the conditions imposed (i.e. no contact order) to avoid getting into more trouble with the law ("so, we have to, because I don't want to cause any problem[s]"). Being without his children, however, has been "hard" for Sahib who waits for the day that he can "go back happily" to his home: "Now we are not seeing each other. I live in my brother's house. She live[s] in our house, so it's very hard."

In reflecting on his own childhood, Sahib commented on what he described as "cultural and country differences." For Sahib, his children are living a life that is notably "different" from the one he experienced in India. Such differences make it challenging to even compare the two:

> Because when I was a child in my country, I lived with my father. That's totally different because that time, no phones, no smartphones, no landline phones in my country. So, no computer, no nothing, right? So, lots of difference[s]. I can't compare with that life because this life is totally changed.

Later in our conversation, Sahib noted that such technology (i.e. Facetime) has allowed him to stay connected with his family in India as an adult. When asked to describe a story of a time he felt like a "good father," Sahib laughed and replied with "I think I'm always so." Sahib's understanding of "good fatherhood" was described in relation to shared time with his family. Sahib spoke fondly of memories of family birthdays and visits with his children to his home country of India. Sahib mentioned that his time away from his family has been difficult as he has been absent for multiple family events. I recall thinking at the time that this separation would be upsetting for Sahib given the value he attached to spending time with his family:

> I have three kids and, now, in this year, I missed the birthday so like my middle one is in June, so I missed. And [the] younger one is coming now next month. So, I just only send

them wishes and gift[s]. So, I missed that. Now I missed that moment, but before that I spend the moment with my kids and my family, it's very enjoyable. I really like that.

For Sahib, being a "good" father also meant being there for children and meeting their needs in the moment. Sahib smiled and laughed as he shared a story of a time he took a spontaneous trip to Toronto with his wife and children following a long work day. Sahib recalled dropping off his family in Toronto and then flying back home the next day. A week later, he returned to Toronto to pick up his family and bring them back home:

I remember I come from work. I drove [a] delivery truck, it's [a] long hour shift. So, like I start[ed] in the morning 4:00am and I came back around 7:00pm. And when I came back my wife and my kids had the luggage. So I ask, "what are you doing?"

"So, we are going Toronto"

"What? Toronto right now? It's 7 pm. I'm coming from work, I'm tired"

"We have to go!"

(laughs) So, "Okay, I can't drive."

"You drive and let's go"

In relation to this story, Sahib acknowledged that there might be times in which parents do not feel "in the mood" for something that their child is asking of them. In such moments, however, it is important to try one's best as a parent to be responsive to their needs: "If kids need that, you have to do that." Sahib distinguished this idea of meeting a child's need for experiences from a desire for material goods. For example, Sahib expressed limits in terms of purchasing certain items for his children given their age (i.e. cell phones). He described himself as "strict" and noted that he wants his children to "concentrate" on their studies. For Sahib, "good

fatherhood" is reflected in the success of his children, particularly in terms of their education and employment:

> So good things are like uh, getting your children a good education. And not uh, I'm not talking about the highest education like they have to become doctor, engineer, pilot like this. But like if they are good education, they are good jobs. They are good manners and like uh, everything. Their life is going smoothly and good job, no issues. So, my achievement is I'm [a] good father.

Observations of his own father as a child also shaped Sahib's understanding of "good fatherhood." He mentioned that his father never raised his voice or acted abusively toward Sahib and his siblings. His father also communicated with his mother with regard to child-rearing. Sahib described his family life in India as "united" and shared with me his desire to maintain this family structure with his own children. Attaining this goal of preserving family unity, therefore, is tied to Sahib's understanding of what it means to be a "good father." Moreover, it serves as a way for him to measure his own "success":

> I'm trying my best to like uh keep my children [the] same way to live together, so not like that "Okay, I'm married now, so I'm going to my other home," "I'm going to my other home and I'm going to rent my house" and whatever. So, I'm trying to keep them together. If I do this, so I think uh yeah, I'm [a] success. So I'm [a] good father.

Throughout our conversation, Sahib shared many examples of cultural differences in parenting and family life. Sahib mentioned that in India if a parent were to tell a child that they do not "need" something, the child would not respond with "why" (as his own children do). Instead, they would accept their fathers' decision and not proceed to question it: "In our country, if my dad said okay you don't need this phone, we never say 'why?' Never." Sahib also

commented on cultural differences in terms of a collectivist and individualistic mentality. Terminology such as “ours” versus “mine” within the context of family life was used by Sahib to illustrate this. As he provided various examples, I thanked Sahib for sharing his perspective regarding these cultural differences that I was admittedly unaware of:

> I just give you [an] example. We are one car, so we are fifteen people all together. My cousins, brothers. So, we are talking about, this is our car, this is *our* car right. Here, you are three people at home, you have three cars. Nobody says this is “*our* car.” This is mom’s car, this is dad’s car, this is *my* car. That’s the difference.

Moreover, Sahib mentioned that “labour is very cheap” in India, meaning that families can afford to hire someone to help take care of their children. Conversely, a Canadian couple with a “$400,000 mortgage” on their house cannot afford to stay home and raise their children, as noted by Sahib. Financial factors, therefore, play a role in parents’ involvement in childrearing and family life. As our interview progressed, I noticed a tendency for Sahib to circle back to these perceived “differences” when describing the structure of Canadian and Indian families.

> So, you have a mortgage, you have insurance, you have payments, grocery. In the back home country, you don’t worry about the grocery. You have farmland, you can like uh, grow your own vegetables, own food. Lots of difference, that’s why you can - their life [is] a little bit easy. So, you got all the time take care of your kids. But here if you are on job, your kids in like daycare. After they spend like 4-5, 3-4 hours in school, after that they spend 3-4 hours daycare, right? So, it’s lots of difference.

Toward the end of our interview, Sahib and I discussed the IPV group that he was currently participating in. Sahib mentioned that although each group member has their own difficulties (i.e., “family problem,” “kid problem,” “drink problem”), hearing about their

challenges is helpful and allows him to learn from their experiences. For example, Sahib stated that learning about difficulties with children might help to prevent someone else in the group from behaving similarly. Sahib described this transfer of knowledge as follows:

> You can like, collect the ideas, you can discuss the why it's happened…. That guy has problems, kids problems, why? What he did? So why he has problem[s] with his kids, right? So, you can take the ideas so that [is] helpful [to] you because you [are] then more careful for your kids.

According to Sahib, the telling of experiences within the IPV group, regardless of whether or not they are shared, serves as an opportunity for learning. Being only 3 to 4 weeks into the group, Sahib noted that the topic of parenting might emerge in future groups. I was hopeful that he would share this with me in our next interview and thanked him for his time.

Participant 6: Youssef

My interview with Youssef took place in Fall 2020. Youssef was participating in an IPV group at the time and his contact information was provided to me by a practitioner in the community. I began our conversation by asking Youssef some questions to better understand his background. As I was doing so, Youssef started sharing the events that led up to the offence. I found myself having to backtrack in order to better understand Youssef's history, starting with his journey to Canada over thirty years ago.

Youssef is a 62-year-old man who was born and raised in Egypt. Youssef was the youngest in a family of 11 children and recalled getting special treatment from his parents ("The youngest always get[s] spoiled, you know"). When Youseff was 11 years old his old mother passed away suddenly. His sister, who was divorced and had a son of a similar age, moved back into their father's home to take care of her siblings. Youssef recalled his sister taking on the "mother role" and caring for him as if he was her own: "she was like a mother to me". When Youssef was in junior high, he began "dreaming" about moving to Canada. Youssef had a friend whose cousin immigrated to Canada and then brought the rest of his family, including his close friend. Youseff's sister, who was working as a seamstress at the time, paid for his ticket to Canada as he was unable to afford the trip himself. Youssef described his sister as "everything" to him and a "shoulder" that he could always lean on. His initial excitement to leave Egypt, therefore, was later met with feelings of loss:

> So I came, and um, it was kind of something I was looking forward to…I was so excited like finally I'm here and like um, there's like a price you have to pay to migrate and, and, and leave. I have left my family behind, my father, my siblings, my nephews, nieces and all this.

Youssef explained that he was unable to return to Egypt until he was officially a Canadian citizen; otherwise, he would be forced to serve in the Egyptian army. Three years after arriving in Canada, Youssef's father passed away: "my first shock since I came." Given the state of communication at the time (1980s), Youssef would often send letters and gifts with someone he knew that was traveling back home. A friend of Youssef's became aware of his father's death during a trip to Egypt and shared this news with Youssef upon his return. Since Youssef was living alone in Canada, his family was "worried" about him and, therefore, decided to withhold this information. Youssef recalled feelings of remorse after hearing the news and wondered if it had "hurt" his father that he was "gone from him." I sensed that reflecting on the impact of his absence on his family was difficult for Youssef, and something that I empathized with:

> I was bawling and stuff like this. Because I didn't even get to see him and I felt, I felt responsible like I started to feel, I was selfish in the way that I didn't think about him. Like, I just wanted to leave, I wanted to travel….but I didn't think about his feelings as a father. Losing his youngest, I'm the youngest that he has, right? … Like, I never even spoke to my sisters or brother about this. Like, saying I might cause them to die or something, I don't know. This is how I feel, but I don't know.

In reflecting upon this memory, Youssef emphasized that his decision to relocate to Canada was one that came at a cost that he did not anticipate: "Even when now I see newcomers come or stuff like this, right away, I tell them there's a hefty price you're going to have to pay."

At the time of our first interview, Youssef had been living in Canada for 40 years and had 5 children below the age of 18. He shared that he was currently separated from his wife and in the process of getting a divorce. Youssef described conflict in his former marriage as something that was ongoing and not unique to the incident that brought him in contact with the law. In

reflecting back on their relationship, Youssef shared some regrets: “it’s just, it was wrong from the beginning.” Youssef also connected his decision to get married to his strong desire to become a *father:*

> I should’ve, I shouldn’t have even started this marriage. I should’ve just stopped from the beginning, but I don’t know, I just - I was in love with her. We were, we were together for [a] long time and then I just uh, I don’t know, I was getting older and I’m not going to go look for somebody else that already has kids and this and that and I was like 40 years old and not married, and I want to have kids.

Youssef was charged with uttering threats toward his wife, resulting in a no contact order and court-mandated IPV treatment. In the summer of 2019, Youseff received a call from his daughter stating that her mother had “kicked her out” of the house. Youseff was working in another city at the time and was unable to leave. Concerned for his daughter, Youseff called the police to report this incident. No action, however, was taken: “What did the cops do? Nothing.” Several days later, Youseff’s wife called him and they began swearing at one another. Youseff recalled feeling angry as he had not heard from his daughter since the incident, nor any of his other children. Youssef felt as if his communication with them had been cut off by his wife, and this fuelled his level of frustration:

> And you know, I - all I did was like because, because my daughter went out. I didn’t know where she was. I didn’t know what she was doing, who - I couldn’t get hold of her. Because every time I called the house, it’s like I couldn’t get through. It’s like she blocked me. So I couldn’t talk to any of my kids, plus I couldn’t get hold of my oldest daughter. And, and like I went crazy, to tell you the truth. I was so mad. So she called me

> and we butted heads, started swearing at each other. So I kinda threatened her. That's what I did. Because I had nothing else to do. I couldn't come home.

Youssef expressed that his wife knew that he would not act on any of the threats made in their call. He described his words as something that needed to be released from his "system" given the circumstances: "The only thing I could do is just swear and say all these bad words or bad stuff, right?" Moreover, Youssef spoke of his children as influencing his lack of abusive behaviour toward his wife. He mentioned the impact that acting violently would have on them (i.e. losing their parents) as a deterrent for behaving this way:

> I'm not going to hit her or kill her or whatever I said to her *because of my kids*. I would never put them in that situation where they lose both the parents, right? And then they'll be given away to a foster home or something like that. I worry about them more than anything else.

The next day, Youssef received a call from the police. The officer reported that his wife had recorded their call and that there were two warrants out for his arrest. Youssef was told not to return home and to turn himself into a police station as soon as possible. Yousseff was confused regarding the second warrant, as he had not been in contact with his family. It was later revealed that his wife had "made up" a story stating that a month ago he had "hit" his son, a charge which was later dropped. A police officer was in contact with Youssef following his return from work, and Youseff arranged to meet with him at a station:

> Outside the police station, they handcuffed me and they searched me and everything. Put me in the cruiser and they took me downtown. And I spent the night there, in the police station, and until the next day. I saw a duty counsel and they released me because I have no record and all this. Because of my job and - so that I don't lose my job and all this

> stuff and, and a condition to appear in court and they set a date for court and all this stuff right. So, I stayed at a friend's house and all this stuff but anyways, this is why, this is the reason why the charges and they were against me.

Following the offence and resulting charge, a no-contact order was put in place. Youssef was unable to make contact with his wife, but was still allowed to see his five children. A month later, Youssef's wife blocked her number and called crying and stating that she loved and missed him. In recalling this incident, Youssef expressed disbelief that someone who cared for him would act in such a way and purposefully get him into trouble with the law. Youssef also mentioned feeling a certain level of pressure to maintain contact with his wife given her ability to control access to his children:

> She held the kids like as a, as a, how you call it, *like a chip in her hand*, you know? So, I I couldn't see them because she wouldn't let me see them. Because my only way to see them is to like - I had to kinda be nice to her, talk to her, even though I didn't want to talk to her or anything like that. And I just - I missed them so much and I wanted to see them and I even got one of my daughter[s] to record- my oldest daughter to record my little kids because I have little ones too.

As his wife continued to visit his home with their children, Youssef recalled feeling as if he were being used and taken advantage of financially. Youssef was continuing to pay child and spousal support during this time, despite not having consistent employment himself. In the summer of 2020, the family took two trips outside of the city during which arguments surrounding finances occurred. Regardless of his financial stress, Youssef wanted to provide his children with memorable experiences and took great pride in doing so: "My money was an issue

for me. I'm not going to lie to you. But, I tried to make them happy. I tried whatever I could give them, I'll get them, you know."

Youssef shared with me that he does not have a relationship with his two eldest daughters and that he has "written them off." Youssef recalled his daughters having a party in his home resulting in the house being "destroyed" (e.g., glass coffee table broken in half, ripped curtains, etc.) and mentioned another incident that ended with police involvement. Two months prior to our first interview, Youssef's second eldest daughter was living with him, but has since returned to live with her mother following a heated argument. Similarly, Youssef described a conflictual relationship with his eldest daughter. He mentioned that her mother recently texted him out of concern for her and that he has tried to "get her to straighten out." According to Youseff, his daughter's mother is the "root cause of all of these problems," a statement which he did not elaborate upon. I sensed that speaking of his eldest daughter given the state of their relationship was upsetting for Youssef and, therefore, I decided not to probe further.

Currently, Youssef sees his youngest children three to four times a month, typically on the weekends. He also tries to have indirect contact with them (i.e., texting, video chats, etc.) everyday, however, his attempts are not always successful. Youssef mentioned that his children do not always receive his calls on Facetime calls and that he suspects his wife blocked the calls: "They tell me, 'oh we didn't get anything! I don't know what happened'." Youssef will sometimes call his son and have him pass along a message to his daughter in order to get in touch with her. Ongoing challenges related to his youngest children visiting his home were also described. Youssef stated that one of his daughters refuses to sleep over at his house despite his efforts to make her feel at home. This is upsetting for Youssef, who tried his best to make a nice,

comfortable space for his children at his home. After spending the day with his daughters, Youssef brings them back to their mother's house:

> I don't know what happened to her but all of a sudden now, she said, I want to sleep on my own bed. I like, what do you mean you want to sleep in your own bed? You come over on the weekends, spend the time with me.

Youssef also described feeling a sense of pressure from mutual friends to reunite with his wife and "get back the kids." At the time of our conversation, Youssef had not seen his wife for about a month and expressed no intention of doing so, despite her efforts to get in touch with him (i.e., texts, calls, etc.): "Deep inside I don't want to because I know she's not going to change. She's just… have a mind of her own." It appeared, therefore, as if any connection Youssef maintained with his wife was due to a desire to remain in contact with his children. For Youssef, "good" fatherhood was described as involving guidance and the sharing of experiences. Youssef mentioned, for example, feeling inclined to steer his children down a certain path based on his own life lessons. He acknowledged, however, that this can be particularly difficult during the teenage years. I also noticed that Youssef appeared excited in his tone and presentation when talking about future plans he had with his children (i.e. going to an amusement park for his daughter's birthday) as well as past memories (i.e. trips to the mountains).

In describing the IPV treatment group that he was participating in at the time, Youssef stated that the men share a common sense of "injustice" and perception of the legal system as favoring women. When asked if there were any specific parenting strategies or supports that he believes the group facilitators could provide, Youssef did not share any ideas. Instead, he focused on the incident that brought him into contact with the law and mandated to attend treatment. Youssef expressed his frustration that a single incident (i.e. him yelling at his wife on

the phone) led to his charge (i.e. uttering threats) and mandated treatment. Earlier in our conversation, however, Yousseff stated that he and his wife often struggled to be on the same page regarding "communication." Youssef expressed that his wife would incite arguments in front of their children, whereas he preferred to have such conversations in a private space. Ongoing co-parenting challenges were also mentioned and differed with his younger and older children. As such, I wondered if Youssef would have more to share relative to parenting once he was further along in the IPV group.

Participant 7: Ghazwan

My conversation with Ghazwan took place in Fall 2020. I contacted Ghazwan after his information was provided to me by the facilitators of an IPV group that he was participating in. As we spoke, Ghazwan commented on the length of his story, stating that if he wrote a book he would "get the Nobel," a sentiment that became increasingly clear as I listened to Ghazwan's story.

Ghazwan is a 46-year-old man who was born and raised in Afghanistan. Ghazwan recalled his upbringing as a constant state of war and turmoil. When Ghazwan was around 6 years old, Afghanistan was attacked by Russia. Afterwards, the Mujahideen came, followed by the arrival of the Taliban. Exposure to such traumatic events had a negative and lasting "effect" on Ghazwan, who reported that he continues to experience flashbacks. Even the sight of blood impacts Ghazwan and his "brain:"

> In my experience in back home I saw lots of the dead body. I collected the part of the body with the blood. Because of, due to the war, even our neighbours. The bomb blasted, the rocket came, my mom injured, my 2 brothers and my, my sister they injured. Like 20 years 27 years ago and back home I was 23/ 21 year[s] old. It was very bad effect on me.

Ghazwan also recalled witnessing abuse within his familial relationships as a child. In particular, Ghazwan spoke of an upsetting relationship between his mother and grandfather, noting that he was verbally abusive toward her. Ghazwan described having a positive relationship with his father whom he described as "kind" and well-respected. His father's reputation in the community as a teacher also served as a motivator for Ghazwan to behave a certain way: "If I did something wrong outside or inside, maybe the people would say, 'you are a teacher's son'."

Ghazwan and his wife were married in Afghanistan with the intention of moving to Canada. Approximately 16 years ago, Ghazwan's wife immigrated to Canada with her parents. Afterwards, she began the sponsorship process so that Ghazwan could join her. Ghazwan recalled the immigration process taking longer than anticipated as two of his applications were rejected. His wife gave birth to their first-born daughter while she was living in Canada. When their daughter was three and a half years old, Ghazwan's wife took her to Afghanistan to meet her father for the first time. During a later visit to Afghanistan in 2009, Ghazwan's wife became pregnant again and gave birth to their son upon her return to Canada.

Eight years after the immigration process started, Ghazwan's application was approved and he moved to Canada. Arriving in Canada was a "nice moment" for Ghazwan who recalled being warmly greeted with hugs and kisses by his family. Ghazwan's son, who was two and a half years old at the time, did not recognize him as he had only seen his father over video chats. Ghazwan's arrival in Canada, therefore, marked their first official meeting. Ghazwan shared that he made the decision to leave his family of origin in Afghanistan (i.e., parents, siblings, etc.) to build his new life and family in Canada. At the time of our first interview, Ghazwan had been living in Canada for 8 years and had three children.

Approximately 2 years ago, Ghazwan was charged with assault toward his wife. The day prior to the offence, Ghazwan was drinking with a friend. He returned home during the night (after 2 o'clock) and slept in an extra bed in his son's room. The next day, Ghazwan recalled getting frustrated with his daughter when she was crying loudly and reported that he slapped her. His wife who witnessed the incident told Ghazwan to stop and took their daughter upstairs before leaving for a work Christmas party. Later on in the evening (9 or 10 o'clock) while Ghazwan was watching the hockey game, his daughter came and sat on his lap and he

apologized: “I kissed her and I told her, I’m so sorry, my lovely daughter, sorry. I don’t know why it happened.” When Ghazwan’s wife returned at 11 o’clock she confronted him and told him that she had taken a picture of her daughter’s face:

> She took the picture and I say, “Why did you take a picture? Now she will grow up and she will hate me [and] say, ‘Dad, look at my picture, you are a bad dad’.” I am okay with her and she forgave me.

Ghazwan then proceeded to beat his wife and recalled throwing a lamp at her. Ghazwan reported that his wife called out to his daughter to contact the police, which she did. Shortly after, the police arrived and Ghazwan was arrested. Ghazwan remembered asking himself what he had done and stated that he has experienced difficulty sleeping ever since.

Following the offence, Ghazwan spent 3 winter months in jail. He recalled the days becoming shorter and darker as time progressed and noticed feelings of uneasiness emerge. Ghazwan wondered, for example, what would happen with his wife following his release from prison and whether or not they would separate from one another. The isolation and uncertainty of his situation appeared to fuel Ghazwan’s worries. Ghazwan also spoke to his god, Allah, to ask what had happened to him and how he ended up in this situation: “I love my wife, which I love my kids. And how long I will be here? What will happen to me? Maybe I will be deported.”

Moreover, Ghazwan shared the following memory of his daughter that brought him to tears while incarcerated. He recalled 4:40pm as the time he his daughter would arrive home from school, and described a playful interaction between the two of them:

> I remember the time, 4:40pm, when my daughter arrive at home. Before that when I was at home she [would] open, ding dong, or knock [on] the door [and say], “is dad home?”; “no, he is outside”; “no, he is at the groceries”; “he is home?” … Sometimes I hide

> myself behind the couch. I remember that. It remind[s] me. I cried in that time. It was very hard for me.

Ghazwan's time in prison also served as an opportunity for self-reflection. Ghazwan expressed the desire to start a "new life" and to not "relapse." In addition, Ghazwan made the decision to stop using substances (i.e. marijuana) and drinking alcohol. Following his release, Ghazwan moved into a rental unit as he was unable to see his wife and children for the duration of a year. Ghazwan referred to his children and "future" as motivators for respecting this no-contact order. He shared with me, however, that he sometimes saw his children from a distance:

> Yeah, I was not allowed to see, no contact, but from the very far when some, like when they went to recreation centre, one of my friend[s], he was my close friend he told me "your kids comes" and I went and sit in my car when they come out from the car I saw them. No contact, no talking.

After the year had elapsed, Ghazwan returned home to live with his wife and children. Ghazwan described his life upon return as a fresh start: "Oh that was like new, like [a] new life. To be reborn and [to] see it." Slowly, Ghazwan began to reconnect with his children and spend time doing things together that they enjoy (i.e. going to the library, swimming lessons, watching movies, etc.). Ghazwan expressed that his children had either forgotten about what had happened with their mother, or that they recalled the offence but did not "hate" him: "When they saw my face, my character, it was changed."

Ghazwan did not report engaging in conversation with his children regarding what they witnessed or heard, apart from correcting inaccuracies expressed by his daughter:

> My daughter when I came home, she mention me 2-3 times and she said "when you hit mom" instead of the unconscious she said "my mom died when you hit her" and I say

> "no she didn't die" just it was, she was unconscious. And slow, slow, slow they forgot that situation.

Ghazwan shared that he participated in a family violence group in the community "for one or two months" after his release. He recalled learning about not using violence in front of children as well as how to "control" oneself, "ignore," and "apologize." In describing what he took away from the group, Ghazwan mentioned the following analogy in relation to emotion regulation:

> Ignore. I, lots of, like when light the fire it gives more light and it gets very big fire and should not touch the fire or [inaudible] the fire to become glowing. Just let it go down.

At the time of our first interview, Ghazwan was half way through a 16-week court-mandated IPV group. He mentioned that the group is "beneficial" and noted that he finds the different topics discussed in the group (e.g., culture, environment, work, economy, etc.) enjoyable. Ghazwan also shared that he believes that a similar group for women would be beneficial ("to teach them how to relation with their husband") instead of focusing exclusively on men. He did not recall learning directly about parenting in this group, and I reflected that this might be something that is discussed in future sessions. When asked what he would like to learn about parenting, Ghazwan stated:

> Respect to the kids and wife, like from the, from the wife and the kids. Relation between father and son, father and daughter, mother and daughter, wife and husband. Listening, not in front of the kids violence, shouting, or bad words. Like share opinions and not get anger or with mad. Things like that.

I interpreted this response as a desire to learn about communication and emotion regulation within various familial relationships. Earlier in our conversation, Ghazwan also spoke

of his challenges regulating his own emotions and uncertainty surrounding the cause of his difficulties (i.e. stress, diabetes, etc.). On several occasions, I also noticed that Ghazwan circled back to the impact of the war when describing his behaviour and mental state:

> I am not sure I told a psychologist in the court. I don't know what is going on with me. Sometimes why I get mad, why I get anger, why I get red with very small piece of talking. I get mad. With [a] very big huge war, I ignore that. I say I don't know it, it's okay. I'm not sure it's due to the diabetes or due to the stress which is my memory all come the back home to my brain.

In explaining his understanding of "good fatherhood," Ghazwan referenced his children's future and the opportunities afforded to them in Canada. Due to the war in Afghanistan, Ghazwan was unable to attain a higher education. He spoke, therefore, of a desire for his children to work and "study hard" and described Canada as a place of "peace" and opportunities. Ghazwan stated that he would like his children to recognize that there will be a time for fun and games (e.g., sightseeing, parties, etc.) after their schooling. As Ghazwan reflected on his upbringing in relation to his hopes for his children, I sensed that he was optimistic about their future.

In addition, Ghazwan mentioned his desire for his children to take care of themselves to avoid developing similar health conditions: "Study, eat good food, and exercise. This is for your life because of my experience, see my feet, my eyes, my skin, everything." Ghazwan also described parents as role models for their children, commenting that children "learn" from what they see being done around them (i.e. smoking, drinking, swearing, etc.). He connected this idea of modeling to his own behavior and mentioned that he stopped smoking in front of his children. In this sense, Ghazwan's children served as a motivator for him to change his behavior:

> For a long time, I shy in front of my kids. My son, he was 5, 6-year-old and he say, "Dad, why [do] you smoke? It's not good." I was shy and I stop[ped] it. I didn't smoke in front of them.

As our conversation came to an end, I thanked Ghazwan for his time and willingness to share his story. I acknowledged how difficult it can be to recall such memories and expressed my gratitude for his openness: "No problem, thank you so much. And thank you for helping, thank you for, uh, asking me to come out my words from my heart and from my mouth."

Thematic Analysis

The thematic analysis revealed nine themes across the majority of narratives: (a) the immigration experience, (b) risk factors and protective factors, (c) fathers as part of a family system, (d) understandings of "good" fatherhood, (e) children as motivators toward change, (f) parenting stressors and challenges, (g) evolution of parent-child relationship, (h) role of culture and (i) helpful strategies for moving forward. A summary of each theme and subtheme is also depicted in the Table 1 below, followed by a description.

Table 1

Themes and Subthemes Generated from Participant Interviews

Themes	Subthemes
The Immigration Experience	Circumstances of Immigration Challenges and Stressors
Risk and Protective Factors	Personal Challenges and Stressors Protective Factors
Fathers as Part of a Family System	Interconnectedness Impact of IPV
Understandings of "Good Fatherhood"	Fathers as Teachers and Providers Involvement and Support Love
Children as Motivators Toward Change	Inner Reflection Barriers Desire for Knowledge on Parenting
Parenting Stressors and Challenges	Mothers as Gatekeepers
Evolution of the Parent-Child Relationship	Shifts in Family Dynamics Reunification
Role of Culture	Gender Role Expectations
Helpful Strategies for Moving Forward	Benefits of Group Therapy Education and Prevention Alternative Approaches

Theme 1: The Immigration Experience

Circumstances of immigration. Fathers spoke of the transition from their country of origin, challenges associated with immigration, and their experience of living in Canada. Participants had been residing in Canada for a range of time (2 to 40 years) and immigrated under varying circumstances (e.g., to attend school, to reunite with their family, to be with friends, to distance themselves from people back home, to leave unsafe conditions, and for "better opportunities"). Some fathers were sponsored by their wives who moved to Canada first, whereas others made the decision to immigrate alone. In general, Canada was described as a place of opportunities for fathers as well as their children. A level of excitement and happiness surrounding relocating and starting a new life was recalled by one participant, saying: "Everybody wanted to go to Canada, for some reason, for a better life, I think."

Challenges and stressors. Stressors specifically associated with the immigration experience were also mentioned by fathers. One father described his decision to immigrate as coming at a "hefty price," something that he now shares when encountering Canadian newcomers. Examples of stressors included cultural differences and slow adjustment to the Canadian way of life, length of time it required to immigrate, challenges communicating and sharing information post-immigration, guilt surrounding leaving one's family, finances and cost of living in Canada, as well as the loss of familial relations and support system. Relatedly, a lack of close friends and family to reach out to following his offence was noted by another participant. Variation was evident, however, in the extent to which fathers had family and friends in Canada upon their arrival and at the time of our first interview. For example, one participant shared: "I don't have any sister, aunt, uncle, something like that here."

Moreover, although some fathers did not disclose having regular contact with their relatives in their country of origin, others remained connected to their relatives, stating: “It’s easy… I connect with my family every, mostly every day. I talk my cousins, and, like uh, my brothers, sisters and my uncles and everybody.”

Theme 2: Risk Factors and Protective Factors

Various risk and protective factors related to father’s perpetration of violence and/or understanding of intimate relationship were described. Examples included fathers’ familial history and background (e.g., exposure to violence, negative familial relationships, lack of positive role models), personal challenges and stressors (e.g., substance use, post-traumatic stress, emotion regulation difficulties, unemployment/job loss, financial pressures, history of conflict in their intimate relationship), as well as circumstances related to immigration (e.g., lack of knowledge of the Canadian legal system). Substance use emerged as a risk factor for those fathers who disclosed consuming alcohol prior to the offence. One participant reported that he “lost” his job and “had a little bit to drink” on the day of the incident, whereas another described himself as intoxicated at the time of the assault. Moreover, fathers who witnessed violence in familial relationships commented on how this impacted them or their understanding of acceptable behavior in relationships.

> Tomas: So before, I never knew how to treat a woman because my mother and father used to fight. My one brother was a gangster and the other one used to beat women. So, I never knew how to treat a woman.

Modeling their behavior after what participants had come to “know” also highlights the impact of the surrounding environment in shaping fathers’ actions and working models of relationships.

> Tomas: I never had the experience, so I never got the chance to treat a woman like a woman because I just didn't know. It's funny, because people think that at your age you should know better *but it's how you grow,* you just don't know. It's kind of, it's weird.

Relatedly, the role of gender beliefs in relation to the perpetration of violence in immigrant communities was acknowledged. The overall prevalence and sense of normalcy that might come from witnessing such behaviours was described by one participant as follows:

> Adewale: That mentality is already there, right. I'm a man, I'm a woman. And, I think most immigrants, most immigrant families deal with stuff like this… not all of them go ahead and report or whatever… and most of the women have been around the cycle of events and it's okay for a man to do that.

This father also commented on the adoption of the mentality "I'm a man, she's a woman," as expressed by another man in his IPV group. He also described this belief in relation to the perpetration of violence:

> Adewale: There was this one guy like in the group… was just hell bent on like "I'm a man, she's a woman" - "this is how it's done." …So, I mean not everybody has that kind of understanding…that's what leads to a lot of domestic violence, right. You know, because, it's, that mentality is already there, right. I'm a man, I'm a woman.

Moreover, a lack of knowledge of the Canadian legal system placed some fathers in a position in which they were not aware that their actions toward their partner were, in fact, illegal.

> Tomas: Back home I wouldn't have get charged. They probably would have said, 'don't do it again,' or something like that. Because I - it's just that it wasn't intentional. But here, in Canada, they don't care. It's a law, you break, you're gonna pay the consequences. They're a little more strict here.

Personal challenges and stressors. Following their offence and resulting no-contact order, not all fathers had family members or friends in Canada that they could reach out to for support. Isolation prior to and following the offence, therefore, was conceptualized as risk factor for these fathers.

> Berhanu: What's my plan now? I don't have any close friend. Till now she is my emergency contact. I don't have a close person in this country. I know, she have uncle, aunt, brother, something like that, but I don't have anyone. I don't have any emergency friend. So, after police station, I don't know where I go.

Additional stressors described in fathers' stories included estrangement from children, threats of deportation, difficulties navigating the legal system, as well an absence of connections and supports in Canada,

Protective factors. Some fathers, however, had friends and/or family in Canada that offered support following their offence, serving as a protective factor. These individuals provided a place for them to stay during their no-contact order, helped fathers arrange to see their children, or assisted them in communicating with their partners.

> Arjun: So, I went to my father's house. I had to go somewhere because I couldn't go… to my house actually, where we were living together. So, I didn't call her or talk to her or, I wasn't allowed to but, by law, I could have called a third party to make an arrangement so I could see them there.

Participants' belief in their capacity for change as well as their willingness to reflect inwardly and reach out for help were also conceptualized as protective factors. Following their offence or period of incarceration, some fathers also identified a desire to make amends and start a "new life" for the benefit of their families, for example: "I said, I promise again no more violence, no

get anger, no physical" The perception that they could change their behaviour and act differently in their relationships moving forward was also expressed.

> Ghazwan: How long I will be here? What will happen to me? Maybe I will be deported. I will go… for a long time for the jail. Maybe I release? Maybe I separate? Maybe she divorce me? …. I say, no, I should remember those and I should not relapse these things. Just everything stop and starting a new life.

Theme 3: Fathers as Part of a Family System

Various relationships (i.e., mother-child, father-child, mother-father, mother-father-child) within the larger family system were described as interacting and influencing one another. A range of family structures were also evident (i.e., single parent families, blended families, divorced/separated families, nuclear families, etc.) across participants, each with their own sub-systems. Amongst fathers and their current or former partners, the perpetration of IPV, as well as past or ongoing conflict in their relationship, played a role in their involvement in family life. Although some fathers returned to live with their families following their no contact order and fell back into their previous fathering role, others remained separated from their partners and experienced co-parenting challenges. Adopting a systems lens helps illustrate how an incident between intimate partners can influence the larger family system, which fathers remain a part of.

Interconnectedness. The extent to which fathers were permitted visitation access was often dependent on the nature of their relationship with their child's mother. In this sense, the father-child relationship post-offence was impacted by the mother-father relationship: "We love each other. So, she knows if she wants to upset me, he's my weakness." The desire to continue to sustain a level of cooperation in the parental relationships in order to maintain contact with their children was also noted.

Moreover, mothers' relationships with their children were influenced by changes to the parental dynamic, as some mothers found themselves in a single parent role for the first time. One participant noted that although their marital relationship had ended, his former partner would contact him when she was concerned about their eldest daughter.

> Youseff: [My daughter is] living on her own with some guy and uh, every time, twice she texted me was about her… She said, "Oh I think she's up to no good."

Impact of IPV. Although all fathers were charged with an offence directed toward an intimate partner, some children witnessed the violence or were involved in a conflict that preceded the offence. For example, in some instances a conflict within the father-child or mother-child relationship occurred prior to IPV. Such incidents were described as triggering or contributing to the subsequent use of violence.

> Youseff: All I did was like because, because my daughter went out. I didn't know where she was. I didn't know what she was doing, who - I couldn't get hold of her because every time I called the house, it's like I couldn't get through. It's like she blocked me. So, I couldn't talk to any of my kids, plus I couldn't get hold of my oldest daughter. And, and like I went crazy, to tell you the truth. I was so mad. So, she called me and we butted heads, started swearing at each other. So, I kinda threatened her.

In addition, some children were in the home at the time of the offence and called the police. As one participant explained: "When I was beating my wife I hold from her hair and she call my daughter 'call the cops' and she called the cop[s] and they came here and arrested me." This father noted that his children were slow to warm up to him after he returned home and that he had to clarify to his youngest daughter what had happened between himself and her mother.

> Ghazwan: My daughter when I came home, she mention [to] me 2 or 3 times, and she said, "when you hit mom" instead of unconscious she said, "my mom died when you hit her." I say, "no, she didn't die, just she was unconscious."

As illustrated, the offence between fathers and their intimate partners was not isolated to this dyadic relationship, but instead impacted the larger family system through various subsystems and interactions among them.

Theme 4: Understandings of "Good" Fatherhood.

Fathers shared their perspectives surrounding what "good" fatherhood entails and identified what contributed to the development of this understanding. Traditional and non-traditional roles associated with fatherhood were noted, as the participants reflected on their upbringing and the impact of their own parents.

> Tomas: [I] actually want to make any child's life better than my life. So, I do whatever it takes to make her happy, to give her what she needs. And to make sure she feels safe and secure. Unlike how I had it as a youth, right?

Fathers as teachers and providers. "Good" fatherhood was described as ensuring safety and security, providing financially (i.e., food, shelter, etc.), and instilling a sense of guidance, direction and morality. Fathers characterized themselves as teachers or role models who had the duty of passing on "good" values to their children and promoting their well-being and happiness.

> Arjun: I think being a good father just doesn't mean that you leave them a lot of money. Like inheritance or something. I think it's to teach them or, like, to instil good values and show them the reality of this world. Not sugar coat it. Right, and what they need to do in order to be successful in and especially happy in life I would say.

Access to a "good" education was also important for fathers who viewed their success as a parent as being based on that of their child's. "Investing" in children was described in relation to their life trajectory and opportunities afforded in Canada: "Their life is going smoothly and good job, no issues. So, my achievement is I'm *good* father."

Involvement and Support. Responsiveness toward their children's needs and accumulation of memories was also mentioned as important parts of being a "good" father. For example, several fathers expressed feelings of pride in providing opportunities for their children and enjoyment in these shared experiences (i.e., family holidays, visits to their home country, spontaneous trips, etc.). Moreover, fathers spoke of the importance of paternal involvement in childrearing and other aspects of family life (i.e., helping their children with homework, cooking for them, going for bike rides, playing video games, reading, etc.) in relation to "good" fatherhood. The importance of being supportive and reliable was also expressed: "what it means I think is being there for your kid, being supportive and letting them know they can count on you and they can rely on you."

Love. Paternal availability, both physical and emotional, was also described by participants. Such availability included acts of affection and closeness between fathers and their children. For example, as one father explained: "Yeah, and days when she come and hug me and tell me, 'Daddy I love you.' Yeah, I feel like a *good* father." Similarly, another father said: "…we [him and his son] have a very good bond. Like, at least 3 times a day he comes to me and – 'Daddy I love you'."

The notion of "good" fatherhood, therefore, extended beyond providing in a financial or material sense and encompassed paternal responsiveness, warmth, and involvement: "A good father means not just only buy milk, give food, clothes. It means love, it's about *love*."

Theme 5: Children as Motivators Toward Change

Inner reflection. Shifts in their attitudes and behavior post-offence related to some fathers' desire for an improved relationship with their children, for example: "I actually just came out of prison and saw her. Saw her well and happy, that's when I realized, you know what, I don't wanna lose her ever in life again." These fathers reflected on the way they treated their children prior to coming in contact with the law and described how their use of violence or substances (i.e., alcohol) might have impacted their children. In this sense, children served as a catalyst toward change and sparked fathers' inner reflection:

> Tomas: I felt like I had to make up how I treated her [my daughter] before the offense. Try to be the best I could because I knew I haven't been nice to her before the offense. And that kind of made me think about my father and how he used to treat me. So, as soon as I got out, I was like let me just show her I'm sorry and make it right.

One father described his substance use and assault as inconsistent with the behaviors he wanted his children to emulate. This father's desire to be in a position in which his children look to him as a positive role model, therefore, meant shifting his behaviour accordingly: "This bad alcohol abuse and this assault incidence and the fight, that kinda made me realize that… I'm kinda leaving them a bad impression. I should be their role model. They should look to me actually." Furthermore, his children's concerns surrounding his drinking and subsequent behavior influenced this father's decision to stop consuming alcohol:

> Arjun: I said, "why don't you like my drinking?" They said, "when you drink, the thing is that you become isolated. You don't talk to us, and you are a different person and you're not the same dad anymore". So…it is better to not drink. So, I kinda listened to that as well. I am trying to stay away from this… they kinda showed me the mirror.

Barriers to change. Not all fathers spoke of their children as motivators toward change or acknowledged how their actions might have been perceived by their children. The variability in fathers' responses was interpreted in relation to different factors, such as the extent to which fathers took ownership of their abusive behaviour and acknowledged potential consequences of their actions, as well as the extent to which the men described their offence as something that impacted their child or parenting relationship. When asked to describe his relationship with his children before and after his offence, this father shared the following:

> Sahib: I can't say so my relationship was bad with my children before this happened. It's nothing like this. It's just accident, accident. It's just (snaps fingers) happened like this, it's gone. That's all. It come like storm and go. It's not like it's coming long time like family problem.

This father described his behaviour as an "accident," and, therefore not something he would feel motivated to change. Similarly, another father commented on how his relationship with his children did *not* change following his offence. He also noted that "issues" or "differences" in his marital relationship did not impact his relationship with his children, nor his wife's. Failure to acknowledge how familial stressors have the potential to impact children and the parent-child dynamic may get in the way of parents' willingness to make changes in their behavior.

> Adewale: I don't think anything changed … The fact that I had issues with the mom, or we were having our differences, as much as, there were times when, when they walked into maybe an argument talking about something maybe like in a heated way or something, we *never* made it affect the relationship with them.

As illustrated, fathers differed in terms of their awareness and acknowledgement of the impact of the offence, or previous marital interactions, on their parenting relationship. I understand this

lack of awareness as a barrier to change, as it may impede fathers' ability to recognize a need for support, both for themselves as well as their children.

Desire for Knowledge on Parenting. The importance of parenting knowledge was evident across most interviews. Fathers identified the following topics as ones they wanted to learn more about or saw value in discussing: types of abuse beyond physical forms (e.g., emotion abuse) and appropriate behavior (e.g., not using violence in front of children); emotion regulation and communication strategies (e.g., listening to children, refraining from using bad words or shouting); how to connect with children, care for children, and show love toward them; as well as parenting in the context of a blended family. The desire to be comfortable around children was also shared:

> Adewale: Because being a parent the truth is, yes, now there is a kid or whatever, yeah, you grow up around each other, but no one actually 100% prepares you for those kind of things.

Other examples of desired parenting knowledge included the adoption of female characteristics, such as: "just the way a woman does, like play with a child, laugh with them", as well as the ability to listen to their children: "they should teach the parents I think to be better counsellors. Better to listen to their kids." Hearing other fathers' stories and perspectives in the context of their IPV group also provided opportunities for fathers to learn from one another and engage in discussions about parenting. One father who participated in a parenting specific program while incarcerated shared the following learnings regarding childrearing:

> Tomas: Yeah, I took away one thing - just always *listen* to your children. And it's important that the child trusts you. So, if they have any problem or anything to say they

feel comfortable to come to you and explain. Not to some stranger or anybody else.

Establish that love between your children and you. That's one thing I took away.

Although the specifics in terms of what fathers wanted to learn differed depending on their circumstances (i.e., single parent versus married, nature of their relationship with their children, etc.) and exposure to parenting-specific programming, the value in learning or having discussions about parenting post-IPV was expressed.

Theme 6: Parenting Stressors and Challenges

Parenting challenges were described by fathers, some of which preceded their offence and others that emerged afterward (e.g., restricted access to their children, conflict regarding visitation, difficulties navigating the legal system and relationships with a restraining order, feeling silenced by the courts, serving time in jail away from children, and threats of deportation). Examples of parenting challenges and stressors that were present prior to the offence or that participants did not consider to be specific to the impact of IPV included the following: being a single parent and having limited support and high levels of stress, parenting in a blended family with biological and stepchildren, parent-child conflict in the teenage years, as well as longstanding marital conflict and financial challenges. One father also commented on changes in his children's behavior after the birth of a sibling and resulting shifts in their family dynamic: "I don't know maybe she felt like, okay, maybe like he's taking the attention… so, a lot of attitude and everything started up."

Mothers as gatekeepers. New parenting stressors emerged following IPV and the resulting no-contact order. Co-parenting challenges were expressed by fathers who felt as if access to their children was being controlled or dictated by their former partners, despite no legal restrictions limiting their contact. One father described ongoing difficulties visiting his son, even

after acquiring a court order granting him weekly visitation. As illustrated below, this father's access to his son was complicated by the restrictions between himself and the mother of his child:

> Berhanu: Already, I have a court order to visit him, to access him two times a week. Monday and Wednesday, from 4:00 up till 6:00. Just, I don't have right to call for her, I just text for her. She's not answering. Just maybe she answering after 8, something like that. What am I supposed to do? I don't have access to go there.

Relying on their former partner as a means of accessing their children was frustrating to those fathers who desired an ongoing relationship with their children and exerted great effort in doing so. Participants felt that fathers' rights to see their children were not being acknowledged, nor were their children's: "spending time with his father, he [has] a right." A sense of powerlessness was also expressed as mothers acted as gatekeepers in controlling some fathers' access to their children. One father shared how he felt a sense of pressure to maintain a relationship with his ex-wife in order to spend time with his children. From his perspective, his ex-wife held their children "like a chip in her hand."

> Youssef: I couldn't see them because she wouldn't let me see them. Because my only way to see them is to like - I had to kinda - be nice to her, talk to her, even though I didn't want to talk to her or anything like that.

Additional parenting challenges related to reconnecting with children following fathers' re-entry into the home were also described, as some fathers reflected on their transition back to living with their families. A more in-depth discussion of changes in the father-child relationship are outlined in the theme below.

Theme 7: Evolution of the Father-Child Relationship

Shifts in family dynamics. Shifts in fathers' relationships with their children following IPV were noted. Although not all fathers acknowledged the impact of their offence on their parenting relationship or dynamic, changes in their daily lives that affected their role or presence in their children's lives were described. All fathers spent a period of time outside of their home post-offence (i.e. serving time in jail, living with friends or family, living alone, etc.) and most had no-contact orders with their partners, thereby limiting their access to their children. As one father explained: "Just I live two blocks away from my home…I'm waiting till we finish my period, probation period so I can go back happily to my home."

Separation between fathers and their intimate partners (i.e. partner, mother of their children) also occurred in some families, whereas other relationships remained intact. As the presence of fathers in the lives of their children changed, so did their capacity to take on an involved and responsive fathering role. Some fathers, for example, commented on not being able to attend family events and activities (i.e. birthday parties) and having limited contact with their children.

> Ghazwan: Yeah, I was not allowed to see, no contact, but from the very far when some-like when they went to the rec centre, one of my friend, he was my close friend, he told me 'your kids comes' and I went and sit in my car when they come out from the car I saw them. *No* contact, *no* talking.

Reunification. Additionally, some children were witnesses to the perpetration of violence amongst their parents or were aware that it occurred. Variation in children's ages at the time of the offence and level of involvement (i.e. witnessed violence, called police, not present for the offence, etc.) were also noted. As described by their fathers, some children expressed misunderstandings regarding what occurred (i.e. "my mom died when you hit her") or fears

surrounding what could have happened (i.e. “that dad could have severely hurt or even killed mom”). One father recalled his reunification with his children following his period of incarceration as follows:

> Ghazwan: When they saw my face, my character, it was changed, from after the release. They was little bit quiet, slowly and safe, ‘hi hello.’ And they sit, slow, slow, slow, slow, take time to eat on the table, talking, watching movie and hobbies, exercise, YMCA, slow, slow, slow, they forgot everything.

Moreover, reflections on fathers’ own emotions during interactions with their children post-IPV were provided. Feelings of shame were expressed as this father reconnected with his children for the first time following his offence: “The first day I saw them after that incident, it was really awkward. I didn’t have the words on how to start a conversation on what to say or not to. I was obviously very ashamed and regretful.”

Fathers also described their desire to change the way they had treated their children prior to their offence or to slowly rebuild their relationship and make amends: “You have to work *all together* and gain their trust so apologize to them and start um building relationships again so, I can win their trust, which I was able to slowly and slowly, again.”

Regarding their present relationship, some fathers shared that their children were “over it” or did not recall what happened. For example, one father shared: “Right now I think they don’t remember anything at all that - maybe they remember but they don’t hate me” and another stated: “I know it has impacted them, but I think they’re over it now.” A lack of acknowledgement in terms of changes in their father-child relationship post-offence were also expressed by some fathers. One father explained: “So, it’s not a difference in me, my wife, and my kids. That was accident, that past is gone, is gone, that’s all.” Similarly, another father stated:

"It never changed like, you know, like my relationship with them never changed, like. The fact that I had issues with the mom, or we were having our differences."

Taken together, changes in the father-child relationship following IPV were evident, regardless of whether or not children directly witnessed the offence. Shifts in fathers' level of involvement in parenting and availability to their children were also described, as were varying reunification experiences and beliefs surrounding the impact of IPV on their parenting relationship.

Theme 8: Role of Culture

Fathers' parenting experiences were discussed in relation to their cultural background and upbringing, as well as their gender role expectations. Some fathers described changes in their familial structure upon moving to Canada (i.e., transition from a multigenerational household or joint family to a single-family home) and commented on differences in ideologies (i.e., collectivist versus individualistic mentalities) and the authority of the fathering role: "In our country, if my dad said okay you don't need this phone, we never say 'why?' Never. He said you don't need this phone. It means you don't need. That's all." Additionally, expectations and beliefs surrounding the involvement of others (i.e., extended family and community members, religious leaders, etc.) in family life were mentioned: "In Africa it's not like in Canada, maybe your grandma she don't have any involvement in your father or mom. But Africa it's not like that. A lot of third person, they have rights."

Gender role expectations. Cultural differences in relation to gender role expectations within family life were highlighted. Two fathers described women as taking on the primary childrearing role in their country of origin ("so, it's the women mostly that take care of the babies…") and noted that men typically work "outside the house." Given the cost of living in

Canada, one father reflected on how it was impossible for his wife to stay at home with their children, as she could if they were living in India ("we are rich over there so, your mom is like uh, stay at home with kids all the time."). Another father who perceived himself as defying traditional gender expectations reflected on how his level of engagement would be considered atypical in India:

> Arjun: We come from a community usually fathers are not much involved like in my country there, in parenting, like taking care of it [the baby] but I was lucky, or you could say uh I had the chance, so I changed their first diapers in the hospital.

The cultural expectation of men to fill the role of provider and the associated financial stress was also communicated. Conflict in the co-parenting relationship was described by one father who shared feeling upset that the mother of his child brought groceries purchased by another male family member (i.e., her brother) into his home: "This is my son, he can grow by *my* money. I don't have a shortage." This father expressed a sense of pride in being able to support his family and, therefore, was deeply offended by the presence of these items. He believed that he was responsible for ensuring that his son was take care of, even after he separated from his mother. In general, the expectation as men as ongoing providers despite financial stressors (i.e., losing employment) or the termination of their relationship post-IPV was described.

Furthermore, the idea of certain traits or characteristics as being inherently female, even amongst children, was expressed (e.g., "usually girls who act like that, right?). In outlining what he would like to learn in a parenting group, for example, one father shared the following: "Just the way a woman does, like play with a child, laugh with them. And how is - not getting angry…Because women are just different. Women, they are good." From his perspective,

women possess a unique capacity to relate and connect with children, as well as the ability to regulate their emotions, particularly anger.

In summary, fathers' experiences were described in relation to their cultural background and upbringing, as well as their ideas surrounding gender role expectations. Further exploration of culture in relation to IPV programming for immigrant men is discussed in the following theme.

Theme 9: Helpful Strategies for Moving Forward

Benefits of Group Therapy. Fathers described gaining knowledge of the Canadian legal system, different types of abuse, as well as communication and emotion-regulation strategies (e.g., compromising, meeting in the middle, "anger management," "being calm," and "how to diffuse a situation"). Participants felt that sharing their opinions and hearing about the experiences and challenges of others was valuable, regardless of whether or not they could directly relate.

> Berhanu: Before Covid-19, we have some big sessions, maybe 25 to 30 people in one room, so we gained different experience from different people. There are people from Africa, there are people came from different background. From different countries, so we share a lot of things with them. Some people they fight by financial issues, some people they have agreement by dishonesty…. So, we get a lot of experience from that group.

The value in shared learning experiences and the supportive group environment was communicated. One father described the group facilitators as "gifts" who expressed thoughts and ideas he was in agreement with, for example, stating: "I wanted to mention but before me, [the facilitator] mention[ed]." Areas of personal growth as a result of participating in the IPV group were also noted, with one participant explaining: "I think this group actually helped me too,

right, because I am a very shy person … and now I'm starting to loosen up a little bit." This comment highlights personal gains beyond the acquisition of content.

Education and Prevention. The importance of "education" and prevention efforts for immigrant men were identified as suggestions moving forward. This information was deemed critical given some immigrant men's lack of knowledge of the Canadian justice system, or given the normalization of violence. One participant suggested "education" regarding what is considered acceptable behavior toward women and children:

> Adewale: So, I think a lot of people need this *education*, like, they feel like 'okay, I'm from Africa and that's how it's done in Africa', because I'm in Canada… I can't adjust or whatever… There are some things you just can't say or do to your kids or your spouse.

Relatedly, acknowledgment of one's social circle and the role of "education" as beneficial to men outside of IPV groups was shared:

> Adewale: Like some of my friends do some of those things or whatever... But… people actually need this education… not everyone gets this training, not everyone just knows, okay, "this is right and this is wrong." And just because you are around this circle of friends… it's the way or life of where you're from that's how it is, that doesn't make it right.

In building upon this idea of prevention, another father spoke of the timing of the IPV program and suggested that such information be provided earlier:

> Arjun: This program is after assault, right? …I think it should be part of like school curriculum or something … Should give them some life skills, right? Even it's helping me now… court mandated but it's helping us a lot. The things, especially about like your own psychology.

Alternative Approaches. Flexibility in IPV treatment options, for example, involvement of one's religious community (e.g., "church counselling") or the implementation of a "whole family" approach were also discussed.

> Berhanu: We have some community, we have some priests, just you can ask them…They are elder, they are very elder. They have obligation also in the Bible... So, everybody is son for them. Whether you are in Africa or in America, doesn't matter. Just part of their job to like solve this problem. They call her, maybe they listen to us…. In between, they pray for us.

Provided that the IPV occurred "in the family," it was imperative to "get out of this situation and as a family," as noted by one father who endorsed this "whole family" approach. From this perspective, the family was conceptualized as a "unit," which required support for all its members post IPV – a view that can also be understood in relation to one of the previous themes regarding fathers as part of a larger, interconnected family system: "They should work on… the whole family as a unit, actually. Everybody involved. Because this is the family, right?" The current treatment approach for IPV (i.e., court-mandated groups) as described by fathers, however, was strictly inclusive of men and did not allow for the integration of women and children. Relatedly, the lack of resources to facilitate mediation between parents following IPV was mentioned by one father, a suggestion which also relates to the "whole family" approach. From his perspective, having this external support would have allowed for "reconciliation before separation" between himself and his former partner who shares custody of their son. The potential for this type of support to shift the trajectory of father's experiences post-IPV was shared: "If that person accept[s] your sorry, if they give forgiveness, there is not one year journey. Things are easier. Everything back to normal. But they - they just run to put a condition

on you for one year." As mentioned in one of the previous themes, the importance of incorporating knowledge of family life in IPV groups (i.e., marital relationships and parent-child relationships) was shared: "They should consider the *whole* family and teach them not just about the husband-wife relationships."

Additionally, involving women in terms of teaching some of the skills acquired in the men's group (i.e., emotion regulation and communication strategies) was also expressed. This suggestion was also discussed in relation to the belief that men are disproportionately punished or sentenced, and that women also require intervention.

> Ghazwan: To have some these courses for the women also. To teach them how to relation with their husband. It's not from one side. Just always talking with the courses or punishing or sentence the men. Some reasons also come from the woman.

Moreover, although fathers recognized the benefits of the IPV group in terms of their own personal learning and growth, ideas for alternative approaches or interventions that adopt a family-based approach were proposed. It was also acknowledged that men who "want to stay in the family" might have different priorities or beliefs surrounding getting "involved" with their families post-IPV relative to others. Recognition of this variability holds implications for practitioners providing IPV treatment.

CHAPTER FIVE: Discussion

Investigations of the parenting experiences of fathers with a history of IPV are lacking in the parenting literature. For those fathers seeking ongoing involvement in the lives of their children, practitioners have limited information to draw upon as a means of supporting fathers' rehabilitation and parent-child relationship. To date, researchers have focused their efforts on capturing women's perspectives and on understanding the longstanding impact of violence on children's health and development. Moreover, although investigations of men's parenting in the context of IPV have increased in recent years (i.e., Adhia & Jeong, 2019; Stephens, 2020), this literature is based primarily on studies conducted with fathers from non-immigrant populations. The voices of male offenders, particularly those from diverse cultural backgrounds who are mandated to attend treatment, and explorations of these men's perspectives are largely omitted. It is imperative that immigrant fathers be provided with opportunities to share their stories as a means of informing culturally responsive treatment and understanding the impact of IPV on the parent-child relationship and family system. This knowledge will in turn aid in the development of programing to support immigrant families following the perpetration of IPV, particularly in fathers' role as parents.

This dissertation study provides a notable contribution to the literature by giving voice to immigrant male perpetrators of IPV. To my knowledge, this research is the first narrative study to investigate the parenting stories of immigrant fathers residing in Canada who were court-mandated to attend IPV treatment following an offence against an intimate partner. The heterogeneity of the sample is reflected in the mix of father's ethnicities (i.e., Ethiopian, Nigerian, Indian, Egyptian, Afghan, and Caribbean), a characteristic that further distinguishes this study from others that focus primarily on one immigrant group (i.e., Alcalde, 2011; Baker,

Perilla, & Norris, 2001, Welland & Ribner, 2010). The diversity of ethnicities in the sample is also reflective of the composition of Canadian IPV treatment groups which are inclusive of immigrant men from a variety of countries.

Immigrant Fathers' Parenting Experiences

Within this study, fathers' stories situate IPV within the larger family system. The systems perspective acknowledges how various relationships within a family (i.e., mother-father, father-child, mother-child, father-child-mother, etc.) interact and influence one another. Systems theory also "places its conceptual focus on the family system as a whole with attention to the wider social ecology" (p.107), as described by Bond (2019). Although a systems theory model was not strictly adopted in this study (i.e., only fathers' stories were gathered), it serves as a useful framework for conceptualizing the information shared by participants within the broader social-cultural context. This framework also aligns with my belief that any incident that occurs within the context of a family unit is not isolated to a single individual or dyad - a perspective also exemplified in fathers' narratives and reflected in the theme "fathers as part of a family system." In addition to this, I draw on an integrated ecological framework of gender-based violence, as outlined by Ali and Naylor (2013) and Heise (1998). This nested model is inclusive of personal, social, and sociocultural factors and emphasizes the interactions amongst the various levels in understanding the perpetration of abuse (Heise, 1998). I view these frameworks as complementary given their emphasis on understanding the complexities of human behavior within multiple overlapping systems. Moreover, these orientations align with the narrative methodology which takes personal, historical, and cultural context into consideration when capturing an individual's experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Shifts in Familial Relationships and Post-IPV Challenges. All fathers identified a change in their relationships with at least one member of their family system following the offence. Three fathers separated from the victim of their offence, whereas others reunited with their families following incarceration or expiry of their no contact order. All seven fathers spent a period of time away from their children post-IPV (i.e., incarcerated, serving a no-contact order, separated from the victim of the offence, etc.), regardless of whether or not their children witnessed the offence. All but one father continued to maintain direct or indirect contact with their children at the time of the first interview, as described across narratives. This father reported not being able to communicate, directly or indirectly, with his children due to a no-contact order that was soon to expire and spoke hopefully of his return home to live with his family. Ongoing father-child contact for fathers who perpetrate IPV has been identified by other researchers in the field (i.e., Bourassa et al., 2017; Bunston, 2015; Hunter & Graham-Bermann, 2013; Stover & Morgos, 2013) and speaks to the importance of garnering an understanding of fathers' parenting experiences (i.e., difficulties, stressors, etc.) following an abusive incident. Depending on their individual circumstances (i.e., relationship status, no contact order, etc.), fathers' relationships with their children post-IPV may take various forms, as depicted in fathers' narratives. Although a desire for fathers to remain in the lives of their children and families after their offence is not a universal experience, exploration of the challenges and barriers for those that seek ongoing involvement is worthy of investigation. As an example, a potential lack of skills required to establish a healthy co-parenting relationship has been discussed in the literature (Stover, 2015) and illustrated in participant narratives. Difficulties associated with fathers' transition home following their no contact order or period of incarceration were also described by fathers in this study. As noted in the sub-theme "reunification," two fathers explicitly

identified feelings of regret and shame as they returned home and noted the time it took for their children to slowly warm up to them. Another father reflected on how he had mistreated his daughter prior to his incarceration and noted his intention to change his behavior and level of parenting involvement. This father commented on his desire to be engaged in his daughter's life and to provide her with a sense of safety and security. Based on the information shared by fathers in this study, no specialized support or resources were provided in terms of aiding in fathers' transitions home or reintegration into family life, even when children were witness to their abuse. Most fathers also did not mention how or if they addressed their use of violence upon their return home. From a therapeutic standpoint, this raises important considerations in terms of assessing and supporting children's mental health and attachment relationships post-IPV. Bourassa and colleagues (2017) note the following in terms of parent-specific supports for fathers and their children following exposure to IPV, emphasizing the importance of certain discussions:

> Fathers who are violent need specific and targeted interventions regarding the parent–child relationship. More specifically, fathers need to become aware and learn to empathize with their children in light of the consequences of IPV. Fathers also need to learn healthy and respectful ways to discuss the IPV with their children. Some researchers have found that IPV-exposed children need to express their feeling and have their emotions recognized and accepted. (p. 274)

Providing fathers with the opportunity to acquire this information within or outside of their mandated programming is an important consideration for practitioners in the field.

Father-Child Relationship. Children are active members of the family system impacted by the perpetration of violence in the home (e.g., losing access to their father, witnessing violence between their parents, etc.). The consequences of IPV extend beyond the victim and perpetrator,

as children's relationships with their fathers are affected following violence in the home. Some fathers' narratives revealed children as witnesses to their abuse and/or described the children's role in involving the police. All fathers also spent a period of time away from their families post-IPV and were required to navigate multiple systems (family courts and the criminal justice system, immigration, etc.). This was challenging for some fathers given their lack of familiarity with the Canadian legal system and limited external support in Canada. In investigating the experiences of fathers with a history of IPV residing in a Northeastern city in the United States, Stephens (2020) developed a "theory of excision" characterized by four phases: "(a) extraction; (b) re-assignment of identity; (c) exclusion; and (d) what remains" (Stephens, 2020). This sequence coincides with the stories shared in this study, in particular the phase of exclusion in which immigrant fathers described undergoing periods of separation and feeling ostracised from the lives of their children (Stephens, 2020). A similar sentiment was also expressed by fathers in this study who separated from the mother of their children following their offence and experienced an unwanted decrease in parental involvement.

Mother-Father Relationship. Relatedly, the nature of the mother-father relationship following IPV impacted fathers' roles in the lives of their children. In some families, mothers served as gatekeepers in limiting or controlling father's access to their children despite no legal restrictions in place. Quotations embedded within the thematic analysis bring to light these fathers' level of frustration as mothers unjustly dictated or restricted their visitation, as perceived by fathers. The distance created between themselves and their children was upsetting for these fathers who sought a connection with their families. The absence of extended family members or friends in Canada further contributed to their sense of isolation and detachment post-IPV. Within a phenomenological analysis on the parenting experiences of Norwegian men in treatment for

IPV, mothers were also described as disrupting the father-child relationship (Mohaupt et al., 2021). Some fathers within this study reported a history of IPV and physical or psychological violence directed toward their children (Mohaupt et al., 2021), which is an important consideration in interpreting mothers' behavior. Although none of the seven fathers within this dissertation study disclosed being charged with abuse directed toward their children, the overlap between witnessing partner violence and child maltreatment has been identified (Hamby et al., 2010). This adds to the complexity in understanding mothers' beliefs and hesitations surrounding ongoing paternal involvement. Hamby and colleagues (2010) reported that "33.9% of youth who witnessed partner violence also were identified as victims of maltreatment, versus only 8.6% of youth who had not witnessed partner violence" (p. 737). Moreover, "more than 1/3 (33.9%) of youth who witnessed partner violence had also been maltreated in the past year, compared with 8.6% of non-witnesses" (p. 737). These findings draw attention to witnessing violence as a risk factor for maltreatment, an important consideration in reintegration of fathers in family life following the perpetration of IPV.

Fathers' Early Experiences. The connection between fathers' upbringing and parenting experiences, including their relationship with their own parents, was illustrated in several narratives. A desire to provide their children with a life better than their own was described by fathers who identified their own unmet needs, both material and emotional. For some, the decision to immigrate to Canada was intended to broaden opportunities for themselves and their families. Two fathers recalled witnessing abuse in their familial relationships, whereas another described what he referred to as a "cycle of violence" in immigrant communities, and noted how this "cycle" can influence women's ability to recognize certain behaviors as abusive. This father also mentioned the role of gender beliefs (i.e., "I'm a man, she's a woman") as perpetuating

violence in intimate relationships. The concept of a "cycle of violence" is also discussed in feminist explanations of intimate partner violence in terms of understanding why women stay in abusive relationships (Ali & Naylor, 2013). The notion of fathers wanting to provide their children with a life dissimilar to their own or to break the cycle of violence has also been documented in other studies conducted with men with a history of IPV (Bourassa, et al., 2017; Fox et al., 2003: Mohaupt et al., 2021; Veteläinen et al., 2013; Welland & Ribner, 2010). Within the context of treatment, fathers' efforts to provide experiences or foster parent-child relationships unlike their own can be conceptualized as a motivator toward change and rehabilitation.

Fathers' Reflections Post-IPV. Acknowledgment of the negative impact of their offence on their children and family and/or a desire to make amends and demonstrate change in some capacity was expressed by the majority of participants. Fathers' described their actions (i.e., perpetration of IPV, substance use, neglect, etc.) as incongruent with the behaviors they wanted to model for their children, or reminiscent of undesirable actions in which their own families of origin engaged in. Consideration of children's perspectives as part of fathers' reflection highlights the role of children as "motivators" toward change, an idea cited in other studies with non-immigrant samples (Fox et al., 2002; Veteläinen et al., 2013). Fatherhood has also been identified as predictive of treatment engagement with men participating in a partner abuse treatment program (Poole & Murphy, 2019). The fatherhood role and associated identity may serve as a strong motivator in acknowledging the impact of one's actions and making steps toward change. The fatherhood role can also serve as a source of hope in challenging times. In reflecting on what they found helpful during difficult times, participants in Aguirre and colleagues (2011) study shared the following: "wanting to be there for the children, wanting to

be better for their children, and having their children be the impetus for carrying on despite challenges" (p. 135). Participants in this study had a history of domestic violence. Researchers should continue investigate the fatherhood role as a motivator for behavioral change and further tease out this construct, specifically with immigrant men engaged in IPV treatment.

The extent to which fathers acknowledged the impact of their offence on their parent-child relationship was inconsistent. Some fathers maintained that the relationship with their children remained the same post-IPV, whereas others focused primarily on the role of their child's mother in controlling visitation and, thereby, altering the parental relationship between the fathers and their children. Moreover, although two fathers recognized the immediate consequences of their offence on their children (i.e., children being slow to warm up to them upon their return home, distrust in their relationship, etc.), they later commented on how their children forgot what occurred or that it no longer affected them. On a similar note, Mohaupt and colleagues (2021) described participants in their study as shifting "between acknowledging the negative effects of their violence on the child, and to doubt its severity and scope" (p. 472). Violence was also understood as the exception to their adoption of good fatherhood (Mohaupt et al., 2021). Although the overlap of fathers' perpetration of IPV and violence directed toward their children in Mohaupt and colleagues' (2021) study complicates the interpretation of their findings, a similar shift in acknowledging of the impact of IPV on their children while denying ongoing distress was expressed by some fathers within the present study. Variation in acknowledgement regarding the negative consequences of IPV on children has been documented in other studies (i.e., Bourassa, et al., 2017), highlighting the importance of providing psychoeducation to fathers with regard to the impact of IPV as part of their mandated treatment. Ideally, this would be coupled with parenting strategies and supports that fathers can implement (i.e., validation of their

child's emotions, communication and assurance of safety, etc.) or information on external resources. From my perspective, it is important that the information provided to fathers extend beyond the consequences or risk factors associated with IPV and incorporate strategies to communicate with their children, respond to their emotions, and foster their attachment relationship. This also aligns with findings from this study, as most fathers expressed an interest or value in expanding their parenting knowledge.

Alternative intervention approaches for IPV were also identified by some participants. In particular, IPV treatment that adopts a "whole family" approach, as outlined in the subtheme, "alternative approaches," was described by two fathers. This perspective conceptualizes the family as a "unit," which requires support for all its members following the perpetration of IPV, including children. The idea of family involvement as helping to facilitate reconciliation or healing was also expressed by one father who experienced challenges in his co-parenting relationship following his marital separation. Disruptions in "family unity" as an impact of domestic violence have been identified in other studies with immigrant men (Simbandumwe et al., 2008) and highlighted in most fathers' narratives. All fathers in this study communicated a desire for an ongoing relationship with their child(ren) and several reunited with their families following their no-contact order. Although not captured in this study, Okeke-Ihejirika and colleagues (2018) noted how immigrant women might also be in a position of wanting to repair their relationship with their abusive partners, rather than separate or divorce. Taken together, purposeful integration of others in the family system within treatment is considered responsive to the reality of ongoing father involvement post-IPV and may be a more appropriate option for those wanting to reconcile with their families. The decision to adopt this approach, however, would be on a case-to-case basis and involve the collection of information from all individuals

involved to ensure safety and suitability. It is not solely up to fathers to decide whether or not reconciliation and a family-based approach is desired or appropriate, hence the importance of a thorough assessment on behalf of the clinician.

Understandings of the Paternal Role and "Good Fatherhood"

Fatherhood was described by participants as part of the male identity and subject to external influences. Fathers' understandings of "good fatherhood" were also embedded within culture and gender role expectations. This complexity was reflected in fathers' responses which included elements of traditional and non-traditional fatherhood as well as the influence of cultural norms. Some fathers spoke of "good fatherhood" as ensuring a sense of safety and security for their children, providing financially, as well as adopting the role of a teacher or role model. Such characteristics align with historically traditional understandings of fatherhood which have expanded in recent years (Lamb, 2010). The importance of responding to the needs of their children and being supportive, engaged, and reliable was also mentioned, alongside possessing characteristics such as warmth, affection and availability. The changing nature of modern-day masculinities in relation to fatherhood has been documented in literature (Henwood & Procter, 2003). Participants in Henwood and Procter's study (2003), for example, characterized the expanded fathering role as a sensitive, present, and responsive parent who is involved in their child's life and who values spending time with their family. Relatedly, Fox and colleagues (2003) described fathers' perceptions of their role as extending beyond a "provider" and noted the importance of being "there" for their children, in whatever form this took. Fathers' parenting efficacy is also understood to be inclusive of dimensions such as positive engagement (e.g., teaching, discipline, understanding and responding to children's needs, etc.) and financial responsibility, as well as direct care of their children (Sevigny et al., 2016). Moving forward,

further exploration of "good" fatherhood in immigrant populations and how fathers' understandings may shift or strengthen post-migration is important. This is important, as immigration can impact the stability of fathers' roles and identities as they navigate parenting in a new cultural context (Strier & Roer-Strier, 2010). Investigations of tension in the roles assumed by fathers and other members of their family following immigration can also be conducted.

Within this study, characteristics of "good fatherhood" such as men providing for their children and families were rooted in cultural expectations and traditional gender norms, thereby adding to the complexity of this construct. Two fathers who separated from the mother of their children following their offence continued to emphasize the importance of providing for their children (i.e., buying necessities, taking them on trips, etc.), even if it added to their level of financial stress. These fathers' sense of responsibility for their families did not dissolve despite the termination of their intimate relationship. Supporting their former partner was also a means of ensuring that their children were well taken care of. This expectation of men as fulfilling the provider role is highlighted in the subtheme "gender role expectations." Some fathers spoke of expectations in their country of origin regarding the responsibilities held by men and women, some of which shifted following their immigration to Canada. Changes in gender relations and familial power dynamics have been documented in other studies with immigrant men (Okeke-Ihejirrrika & Salami, 2018), and should continue to be explored with the context of parent-child and co-parenting relationships post-IPV.

Culture, Gender Roles, and IPV

Fathers' narratives illustrated the impact of culture and gender norms, whether that be in terms of how they came to understand "good" fatherhood, intimate relationships, or the structure of family life. One father admittedly adopted a parenting role dissimilar to what is considered

typical or expected of men in his country of origin (i.e., caring for his children when they were young), whereas others sought to preserve their traditional family structure and way of life (i.e., men fulfilling the role as provider, residing in intergenerational homes, involvement of individuals outside of one's immediate family, etc.). Challenges were expressed as fathers navigated parenting in a different cultural context with the added stress of being separated from their families and in conflict with the law.

Gender role expectations emanate from cultural beliefs surrounding acceptable behavior for men and women (Welton-Mitchell et al., 2019). A significant association between higher gender equality in a country of origin and lower risk victimization in the host country has been documented, drawing attention to the influence of gender norms on the perpetration of IPV (González & Rodríguez-Planas, 2020). Within this study, the role of gender beliefs in the perpetration of violence in immigrant communities was acknowledged, as captured in the themes *role of culture* and *risk factors*. Some fathers shared experiences of witnessing abuse in their familial relationships (i.e., between their mother and father, their parent and grandparent, etc.) or commented on the normalization of violence in their social circle. The impact of being witness to violence was described as fathers reflected on these experiences or how it shaped their understanding of relationships. Furthermore, a lack of knowledge of the Canadian legal system and what is considered illegal in an intimate relationship was disclosed by one participant.

In a recent investigation of the prevalence of childhood family violence (CFV) with a sample of 1,421 male batterers in treatment, Fernández-Montalvo and colleagues (2020) documented that "35.2% (*n*=500) of the sample reported having been victims of CFV (67.2% of them directly suffered abuse, and 32.8% witnessed violence between their parents, mainly from father to mother)" (p. 1). Early experiences of abuse, therefore, are not uncommon for men

participating in IPV treatment. Unemployment/financial stressors and substance use were also outlined as risk factors in this study, as described in the thematic analysis. Three fathers disclosed consuming alcohol prior to their offence, but varied in terms of how they related their consumption to their abusive behavior. Akinsulure-Smith and colleagues (2013) identified economic and financial stressors as a "root cause" (p. 117) of IPV based on information gathered from West-African immigrant men. The women in the study, however, pointed to traditional cultural expectations in relation to men's behavior (Akinsulure-Smith et al., 2013). Relatedly, the adoption of social norms and gender roles that perpetuate IPV were described in a recent study with male and female Rohingya refugees residing in Malaysia (Welton-Mitchell et al., 2019):

> All men and nearly all women agreed that a man has a good reason to hit his wife if she disobeys him; all men and women agreed that a woman needs a man's permission to work; over 80% of men and women agreed that a man has a right to punish a woman; 73% of men and 67% of women agreed that if a man beats his wife, it shows that he loves her. (p. 7)

Information shared by fathers in this study, as well as other reviewed, situates gender-based violence within the context of the integrated ecological framework (Heise, 1998). At the individual level, witnessing marital violence as a child and having an absent or rejecting father are identified as risk factors, whereas use of alcohol, marital conflict, and male dominance in the family fall within the microsystem (Heise, 1998). Unemployment is an example of an exosystem factor that emerged in this study, in addition to gender roles and cultural values and beliefs at the macrosystem level (Heise, 1998). Moving forward, additional studies should be conducted with immigrant men engaged in IPV treatment in Canada to further identify and understand these risk factors (i.e., childhood experiences, substance use, financial stressors, social norms, gender roles,

etc.) in order to inform intervention and prevention efforts with immigrant populations. Although participants' narratives revealed some risk factors, this was not the primary focus of this dissertation study.

Post-Immigration Experiences. Within the theme "role of culture," some fathers identified changes in their familial structure upon immigrating to Canada (i.e., transition from a multigenerational household or joint family to a single-family home) and noted differences in ideologies (i.e., collectivist versus individualistic mentalities). Shifts in cultural expectations with regard to the authority of the fathering role and involvement of others (i.e., extended family and community members, religious leaders, etc.) in family life were also identified. Relatedly, Akinsulure-Smith and colleagues (2013) documented post-migration challenges experienced by African immigrant men, inclusive of changing masculinities and gender relations across transnational spaces, as well as tensions in parent-child relationships. Given this information, cultural additions to programming such as discussions surrounding changes in gender roles post immigration, have been identified in studies conducted with immigrant men with a history of IPV (Welland & Ribner, 2010). In taking this one step further, researchers and practitioners can further explore the impact of these aforementioned changes in relation to fathers' parenting experiences.

The importance of widespread education and teaching about healthy relationships, even before men come in contact with the law, was described in the subtheme *education and prevention*. One father suggested including this information as part of the school curriculum instead of teaching it *after* an abusive incident, and another acknowledged how the information he was learning would benefit other immigrant parents. Furthermore, alternative forms of IPV treatment that involve members of one's cultural or religious community were mentioned by

another participant. This father spoke of his desire to speak with a priest/elder in his religious circle who would listen, offer advice, and pray for him and his family. Inclusion of members in his extended family or circle of friends was considered typical and desirable, as described in this fathers' narrative. The role of familial or community involvement and collective problem solving has been documented in other studies with immigrant populations. Akinsulure-Smith and colleagues (2013) identified a sequence in which West-African families would seek support, starting with family followed by elders or religious leaders. The last resort involved connecting with resources outside of the community (i.e., calling the police, going to a domestic violence shelter; Akinsulure-Smith et al., 2013). Based on their findings, the suggestion was made that interventions "draw on collective, group, and family-oriented perspectives" (Akinsulure-Smith et al., 2013, p. 123). In addition, Okeke-Ihejirrrika and Salami (2018) documented a dearth of culturally relevant approaches for helping families experiencing violence, as expressed by participants in their study. African immigrant men reflected on how family members or elders formerly assisted them in settling family disputes, a support no longer afforded to them in Canada (Okeke-Ihejirrrika & Salami, 2018). Given these findings, an approach that is inclusive of one's cultural or religious community, guided by the perspectives of men, women, and practitioners should be further explored, as it may serve as a means of engaging immigrant men in services or supporting families beyond mandated treatment. From a feminist lens, the perspectives of female victims and how they perceive this approach in relation to their own agency is another consideration and area for further investigation.

Parenting Knowledge and Support Post-IPV

The current intervention framework for men with a history of IPV does not prioritize parent education or support. Instead, treatment focuses on the intimate relationship, aiming to teach

communication and regulation skills, and to reduce recidivism. As described by Stover and Morgos (2013), “most programs designed for batterers focus on anger management, issues of power and control, and providing alternatives to end criminal behaviors” (p. 248). Although responsive to the incident that brought these men in contact with the law, this model is exclusive to one dyadic relationship in the larger family system. Fathers’ narratives illustrate the rippling effect of IPV beyond the victim-perpetrator relationship and depict co-parenting challenges and stressors post-IPV.

Parenting was communicated as a desired or valued area of learning across most participants’ narratives. Examples of topics mentioned by fathers included the following: types of abuse beyond physical forms (i.e., emotional abuse) and appropriate behavior (i.e., not using violence in front of children); emotion regulation and communication strategies (i.e., listening to children, refraining from using bad words or shouting, etc.); adopting of female characteristics (how to connect with children and be comfortable around them, care for children, and show love toward them; how to be better “counsellors” and listen to children), as well as parenting in the context of a blended family. This information can be used to inform parenting interventions for immigrant men who continue to be involved in the lives of their children post-IPV. Inclusion of parenting knowledge within treatment has been identified in other studies with immigrant fathers with a history of IPV (Parra-Cardona et al., 2013). For example, Latino men involved in a culturally informed batterer intervention program described wanting to learn how to be a “good” parent and to be more attentive and patient with their children (Parra-Cardona et al., 2013). Learning to be a “good father” was also suggested as a cultural addition to programming for partner-abusive Latino men who viewed learning about fathering as an important part of their treatment (Welland & Ribner, 2010). This dissertation study, therefore, explored fathers’ perspectives surrounding

what good fatherhood entails in order to help identify specific areas for intervention. Perceptions surrounding existing parenting competencies has also been discussed in studies conducted with immigrant fathers. Latino men participating in IPV treatment noted a deficiency in parenting skills and in the capacity to attend to their child's emotional needs, as illustrated below (Welland & Ribner, 2010):

> Most of the men did not know that children had emotional needs to which a father could attend; that was the task of the mother. Learning how to be nurturing fathers was one of the treatment outcomes that gave them the greatest satisfaction. They knew something about what was expected of them in their family, in this case positive manhood and fatherhood, but they lacked the experience to deliver it. (p. 804)

Similarly, a desire to meet children's emotional needs and/or learn more about how women interact with children was expressed by most fathers in this study. Discussions within the context of the IPV group also allowed fathers to learn from one another's experiences, regardless of whether or not they could directly relate.

Fathers' reunification efforts, as described in their narratives, also highlight post-IPV father-child interactions as a potential area for support. Some fathers, for example, described their children as slowly warming up to them, having questions or reflections upon their return, or receiving their own psychological support, whereas other did not directly speak to challenges reintegrating in family life. Minimal information was shared regarding how fathers acknowledged their absence (e.g., jail time, period of no-contact order, etc.) or addressed their abusive behavior with their children. A lack of direction for fathers regarding connection and interactions with their children after an abusive incident has been cited in previous literature within non-immigrant populations (Stover & Morgos, 2013). Relatedly, and as previously

mentioned in this chapter, the "whole family approach" was identified by some participants as a responsive model for those fathers wanting to remain in the lives of their children and/or families. This approach also reflected these fathers' desire for help in repairing their relationship with their children as well as their children's mother. Further investigation of how this could be implemented with immigrant families in the context of the current model of service delivery for court-mandated offenders, however, is required.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. First, the attrition rate in this study was high. Out of the seven fathers who participated in the first interview, only two responded to my invitation to engage in a follow up interview. This is unfortunate given the purpose of the second interview as a means of reviewing interpretations and seeking participant feedback. I believe that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and stressors placed on families during the period of data collection may have contributed to this high attrition rate. Second, fathers were at different points in their IPV treatment throughout the course of data collection (i.e., actively participating in an IPV group, recently completed a IPV group, finished an IPV group and engaged in individual counselling, etc.). Some fathers, for example, were still participating in their IPV group at the time of their first interview and did not engage in a follow-up interview. In the event that these fathers had additional ideas or insights after completing the IPV group, this information was not captured in the study. Another father had already completed his mandated treatment and was engaged in individual counselling at the time of our first interview, timing which also may have affected the responses provided. In addition, all fathers who participated in this study were court-mandated to attend therapy, meaning that they did not voluntarily seek group treatment. Lastly, I feel it is important to acknowledge that the stories captured are reflective of how fathers decided to

present themselves and their relationship with their children within our interview(s) at a single point in time. As clinician, I recognize the guilt and shame often associated with this topic, as well as the role of the *relationship* in facilitating openness and vulnerability. I propose that some fathers may not have been as honest and forthcoming with me as they would within a therapeutic relationship. Consideration of external factors, such as the circumstances of in which the data was gathered (e.g., a research interview with someone unknown to them over an unfamiliar virtual platform), timing of interview (e.g., mid-IPV-treatment, post-IPV-treatment, etc.) and potential for feelings of guilt, shame, or discomfort to influence fathers' responses are important to acknowledge.

Directions for Future Research

Effort to engage immigrant fathers in the broader parenting research is important. As noted by Bond (2019), "immigrant males and fathers in particular tend to be either forgotten or excluded from mainstream research with mothers considered the only important caregiver (p. 102)." Further research is required to uncover the parenting experiences of immigrant men following the perpetration of IPV in order to inform treatment and the development of parent-child interventions. Some key avenues for future investigation are outlined below.

IPV prevention and intervention research. Exploration of the parenting experiences of immigrant fathers post-IPV is imperative. Currently, there is a paucity of specialized policies or guidelines for working with immigrant and refugee families experiencing domestic violence in Canada (Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2018). Efforts to better understand how agencies can provide culturally competent services should be encouraged (i.e., Whitaker et al., 2007), especially as separate IPV group are mandated for immigrant men and non-immigrant men. Domestic violence prevention efforts with immigrant populations can also be developed and evaluated

given the high rate of immigration in Canada and scarcity of programming targeted toward immigrant communities (Simbandumwe et al., 2008). In creating prevention and intervention programming, researchers should include the perspectives of clinicians with experience working with this population of men, community elders/leaders from a diversity of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, as well as immigrant fathers themselves. Researchers can also look to existing interventions for fathers with a history of IPV. One example is "Caring Dads," a Canadian program designed for fathers in some form of contact with their children who have "physically or emotionally abused or neglected their children, exposed their children to abuse of their mothers, or are at high risk for these behaviors" (Scott & Crooks, 2006, p. 4). Another intervention program, "Fathers for Change," employs a family systems, attachment and cognitive behavioral framework while drawing on the importance of the fathering role as a source of motivation for change (Stover et al., 2020). Joint coparent or child participation in sessions can also be incorporated in the model, if deemed appropriate (Stover et al., 2020). In relation to the father-child sessions, Stover and colleagues (2020) note the following considerations:

> Clinicians only go forward with father-child sessions if they feel they will be beneficial to the child and the father is fully prepared to take responsibility for his past behavior, not seek forgiveness during the session and understands this is a first step in facilitating a strong relationship with his child that may take time to build. (p. 3)

Expanding the structure and scope of existing intervention programs for fathers with a history of IPV is another area for future research. Carlson and Casey (2018) investigated fathers' perceptions of a "Transition to Fatherhood" (TTF) program and reported support for its development. Participants in this study had a history of IPV and had recently become fathers (Carlson & Casey, 2018). Fathers identified desired topics for a TTF program, stemming from

their IPV class experience, such as “shadowing, self-checking, disciplining children, temper with children, stress management, communication techniques, and dealing with the male/female relationship” (p. 462), many of which are areas of learning expressed by fathers in this dissertation study as well. In addition, the field is “lagging in evidence-based treatment for fathers that are dyadic in nature” (Stover & Morgos, 2013, p. 253), as most programs focus on parent skills and do not involve father-child sessions. Prior to adopting this approach, a comprehensive assessment is imperative. Stover and Morgos (2013) outline key areas of assessment as well as considerations for determining the appropriateness of father-child interventions:

> (a) What was the nature and severity of the abuse? (b) What is the risk for further violence? (c) Does he recognize that his use of violence was wrong and take some responsibility for his actions? (d) What is his legal and mental-health status? (e) What is motivating him to want to participate? (f) Is he engaged in other treatment that will address other mental-health or substance-abuse concerns? (g) Does the child want to attend treatment with his or her father? (h) Does the child still have significant contact or will he or she likely have contact with the father in the future, in which case intervention could be beneficial? (i) How does the child’s mother feel about the child attending sessions with his or her father? (j) What would be the goals of father– child-focused treatment sessions? (p. 250)

Researchers and practitioners can utilize the information provided in the articles referenced to inform their respective efforts. The timing of father-child interventions should also be determined on a case-by-case basis to account for external factors, such as a court-mandate to participate IPV treatment or a no-contact order that is inclusive of children.

Alternate study designs, approaches, and inclusion of other perspectives. Future research can adopt a longitudinal framework to investigate immigrant fathers' parenting experiences over time (e.g., at the beginning of treatment, mid-treatment, and post-treatment). Most studies reviewed captured fathers' perspectives at a single point in time, thereby limiting practitioner's ability to understand how the parenting relationship evolves, or how familial dynamics shift as men engage in treatment. Collecting information from fathers pre-/post-treatment would also help to identify ongoing areas of support, and follow-ups could be conducted to examine how/if gains were maintained with time. Given the level of attrition in this study, I did not have the opportunity to conduct a second interview with most participants. I believe that reconnecting with fathers would be valuable in terms of understanding how their stories shift and evolve over time.

The inclusion of multiple informants has also been identified as an important consideration in developing a comprehensive understanding of family violence (Sternberg et al., 1998). Although challenging from a logistical and ethical standpoint, purposeful integration of the perspectives of mothers, fathers, and children holds value from a research and clinical standpoint. Researchers can adopt a case study approach by involving multiple family members, provided that this does not pose a risk to their safety. The perspective of clinicians can also be explored in qualitative studies, particularly role of clinician bias in engaging fathers in treatment (Stover & Morgos, 2013). In my clinical work, I have encountered differing beliefs surrounding engaging fathers with a history of abuse in treatment with their child.

Investigations of offending fathers' strengths and competencies, as opposed to a focus on their deficits or challenges, can also be conducted. Aguirre, Lehmann, and Patton (2011) adopted this strengths-based model in their study with men with a history of domestic violence as a

means of understanding the following: men's skills/talents, qualities that they are most proud of, areas of achievement and enjoyment, what has helped them through difficult times, and advice for others. When asked what has helped them through difficult times, "family" was most frequently cited by participants (Aguirre et al., 2011). Explorations of strengths might help ease fathers into the research process and build their level of comfort in discussing such a sensitive subject matter. This is important, as researchers studying domestic violence with immigrant populations have identified the sensitivity of topic and concerns surrounding the perception of one's community as influencing the information collected (Simbandumwe et al., 2008). Consideration of how researchers can gather personal data in a way that facilitates openness and trust is imperative, and may involve collaboration with members of the cultural or ethnic community of interest. In addition, fathers' strengths can be acknowledged and built upon as a means of engaging them in IPV treatments. Within this study, I drew on my clinical skills to establish warm, non-judgemental space to help fathers feel more comfortable sharing such personal information.

Additional considerations for researchers. Future studies with immigrant families with a history of IPV can also investigate the role of acculturation. Variation in beliefs surrounding violence and experiences of abuse have been reported based on men's and women's level of acculturation (Nilsson et al., 2008; Shibusawa et al., 2017). In addition, changes in gender roles and power relations have been discussed in relation to the acculturative process (Adames & Campbell, 2005). Investigations of immigrant fathers' sense of acculturation may allow for greater context and understanding of their lived experiences, an essential component when engaging in qualitative research. Acculturation can also be explored in relation to parent-child relationships, parenting stress, and parenting efficacy. Depending on a parents' level of adoption

and integration to the host culture, they may hold varying perceptions regarding their efficacy as a parent, particularly in the presence of different standards or expectations.

Challenges surrounding accessing and recruiting participants is another consideration for researchers investigating IPV. Recruitment strategies were expanded several times throughout the course of this study in order to reach additional participants and connect with agencies on a provincial level. A significant amount of time was dedicated to contacting agencies and practitioners to explain my research and brainstorm feasible avenues for recruitment. My sample was also restricted to fathers who were court-mandated to attend treatment, unlike other studies are inclusive of men who sought treatment voluntarily (i.e., Fernández-Montalvo et al., 2020), which further added to the complexity of data collection. Additional ethics approval beyond the university was necessary to recruit participants mandated to attend treatment at a Western Canadian community health center – an intensive process that added to study timeline. Researchers collecting data with this population should be mindful of the time required recruit mandated offenders, as well as the importance and value in working collaboratively with practitioners to generate feasible strategies that align with their model of treatment delivery. I am grateful for the insights shared by practitioners involved in this study with regard to recruitment timing and approaches, and encourage other researchers to facilitate a similar working relationship when designing their study.

Implications for Practitioners

Consideration of culture and diversity is a core component of the intervention services that psychologists provide, as emphasised in our clinical training and code of ethics. It is imperative that practitioners working with any group of individuals aim to understand their background (i.e., culture, history, experiences, etc.) as a means of facilitating therapeutic

engagement and rapport, as well as informing responsive treatment. The following is outlined in the *Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists*, Fourth Edition under the subheading respect for society (2017):

> Acquire an adequate knowledge of the culture, social structure, history, customs, and laws or policies of organizations, communities, and peoples before beginning any major work there, obtaining guidance from appropriate members of the organization, community, or people as needed. (p. 33)

Culturally sensitive and responsive interventions call for an understanding of the experiences of a target group. In the context of IPV, all fathers in this study participated in treatment groups specific to immigrant men charged with an offence against an intimate partner. The creation and delivery of such groups demonstrates how research with men from diverse cultural backgrounds has informed practice. Moving forward, interventions designed to address the intersection of fathering and IPV should be prioritized. Labarre and colleagues (2016) reviewed 10 intervention programs created for fathers with a history of violence toward their children's mother, their children, or both. None of these programs were specifically designed to be implemented with immigration fathers, and rigorous program evaluations were limited (Labarre et al., 2016). In addition, a recent integrative review of culturally differentiated batterer intervention programs for immigrant male batterers identified only eight studies that met inclusion criteria (Emezue et al., 2019). This paucity of research has implications for clinicians supporting immigrant fathers post-IPV, as limited data is available to help inform their practice.

Based on the information collected within this study, I would encourage practitioners delivering treatment to immigrant fathers with a history of IPV to consider the following ideas. Prior to outlining these suggestions, I will highlight some key considerations. First, I recognize

that many of these suggestions do not align with the current model of treatment delivery described by participants in this study (i.e., court-mandated, 16-week spousal violence treatment program). I acknowledge that proposing a shift in the entire structure is not feasible, and, therefore, I have drafted several recommendations to be in line with the existing treatment model. Second, I acknowledge that I have embedded by own clinical lens in extrapolating on fathers' ideas and comments to generate practical suggestions for service providers. The following considerations are rooted in information shared within fathers' stories but written in the form of implications for service providers in community agencies. As a clinician, I believe it is important to translate research into recommendations for practice. Hence, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Consider facilitating involvement of other family members in IPV treatment and/or provide support for co-parenting on a case-by-case basis.

When possible and in circumstances in which it is deemed safe to do so, provide fathers with the opportunity to involve their family (i.e., wife, children, etc.) in treatment. Fathers who are focused on reintegration and motivated to improve their familial relationships may benefit from this form of support, particularly after they have received individual intervention and are in a place to engage in family-focused treatment. This family-based approach might not be an appropriate or desirable option for all fathers mandated to attend IPV treatment, and clinicians will be required to rely on their assessment skills to identify suitability. It is imperative that clinicians assess whether or not familial involvement would place women and children at greater risk or interfere with their recovery of trauma. This type of assessment is complex and ongoing, and should only be undertaken by seasoned clinicians. It is important that women's agency to participate, or not participate, in family-based treatment is respected.

Involvement of other family members may not be feasible for all agencies providing IPV treatment. For example, such agencies may not have the clinical capacity and resources available (i.e., not capable of providing individualized services, focus on/mandate to provide group-based treatment, etc.). Offering family therapy or child-specific treatment may also extend an agency's scope of practice. If this is the case, clinicians may direct fathers toward outside resources such as child and family community mental health centers or practitioners in the community that can offer this support (e.g., family counselling, parent-child dyadic work, individual therapy for children, etc.). Fathers should be made aware that these services exist and informed of their purpose and value so that the men can pursue them or request a referral, if necessary. Clinicians can use their judgement to determine which families might be responsive to outside support and coordinate services accordingly. For some fathers, providing information on outside agencies or supports may be more appropriate after they have participated in mandated IPV programming and have taken accountability for the actions and reflected on their parent-child relationship(s). At this time, fathers might also be in a place in which they are motivated to pursue parenting support or involve other members of their family in treatment. Again, it is imperative that suitability be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

- Include information and have discussions about parenting post-IPV within the context of IPV groups.

In addition to the core areas of treatment, clinicians can ask group members what they would be interested in learning to support them in their role as a parent. This flexibility is suggested based on the variety of ideas put forth by fathers in this study. Some ideas include discussions surrounding reintegration in family life (i.e., reconnecting with children, co-parenting challenges, etc.), emotion regulation and communication strategies, as well as the impact of IPV on

children/families. Fathers in this study differed in terms of acknowledging the impact of their offence on their children and family. I recommended, therefore, that clinicians provide psychoeducation on the consequences of violence in the home alongside corresponding parenting strategies (for example, the importance of validating their child's emotions, communicating and ensuring safety). Strategies regarding reintegration in family life can also be provided, when deemed appropriate. The group setting might also offer a space for fathers to reengage with their children following a no-contact order, for example, to process this transition and seek support. Moreover, opportunities for discussions surrounding specific parenting challenges associated with immigration such as differences in ideologies (i.e., collectivistic versus individualistic) and structure of family life (i.e., intergenerational homes versus single family homes) can be incorporated in sessions focused on parenting.

- Expand the discussion of skills taught and learned within current programing to be inclusive of the parent-child relationship.

When possible, group facilitators can make connections between the emotion regulation and communication skills taught in the IPV group, and how fathers can model such behaviors for their children. For example, when topics such as anger management or emotion regulation in intimate relationships are discussed, as noted by some fathers in this study when describing their group experience, practitioners can take this as an opportunity to demonstrate how using these skills also serves to benefit their *parenting relationship*. Practitioners can emphasize the role of fathers in demonstrating desirable behaviors for their children as well as the importance of co-regulation in moments of heightened emotionality. This recommendation draws on some fathers' desire to be teachers and models for their children, as expressed in their narratives.

- Provide information on parenting programs or support for children at the level of intake, if possible. Otherwise, connect fathers with these agencies following their mandated programming.

Agencies can also consider offering fathers information regarding parenting supports in the community, or agencies that specialize in working with children and families after conducting the intake assessment. Immigrant fathers might not be aware of such supports or resources in the community, or the fact that these services are confidential and sometimes free of charge. This strategy takes the burden off of agencies that only have capacity to provide mandated treatment to offenders and is responsive some fathers' desire for a more holistic or family-focused intervention approach. Connecting fathers to outside agencies or practitioners also serves as a means for fathers to receive specialized services (e.g., play therapy for children who have witnessed or experienced abuse, family therapy, or couples therapy). Providing this information and facilitating referrals is important, as "immigrant and refugees men are less likely to access mental health and social services than North American born men" (Bond, 2019, p. 112). Moreover, this approach may allow agencies that otherwise would not collaborate with one another to foster connections that ultimately benefit the children and families they work with.

- Invite fathers to discuss how their culture and upbringing relates to their parenting practices.

Clinicians may decide to embed these conversations throughout treatment or include them in a session specific to parenting. The intention of this recommendation is not to be prescriptive in terms of when or how this information is discussed, but instead emphasize the *value* in incorporating this material. I encourage clinicians to utilize their judgment and expertise, as well as their sense of what would best suit the group of men they are working with.

Within this study, some fathers shared stories of cultural expectations and norms in relation to their parenting, which can be further explored within the context of a group of other immigrant men who may share similar experiences. These discussions also serve as a learning opportunity for clinicians in terms of fostering their understanding of the parenting experiences of their clients from different cultural backgrounds.

Personal Reflections

Challenges emerged throughout the development and implementation of this study. While writing the final chapters, I was simultaneously working as a psychology resident in child and youth mental health and providing treatment with children, youth, and families. I was in a space in which I was focused on developing my therapeutic skills and conducting clinical interviews, groups, and assessments on a regular basis. In reviewing the interview transcripts, I noted times in which I responded to a participant as if we were in a counselling session. I caught myself reflecting fathers' feelings or the meaning behind their statement, and often felt the impulse to further explore certain comments I found clinically relevant. For example, when fathers reflected on their relationship with their own parents growing up, I noticed a level of curiosity arise that was not explored to due to the purpose of this study. I reminded myself of the intention behind collecting this information and focused my attention on the interview questions.

The challenge of wearing two hats (researcher and practitioner) was something I experienced throughout the development and implementation of this study. As a clinician, I believe strongly in the importance of father involvement and promoting healthy father-child attachment relationships. I have experience supporting fathers and their children following the disclosure of abuse and/or neglect, and take pride in being able to provide this clinical service. I also hold the perspective that children will *always* yearn for their caregivers, and that most

parents desire what is best for their children. Although I recognize the bias I bring to this topic, I also acknowledge my keen interest and experience as strong motivators in bringing this dissertation research to light. It is my hope that findings from this research will be utilized by IPV service providers not only to inform their approach to treatment, but also to foster a broader understanding of the perspectives and lived experiences of the immigrant fathers with whom they work with.

Concluding Remarks

Fathers play an important role in the lives of their children and should be supported in their parenting following the perpetration of IPV. As emphasized throughout this document, this statement is coupled with the caveat that paternal involvement does not place women and/or children at greater risk or interfere with their own personal healing – a determination that should be left to seasoned clinicians following a thorough assessment. Fathers' narratives depicted IPV as extending beyond the victim-perpetrator relationship, impacting the larger family system and/or generating co-parenting challenges, stressors, and shifts in family life. The focus on uncovering immigrant fathers' perspectives added to the uniqueness of this narrative study by giving voice to an understudied population of men. Fathers identified the role of social norms and gender expectations in the structure family life and relationships, and spoke of their understandings of "good" fatherhood and the meaning associated with this construct. Although individual stories and circumstances varied, what was shared amongst all fathers was a strong love for their children, as well as a desire to remain connected and involved in their lives. The importance placed on the fatherhood role is a strength which should be drawn upon to engage men in treatment and promote positive parenting practices that serve to benefit the family as a whole.

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Appendix A: Participant Demographic Information

Age	Participant 1: 43 years old Participant 2: 42 years old Participant 3: 30 years old Participant 4: 36 years old Participant 5: 46 years old Participant 6: 46 years old Participant 7: 62 years old
Ethnicity	Participant 1: East Indian Participant 2: Black/African Participant 3: Black/African Participant 4: African Participant 5: East Indian Participant 6: Afghan Participant 7: Egyptian
Country of Origin	Participant 1: India Participant 2: Ethiopia Participant 3: Nigeria Participant 4: Grenada (Caribbean Island) Participant 5: India Participant 6: Afghanistan Participant 7: Egypt
Educational Background (Highest level of education attained)	Participant 1: Master's Degree Participant 2: Bachelor's Degree Participant 3: Some University Participant 4: Some post-secondary Participant 5: High School Participant 6: High School Participant 7: High School
Length of Time Residing in Canada (years)	Participant 1: 17 years Participant 2: 2 years, 10 months Participant 3: 10 years Participant 4: 4 years Participant 5: 20 years Participant 6: 8 years Participant 7: 40 years
Citizenship	Participant 1: Canadian Participant 2: Canadian Participant 3: Permanent Resident Participant 4: Permanent Resident

	Participant 5: Canadian Participant 6: Permanent Resident Participant 7: Canadian
Relationship status	Participant 1: Married Participant 2: Separated Participant 3: Married Participant 4: Divorced Participant 5: Married Participant 6: Married Participant 7: Separated (in process of getting divorced)
Current offence	Participant 1: Assault Participant 2: Assault Participant 3: Breached Restraining Order Participant 4: Assault with a weapon, sexual assault Participant 5: Uttering Threats Participant 6: Assault Participant 7: Uttering Threats
Is there currently a no contact order in place with your partner/spouse?	Participant 1: No Participant 2: Yes Participant 3: No Participant 4: No Participant 5: Yes Participant 6: No (but, previously there was) Participant 7: Yes
Number of children (biological)	Participant 1: 2 Participant 2: 1 Participant 3: 2 Biological, 1 stepchild Participant 4: 1 Participant 5: 3 Participant 6: 3 Participant 7: 5
Age of child/children	Participant 1: 12 (twins) Participant 2: 2 years old Participant 3: 11 days, 4.5 years, 9 years Participant 4: 9 years old Participant 5: 10, 14, 18 Participant 6: 7, 10, 16 Participant 7: 17, 15, 13, 11, and 8

How often are you in direct contact (i.e. visits) with your children?	Participant 1: Everyday (currently living together) Participant 2: Prior to COVID, 2x per week for 2hours. Not currently seeing son. Participant 3: Everyday (currently living together) Participant 4: Everyday (currently living together) Participant 5: None (no contact order in place) Participant 6: Everyday (currently living together) Participant 7: 3 – 4 times per month (weekends usually)
How often are you in indirect contact (i.e. phone calls, texting, email) with your children?	Participant 1: Not applicable, the participant lives with his children and sees them every day. Participant 2: Due to COVID: 2 to 3 times per week on facetime Participant 3: Not applicable, the participant lives with his children and sees them every day. Participant 4: Not applicable, the participant lives with his children and sees them every day. Participant 5: None, no contact order in place. Participant 6: Not applicable, the participant lives with his children and sees them every day. Participant 7: Tries to connect with them everyday, not always successful

Appendix B: Recruitment Sheet

Hello,

My name is Vincenza and I am a researcher from the University of Alberta.

I am doing a study with fathers from the [redacted] group at [redacted].

Currently, fathers are under-represented in parenting studies. I want to hear your **parenting stories** and learn about your relationship with your child/children.

This study involves **two** interviews. These interviews can take place at [redacted] or at the [redacted] Library on the University of Alberta main campus. The time commitment is approximately 1 to 1.5 hours for each interview.

If you are interested in participating or if you have any questions, please contact me at [redacted] or vincenza@ualberta.ca.

Thank you,
Vincenza

***** Any information that could identify participants or the clinic in which they were recruited from was removed from these documents (blacked out).

Appendix C: Participant Contact Information Sheet

Your Name	Phone Number	Preferred Interview Location ([redacted] Library at the University of Alberta or [redacted])

* Any information that could identify participants or the clinic in which they were recruited from was removed from these documents (blacked out).

Appendix D: Digital Recruitment Handout

Hello,

My name is Vincenza and I am a researcher from the University of Alberta.

I am doing a study with immigrant fathers who have a history of intimate partner violence.

Currently, fathers are under-represented in parenting studies. I want to hear your **parenting stories** and learn about your relationship with your child/children.

This study involves **two** interviews. These interviews will take place over a video conferencing platform (doxy.me) at a time that works for you. The time commitment is approximately 1 to 1.5 hours for each interview.

If you are interested in participating or if you have any questions, please contact me at [redacted] or vincenza@ualberta.ca.

Thank you,
Vincenza

Appendix E: In-Person/Online Recruitment Script: For Practitioners in Individual or Group Settings

I would like to share some information with you about a research study. This study is being run out of the University of Alberta by a student researcher named Vincenza.

Vincenza is interested in learning more about the **parenting experiences** of immigrant fathers, specifically those with a history of violence against an intimate partner. Her goal is to provide you with a chance to share your parenting stories, challenges, and experiences. Vincenza is also interested in hearing about your relationship with your child/children.

Her project is a chance for you to **share your story** and to **have it heard.** For some fathers, the chance to tell their story is therapeutic; it is a way for them to share their knowledge and to help others that find themselves in a similar situation. Vincenza hopes that what she learns from you can be used to help other immigrant fathers and their families.

Vincenza's study involves **2 interviews**. These interviews will take place over a secure video conferencing platform called doxy.me. Vincenza will email you a link that can be opened on a phone, computer, or ipad. The interview can be at any day or time that works best for you (during the day, evenings, or weekends).

After the first interview you'll be emailed a $20 grocery store gift-card. Then after the second interview you'll be emailed another $20 grocery store gift-card.

If you are interested in participating, I can pass on your contact information to Vincenza and she will give you a call you set up an interview. I will also provide you with a sheet with Vincenza's contact information if you would like to contact her yourself.

> For group settings: If you are interested, please let me know (i.e. at breaktime, at the end of the group, via email, etc.) and I will pass on your contact information (first name, phone number) to Vincenza.
>
> For one-on-one settings: If they say yes - Do I have your permission to give Vincenza your first name and phone number so that she can contact you to set up an interview?

* Vincenza will not tell me if you end up participating in her study or not, and this information is kept private. Your decision to take part in this study is completely up to you. You can also contact Vincenza yourself at [redacted] or vincenza@ualberta.ca.

Appendix F: Telephone Script: For Practitioners/Agencies

I am calling to invite you to participate in a research study with fathers with a history of intimate partner violence who completed programming at *(*insert clinic/centre name*). This study is being run out of the University of Alberta by a student researcher named Vincenza.

The purpose of this study is to give you a chance to share your parenting stories and experiences. The researcher, Vincenza, is also interested in learning more about your relationship with your child/children. It is her hope that the information gathered can be used to help other fathers that were not born in Canada.

This study involves **two** interviews. These interviews can take place over a video conferencing platform (doxy.me). Evening and weekend interview times are available. The time commitment is approximately 1 to 1.5 hours for each interview.

If you decide to participate, you'll be emailed a $20 grocery store gift card after the first interview, and another $20 gift card following the second interview.

If you are interested in participating, I can pass on your contact information (first name, phone number) to Vincenza and she will give you a call you set up an interview. Are you interested?

If they say yes - Do I have your permission to give her your first name and phone number?

Vincenza will not tell me if you end up participating in her study or not, and this information is kept private. Your decision to take part in this study or not is completely up to you.

You can also contact Vincenza yourself at [redacted] or vincenza@ualberta.ca.

Appendix G: [redacted] Group Telephone Script – Final Meeting

During the second week of our group, a student researcher from the University of Alberta named Vincenza joined to tell us about a parenting study that she is doing.

Vincenza is looking to interview fathers from the [redacted] **group** so that she can learn more about your parenting experiences. She's interested in hearing about your parenting stories and any challenges you might have had before or after coming to [redacted]

Her project is a chance for you to **share your story** and to have it heard.

Vincenza hopes that the information you share can be used to help other fathers in future [redacted] groups. She wants to learn from you and to hear your story.

Vincenza's study involves **2 interviews**. These interviews will take place over a video conferencing platform called doxy. Vincenza will email you a link that can be opened on a phone, computer, or ipad. The interview can be at any day or time that works best for you (during the day, evenings, or weekends).

After the first interview you'll be emailed $20 grocery store gift-card. Then after the second interview you'll be emailed another $20 grocery store gift-card.

You are not required to participate in this study as a member of the [redacted] group, and your participation is completely up to you.

If you are interested in participating, I can pass on your contact information (first name, phone number) to Vincenza and she will give you a call you set up an interview. Are you interested?

If they say yes - Do I have your permission to give her your first name and phone number? Vincenza will not tell me if you end up participating in her study or not, and this information is kept private.

You can also contact Vincenza yourself at [redacted] or vincenza@ualberta.ca.

***** Any information that could identify participants or the clinic in which they were recruited from was removed from these documents (blacked out).

Appendix H: Recruitment Flyer

Hello,

My name is Vincenza and I am a student researcher from the University of Alberta. I am doing a study with **immigrant fathers** who have been:

- Charged with an offence against an intimate partner (i.e. wife, girlfriend, etc.) and are
- Attending treatment

I want to hear your **parenting stories** and learn about your relationship with your child/children. It is my hope that what I learn from you can be used to help other immigrant fathers in Canada who find themselves in similar situation.

This study involves **two** interviews. These interviews will take place over a video conferencing platform (doxy.me) at a time that works for you (evening, weekend, etc.). The time commitment is approximately 1 to 1.5 hours for each interview.

After the first interview, you'll be emailed a **$20 grocery store gift-card.** Then after the second interview you'll be emailed another $20 grocery store gift-card.

This study has received ethics approval through the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board. Your participation is completely voluntary.

***If you are interested in participating or if you have any questions, please contact me at 780-222-8768 or vincenza@ualberta.ca.**

Appendix I: Information Letter and Consent Form (Version #1 – *Before* COVID 19)

Study Title: Exploration of Immigrant Fathers' Parenting Experiences Following an Offence Against an Intimate Partner: A Narrative Inquiry

Principal Investigator:
Vincenza Martinovich
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5
780-222-8768
vincenza@ualberta.ca

Research Supervisor
Dr. Christina Rinaldi
6-102 Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5
crinaldi@ualberta.ca

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?
This study is a student research project. You are being asked to be in this study because you are a father who is a current or former member of the [redacted] group at [redacted] Before you decide if you want to participate, the principal investigator will go over this form. You are welcome to ask questions. You will be given a copy of this form.

What is the reason for doing the study?
The purpose of this study is to better understand your parenting experiences. Most of what we know about fathers who have been charged with an offence against an intimate partner is from non-immigrant men. Since you are a father who was raised outside of Canada, I am interested in your parenting stories and experiences. I am also looking to learn more about your relationship with your child/children and how the program can support other parents like yourself.

What will I be asked to do?
You will participate in two audio-recorded interviews. These interviews can take place at [redacted] or at the [redacted] Library on the University of Alberta main campus. For interviews at the University of Alberta, someone will be sitting outside the interview room during the interview.

The first interview will last approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. At the beginning of the interview, I will ask you some demographic questions (i.e. your age, ethnicity, citizenship status, etc.). I will also ask you to state your current offence. The reason why I ask these questions is to gain a better understanding of your background. In this first interview, I will also ask you some questions. For example, I will ask you to talk about your relationship with your child/children and share your parenting stories.

The second interview will last approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. In the second interview we will review what you shared during the first interview. For example, I will ask questions such as "do you see yourself here?" or "did I get this right?"

* Any information that could identify participants or the clinic in which they were recruited from was removed from these documents (blacked out).

What are the risks and discomforts?
There is some risk involved in participating in this study. Some of the questions asked might cause you to feel different emotions such as sadness, shame, or anger. You can take a break at any point during the interview or return on another day to finish the interview. At the end of the interview you will be provided with a list of community counselling resources. It is not possible to know all of the risks that may happen in a study, but the researcher has taken steps to minimize any known risks.

What are the benefits to me?
This study will give you a chance to tell your story as a parent. You can share your experiences and talk about your relationship with your child/children. I hope that the information we gather from this study will help us better understand the parenting experiences of fathers in the [redacted] group. This knowledge could be by the [redacted] program staff and by other programs in Canada to help immigrant fathers with a history of intimate partner violence. However, you may not get any benefit from being in this research study.

Do I have to take part in the study?
You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary. During the interview, you can choose not to answer a question(s) but continue to participate in the rest of the interview. You can withdraw your interview data up until it is being anonymized for analysis. If you would like to withdraw your data, you must let the researcher know via telephone [redacted]

Will I be paid to be in the research?
You will be provided with a $20.00 grocery gift card after participating in first interview. After the second interview, you will be given a second $20.00 grocery store gift card. You will also be given up to $10.00 per interview to pay for your parking.

Will my information be kept private?
I will be recording both interviews so that I can listen to them afterwards. In order to participate in the study, you must agree to be audio recorded. If you want to talk about something that you do not want recorded, you can ask to have the recording turned off. You can ask this at any time in the interview.

After each interview, I will upload the recording on a password protected, encrypted computer and store it on google drive. Google drive is secure as it requires a University of Alberta special ID code plus a password. Once the recording is uploaded onto the computer it will be deleted from the audio recording device. When transcribing your interviews, I will remove your personal information (i.e. first and last name). Instead, another name will be provided. The demographic questionnaire from the first interview will be stored in a locked cabinet. All data will be kept for at least 5 years after the study is complete. When the data is destroyed, it will be safely and permanently deleted in a way that protects your privacy and confidentiality.

The data collected is part of the primary investigator's degree at the University of Alberta (i.e. dissertation study). All your data will be kept confidential. Only members of the current research team (i.e. principal investigator and research supervisor) will have access to your data. Any

additional members of the research team (i.e. volunteer transcriptionist, individual sitting outside the library interview room) will sign a confidentiality agreement.

The data collected in this study may be used in research articles and presentations. Quotations may also be used in research articles and summaries. You will not be personally identified in any articles, presentations, or summaries.

A summary of the data collected from this study will be provided to [redacted] This information will help to inform future programming. You will not be personally identified in this summary.

If you are interested in learning about the study's findings after the study is completed, you can contact the primary investigator using the contact information above.

During the interview, if you share information that indicates a child is being harmed or at risk, I am obligated to disclose this information to children's services.

What if I have questions?

If you have any questions regarding this study or need assistance please do not hesitate to contact Vincenza Martinovich at vincenza@ualberta.ca or [redacted] The plan for this study has been reviewed by the Health Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. If you have questions about your rights or how research should be conducted, you can call (780) 492-2615. This office is independent of the researchers.

***** Any information that could identify participants or the clinic in which they were recruited from was removed from these documents (blacked out).

CONSENT

Title of Study: Exploration of Immigrant Fathers' Parenting Experiences Following an Offence Against an Intimate Partner: A Narrative Inquiry

Principal Investigator(s): Vincenza Martinovich **Phone Number(s):** [redacted]

	Yes	No
Do you understand that you have been asked to be in a research study?	☐	☐
Have you read and received a copy of the attached Information Sheet?	☐	☐
Do you understand the benefits and risks involved in taking part in this research study?	☐	☐
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?	☐	☐
Do you understand that you are free to leave the study at any time, without having to give a reason and without penalty?	☐	☐
Has the issue of confidentiality been explained to you?	☐	☐
Do you understand who will have access to your study records?	☐	☐

Who explained this study to you?
_____

I agree to take part in this study:

Signature of Research Participant
_____

(Printed Name)
_____

Date: _____

I believe that the person signing this form understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

Signature of Investigator or Designee: _____
Date _____

THE INFORMATION SHEET MUST BE ATTACHED TO THIS CONSENT FORM AND A COPY GIVEN TO THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Appendix J: INFORMATION LETTER and CONSENT FORM (*For Specific Group)

Study Title: Exploration of Immigrant Fathers' Parenting Experiences Following an Offence Against an Intimate Partner: A Narrative Inquiry

Principal Investigator:
Vincenza Martinovich
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5
[redacted]
vincenza@ualberta.ca

Research Supervisor
Dr. Christina Rinaldi
6-102 Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5
crinaldi@ualberta.ca

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?
This study is a student research project. You are being asked to be in this study because you are a father who is a current or former member of the [redacted] Before you decide if you want to participate, the principal investigator will go over this form. You are welcome to ask questions. You will be given a copy of this form.

What is the reason for doing the study?
The purpose of this study is to better understand your parenting experiences. Most of what we know about fathers who have been charged with an offence against an intimate partner is from non-immigrant men. Since you are a father who was raised outside of Canada, I am interested in your parenting stories and experiences. I am also looking to learn more about your relationship with your child/children and how the program can support other parents like yourself.

What will I be asked to do?
You will participate in two audio-recorded interviews will take place over a secure video conferencing platform (doxy.me).

The first interview will last approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. At the beginning of the interview, I will ask you some demographic questions (i.e. your age, ethnicity, citizenship status, etc.). I will also ask you to state your current offence. The reason why I ask these questions is to gain a better understanding of your background. In this first interview, I will also ask you some questions. For example, I will ask you to talk about your relationship with your child/children and share your parenting stories.

The second interview will last approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. In the second interview we will review what you shared during the first interview. For example, I will ask questions such as "do you see yourself here?" or "did I get this right?"

What are the risks and discomforts?
There is some risk involved in participating in this study. Some of the questions asked might cause you to feel different emotions such as sadness, shame, or anger. You can take a break at

any point during the interview or ask to finish the interview on another day. At the end of the interview you will be emailed a list of community counselling resources. It is not possible to know all of the risks that may happen in a study, but the researcher has taken steps to minimize any known risks.

What are the benefits to me?

This study will give you a chance to tell your story as a parent. You can share your experiences and talk about your relationship with your child/children. I hope that the information we gather from this study will help us better understand the parenting experiences of fathers in the Mosaic group. This knowledge could be by the [redacted] program staff and by other programs in Canada to help immigrant fathers with a history of intimate partner violence. However, you may not get any benefit from being in this research study.

Do I have to take part in the study?

You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary. During the interview, you can choose not to answer a question(s) but continue to participate in the rest of the interview. You can withdraw your interview data up until it is being anonymized for analysis. If you would like to withdraw your data, you must let the researcher know via telephone [redacted]

Will I be paid to be in the research?

You will be emailed a $20.00 grocery gift card after participating in first interview. After the second interview, you will be emailed a second $20.00 grocery store gift card.

Will my information be kept private?

The video conferencing platform (doxy.me) used for the interviews is secure and encrypted. I will be recording both interviews so that I can listen to them afterwards. In order to participate in the study, you must agree to be audio recorded. If you want to talk about something that you do not want recorded, you can ask to have the recording turned off. You can ask this at any time in the interview.

After each interview, I will upload the recording on a password protected, encrypted computer and store it on google drive. Google drive is secure as it requires a University of Alberta special ID code plus a password. Once the recording is uploaded onto the computer it will be deleted from the audio recording device. When transcribing your interviews, I will remove your personal information (i.e. first and last name). Instead, another name will be provided. The demographic questionnaire from the first interview will be stored in a locked cabinet. All data will be kept for at least 5 years after the study is complete. When the data is destroyed, it will be safely and permanently deleted in a way that protects your privacy and confidentiality.

The data collected is part of the primary investigator's degree at the University of Alberta (i.e. dissertation study). All your data will be kept confidential. Only members of the current research team (i.e. principal investigator and research supervisor) will have access to your data. Any additional members of the research team (i.e. volunteer transcriptionist, individual sitting outside the library interview room) will sign a confidentiality agreement.

The data collected in this study may be used in research articles and presentations. Quotations may also be used in research articles and summaries. You will not be personally identified in any articles, presentations, or summaries.

A summary of the data collected from this study will be provided to [redacted] This information will help to inform future programming. You will not be personally identified in this summary.

If you are interested in learning about the study's findings after the study is completed, you can contact the primary investigator using the contact information above.

During the interview, if you share information that indicates a child is being harmed or at risk, I am obligated to disclose this information to children's services.

What if I have questions?

If you have any questions regarding this study or need assistance please do not hesitate to contact Vincenza Martinovich at vincenza@ualberta.ca or [redacted] The plan for this study has been reviewed by the Health Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. If you have questions about your rights or how research should be conducted, you can call (780) 492-2615. This office is independent of the researchers.

CONSENT

Title of Study: Exploration of Immigrant Fathers' Parenting Experiences Following an Offence Against an Intimate Partner: A Narrative Inquiry

Principal Investigator(s): Vincenza Martinovich **Phone Number(s):** 780-222-8768

	Yes	No
Do you understand that you have been asked to be in a research study?	☐	☐
Have you read and received a copy of the attached Information Sheet?	☐	☐
Do you understand the benefits and risks involved in taking part in this research study?	☐	☐
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?	☐	☐
Do you understand that you are free to leave the study at any time, without having to give a reason and without penalty?	☐	☐
Has the issue of confidentiality been explained to you?	☐	☐
Do you understand who will have access to your study records? ☐	☐	

Who explained this study? _____

Verbal consent obtained (yes/no): _____

(Printed Name) _____

Date: _____

I believe that the person who provided verbal consent understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

Signature of Investigator or Designee: _____
Date _____

THE INFORMATION SHEET MUST BE ATTACHED TO THIS CONSENT FORM AND A COPY GIVEN TO THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Appendix K: INFORMATION LETTER and CONSENT FORM (*General Form)

Study Title: Exploration of Immigrant Fathers' Parenting Experiences Following an Offence Against an Intimate Partner: A Narrative Inquiry

Principal Investigator:
Vincenza Martinovich
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5
[redacted]
vincenza@ualberta.ca

Research Supervisor
Dr. Christina Rinaldi
6-102 Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5
crinaldi@ualberta.ca

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?

This study is a student research project. You are being asked to be in this study because you are a father with a history of violence against an intimate partner. Before you decide if you want to participate, the principal investigator will go over this form. You are welcome to ask questions. You will be given a copy of this form.

What is the reason for doing the study?

The purpose of this study is to better understand your parenting experiences. Most of what we know about fathers who have been charged with an offence against an intimate partner is from non-immigrant men. Since you are a father who was raised outside of Canada, I am interested in your parenting stories and experiences. I am also looking to learn more about your relationship with your child/children and how agencies and practitioners can support other parents like yourself.

What will I be asked to do?

You will participate in two audio-recorded interviews. These interviews will take place over a secure video conferencing platform (doxy.me).

The first interview will last approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. At the beginning of the interview, I will ask you some demographic questions (i.e. your age, ethnicity, citizenship status, etc.). I will also ask you to state your current offence. The reason why I ask these questions is to gain a better understanding of your background. In this first interview, I will also ask you some questions. For example, I will ask you to talk about your relationship with your child/children and share your parenting stories.

The second interview will last approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. In the second interview we will review what you shared during the first interview. For example, I will ask questions such as "do you see yourself here?" or "did I get this right?"

What are the risks and discomforts?

There is some risk involved in participating in this study. Some of the questions asked might cause you to feel different emotions such as sadness, shame, or anger. You can take a break at any point during the interview or ask to finish the interview on another day. At the end of the interview you will be emailed a list of community counselling resources. It is not possible to know all of the risks that may happen in a study, but the researcher has taken steps to minimize any known risks.

What are the benefits to me?

This study will give you a chance to tell your story as a parent. You can share your experiences and talk about your relationship with your child/children. I hope that the information we gather from this study will help us better understand the parenting experiences of fathers with a history of intimate partner violence. This knowledge could be used by clinics and practitioners in Canada to help immigrant fathers with a history of intimate partner violence. However, you may not get any benefit from being in this research study.

Do I have to take part in the study?

You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary. During the interview, you can choose not to answer a question(s) but continue to participate in the rest of the interview. You can withdraw your interview data up until it is being anonymized for analysis. If you would like to withdraw your data, you must let the researcher know via telephone [redacted]

Will I be paid to be in the research?

You will be emailed a $20.00 grocery gift card after participating in first interview. After the second interview, you will be emailed $20.00 grocery store gift card.

Will my information be kept private?

The video conferencing platform (doxy.me) used for the interviews is secure and encrypted. I will be recording both interviews so that I can listen to them afterwards. In order to participate in the study, you must agree to be audio recorded. If you want to talk about something that you do not want recorded, you can ask to have the recording turned off. You can ask this at any time in the interview.

After each interview, I will upload the recording on a password protected, encrypted computer and store it on google drive. Google drive is secure as it requires a University of Alberta special ID code plus a password. Once the recording is uploaded onto the computer it will be deleted from the audio recording device. When transcribing your interviews, I will remove your personal information (i.e. first and last name). Instead, another name will be provided. The demographic questionnaire from the first interview will be stored in a locked cabinet. All data will be kept for at least 5 years after the study is complete. When the data is destroyed, it will be safely and permanently deleted in a way that protects your privacy and confidentiality.

The data collected is part of the primary investigator's degree at the University of Alberta (i.e. dissertation study). All your data will be kept confidential. Only members of the current research team (i.e. principal investigator and research supervisor) will have access to your data. Any additional members of the research team (i.e. volunteer transcriptionist, individual sitting outside the library interview room) will sign a confidentiality agreement.

The data collected in this study may be used in research articles and presentations. Quotations may also be used in research articles and summaries. You will not be personally identified in any articles, presentations, or summaries.

A summary of the data collected from this study will be provided to the center you were recruited from. This information will help to inform future programming. You will not be personally identified in this summary.

If you are interested in learning about the study's findings after the study is completed, you can contact the primary investigator using the contact information above.

During the interview, if you share information that indicates a child is being harmed or at risk, I am obligated to disclose this information to children's services.

What if I have questions?

If you have any questions regarding this study or need assistance please do not hesitate to contact Vincenza Martinovich at vincenza@ualberta.ca or [redacted]. The plan for this study has been reviewed by the Health Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. If you have questions about your rights or how research should be conducted, you can call (780) 492-2615. This office is independent of the research

CONSENT

Title of Study: Exploration of Immigrant Fathers' Parenting Experiences Following an Offence Against an Intimate Partner: A Narrative Inquiry

Principal Investigator(s): Vincenza Martinovich **Phone Number(s):** [redacted]

	Yes	No
Do you understand that you have been asked to be in a research study?	☐	☐
Have you read and received a copy of the attached Information Sheet?	☐	☐
Do you understand the benefits and risks involved in taking part in this research study?	☐	☐
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?	☐	☐
Do you understand that you are free to leave the study at any time, without having to give a reason and without penalty?	☐	☐
Has the issue of confidentiality been explained to you?	☐	☐
Do you understand who will have access to your study records? ☐	☐	

Who explained this study? _____

Verbal consent obtained (yes/no): _____

(Printed Name) _____

Date: _____

I believe that the person who provided verbal consent understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

Signature of Investigator or Designee: _____
Date _____

THE INFORMATION SHEET MUST BE ATTACHED TO THIS CONSENT FORM AND A COPY GIVEN TO THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Appendix L: Steps for Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect

In the event that a participant discloses information regarding abuse or neglect of a child, the following steps will be taken.

1. Participant will be informed that I am obligated to report this information, as discussed when consent was initially obtained.

2. Next, I will call the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-387-5437 to report the concern to a Child Intervention caseworker. This line is open for 24-hours per day.

3. Participant will be reminded that they have the right to withdraw their consent from the study.

Appendix M: Demographic Questionnaire

Before we begin the interview, I have a few questions to ask. The reason why I ask these questions is to have a better understanding of your background.

Participant ID Number: _____ Age: _____

Ethnicity: _____ Country of Origin: _____

Educational Background (highest level of education attained): _____

Length of time (years) residing in Canada: _____ Citizenship:_____

Relationship status (i.e. married, common law, divorced): _____

Current offence: _____

Is there currently a no-contact order in place with your partner/spouse? _____

How many children do you have? _____

Are these children your biological children (yes/no)? _____ (If no, specify the relationship, i.e. stepchildren: _____)

Age of child/children: _____

How often are you in direct contact (i.e. visits) with your child/children?

a) Everyday
b) 3-4 times per week
c) 1-2 times per week
d) 2 - 3 times per month
e) Once per month
f) No direct contact
a) Other (specify: _____)

How often are you in in-direct contact (i.e. phone calls, texting, email) with your child/children?

b) Everyday
c) 3-4 times per week
d) 1-2 times per week
e) 2-3 times per month
f) Once per month
g) No in-direct contact
h) Other (specify: _____)

Appendix N: Interview #1 Template (Agency Specific)

Introduction. Thank you very much for agreeing to meet with me today. This study would not be possible without your participation, and so I am very grateful for your time and willingness to take part in my study.

Today I'm interested in learning more about your parenting stories and experiences. I'm also interested in hearing about your move to Canada and how that may have affected your family life. The questions I have today are to help me learn about what you think and believe, and so there are no right or wrong answers. If at any point I ask a question that is confusing or not clear, please let me know. Are you ready to begin?

Narration

Tell me about your move to Canada. (*If necessary, probe: when did they move, in what year, what were the circumstances etc. to get at this historical information*)

Tell me about your relationship with your father as a child. (*If necessary, probe to get at how they would describe their relationship, how their father parented etc*.)

Tell me about your experience being a father.

Tell me about your relationship with your child/children *before* your offence.

Tell me about your relationship with your child *after* your offence.

Conversation

Tell me a story of a time you felt like a "good" father?

Tell me a story about a time when you did *not* feel like a "good" father?

What do you think it means to be a "good" father? Can you please provide some examples?

Where do you think your understanding about what it means to be a "good" father comes from? Can you please provide some examples?

How do you believe your offence against your partner/spouse impacted your relationship with your child/children? Can you please provide some examples?

Moving forward, what do you think the program here at [redacted] can to do help you as a parent? Can you please provide some examples?

Appendix O: Interview #1 Template (General)

Introduction. Thank you very much for agreeing to meet with me today. This study would not be possible without your participation, and so I am very grateful for your time and willingness to take part in my study.

Today I'm interested in learning more about your parenting stories and experiences. I'm also interested in hearing about your move to Canada and how that may have affected your family life. The questions I have today are to help me learn about what you think and believe, and so there are no right or wrong answers. If at any point I ask a question that is confusing or not clear, please let me know. Are you ready to begin?

Narration

Tell me about your move to Canada. (*If necessary, probe: when did they move, in what year, what were the circumstances etc. to get at this historical information*)

Tell me about your relationship with your father as a child. (*If necessary, probe to get at how they would describe their relationship, how their father parented etc*.)

Tell me about your experience being a father.

Tell me about your relationship with your child/children *before* your offence.

Tell me about your relationship with your child *after* your offence.

Conversation

Tell me a story of a time you felt like a "good" father?

Tell me a story about a time when you did *not* feel like a "good" father?

What do you think it means to be a "good" father? Can you please provide some examples?

Where do you think your understanding about what it means to be a "good" father comes from? Can you please provide some examples?

How do you believe your offence against your partner/spouse impacted your relationship with your child/children? Can you please provide some examples?

Moving forward, what do you think (*the program OR the practitioner they are working with) at (insert new clinic/center name) can to do help you as a parent? Can you please provide some examples?