

Hum Aapke Hain Koun?: The Impact of Bollywood Films on the Indian-American
Second-Generation Diaspora's Cultural Identity

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Abstract

The Indian-American diaspora is one of the largest and fastest growing in the United States today. Indian-Americans, much like any diaspora community, struggle with their dual-identity and the ramifications it has on their sense of Indian culture and their Indian identity. Bollywood film is an extremely important part of modern Indian culture and provides a point of reference for the analysis of diasporan's dual-identity, which has rarely been done before. To fill this crucial gap, this paper provides an analysis of the impact that Indian-American diasporans' dual-identity has on their consumption and internalization of cultural themes found in Bollywood films. To analyze this topic, a survey was conducted on 12 Indian-American students at a high school in Central Virginia, and responses were compared to a thematic analysis of 4 key Bollywood films from the early 2000s to 2025.

The results showed that the diasporans noted feeling more connected to cultural themes and practices that were more easily universalized, such as themes of conformist societies and overbearing parents, rather than those that were more tightly connected to Indian culture. This may be due to the fact that the diasporans were raised in and live in an American cultural environment, causing them to notice and connect to themes that most closely related to their lived experiences.

For diasporans going forward, this research elucidates the impact of their dual-identity, allowing them to better analyze and connect to themes they find in Bollywood films going forward, rather than simply feeling disconnected when faced with unfamiliar practices.

Keywords: Indian-American diaspora, second-generation, Bollywood films, film analysis, cultural practices

1. Introduction

1.1 Indian-American Diaspora and Diasporan Identity

The Indian diaspora¹ is one of the largest in the world, with about 35.4 million living outside of India, according to the Indian government's Ministry of External Affairs (Population of Overseas, 2025). Pew Research Center states that in America, people of Indian descent number at about 5.2 million, accounting for 21% of America's Asian population (Im, 2025). About 3.3 million of these people are second-generation² Indians, making this group extremely significant to the modern Indian-American diaspora (Population of Overseas, 2025). Because of the immense size of the Indian diaspora, NRIs³ are heavily catered to in Bollywood. The Indian diaspora is also incredibly diverse, encompassing people of a wide variety of languages, castes, ethnicities, and religions, making it hard to generalize about their beliefs and cultural practices on a large scale (Sahoo and Shome, 2020). In their examination of the Canadian-Indian diaspora, Ajaya Sahoo and Anindita Shome (2020) of the University of Hyderabad show that the modern second-generation diaspora is somewhat more homogenous, with many of them getting information about Indian culture from the same sources online and on social media. Assimilation⁴, an important piece in the formation of diasporan identity, is also varied between generations, with the degree to which members assimilated depending on many demographic factors and the time in which they immigrated, according to Pardhu Pinnamshetty and Aparna Rayaprol (2021) of Jawaharlal Nehru University and the University of Hyderabad, respectively. Since second-generation diasporans have a dual-identity, with influences from both American

¹ A group of people who have scattered from their homeland and are now settled in a different area (Vocabulary.com, n.d.).

² The generation of people born to immigrant parents who were born elsewhere (Second-Generation Americans, 2013).

³ Abbreviation for Non-resident Indians. Those from India who live outside the country (Cambridge, n.d.).

⁴ The process by which immigrants integrate into and adapt to the culture of their new country, sometimes adopting new cultural practices (Suh, 2023).

and Indian culture, the degree to which they have assimilated is an important metric to determine the influence they gain from Bollywood film.

1.2 History and Structure of Bollywood Films

Bollywood is the Hindi-language film industry and is based in Mumbai, according to Evonne Davids (2023) of Ulster University. Furthermore, the name of this industry comes from a portmanteau of “Bombay”, the former name of Mumbai and “Hollywood”, showing the influence of western cinema since the beginning. Bollywood films do, however, inherently infuse western influences with Indian culture, making the film have a unique cultural significance and purpose in Indian society and culture, as asserted by Samir Srivastava (2022) of Cornell University. Indian films also have additional elements that make them unique from other film genres around the world, namely, the film song. Songs are featured in almost all Bollywood films, and these songs have an immense reach among the diaspora and in the homeland. In her analysis of *Dil Se*, a prominent film for NRIs, Pragya Trivedi (2022) of the University of California, Irvine shows that songs in Bollywood films are often separate from the plot, but can still serve an important narrative purpose, allowing them to be analyzed in their relation to the plot. Bollywood films encompass many different genres, many of them having parallels to western cinema. The masala film genre is unique to Indian cinema, meaning diasporan audiences would have little exposure to the themes contained within without these films. Masala films encompass a mix of action, comedy, romance, drama, and music to create an engaging and jam-packed viewing experience, making these among the most popular films in Indian culture (Davids, 2023). Thus, these films are enjoyed greatly by those in the diaspora, which allows them to absorb many aspects of Indian culture from dramatic and comedic lenses, among others.

1.3 Importance of Bollywood to Diaspora

Bollywood is the world's largest film industry, producing about 1,500 movies and generating about 3.7 billion dollars in revenue a year (ET Bureau, as cited in Rai, 2023). Because Bollywood films are so immensely popular in modern Indian culture, they retain a unique ability to influence the perceptions of Indians at home and abroad. Firstly, Bollywood film songs are, of course, popular within India, but are also widely enjoyed by diasporans all around the world. This is due to the hybrid nature of Bollywood film songs, which encompass almost every genre and possible taste in music, according to Sangeeta Marwah (2017) of the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. This means that a second-generation Indian can find songs which they enjoy, that are inherently infused with Indian culture, despite having possibly never been to India or having minimal contact with Indian culture from the homeland, allowing them to experience Indian culture through this medium. Additionally, Bollywood films serve as a “source of national pride” and are considered to be “a part of India’s cultural heritage”, as noted by Pinnamshetty and Rayaprol (2021). Their study, however, focuses mainly on the effect of gendered portrayals in film on second-generation diasporans. The consumption of these films could allow diasporans to feel pride in their culture and heritage, through the same media a native Indian would consume, which is why the effect on cultural practices is important to study. Finally, As Subhra Rajat Balabantaray (2020) notes in his sociological analysis, Bollywood films provide a great source of information about the festivals, views, cultural practices, language, and religion of India. His analysis, however, does not review diasporans’ own sense of identity in relation to the viewing of these cultural practices in Bollywood films. Because they are greatly influenced by the views of their Indian creators, Bollywood films provide an authentic view into Indian culture from a uniquely Indian lens for the diaspora, allowing them to learn about the culture which they

come from, and possibly allowing for a greater connection to and practice of Indian culture in their lives.

1.4 NRI Media

Bollywood films are consumed both by those in the homeland and by those in the diaspora, with both being very large and active audiences, but are not typically consumed by those not of Indian descent (Davids, 2023). NRI media is an important part of modern Bollywood cinema, with many directors making films directed at NRI audiences, taking into account their unique identity and cultural background. These films often include aspects of NRI identity and are removed from Indian culture in the homeland, and cater more towards the values and experiences of diasporans, who are the primary intended audience, according to Ashish Dwivedi (2024), a film researcher of the University of Southampton. Another interesting aspect of NRI media consumption is the idea of “non-resident media”, which is defined as media consumed by those outside of its intended audience (Athique as cited in Trivedi, 2022). NRIs, therefore, have the opportunity to watch films that glean insight into “authentic” Indian culture, allowing them to learn about their culture from an Indian perspective.

1.5 Research Focus

Because of the importance of Bollywood film to Indian culture and the reflection of Indian culture within the films, the Indian diaspora is able to consume these films as a means of cultural reconnection and accurate representation. Second-generation diasporans, therefore, have a unique relationship with Bollywood films, utilizing them as a means for cultural reconnection and to learn about the Indian aspects of their identity from an “authentic” lens. Because of the lack of previous research on the connection Indian diasporans experience with Bollywood film and how their experience of Bollywood films differs from the messages and themes originally

included by the filmmakers, the question arose of how the cultural practices and beliefs of the American second-generation Indian diaspora are affected by viewing culturally significant Bollywood movies. This question led to the final research question and focus of the research project: How are the cultural practices and beliefs of the American second-generation Indian diaspora at X High School affected by their viewing practices of culturally significant Bollywood movies?

2. Method

A mixed method approach was taken to study the effect of Bollywood movies on the development of cultural practices in second-generation Indian-American diasporans. The researcher distributed surveys to high school students at a high school with a significant Indian population in Central Virginia, subsequently conducting thematic film analysis on several culturally significant Bollywood movies released between the late 1990s and early 2010s. Highschool X was chosen due to its high proportion of students with an Indian background, with 35% of students being of Asian descent ([REDACTED] High School, 2025).

The researcher first chose to distribute surveys on cultural practices and Bollywood film viewing patterns to second-generation Indian-American students at Highschool X before conducting the film analysis. This approach was taken so that the researcher could gather a final list of appropriate films to analyze based on the responses to the survey. Thus, the films analyzed would be able to be compared to the cultural practices outlined in survey responses and generate significant findings. The researcher chose to administer a survey to obtain the highest response rate possible, as interviews would have been difficult to conduct in a timely manner and fewer respondents would have been available. Participants were chosen through purposive sampling by reaching out to several classes and clubs with significant amounts of Indian students at High

School X. Participants were also reached out to through snowball sampling, by having students reach out to other Indian diasporans that they knew at the school. These two sampling methods were chosen to obtain as wide a sampling of the Indian population at High School X as possible, and because of their similarity to other previous research methods in the area, namely Pinnamshetty and Rayaprol (2021). All participants were given a parental consent form two weeks before administration of the survey, which can be seen in Appendix N. The responses to the survey were fully anonymized to protect student privacy. Survey responses were coded according to theme and content to generate a broad list of recurring themes that were present in survey responses. The researcher analyzed how these themes were realized in the student's cultural practices to better understand the list of cultural practices and themes. This analysis was done by looking at the coded responses and selecting key responses that illuminated or related to specific themes and patterns noted in preliminary research or that represented a common pattern in the data. These key responses were looked at to come to the new understanding about how the film themes were viewed by respondents.

Before the collection of survey responses, a list of culturally significant Bollywood films was assembled, ranging from 1990-2018. The list was generated by going through the top ten highest grossing Bollywood films for each year, and eliminating films deemed not culturally relevant by the researcher. Once survey responses were recorded, a list of the films most commonly mentioned in responses was collected. The researcher then finalized a list of 4 films mentioned to analyze from three major genre categories: masala and romance, patriotism and action, and a family drama. An additional film was added to the list, *Dhurandhar*, released in 2025, which was outside of the original time frame of the initially generated list of significant films. The researcher chose to analyze this newer film because of the prevalence of the film in

survey responses, and because it could provide insight into the viewing of newer films in the diaspora, a topic not mentioned in prior research.

Films Chosen to Analyze	Genres Represented
<i>Dhurandhar (2025)</i>	<i>Action, Patriotic</i>
<i>Chennai Express (2013)</i>	<i>Masala, Romance</i>
<i>3 Idiots (2009)</i>	<i>Coming-of-Age, Comedy</i>
<i>Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham (2001)</i>	<i>Family Drama</i>

Figure 1: Films Chosen to Analyze and the Genres Represented

This list was assembled by cross-referencing the list assembled from survey responses with the list of culturally significant films. The three films chosen were then analyzed, along with a coding partner, for themes mentioned and views expressed through thematic film analysis. Key cultural themes were documented along with how the film portrayed the themes and practices. The film analysis was compared with the coded survey responses to see how the students' recollection and experiences with the films compared with the source material. Despite the small number of films analyzed, the results were deemed applicable to the survey responses due to the high overlap of themes and commonly occurring motifs through specific genres, as mentioned previously.

3. Results

3.1 Viewing Patterns

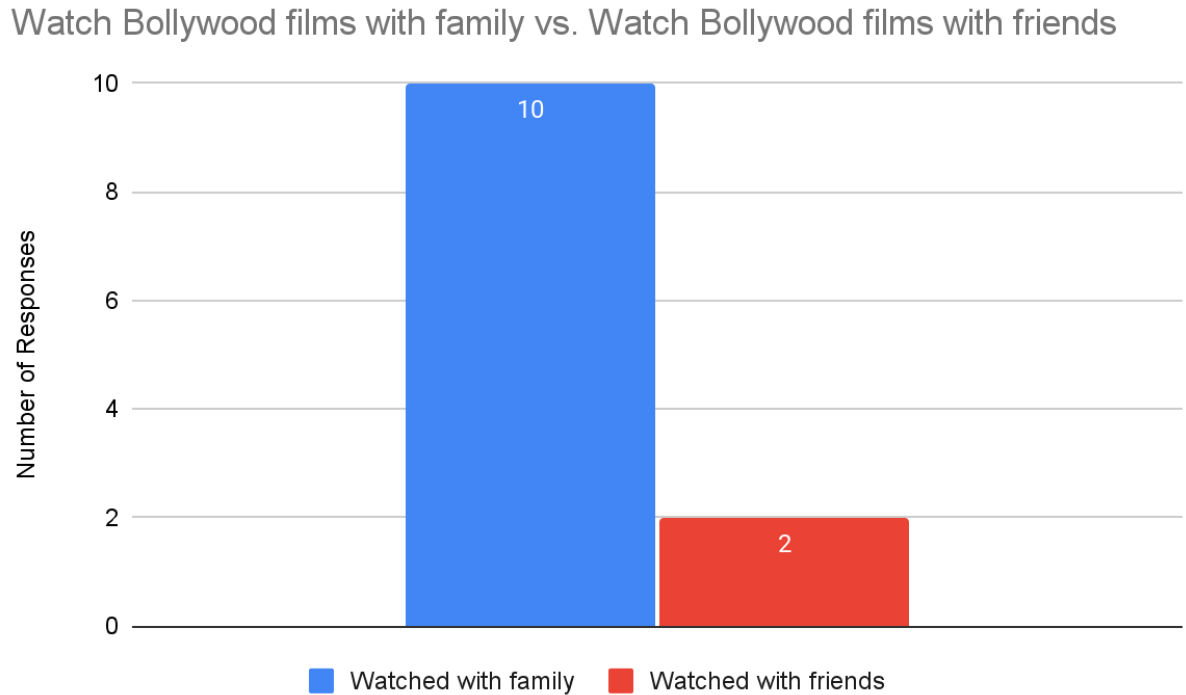


Figure 2: Participants who watch Bollywood films with family vs. those who watch Bollywood films with friends

The vast majority of participants acknowledged that they viewed Bollywood films on a semi-regular basis almost exclusively with their families. Additionally, most participants noted that they usually didn't go out of their way to watch Bollywood films, rather the films were selected mostly by the student's family or by popularity.

Motivations for Watching Bollywood Films

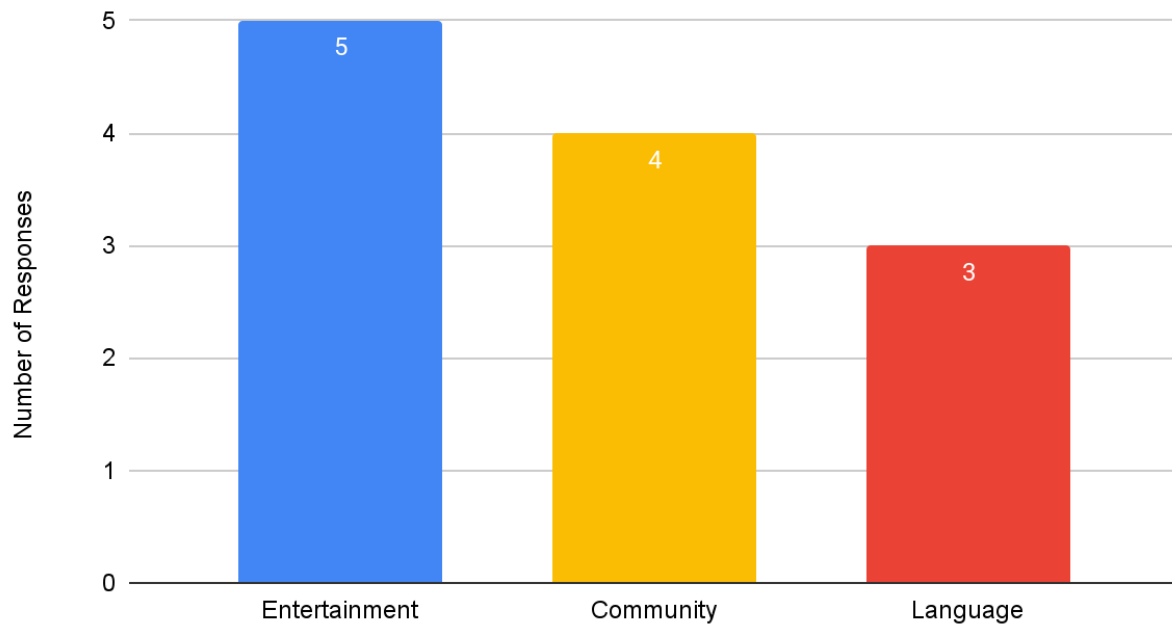


Figure 3: Response Motivations for watching Bollywood Films

For the first free-response question, respondents varied in their personal reasons for watching Bollywood films in the first place. 5 respondents, the largest group, noted that they watched Bollywood films for entertainment value, the same as they might have for a movie of any other origin. 4 respondents, the second largest group, claimed that since they watched Bollywood films in a community setting, they primarily participated in viewing them for a community-building experience with family and friends. Lastly, the smallest group were the respondents who watched Bollywood films as a way of connecting with or practicing a foreign language, with only 3 respondents belonging to this group. One respondent noted that “because Hindi is the national language and Bollywood is a monumental field” and that Bollywood “stories and screenplay are the best of the best”, they were more enticed to watch Bollywood films to gain insight into the artistic practices of India, since the films represent the dominant

culture. This response reflects the view of the smallest group of respondents, who valued the authentic linguistic representation that the films provided.

Responses Showing Familial Introduction
<i>I watched it with my family, they wanted to culture me, and they wanted to spread the amazingness of the movie to me</i>
<i>My mom likes Bollywood movies and she got me interested as well.</i>
<i>I watched it when I was little, so I just watched it because my parents did.</i>
<i>For spending time w my family in the weekends</i>

Figure 4: Key Responses Reflecting a Familial Introduction to Bollywood films

Expanding on the responses' pattern of familial and community connection, several key responses, as shown in Figure 4, demonstrate that the respondents' family members were the ones who initially introduced them to Bollywood films, reinforcing previous research by Pinnamshetty and Rayaprol (2021) about the value of Bollywood film in Indian culture and in the Indian diaspora community.

Number of Films Mentioned from Each Year

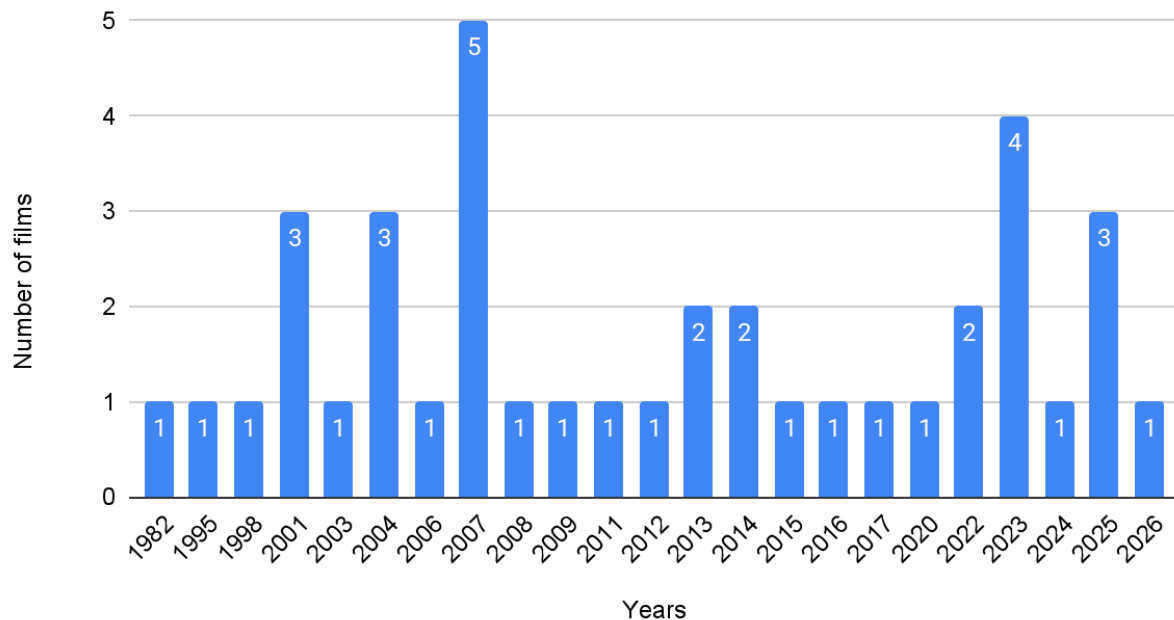


Figure 5: Count of Films Mentioned in Responses from Different Years

One pattern that emerged in the films viewed was the prevalence of newer Bollywood films from the past 5-10 years, which could possibly be due to the increased connection to modern Indian society from the internet, as noted previously in research by Sahoo and Shome (2020). Expanding on Pinnamshetty and Rayaprol's (2021) claim that respondents primarily watch Bollywood films from the 1990s and 2000s for their nostalgic value, this pattern could show that their assertion is not entirely valid in the modern age with diasporans having such an increased connection to their homeland through the internet.

3.2 Thematic Connections

Responses Showing Universal Cultural Connection
<i>I definitely learned a lot about the school systems.</i>
<i>Because it has very cute relations with mom and son and father daughter etc</i>
<i>I connected to the fact that the education system was harsh on students</i>
<i>I learned to have more sympathy and acceptance with those who struggle with academic aspects</i>

Figure 6: Key Responses Reflecting a Connection to Universal Themes

The themes participants stated they felt a personal connection to in the films were largely not related to Indian culture. Participants especially noted a connection with criticisms of school systems present in many films and the pressures that parents place on their children. These themes would have a greater presence in the respondents' lives because of their age, meaning that they were more prone to connect to ideas and themes that were relevant to their current lives. Since participants were able to connect with elements of culture common between the two parts of their identity, it may imply that they were able to feel as though their own practice of culture was not as different, leading to a greater connection with Indian culture, but further research is needed to confirm this fact.

Responses Showing Increased Family and Community Connection
<i>I was able to connect with my parents who went to college in India</i>
<i>I think about religion a lot more and how it impacts the people in my family.</i>
<i>I feel more at home with other south Asians</i>
<i>I know that one of my great aunts went through an arranged marriage, so I asked her how that was, but she wanted to marry the guy anyways so they were happy.</i>

Figure 7: Responses Reflecting an Increased Family and Community Connection from

Recognizing Unfamiliar Themes

Respondents also showed an interesting pattern of connecting with their family members and the wider Indian community after talking with them about unfamiliar themes in the films they watched. One specific example of a respondent experiencing greater connection with family and community members following their discussion of Indian culture include learning about and having a greater understanding of Indian festivals such as Diwali and Holi, which, in their words, resonated to them because “My family and I celebrate Holi every year”, which can be seen in Appendix E. A respondent also noted learning about the specific and different challenges faced by their family members in the patriarchal Indian education system as opposed to their own experiences in the American education system, and feeling sympathy for their relatives as a result, which can be seen in Figure 7.

4. Discussion and Analysis

When talking about their “favorite” Bollywood films, respondents often noted the loud and entertaining portions, such as the song and dance sequences or action elements, of the films as the reason that those films were their favorite, aligning with the higher number of responses noting entertainment as their primary motive for watching Bollywood films. Additionally, this pattern connects to Marwah’s (2017) claim that diasporans exhibit a level of interest in Bollywood film songs by connecting them with their own interests in entertaining and exciting films. In Appendix C, specific responses can be seen that outline the “amazing music” and “romantic and exciting” stories of their favorite films. None of the responses mentioned favoring films for cultural content that was in the film, supporting entertainment as the primary motive for the diasporans to watch these films, as they would with any other film.

Additionally, for the questions on memories of specific film content, responses seemed to mostly note aspects of Indian culture that were the most unfamiliar or foreign to them, showing

how the new and unique parts of Indian culture shown in the films seemed to be remembered more than themes the respondents would already have been familiar with through their experiences in an American cultural environment. Respondents noted personal connection to film elements that connected with their own lives as young students, such as family relationships and educational pressures, and pointed out specifically mentioned aspects of Indian culture that stuck out to them as unfamiliar, such as the practice of arranged marriage or specific religious practices. These cultural practices could have been unfamiliar to respondents simply because they would not have had much personal experience with them in American culture, which exerted the most influence on their everyday lives. The films analyzed were all created for an Indian audience, meaning that they contained commentaries on Indian culture from an Indian lens, as noted earlier; for example: *Chennai Express*' commentary on the harms of arranged marriage and the benefits of cultural diversity. These critical commentaries went largely unrecognized by participants, simply being noticed at face value as parts of the story. For example, one respondent responded to the question found in Appendix D by citing a scene in *Chennai Express* where the main character carries his love interest up the steps to a temple in a local ritual as an instance where they learned about an aspect of Indian culture. The respondent boiled down their new understanding of Indian culture to "if [you] carry [your] wife up the temple stairs you will [be] together forever". However, through the film analysis, the researcher came to the conclusion that this scene also contains commentary on the importance of true love in marriage, connecting back to one of the film's overarching claims about the dangers of arranged marriages. Because the respondent was unable to articulate this aspect of the film's message in the scene, it can be inferred that the way in which they were viewing and interpreting the film did not enable them to understand the full message and critiques the film offered to

them. It can be inferred that the participants' upbringing in an American cultural setting barred them from recognizing or fully understanding broader commentaries on Indian society and culture due to the fact that they could not recognize specific, subversive commentaries on Indian culture that they might have had they been raised with Indian cultural norms ingrained as normal in their everyday lives.

Although many respondents noted recognizing new aspects of Indian culture as unfamiliar to them, many respondents also noted increased feelings of cultural connection after talking with first-generation immigrants, who could provide increased insight into these cultural practices and help respondents to understand how these aspects of Indian culture are viewed and practiced by Indians. Respondents were able to connect with their community through Bollywood film, connecting back to Pinnamshetty and Rayaprol's (2021) assertion about the importance of Bollywood film to the Indian diaspora community and the respondent's pattern of watching Bollywood films almost exclusively with family members. It can also be inferred that because the primary motive of many of the diasporans surveyed was not to ingest the cultural messages of the films, but rather to watch entertaining films to pass time with family, as discussed previously, that the diasporans neglected to watch the films with an analytical lens, leading to them missing out on key cultural insights that could bolster their understanding of modern Indian culture and lessen feelings of cultural disconnection.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Limitations

The researcher's study was limited in its scope due to the lack of time. The researcher was only able to view 4 films and collect 12 survey responses, which severely limited the wider applicability of the results. The researcher was limited in the number of responses collected

primarily due to the lack of time to reach out to a wider range of students, and inefficient survey design. This led to many students not being able to complete the survey, or simply not knowing about the opportunity, leading to a lower sample size and limiting the wider applicability of the results. Additionally, the respondents that did complete the survey were not very diverse in terms of socioeconomic background and age. This was primarily due to the fact that the school chosen to research was located in an affluent and somewhat homogenous suburb and the lessened reach of the survey to the wider Indian-American student body due to time constraints. Future researchers should consider reaching out to a wider range of diasporans from different socioeconomic backgrounds from around the United States to obtain a more representative sample of the Indian-American diaspora to avoid undue generalizations of the diaspora, as warned against by Sahoo and Shome (2020). Additionally, future researchers of this topic should examine additional films that encompass more of the films mentioned by respondents to obtain more specific and relevant insights into the shortcomings of current diasporan media consumption. Likewise, future research should consider analyzing specific regional film industries in India and their relation to the diaspora. This would provide insight into the differences in how the consumption and internalization of cultural messages occur in a more specific cultural context. This approach would also help to see how the South Indian diaspora, which is not represented by the North Indian Bollywood film industry, interprets messages and themes in South Indian films that may have more cultural relevance to them. By utilizing a wider range of sample sizes, future researchers would be better able to analyze broader cultural practices and to obtain research that is better able to be generalized to their study group.

5.2 Implications

The researcher's analysis of several Bollywood films revealed a pattern of diasporans connecting the films with their own lived experiences as Americans, rather than relating to or adopting aspects of Indian culture in their lives. Going forward, the diasporans studied could benefit from this research by learning how their viewing of Bollywood films could be changed to better learn about or connect with their culture. The survey results revealed a pattern of respondents not noticing or realizing specific cultural commentaries made in the films that could show the ways in which Indians view their own cultural practices and the criticisms they have of it, possibly leading to a more well-rounded and accurate understanding of modern Indian culture. Diasporans could start to pay more attention to and analyze the unfamiliar aspects of the films they watch, rather than latching on to themes that are most familiar to them. To this end, diasporans could utilize familial and community resources more effectively by having discussions about what the film's intended message may have been for an Indian audience, and thinking more carefully about what the cultural commentaries mean for diasporan's own cultural identity. While watching films purely for entertainment value is not inherently incorrect, because of the respondents' increased influence from American culture, they will have to be more deliberate about their viewing practices in order to get the full range of messages and themes out of a film, which provide authentic insight into Indian culture, as Balabantaray (2020) noted previously.

5.3 Closing Thoughts

The Indian diaspora's large, solidified presence in the United States makes the study of their dual-identity especially interesting because of how much they have integrated into American society. It is important to understand how their specific dual-identity impacts their relationship to and practice of Indian culture. Going forward, researchers must acknowledge the

uniqueness of diasporan groups, and how their specific cultural practices are impacted by their unique dual-identity, rather than generalizing results to diasporans as a whole.

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Appendix A: Survey Questions

16. What film was it?

17. What did you connect to? (practices adopted, language learned, etc.)

18. Why did you feel more connected?

19. How has this experience affected your real life?

Think of an instance where you felt less connected to Indian culture (religious, linguistic, caste, ethnic, folk) after watching a Bollywood film.

20. What film was it?

21. What in the film made you feel less connected/othered? (cultural practices, language, specific behaviors/actions, etc.)

22. Why did you feel less connected?

23. How has this experience affected your real life?

Thematic Experiences

Think of an instance where you recognized a cultural theme (cultural/ethnic pride, traditionalism, arranged marriages, etc.) in a Bollywood film that you already knew about.

24. What film was it?

25. What theme did you recognize?

26. How have you utilized this knowledge in your real life?

Think of an instance where you recognized a cultural theme (cultural/ethnic pride, traditionalism, arranged marriages, etc.) in a Bollywood film that was new to you.

27. What film was it?

28. What theme did you recognize?

29. How have you utilized this knowledge in your real life?

Think of an instance where you recognized a cultural practice in a Bollywood film that you already knew about.

30. What film was it?

31. What did you recognize?

32. How have you utilized this knowledge in your real life?

Think of an instance where you recognized a cultural practice in a Bollywood film that was new to you.

33. What film was it?

34. What did you recognize?

35. How have you utilized this knowledge in your real life?

Demographic Information

Please fill out the next section, which will provide the researcher necessary demographic information.

36. What gender do you identify as? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Other:

37. How old are you? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ 13

☐ 14

☐ 15

☐ 16

☐ 17

☐ 18

☐ Other:

38. What state(s) is your family from? *

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Andhra Pradesh
- ☐ Arunachal Pradesh
- ☐ Assam
- ☐ Bihar
- ☐ Chhattisgarh
- ☐ Goa
- ☐ Gujarat
- ☐ Haryana
- ☐ Himachal Pradesh
- ☐ Jharkhand
- ☐ Karnataka
- ☐ Kerala
- ☐ Madhya Pradesh
- ☐ Maharashtra
- ☐ Manipur
- ☐ Meghalaya
- ☐ Mizoram
- ☐ Nagaland
- ☐ Odisha
- ☐ Punjab
- ☐ Rajasthan
- ☐ Sikkim
- ☐ Tamil Nadu
- ☐ Telangana
- ☐ Tripura
- ☐ Uttar Pradesh
- ☐ Uttarakhand
- ☐ West Bengal
- ☐ Other: _____

39. What language(s) does your family speak? *

40. What language(s) do you speak? *

41. What religion(s) does your family belong to? *

Check all that apply.

☐ Hindu

☐ Muslim

☐ Christian

☐ Sikh

☐ Buddhist

☐ Jewish

☐ Jain

☐ None

☐ Other:

42. How religious would you consider your family? *

One being not religious at all, five being very religious.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Not ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very religious

43. What caste does your family belong to? *

44. What do your parents do for work? *

45. Where were you born? *

46. Where were you raised? *

47. Where were your parents born? *

48. Where were your parents raised? *

49. When did your family immigrate to the US? *

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Google Forms

Questionnaire about Bollywood Films

All responses to this survey are anonymous. Please take your time answering all questions. By completing this form, you are providing your assent to be a part of this research study. You are free to leave this study at any time.

Thank you for your time and participation!

* Indicates required question

For the purposes of this survey, Bollywood is defined as the North-Indian Hindi-language film industry, based in Bombay (Mumbai).

1. Would you like to fill out this survey? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Viewing Patterns

Please fill out the next section, which will have questions about the contexts you watch Bollywood movies in.

2. How often do you watch Bollywood films? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ A few times a year
- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ Never

3. Who do you typically watch Bollywood films with? *

4. Why do you typically watch Bollywood films? *

Specific Experiences

Please fill out the next section, which will have questions about specific experiences viewing Bollywood films.

Favorite Bollywood Film

5. What would you consider to be your "favorite" Bollywood film?

6. Why is this your favorite Bollywood film?

First Bollywood Film

7. What is the first Bollywood film you remember watching? *

8. In what context did you watch your first Bollywood film? (who you watched it with, why you watched it, etc.)

9. What do you remember most about your first Bollywood film?

Learning Experience

Think of an instance where you learned something about Indian culture (religious, linguistic, caste, ethnic, folk) from watching a Bollywood film.

10. What film was it?

11. What did you learn?

12. How have you applied this knowledge in real life? (adopted a new practice or celebration, able to connect with family members, etc.)

Indian Festivals

Think of a time when a Bollywood film taught you about a festival from your culture.

13. What film was it?

14. What did you learn?

15. How have you applied this knowledge in real life? (adopted a new practice or celebration, able to connect with family members, etc.)

Cultural Connection

Think of a time when you felt more connected to Indian culture (religious, linguistic, caste, ethnic, folk) after watching a Bollywood film.

Appendix B: Responses on Viewing Practices

Response Number	How often do you watch Bollywood films?	Who do you typically watch Bollywood films with?	Why do you typically watch Bollywood films?
1	Monthly	My family	I watch them for entertainment
2	Weekly	My family	My Parents like to reconnect with their language and want us to understand it at least.
3	A few times a year	My family/friends	Because my family or friends are interested in watching them with me.
4	Weekly	My family	For spending time w my family in the weekends
5	Weekly	My family	For entertainment
6	A few times a year	My Family	Because Hindi is the national language and Bollywood is a monumental field, it was one of the first fields from India to move internationally. The stories and screenplay are the best of the best, very innovative and creative.
7	Weekly	With my family.	For entertainment.
8	Once a year	My mom and grandma	Bollywood films are just fun, and they do everything. Romance, drama, action, and tension.
9	A few times a year	My family	Because I love the stories
10	Monthly	With my mother and my sister.	Usually, my mom tells me about a

			good movie that comes out, and I'll watch it!
11	Weekly	Usually myself or my family. Sometimes friends too.	I really like watching movies. I usually watch pleasant and family type movies because I want to watch something fun. Sometimes I want to feel an emotion like crying, so I put a sad movie and I watch it. If I am feeling down, then I will put an inspirational type of movie to boost my energy. I also watch a lot in the night times.
12	Monthly	with my family	I learn hindi from it

Appendix C: Responses on Specific Film Experiences

Response Number	What would you consider to be your "favorite" Bollywood film?	Why is this your favorite Bollywood film?	What is the first Bollywood film you remember watching?	In what context did you watch your first Bollywood film? (who you watched it with, why you watched it, etc.)	What do you remember most about your first Bollywood film?
1	Dhurandhar	It has amazing music and it is based on real life history.	Race Gurram	I watched it with my family, I watched it because it was a new film	The plot of the movie and how funny it was
2	Hi Nanna	It has two of my favorite actors and the story is great.	Om Shanti Om	My parents made us watch it when we were around 7.	The songs and dance numbers.
3	Kal Ho Na Ho	It's genuinely so insane. This is not my favorite because it is good (it's not) but because there's just so many ridiculous things happening all the time.	English Vinglish	I watched it with my mom and brother in the theater. There weren't many hindi shows playing in the theaters around me, so my mom wanted to go see this one.	I only remember the music. I was kind of young so I don't remember much of the plot.
4	Chennai express	Because it's Tamil and Hindi and I'm Tamil so it's very connecting	I don't rememberr	Definitely my family and I probably watched it to have a new experience	I don't remember my first one
5	Bahubali pt 2	Because it is very romantic	Jab we met	I watched it with my family,	it was so romantic and i

		and exciting		they wanted to culture me, and they wanted to spread the amazingness of the movie to me	loved the excitement from that
6	Chennai Express	The music is very good, and it spread so rapidly across the globe. It has been a favorite since I was a kid	Chennai Express, the one where the girl gets lost outside of a train, The robot one I forget the name	I watched it with my family and in a movie theater.	It had great music and a nice aesthetic throughout.
7	Hum Tum?	Because it's just classic for me and funny and entertaining.	I think Dhoom? or Kai Po Che	With family during dinner or in a movie theater.	Just a bunch of loud noises and bikes but I have rewatched it again.
8	RRR	The dynamic between the two main characters was really interesting and the action was shot very well.	Also RRR, and nothing has come close since	My mom brought me into it because it was really successful in India and she wanted to watch it	It was a bit of culture shock, but I got into it pretty quick and the plot was very interesting.
9	Kabhi kushi kabhi gham	Because I love the storyline and the actors are such good actors.	Dhoom 2	My mom likes Bollywood movies and she got me interested as well.	The songs
10	I think that my favorite Bollywood film is RRR.	I'd chose it because it has a great story, while also having a nice musical score! (I love the	The first Bollywood film that I remember watching is probably Sultan (the	I remember watching most of it at the movie theater with my family (though I might have	The thing that I remember the most are the dancing/music scenes.

		music in this film)	one with Salman Khan)	fallen asleep during one part of the movie).	
11	Chennai Express	It is such a funny movie. I watched it with my sister and we were laughing the entire time.	Kabhi Kushi Kabhi Gham	I just watched it for fun.	I wanted to watch something in Hindi, so I decided to watch a classic movie.
12	DDLJ	I love the storyline and plot, acting is good too.	Jab We Met	I watched it when I was little, so I just watched it because my parents did.	The song is Ye Ishq Hai.

Appendix D: Response to question “Think of an instance where you learned something about Indian culture (religious, linguistic, caste, ethnic, folk) from watching a Bollywood film.”

Response Number	What film was it?	What did you learn?	How have you applied this knowledge in real life? (adopted a new practice or celebration, able to connect with family members, etc.)
1	Dhurandhar	History behind India	I was able to connect with people who have watched the movie
2	3 Idiots	I definitely learned a lot about the school systems.	I was able to connect with my parents who went to college in India
3	Chennai Express	I watched this when I was really young, so I learned a lot about what it was like to live in India and the subtle ways that it's different to the US.	I don't know if I learned anything too substantial, but it did give me a bit more understanding about the general culture of India which has helped me understand my own culture a little bit better.
4	In Chennai express	I learned that if u carry ur wife up the temple stairs you will hr together forever	I just thought it was cool I didn't apply it tho
5	Bajirao Mastani	I learned about a historical figure and the effect he had on old india	I just gained new appreciation for the history of Indian and how many people fought for it
6	I don't remember, but it was very cultural with the north.	I learned north Indian customs, something I didn't know as I was from the south.	Yes, I learned to apply and notice this in day to day life
7			
8	I dont remember what the name was, but it	Yes, it is a Pakistani film, but a lot of it takes	I learned more about what caste members

	was about a Karachi police officer that infiltrates a big crime network.	place in India where a rival gang is located, and I learned about the Caste system that dictated gang ranking and social status.	of my family are part of.
9	Dhurandhar	I learned more about Indian history and the events that happened	I was able to talk to my family about this
10	One movie that really taught me something about Indian culture is Brahmastra!	I had never really seen the beauties of Varanasi, and this movie really showcased some of the hidden gems of the state.	
11			
12	Dhoom	I learned about different cultural artificats	I did more research on it

Appendix E: Responses to question “Think of a time when a Bollywood film taught you about a festival from your culture.”

Response Number	What film was it?	What did you learn?	How have you applied this knowledge in real life? (adopted a new practice or celebration, able to connect with family members, etc.)
1	Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham	festivals like Diwali are grand and symbolizing light, togetherness, and tradition	I was able to connect with family members
2	Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara	I learned about Holi	My family and I celebrate Holi every year.
3	N/A		
4	I don't rememberrr	Idkk	Idkk
5	Taare Zameen Par	I learned about the hard education systems in india and how harsh they are on students to become the best	I learned to have more sympathy and acceptance with those who struggle with academic aspects
6	Param Sundhari	They had South Indian concepts, although it wasn't perfectly aligned it had components.	,
7			
8	Slumdog millionaire	I learned about the diwali and holi celebrations	My mom has always celebrated diwali, and we watched slumdog millionaire to celebrate.
9	I never watched a movie like this		
10			

11			
12	Yeh jawaani hai deewani	I learned more about holi	I learned if you spray the color with water it makes it ten times worse

Appendix F: Responses to question “Think of a time when you felt more connected to Indian culture (religious, linguistic, caste, ethnic, folk) after watching a Bollywood film.”

Response Number	What film was it?	What did you connect to? (practices adopted, language learned, etc.)	Why did you feel more connected?	How has this experience affected your real life?
1	Lagaan	The film juxtaposes Indian and British cultures, using the game of cricket	It applied to my country's history	It has allowed me to understand the hype in cricket
2	Happy New Year	The songs and pride of India	I felt more connected because of the sheer amount of people who resonate with the songs in this film.	I feel more at home with other south Asians
3	N/A			
4	Jawan	Relations	Because it has very cute relations with mom and son and father daughter etc	N/a
5	3 idiots	I connected to the fact that the education system was harsh on students	Because as a student i feel quite pressured at times, and this movie provided me with a srnse of relief and happiness	Well whenever im stressed about a test or my academics, it just tells me to keep fine and that all is well
6	I would say Khabi Kushi Kabhi Gham	It describes preserving Indian culture in foreign lands	I related it with my personal culture	I have enjoyed the movie more and connected with Indian culture
7				

8	I watched a film about Ghandi, I think it was called "the peaceful war" or something like that	I connected to the religious side, as my grandma is still a practicing Hindu and one of my uncles is a Bhuddist	I felt like my family was more represented and I felt seen by the movie.	I think about religion a lot more and how it impacts the people in my family.
9	Chennai express	The language and the general demeanor of Indian people.	Because it connected with the my childhood roots	I learned more about my culture.
10				
11				
12	Mahavatar Narsimha	Religion	I saw the different temples.	It made me happier

Appendix G: Responses to question “Think of an instance where you felt less connected to Indian culture (religious, linguistic, caste, ethnic, folk) after watching a Bollywood film.”

Response Number	What film was it?	What in the film made you feel less connected/other ed? (cultural practices, language, specific behaviors/actions, etc.)	Why did you feel less connected?	How has this experience affected your real life?
1	Swades	It's depiction of NRIs	It gave off the wrong impression of NRIs	It made me reflect on my experiences living in the US
2	Kalki 2898 AD	It is a sci fi movie set in the far future that and instances of Hindu mythology but felt like a dune knock off	It movie was bad and the story made me feel less interested in Hindu mythology	It really hasn't
3	N/A			
4	Pathaan	I didn't see any cultural things in the movie	Because I thought the movie was so westernized	N/a
5				
6	N/A	I felt very connected in many films	N/A	N/A
7				
8	Slumdog Millionaire	A lot of the speaking was in Hindi and Tamil so I had subtitles on the whole time	Subtitles broke my immersion a lot	Not a lot, but it did make the movie a bit less impactful.
9	I didn't have any movie like this	None		

10				
11				
12	Kabhi kushi kabhi gham	The language	I felt i didn;t understand the language that well	for a bit, it made me feel less confident.

Appendix H: Responses to question “Think of an instance where you recognized a cultural theme (cultural/ethnic pride, traditionalism, arranged marriages, etc.) in a Bollywood film that you already knew about.”

Response Number	What film was it?	What theme did you recognize?	How have you utilized this knowledge in your real life?
1	Kalki	The epics	I haven't really used this
2	Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani	Parental pressures and influences	I realized how good I have it with my parents
3	3 Idiots	Emphasis on education and success for children/young adults	I learned that academics is not as serious as people make it out to be, and there's things that are more important than grades. I also learned that there are many definitions of success.
4	3 idiots	That family and friends are both important in life	N/a
5			
6	I do not remember, but these are recurring themes	Traditional, parental influence, arranged marriage	It's interesting to see it, so I relate it
7			
8	In the film about the Karachi police officer, one of his sisters had to go through an arranged mairrage	I recognized how arranged marriages harm a lot of people	I know that one of my great aunts went through an arranged marriage, so I asked her how that was, but she wanted to marry the guy anyways so they were happy.
9	Gandhi	I recognized peace and tranquility	I realized that violence is not always the answer.

10			
11			
12	Border 2	Cultural Pride	

Appendix I: Responses to question “Think of an instance where you recognized a cultural theme (cultural/ethnic pride, traditionalism, arranged marriages, etc.) in a Bollywood film that was new to you.”

Response Number	What film was it?	What theme did you recognize?	How have you utilized this knowledge in your real life?
1	Monsoon Wedding	The depiction of a Punjabi wedding celebration spanning several days,	Having prior knowledge of these traditions would allow me to understand the structure and significance of an actual Indian wedding ceremony if invited to one.
2	Chennai Express	Gangs	I didn't
3	N/A		
4	N/a	N/a	N/a
5			
6	In Param Sundari, Gunjan Saxena, Dhurender	They depict both internal Indian pride and national pride	Yes, it makes me feel more educated on Indian history and political relations
7			
8	I recognized a theme of traditionalism when I watched a documentary (sort of bollywood/adjacent) about the Indian military and how much it was based on the British military	Traditionalism	I realized how much of a
9			
10			
11			

12	DDLJ	Arranged/forced marriage	I asked my parents if they haven't done the same to me
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Appendix J: Responses to question “Think of an instance where you recognized a cultural practice in a Bollywood film that you already knew about.”

Response Number	What film was it?	What did you recognize?	How have you utilized this knowledge in your real life?
1	Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge	he depiction of transnational Indian family values and the concept of "Indian pride" even when living abroad	I haven't really used it in real life
2	Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani	Parental influence	I haven't
3	N/A		
4	I don't remever	Idk	Idk
5			
6	In most movies	They align closely	Yes, it has helped me connect culturally
7			
8	RRR	I recognized how respecting your elders is VERY important in the culture of southern India	I was more respectful to my grandmother
9			
10			
11			
12	Kuch Kuch hota hai	Aarti and Pooja	I go to the temple

Appendix K: Responses to question “Think of an instance where you recognized a cultural practice in a Bollywood film that was new to you.”

Response Number	What film was it?	What did you recognize?	How have you utilized this knowledge in your real life?
1	English Vinglish	The struggle and awakening of self-respect in women, particularly those who lack English language skills	This experience prompted me to be more mindful of language and social barriers that individuals face.
2	Chennai Express	Gangs	I haven't
3	N/A		
4	Idk	Idk	Idk
5			
6	In many different films, Tar Zameen	Educational culture	Seen how pressures spread and how the education system aligns.
7			
8	I recognized the practice of Ramadan in the movie about the Karachi police officer	The police officer was muslim and had to eat on ramadan in order to keep his cover	I realize that my muslim friends are extra irritable around february-march
9			
10			
11			
12	Rocky aur rani ki prem kahani	women had head covered	I have learned that this is a process in real life

Appendix L: Responses to demographic questions, Part 1

Response Number	What gender do you identify as?	How old are you?	What state(s) is your family from?	What language(s) does your family speak?
1	Female	16	Andhra Pradesh	Telugu, Hindi, English
2	Male	15	Andhra Pradesh, Telangana	Hindi and Telugu
3	Female	17	Uttar Pradesh	Hindi
4	Female	17	Tamil Nadu	Tamil
5	Female	16	Maharashtra	Marathi and Hindi
6	Female	16	Andhra Pradesh, Telangana	Telugu
7	Female	17	Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi	Hindi, Punjabi, English
8	Male	16	Tamil Nadu	I speak english with my dad, my mom speaks hindi and tamil, and my grandma speaks, tamil, hindi, urdu, pashtun, sanskrit, and a couple others I cant remember
9	Female	16	Andhra Pradesh	Telugu and hindi
10	Male	16	Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh	Hindi/English
11	Female	16	Andhra Pradesh	Telugu and English
12	Female	15	Haryana, Punjab	Punjabi and Hindi and English

Appendix M: Responses to demographic questions, Part 2

Response Number	What language(s) do you speak?	What religion(s) does your family belong to?	How religious would you consider your family?	What caste does your family belong to?
1	Telugu, Hindi, English	Hindu	3	unsure
2	English	Hindu, Muslim	3	Brahmin and Suni
3	English	Hindu	3	Unsure
4	Tamil and English	Hindu	4	Idk
5	Marathi and Hindi	Hindu	4	Brahman and the third one
6	Telugu, English	Hindu	4	Kshatriya
7	Hindi, Punjabi, English	Hindu	4	idk?
8	English and Spanish	Hindu, None	1	I think my grandma was in the Brahmin caste
9	Telugu and English	Hindu	4	Kshatriyas
10	I speak English, and I can slightly speak Hindi	Hindu	3	Kshatriya
11	Telugu, English, and I can mostly understand hindi.	Hindu	4	Vaishya
12	Hindi and English	Hindu	4	Kshatriya

Appendix N: Responses to demographic questions, Part 3

Response Number	What do your parents do for work?	Where were you born?	Where were you raised?	Where were your parents born?
1	Software Engineering	Andhra Pradesh	Both India and US	Andhra Pradesh, India
2	Senior Dev Ops Engineer and IT Project Manager	Henrico Virginia	Henrico Virginia	Wellington, Nilgiris, Tamilnadu, India and Warangal, India
3	Computer Science & IT	Indianapolis, Indiana	Richmond, Virginia	Mother: Ghaziabad, Father: Uttar Pradesh (I'm unsure of the town)
4	Software engineer	Boston massachusetts	Usa	Tamil nadu
5	My dad is architect my mom is software engineer	Pune, Maharashtra	America and India (Virginia and Pune)	Maharashtra
6	IT and Business Accounting	India	India/US	India
7	Teacher and Technical Senior Manager	Koushambi	Delhi, Boston, Virginia	Hanumangarh and Sirsa
8	My mom is a surgeon and my dad is in urban housing and development	I was born in San Francisco	good question	My dad is from pittsburgh and my mom was born in chennai
9	It employees	America	Anerica	India
10	Both of my parents work in Banking	Las Vegas, Nevada.	Las Vegas, Nevada, and moved to Richmond about three years ago.	The Fiji Islands.
11	Software Engineer	India	India and America	India
12	Technical Recruiters	Richmond, VA	Richmond, VA	Pathankot, Punjab and

				Chandigarh, Haryana
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Appendix O: Responses to demographic questions, Part 4

Response Number	Where were your parents raised?	When did your family immigrate to the US?
1	Andhra Pradesh, India	2017
2	Hyderabad and Warangal	1999
3	Mother: Dehli, Father: Jaunpur and Mumbai	Early 2000s
4	Tamil nadu	2015
5	Maharashtra	We fully immigrated in 2016
6	Andhra/Telngana, India	2010 but on and off until 2015
7	Hanumangarh and Sirsa	2016
8	my mom was raised in LA and chennai, and my dad was raised in pittsburgh	when my mom was 14
9	India	2000
10	The Fiji Islands.	2000
11	India	2018
12	Pathankot, Punjab and Chandigarh, Haryana	2002 and 2006

Appendix P: Parental consent form**Parental Consent - Opt-Out to Participate in a Research Study**
_____ – AP Research

Title of Study: Analyzing the Impact of Bollywood Films on the Indian-American Second-Generation Diaspora's Cultural Identity

Researcher Name: _____ **Email:** _____

Instructor of course: _____ **Email:** _____

Introduction

- Your child is being asked to be in a research study about the cultural practices of Indian diasporans in relation to their viewing of Bollywood films.
- S/he was selected as a possible participant because they are of Indian descent. Please do not participate in this study if they are not of Indian origin.
- We ask that you read this form and ask any questions that you may have before allowing your child to participate in this study.

Purpose of Study

- The purpose of the study is to draw a connection between viewing of Bollywood movies and cultural practices and identity of second-generation Indians.
- Ultimately, this research may be presented as a paper.

Description of the Study Procedures

- If you decide to allow your child to participate in this study, s/he will be asked to do the following things: Fill out one ~20 minute survey expanding on their cultural practices and Bollywood viewing patterns.

Risks/Discomforts of Being in this Study

- There are no reasonable foreseeable (or expected) risks. There may be unknown risks.

Benefits of Being in the Study

- The benefits of participation are: Gain insight into Bollywood films and cultural identity and better understand participant's own cultural identity.

Confidentiality

- The records of this study will be kept strictly confidential. Research records will be kept in a locked file, and all electronic information will be coded and secured using a password protected file. We will not include any information in any report we may publish that would make it possible to identify your child.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

- The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you and your child. Your child has the right not to answer any single question, as well as to withdraw completely from the interview at any point during the process; additionally, you have the right to request that the interviewer not use any of the interview material.

Right to Ask Questions and Report Concerns

- You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you have any further questions about the study, at any time feel free to contact me, [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] or by telephone at [REDACTED]. If you like, a summary of the results of the study will be sent to you. If you have any other concerns about your rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the researchers, you may contact [REDACTED]
- If you have any problems or concerns that occur as a result of your participation, you can report them to [REDACTED] at the number/email above.

Consent

- If you have decided to allow your child to participate as a research subject for this study then you do not need to do anything else.

Opt-out

If you do NOT want your child to participate in this study then please click on the link below and complete the form. Thank you.

[REDACTED]