LEVELS OF ACCULTURATION AND RESILIENCE AMONG
SOUTHEAST ASIAN ADOLESCENTS WHO HAVE AND HAVE NOT
WITNESSED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

This dissertation, by Skultip (Jill) Sirikantraporn, has been approved by the committee members signed below who recommend that it be accepted by the faculty of the Antioch University Seattle at Seattle, WA in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

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Date
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation with my whole heart to my parents. My mother has instilled in me a great compassion and patience in everything that I choose to do. Combined with the sense of purpose, tenacity and perseverance shown me by my father, these values have been my mainstay in my life and research.

Thank you very much for your love and unyielding support.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express the deepest appreciation to my committee chair, Professor Pat Linn, who has exceptional passion and skill in assisting her students to become well-versed psychologists. She continually encouraged me to advance my skills in research and statistical knowledge. With her guidance and faith in me, this dissertation was made possible. In addition, her outstanding teaching skills are an inspiration for me and have instilled in me an excitement in regard to teaching.

I would like to thank my committee members, Chikako Nagai, Ph.D. and Doni Kwak. Dr. Nagai’s work has demonstrated her great passion for working with minority populations and her solid cultural competence. Dr. Kwak’s skills and experiences in the area of child psychology have inspired me to continue my clinical work and research to benefit children.

In addition, a thank you to all of my research participants, whose willingness to take part in the advancement of knowledge in the field of psychology is greatly appreciated, and also to the two community agencies, which were my great support throughout the recruitment and investigation processes.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Mr. Kevin Hart for his time in furnishing me with professional feedback to my query for editing this dissertation.
ABSTRACT

LEVELS OF ACCULTURATION AND RESILIENCE AMONG SOUTHEAST ASIAN ADOLESCENTS WHO HAVE WITNESSED AND HAVE NOT WITNESSED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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The central purpose of this research study was to elucidate the relationship between the levels of acculturation and resilience among Southeast Asian adolescents in the U.S. who have and have not witnessed domestic violence. There is a voluminous amount of research on resilience, acculturation, and domestic violence and their impacts on adolescents. However, there is virtually no research that investigates the relationship among these three major social constructs. Previous research on acculturation, resilience, and coping abilities showed that immigrant children and adolescents who were bicultural were found to be highly adaptive in the midst of stress. No previous studies were found specifically to document witnessing domestic violence as the main risk factor or life stressor in assessing their acculturation and resilience levels. This study attempted to fill in this gap. Eighty-two Southeast Asian youth participated in this study. The participants’ levels of acculturation and resilience were assessed by Suinn-Lew Asian Self-identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA) and Youth Risk and
Resilience Inventory (YRRI), respectively. The results confirmed previous findings regarding the relationship between the levels of acculturation and resilience.

A significant curvilinear relationship between the level of acculturation and resilience was observed among the Southeast Asian adolescents. Youth who were ranked as bicultural had the highest resilience scores, compared to youth who were identified as either highly Asian or highly westernized. In addition, a significant negative relationship was found between the number of types of domestic violence witnessed and the level of resilience. Results were discussed in terms of the significant findings, clinical implications, and recommendations for future studies.
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Chapter I

Introduction

This research study explored the relationship between the levels of acculturation and resilience among Southeast Asian adolescents who have and have not witnessed domestic violence. Specifically, it focused on the following questions: Is there a relationship between the levels of acculturation and resilience among Southeast Asian adolescents who have and have not witnessed domestic violence?; What is the relationship between the levels of acculturation and resilience among Southeast Asian adolescents who have witnessed domestic violence?; Is there a relationship between the experience of having witnessed domestic violence and the level of resilience?; What is the relationship between the number of types of domestic violence witnessed and the level of resilience?

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to knowledge about the relationship between the levels of acculturation and resilience among Southeast Asian adolescents who have and have not witnessed domestic violence. It makes a contribution to the mental health field of resilience and youth development, in which there is a growing interest. In addition, recommendations were made from this study for interventions in working with Southeast Asian youth.
Background/Literature Review

Definitions

**Domestic Violence**

The Intimate Partner Abuse and Relationship Violence Working Group (2002) defined intimate partner abuse as the physical, sexual, psychological abuse and stalking of an individual by a current or former intimate partner. While this term is gender-neutral, women are more likely to experience physical injuries and incur psychological consequences of intimate partner abuse. This study adopts this definition in explaining domestic violence.

Domestic violence can be argued to be a form of child abuse and the presence of it increases the risk of direct victimization of children and adolescents. However, for the purpose of this study, the author focused only on youth who have witnessed domestic violence, and not on those who have been directly victimized. Therefore, the screening questions were exclusively related to their experience of having witnessed domestic violence.

**Resilience**

Resilience refers to the ability to bounce back and succeed despite harmful environmental influences such as poverty, dysfunctional family relationships, and negative peer pressure (Resnick, 2000). Grotberg (1995) stated that resilience is related to experiences, assets, attitudes, skills, external and internal resources, and other factors that make it possible for adolescents to overcome adversity with courage and faith.
**Acculturation**

Acculturation is a complex and multidimensional process, in which groups of individuals who have different cultures come into continuous contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups. Berry delineated four strategies in his model, which has been widely used by researchers to assess levels of acculturation (Berry, 2001). These four strategies include assimilation (highly identified with the host culture), separation (highly identified with the culture of origin), marginalization (exclusion of all options), and integration/biculturalism (highly identified with both cultures).

**Biculturalism**

For the purpose of the study, the author adopted this term from what is known in the acculturation literature as Berry’s model of acculturation process (Don & Berry, 1994). From this model, biculturalism is an integration strategy in which the individual endorses both their culture of origin and that of the host or receiving culture. Further more, bicultural individuals flexibly move between their two cultural orientations by switching and adapting behaviors responding to the cultural context (cited in Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2007). Recent studies support that biculturalism has a positive impact on youth’s intellectual and emotional development (Chen, Benet-Martinez, & Bond, 2008).
Overview of Resilience and Youth Development

The concept of resilience is hardly a novel theme. There is ample literature on risk and resilience factors affecting youth developmental trajectories (Arlington & Wilson, 2000; Benard & Marshall, 1997; Resnick, 2000). In the past several decades, there have been some changes in how people understand the direction of resilience and its determinants. There are such terms as invulnerable, invincible and stress-resistant used to characterize children who did not develop expected stressful circumstances (Graham-Bermann & Edleson, 2001). However, researchers have started to recognize that health is not merely an absence of psychopathology (Ungar, 2005). These terms later have been replaced by survivors and thrivers of adversity and children with resilience.

The conceptualization of resilience has also shifted from being solely innate or within-individual to incorporating external or environmental elements identified as crucial factors in the make-up of resilience (Ungar, 2005; Ungar, Brown, Liebenberg, Othman, Kwong, Armstrong, & Gilgun, 2007). The presence of protective factors may be the reason some adolescents succeed despite less-than-optimal conditions. Researchers and practitioners alike in the area of youth development, including the development of immigrant youth, agree that youth developmental trajectories are multifaceted and range along a continuum from positive situations indicative of stable adaptive functioning to negative situations that potentially
compromise adaptive functioning (Arlington & Wilson, 2000; Compas, Hinden, & Gerhardt, 1995). There are a number of both internal and external factors that are considered as positive (protective factors) and others identified as negative (risk factors). Accordingly, to assess resilience in youth, it is necessary to understand the interaction between youths’ internal assets and changing environments, thereby mitigating the impact of the existing risks (Eagle, Castle, & Menon, 1996). Family bonding, positive parent-adolescent relationship, and cultural identification are among those factors considered positive or protective that can enhance immigrant youth’s adaptation (Castro, Garfinkle, Naranjo, Rollins, Book, & Book, 2007; Serafica, 1997). APA (American Psychological Association, 2002) acknowledges the importance of culture in psychology when it cites in the multicultural guidelines, “All individuals exist in social, political, historical, and economic contexts, and psychologists are increasingly called upon to understand the influence of these contexts on individuals’ behavior.” (p. 1).

Culture and such mediating factors as family bonding and relationships influenced by culture play a significant role in youth development. The role of culture is especially pertinent for immigrant youth and their development, for they are negotiating and navigating through more than one set of communities, beliefs, values, norms, traditions, and systems in order to find the meaningful acculturation pathway for them (Park-Taylor, Walsh, & Ventura, in press). Therefore, it is important to investigate the resilience level
of immigrant youth within their cultural and acculturation context. One international qualitative study on resilience confirmed this conviction. This study was assisted by the International Resilience Project to collect qualitative data from 89 adolescents and young adults (aged 12-23) from 14 different countries. The researchers investigated culturally determined indicators of resilience by interviewing youths with nine culturally and linguistically appropriate questions to identify “health-enhancing resources” in culturally relevant ways that helped them overcome life challenges. The findings revealed that outcomes associated with resilience and the processes that mitigate risk were dependent on individual, relational, and cultural factors (see review in Ungar, et al., 2007).

The role of culture in resilience development is also emphasized in another related study by the International Resilience Project, called “A Guide to Promoting Resilience in Children: Strengthening the Human Spirit” (Grotberg, 1995). This online published study aimed to understand what different cultures are doing to promote resilience and what factors they perceive as resilience factors. A total of 589 children (aged 9-11 years) and their families from 14 different countries were interviewed with a set of questions using the “I have, I am, and I can” model to identify their resilience factors. The results suggested that culture was reflected in all three categories, such as I have: Structure and rules at home based on my culture,
I am: Filled with hope, faith, and trust, and I can: Seek trusting relationships in my community.

**Overview of Acculturation**

In defining acculturation, it is helpful to first describe the broader construct of culture because the concepts are integrally intertwined. Culture is a multi-dimensional construct that can be defined as a particular social group’s shared values, traditions, norms, behaviors, and rituals (Leong, Elbreo, Kinoshita, Inman, Yang, & Fu, 2007). It becomes more complex to live with two (or more) sets of cultures. Acculturation is, therefore, a multidimensional process of cultural and psychological change following contact between cultural groups and their individual members (Berry, 2001).

The concept of acculturation has been studied and conceptualized in different models since the early 1900s (see review by Padilla & Perez, 2003). Early conceptualizations considered acculturation as a unidimensional framework. Robert Park in 1914 first formally delineated an acculturative process as having three steps: contact, accommodation, and assimilation (cited in Padilla & Perez, 2003). The essential element in this model was accommodation, the process by which immigrants had to learn to accommodate to the host culture of the U.S. Forty years later the Social Science Research Council in 1954 expanded the model by including psychological aspects of acculturation and recognizing that such factors as value systems, developmental stages, and personality factors can contribute
to how individuals accommodate when they come into contact with each other.

The psychological perspective model was again more fully expanded in 1974 by Teske and Nelson by recognizing changes in material traits, behavior patterns, norms, institutional changes, and values (cited in Padilla & Perez, 2003). This model recognized individual differences and attempted to explain factors that might be more resistant for the individual to accommodate to the host culture. The important theme of acculturation of these models is the unidimensionality of acculturation, in which immigrants (both youth and adults) are to accommodate to the mainstream culture in order to assimilate, thereby eventually being considered acculturated. This theme remained as the most popular perspective in psychological and anthropological research until the 1990s when John Berry and his colleagues (Don & Berry, 1994) developed a new model that considered acculturation to be multidimensional and also dropped the idea of assimilation being the ultimate goal of acculturation.

This study adopted Berry’s model of acculturation to understand the experiences of ethnic minority youth as they engage in the process of adaptation to the mainstream U.S. while being brought up in traditional culture. Berry (2001) delineated four strategies in his model, which has been widely used in similar studies to assess levels of acculturation. These four strategies include assimilation (highly identified with the host culture),
separation (highly identified with the culture of origin), marginalization (exclusion of all options), and integration/biculturalism (highly identified with both cultures). According to Berry’s model, people may have different reasons and contexts for the strategies they choose due to the relative importance of identifying with the new culture or maintaining loyalty to their heritage culture (Padilla & Perez, 2003). The flexibility and multidimensionality in acculturation pathways are very different from earlier views of accommodation and assimilation defined in earlier conceptualizations. The author, however, made no reference to the concepts of accommodation and assimilation adopted by the Piaget’s developmental psychology.

The research on acculturation and resilience has been complex due to its multidimensionality. While immigration is often cited as a risk factor that renders immigrant parents and their children vulnerable, acculturation has not been clearly grouped in either the risk or protective categories (Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, and Cleveland, 2005). Early views were that cultural contact and change inevitably led to stress (Berry, 2001). One study found that immigration can be a source of stress for both immigrant parents and children because their relationship was compounded by the different acculturation level of immigrant children from their parents, making them more likely to downplay their parents’ values and modes of behavior and completely adopt values and modes of behavior from the new society (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). There is also a term acculturative stress, which refers to
stressful phenomena such as uncertainty, anxiety, depression, and psychopathology accompanying the inevitable changes brought on by immigration (Romero, Carvajal, Valle, & Orduna, 2007). This term is not to be confused with the term acculturation itself, however, which has a neutral meaning. Acculturative stress was understood to be related to the pressure for the minority groups to be acculturated to the majority culture (Don & Berry, 1994; Romero, et al., 2007). Cohler, Scott, & Musick (1995), also highlighted that culture and the acculturation process can play a part in the etiology of psychological distress. However, the current view is that the level of stress depends on a number of factors such as acculturation attitudes, level of acculturation, and cultural pluralism in the host society (Krishnan & Berry, 1992).

With Berry’s model of the acculturation process at the center, there have been also several studies assessing the correlation between acculturation level and adaptive behaviors, which in turn can enhance an immigrant’s resilience development. Integration (biculturalism) has been mentioned in several studies as a protective factor. Most studies on this topic were done with Latino adolescents in the U.S. One research study attempted to assess cultural traditions, including acculturation level, as protective factors among Latino youth against illicit drug users by studying 23 youth whose fathers were users of illicit drugs (Castro, Garfinkle, Naranjo, Rollins, Book, and Book, 2007). The study suggested that a bicultural orientation among
Latino youth may be the form of cultural asset that was the most consistent with the asset of greater family bonding. Family bonding was considered a protective factor for the Latino youth, who showed more adaptive behaviors than those who were identified as having a White cultural orientation (Castro et al., 2007). This finding was confirmed by a larger study on acculturation risk factors, assets, internalizing behavioral problems, and self-esteem in 323 Latino adolescents who completed several measures to assess their biculturalism and internalizing problems, such as Perceived Discrimination, Parent-Adolescent Conflict, and The Prosocial Friends Scale (Smokowski & Bacallao, 2007). This study found that biculturalism or an integrated style of acculturation was the cultural asset associated with fewer internalizing problems and higher self-esteem and prosocial behaviors.

Along similar lines, Farver, Narang and Bhadha (2002) reported in their study on South Asian families that there were higher levels of conflict in families where parents had a more separated or marginalized style of acculturation than those parents who had an integrated or assimilated acculturation style. From the same study, acculturation preferences or styles also were related to the academic performance of adolescents. The authors found that adolescents with an integrated acculturation style had higher GPAs and higher scores on the self-perception profile than adolescents with separated or marginalized acculturation styles. These findings have so far
supported the promotion of an integrated style of acculturation for immigrant youth.

Such studies, with their focus on acculturation and mental health, support how acculturation plays crucial roles in the mental health of minority adolescents and how cultural integration or biculturalism has become the more adaptive acculturation strategy than other strategies. These studies demonstrate the need to understand youths’ adaptations or resilience as influenced by their acculturation level. One common suggestion that these researchers have proposed is to incorporate healthy acculturation processes into youth development programs to prevent maladaptive behaviors among immigrant youths.

As mentioned earlier, like risk and resilience, acculturation is considered a multi-dimensional process, signified as being fluid and dynamic, as opposed to rigid, fixed, or static (Arlington et al., 2000). Due to its multidimensionality, the literature on this topic should be expanded to increase an understanding of the acculturation strategies and their relationship with resilience in youth development within the broader areas of the presence of risk factors. According to Romero et al. (2007), who summed it up well, “There is a need to understand youth resiliency in the face of discrimination, prejudice, and adolescent acculturation transitions at home and school” (p. 531).
Overview of Southeast Asian Population

One certainty is that culture’s role in youth development can no longer be ignored because of the demographic changes in the United States (Serafica, 1997). The Southeast Asian population is documented as one of the fastest-growing Asian groups in the U.S. (Wong & Fujii, 2004). According to the authors, “The fastest growing Asian group in the United States is the Vietnamese. They numbered 1,122,528 in the 2000 U.S. Census, showing an 82.7% increase in their population from 1990 to 2000” (p. 28). As this group becomes part of U.S. society, there is a great need to understand how Southeast Asian immigrant children and adolescents adapt to the U.S. and the problems they encounter. Specifically, more research studies are needed to enhance understanding in the area of Southeast Asian youths’ development and their acculturation experience.

In this study, the scope of Asian culture was narrowed to Southeast Asian culture, identified by their refugee status. The reason for this decision was twofold. First, while a limited amount of research has been conducted on Asian American populations, psychological research on Southeast Asian American population is much scarcer. One reason to study Southeast Asians is that they make up a large number of Asian populations residing in the U.S and appear to be on the rise. The second reason is that Southeast Asian populations largely share immigration history, refugee status, parent-child relationship style, family values, and spiritual beliefs. These groups of
immigrants/refugees had undergone the similar traumas of being involved in civil wars, experiencing hardships while traveling, and waiting for a long time for relocation (Serafica, 1997). Therefore, this specificity can reduce within-group heterogeneity.

One of the few studies on Southeast Asians was done by Xiong and colleagues (Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005). This was a qualitative study on Southeast Asian perceptions of what makes a good parent and a good adolescent (2005). The authors concurred that both parents and adolescents in the study consistently agreed that obedience, family orientation, and taking family responsibility were the most common attributes of good adolescents. In addition, love and care, respectful communication (meaning “talk nicely, do not yell or hit”) were cited as attributes of good parents (p. 169). This study suggests that family orientation is an important factor that has an impact on how well adolescents adapt and adjust in their host country. The authors indicated that further studies are required to determine whether acculturation has an impact on Southeast Asian adolescents’ ideas about family orientation and responsibility (Xiong et al., 2005).

One recent study attempted to fill in this gap by incorporating acculturative factors in assessing Cambodian high school students’ academic performance (Dinh, Weinstein, Kim, & Ho, 2008). Dinh and colleagues asked 163 Cambodian high school students residing in Lowell, Massachusetts to
complete an anonymous survey that assessed demographic characteristics, acculturative experience, intergenerational conflict, and academic-related outcomes. The General Ethnicity Questionnaire (GEQ) was used to assess the students’ cultural orientations, namely Cambodian orientation and Anglo/White orientation. The findings suggested that Cambodian high school students’ Cambodian cultural orientation was positively associated with their beliefs about the utility of education and sense of school membership, while students’ Anglo/White cultural orientation was positively associated with their grade point average and educational aspirations. In addition, Cambodian cultural orientation was negatively related to intergenerational conflict. The findings of this study indicated that both Cambodian and White cultural orientations can be related to positive development in terms of academic success for Cambodian youth. Because biculturalism was implied in this study and not used as a distinct variable, further research is needed to investigate whether a bicultural orientation will produce similar positive results with this same population.

**Domestic Violence and the Impact on Children and Adolescents**

One risk factor in youth resilience literature is the presence of domestic violence. The impact of domestic violence on children and adolescents has been increasingly recognized and researched. The literature on domestic violence and its impact on children and adolescents describes a strong link
between domestic violence and child abuse (Lung & Daron, 1996). Exposure to domestic violence is associated with significantly greater behavioral, emotional, and cognitive functioning problems among children, as well as adjustment difficulties that may continue into young adulthood (Edleson, Ellerton, Seagren, Kirchberg, Schmidt & Ambrose, 2007). Even though youth who witness domestic violence may not be directly attacked, they can experience severe emotional damage while living in an environment where abusive behavior is modeled as acceptable (National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse, 1996).

Children who are exposed to domestic violence are frequently traumatized themselves. The literature on youth risk and resilience concurs that the presence of domestic violence puts children at risk for developing various psychological and developmental problems, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other emotional and behavioral maladjustments (Geffner, Jaffe, & Sudermann, 2000; Jaffe, Wolfe, & Wilson, 1990; Sudermann & Jaffe, 1999). At minimum, exposure to this kind of violence is itself a form of psychological maltreatment (American Psychological Association, 1996).

The wide range of behaviors and consequences associated with exposure to domestic violence was, however, also found in several reviews, indicating that the relationship between exposure and possible impacts is a complex one (Edleson et al., 2007). Kitzmann, Gaylord, Holt, & Kenny (2003)
and Wolfe, Crooks, Lee, McIntyre-Smith & Jaffe (2003) indicated in their meta-analyses that children exposed to domestic violence exhibited significantly worse problems than children less exposed. In the same study, children exposed to witnessing domestic violence were found not significantly different than children who were themselves physically abused or who were both physically abused and exposed to domestic violence by witnessing (Kitzmann et al., 2003).

In an attempt to explain the variations of impacts on children who were exposed to domestic violence, Rossman, Hughes, & Rosenberg (2000) suggested that the presence of risk factors in the child’s life combine to produce greater impacts on children exposed to domestic violence. This is consistent with research on children’s resilience (Hughes, Graham-Bermann, & Gruber, 2001; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990). While currently inconclusive concerning the relationship between the exposure to domestic violence and specific impacts on children, the literature on risk, resilience and child development indicates that children who are exposed to domestic violence are put at greater risk in many ways. More than one risk has been noted, such as risk for direct victimization, risk for lower ability to cope due to limited learning environment for healthy coping skills, risk for psychopathology due to self-blame, and risk for academic failure (Edleson et al. 2007). Further, one of the most protective factors against negative effects of risk factors is a positive and nurturing relationship with caregivers and
family (Resnick, 2000). In cases of domestic violence where one caregiver is the victim and the other caregiver is the perpetrator of the violence, there is one less important protective factor in the child’s life, thereby putting them at great risk to develop mental health and developmental problems.

There is virtually no existing study on domestic violence and Southeast Asian youth. However, the extent of domestic violence in Asian American and particularly Southeast Asian communities cannot be overstated. According to Dabby (2007), “Forty one to sixty percent of Asian women report experiencing physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner during their lifetime in community-based studies compiled by the Asian Pacific Islanders Institute on Domestic Violence. This is higher than the prevalence rate for other groups: Whites (21.3%), African-Americans (26.3%), Hispanic of any race (21.2%), mixed race (27.0%), and American Indians and Alaskan Natives (30.7%)” (p. 10). This study was conducted by the Asian Taskforce Domestic Violence in Boston by using a self-administered questionnaire at ethnic fairs (Yoshioka & Dang, 2001). In the same study, 39% of the Vietnamese respondents and 47% of Cambodian respondents reported that they know a woman who has been physically abused or injured by her partner. As refugees, the compounding factors of war-related trauma, stressors related to lacking of any kind of capital, formal education, knowledge of English, and marketable jobs may exacerbate domestic violence
problems. Due to many cultural and linguistic barriers in the Southeast Asian American communities, many women may be prevented from speaking out about domestic violence. These barriers may range from fear of being alienated by their own communities, to the belief that domestic violence is a private matter and must be resolved internally to avoid bringing shame to the family, and mistrust of authorities in the U.S. for fear of deportation (Southeast Asia Resource Action Center [SARAC], 2003).

Such a high prevalence, which is likely to be underreported, indicates a need for more understanding of the impact of domestic violence on Southeast Asian adolescents who have witnessed it. The study done by Xiong et al. (2005) discussed above showed that respectful communication was part of the definition of good parenting among the Southeast Asian participants. Therefore, children and adolescents who have witnessed domestic violence may have a hard time understanding and coping with what they are exposed to that seems to contradict with the belief of good parenting. In addition, because domestic violence is shown to result in various mental health-related problems, it is unquestionable that mental health professionals should be more culturally competent in working with individuals from this culture who have been impacted by domestic violence. Interest in resilience grew out of studies of children at risk, yet to date there are only few investigations of resilience in children exposed to domestic violence (Graham-Berman & Edleson, 2001).
A bicultural strategy within the process of acculturation appears in several studies as a protective factor for immigrant youth development. The present study, then, focused on how acculturation levels play a role in Southeast Asian youth’s ability to cope after having witnessed domestic violence.

**Research Question**

What is the relationship between the acculturation level and resilience level among Southeast Asian adolescents who have witnessed domestic violence?

**Hypotheses**

1. Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is a significant curvilinear relationship between acculturation and resilience, with biculturalism associated with the highest resilience level among Southeast Asian adolescents, when compared to being highly Asian and being highly Westernized.

2. Hypothesis 2 (H2): There is a significant difference in the level of resilience between Southeast Asian adolescents who have and who have not witnessed domestic violence.

3. Hypothesis 3 (H3): There is a significant negative relationship between the number of types of domestic violence that the Southeast Asian adolescents have witnessed and their level of resilience.
Chapter II

Methods

In order to answer the research question, this present study used quantitative analyses to investigate the relationship among three variables: acculturation, resilience, and the number of types of domestic violence witnessed among Southeast Asian youth.

Participants

The author used a demographic screening page to select participants, whose ages ranged from 13 to 18 years. The author approached two main agencies that provide programs for Asian population who have experienced domestic violence: Asian Counseling and Referral Services (ACRS), located in Seattle, WA and the Light of Cambodian Children, Inc., located in Lowell, MA. These two locations have been cited as two of the most popular places in the U.S. for resettlement for Southeast Asian immigrants (Southeast Asian Resource Center, 2003).

The youth participants all have parents who immigrated from Southeast Asian countries, including Cambodia, Laos (Khmu and Cham), Hmong, Mien, Myanmar (Karen), and Vietnam. Despite the author’s attempt to minimize the possible effect of within-group heterogeneity within Asian culture as a whole by narrowing down the scope of study to Southeast Asian culture, the existence of within-group heterogeneity is an acknowledged phenomenon within Southeast Asian culture itself.
Descriptive Statistics for Demographics

The sample included 82 Southeast Asian youth from two youth development programs. Sixty-one youth were recruited from Asian Counseling and Referral Services (ACRS), located in Seattle, WA and twenty-one youth were recruited from the Light of Cambodian Youth, Inc., located in Lowell, MA. (See Table).
## Table

**Demographic Information (Seattle, WA and Lowell, MA)**

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<td>Cambodian-Laotian 1</td>
<td>Cambodian-Laotian 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cambodian-Cham-Vietnamese 2</td>
<td>Laotian 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cham 1</td>
<td>Mien-Laotian 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hmong 2</td>
<td>Vietnamese 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laotian 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khmu 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(an ethnic group in Laos)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mien 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mien-Laotian</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of residence in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the U.S.*</td>
<td>0-15 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;15 years</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Born in the U.S.</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of treatment</td>
<td>0-5 sessions</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program participation**</td>
<td>5-15 sessions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 15 sessions</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All demographic data were compared by city and significant differences were found for two variables as noted below; samples were combined for all other variables.

*A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between the length of residence in the U.S. of youth in Seattle and those in Lowell, \( X^2 = 36.40, \) df = 3, \( p = 0.025. \)

**A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between the length of treatment participation of youth in Seattle and those in Lowell, \( X^2 = 14.65, \) df = 3, \( p = 0.025. \)
Measures

*Demographic Form:* This form included general background items regarding school, grade, gender, age, specific ethnicity, length of residence in the U.S., the length of their participation in the youth program, and five screening questions concerning experience of witnessing domestic violence (See Appendix A).

*Youth Risk and Resilience Inventory:* This measure was used to assess youth participants’ resilience level. The YRRI was designed to screen for the presence of risk and resilience factors to identify signs of emotional stress and personal assets to assess their impact on the individual. The YRRI is composed of two separate lists of questions. One list includes risk factors items and the other list focuses on resilience factors. These two sets of questions were delineated as two different entities with separate sets of psychometric properties. Therefore, for the purpose of this study that focuses on resilience level of youth, the author only administered the 18-item Resilience Factors (see Appendix B). The Resilience Factors were designed to measure positive characteristics and assets that increase youth’s adaptation. In terms of psychometric properties, the Resilience Factors were tested for content validity, concurrent-criterion validity, and reliability. All of these properties were shown to be significant with 0.8 reliability and internal consistency (Brady, 2006). Split-half reliability coefficients were $r = .827$, $p < .001$, for risk factors; and $r = .802$, $p < .001$, for resilience factors. The YRRI
has been used in youth substance abuse programs, youth correctional facilities, and domestic and family violence programs and shelters (Brady, 2007).

*Suinn-Lew Asian Self-identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA):* This acculturation measure was adapted from a similar scale used to measure Hispanics, called The Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans (Suinn, 2001). This is a measure designed and normed to measure Asian Americans’ levels of acculturation. The author chose this scale to measure the levels of acculturation among youth participants because it is multidimensional, which corresponded well with the most recent and comprehensive conceptualization of the term acculturation. The SL-ASIA items reflect language use, friendship choice, food preference, media preference, participation in cultural activity, and generation and geographic identity. Specifically, this 21-item standardized Likert-scale measurement was tested for validity and reliability for measuring acculturation and self-identification among Asian population with relation to several aspects of culture, such as language, music/movie preference, food consumption, and self-ethnic identification (Suinn, 2001). Each question is measured on a 5-point scale, where choice 1 is indicative of high Asian identity (“Asian-identified”), while choice 5 is indicative of high Western identity (“Western-identified”) (See Appendix C). This scale also permits classification as “bicultural,” which score is 3. A person retaining a high Asian identity is one
whose values, behaviors, preferences, and attitudes reflect those of a person with an Asian background. This person may prefer an Asian language over English and emphasize collective or group attitudes. A person showing a high Western identity is one whose values, behaviors, preferences, and attitudes reflect those of a Western background. This person might be more self-directed and independent of parental guidance, disinterested in Asian cultural events or beliefs, committed to English as the preferred language, and more comfortable socializing with Euro-American friends. A bicultural person has adopted some Asian along with some Western values, behaviors, preferences, or attitudes, which include being equally comfortable communicating in his or her own Asian language, as well as communicating in English and being flexible in their attitude regarding cultural preferences (Suinn, 2001). The scale was initially found to have a 0.88 alpha coefficient, and subsequent studies have reported similar alpha coefficients from 0.86 to 0.88 (Chung, Bemak, & Wong, 2000). Unlike some other Asian acculturation scales, SL-ASIA aims to assess both external and internal layers of ethnic identity development level.

**Procedure**

After obtaining permission from ACRS and the Light of Cambodian Youth, Inc., the author was invited to attend two youth groups at ACRS that meet every week at a local high school and explain the research in detail. The survey packets were sent to the executive director of the Light of Cambodian
Youth, Inc., who then distributed them to the youth who were interested in participating.

Having consulted with the program managers in the aforementioned agencies, the author determined that a $5 Starbucks gift certificate would be an appropriate form of incentive. All of the youth participants received a $5 Starbucks gift certificate to encourage them to participate and to show appreciation for their interest in participating in the study. In an attempt to reduce social desirability biases in participants’ responses, participants were assured that their views would not be shared with other staff and would not in any way affect the services that they and their parents receive.

The survey packets that were distributed to these youth included a parental consent form (see Appendix D), youth assent form (see Appendix E), a demographic form, Youth Risk and Resilience Inventory (YRRI), and Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA). The youth participants were firmly assured of the confidentiality of their responses and were reassured that they could opt out from the survey at any time. In the Seattle location, the author was an acute observer for any signs of stress that the participants might be experiencing while completing the survey. The youth participants were informed that a confidential referral to school counselors was also available for them in case they need it. Because the author was not able to observe survey administration at the Light of Cambodian Youth, Inc., the author communicated with the youth development program coordinator,
who was present when the youth were taking the survey, to follow the same protocol in behavioral observations and the plan for referrals when necessary.

**Data Analysis Plan**

The data were analyzed using the Microsoft Excel Statplus program and Statistical Program for the Social Science (SPSS). Independent variables included acculturation level and an experience witnessing domestic violence. The dependent variable was resilience level. Since the data were collected from two different cities (Seattle and Lowell), the data for the two samples were collapsed only for demographic variables that did not differ significantly between the two cities.

The author used Scatter Plot Graph option in Microsoft Excel StatPlus and curve estimation within the regression analysis in SPSS to analyze the relationship between the levels of acculturation and resilience among Southeast Asian youth who have and have not witnessed domestic violence.
Chapter III

Results

Univariate Results

On the Youth Risk and Resilience Inventory (YRRI), a measure of the level of resilience, there was no significant difference by city. The overall mean was 3.87, SD=0.58, and Range=2.41. On the measure of acculturation, measured by Suinn-Lew Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA), again there was no significant effect of city. The overall mean was 3.12, SD=0.36, and Range=2.19. For the count of number of types of domestic violence witnessed, again there was no city effect. Overall mean was 1.76, SD=1.56, and Range=5. The sample was also split into those who have witnessed domestic violence (N=58), and not (N=24).

Bivariate Analyses

The results supported the first hypothesis, which predicted a curvilinear relationship between the levels of acculturation and resilience. A scatterplot (see Figure 1) showed an inverted-U-shaped function between the two variables.
Figure 1: Scatter plot of the relationship between the levels of resilience and acculturation

Given this non-linear result of the scatter plot, the data were entered into a curvilinear function analysis. First, a linear regression analysis yielded no significant result, \( R = .005, p = 0.962 \). The quadratic analysis yielded the formula, \( Y = 9.2X - 1.5X^2 - 10.2 \), a significant increase in prediction, \( R = .31, p < .01 \). The result indicated that the adolescents who were bi-cultural scored highest on the resilience level, compared to those who were highly Asian and highly westernized.
The second hypothesis, that there would be a significant difference between the level of resilience of Southeast Asian youths who have witnessed domestic violence and that of those who have not witnessed domestic violence, was also supported. The sample was split into two groups: those who had witnessed domestic violence (N=58) and those who had not (N=24). A two-sample t-test assuming unequal variances was used to find the mean difference between the level of resilience and the experience having witnessed domestic violence or not, \( t = 2.54, \text{df} = 59, p < .01 \). Adolescents who had witnessed domestic violence scored lower on resilience level (M=3.77, S.D.=0.61) than those who had not (M=4.09, S.D.=0.44).

The third hypothesis, which predicted that there would be a significant negative relationship between the number of types of domestic violence that the Southeast Asian adolescents have witnessed and their level of resilience, was also supported by the results. A Pearson correlation was used to describe the relationship between the number of types of domestic violence witnessed and the level of resilience, \( r (82) = -.33, p < 0.05 \). The more types of domestic violence the youths have witnessed, the lower their level of resilience (see Figure 2).
Figure 2: Correlation between the number of types of domestic violence witnessed and the level of resilience
Chapter IV

Discussion

This section will present a summary of the results, review the study’s significant findings, and possible explanations for the relevance of the findings. In addition, clinical implications, limitations of the study, and suggestions for the direction of further research will be discussed.

Results Summary

The present study examined the relationship between the levels of acculturation and resilience among Southeast Asian adolescents who have or have not witnessed domestic violence. The results of the analyses by city showed that among seven variables, five variables showed no significant difference between these two cities. The two variables showing a significant relationship included the length of residence in the U.S. and the length of treatment participation. The two samples were collapsed for subsequent analyses of all variables except the two with a significant city effect.

An inverted-U function best described the relationship between acculturation and resilience: Biculturalism (the mid-point of the acculturation scale) was associated with the highest levels of resilience, compared to highly Asian identity (low acculturation) and highly westernized identity (high acculturation), which were associated with lower levels of resilience. In addition, the experience of having witnessed domestic violence was associated with lower levels of resilience among the participants than for
those who did not witness domestic violence. The participants who witnessed more types of domestic violence were also found to be less resilient.

**Demographics and Main Variables**

In the present study, adolescents were studied (age 13-18 yrs, M=16.25 yrs) who identified their ethnicity as one or more of those in the Indochina regions, including Cambodian, Cham, Hmong, Laotian, Mien, and Vietnamese. The majority of the participants were Vietnamese and Cambodian, which reflected the two fastest-growing Southeast Asian immigrant populations in the U.S. in the past two to three decades starting in the mid 1970s, following the Vietnam War and the Khmer Rouge, respectively (Southeast Asia Resource Action Center [SARC], 2003).

Southeast Asians are a rapidly growing population in the U.S. that has not been widely researched. This study collected data from sixty-one Southeast Asian youth from a local youth development program in Seattle, WA and twenty-one Southeast Asian youth from a program in Lowell, WA. Both Washington and Massachusetts have been cited as two of the most popular states in the U.S. for resettlement among Southeast Asian immigrants. According to Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (1992), “Washington has the third largest population of Southeast Asian immigrants (an estimated 50,000) in the United States; approximately 32,000 reside in Seattle-King County” (p. 1). The Southeast Asians of Lowell, Massachusetts
are part of the second-largest Cambodian community in the United States (Barnhill, 2008; Southeast Asian Resource Action Center [SARC], 2003).

A total of 71% of the youth participants reported that they had witnessed domestic violence. This high number of youth having witnessed domestic violence was expected from these two youth development programs, which were designed to help youth at high risk of having witnessed violence at home. This high prevalence also reflected the recent statistics on the high prevalence of domestic violence in the Southeast Asian communities in the U.S. (Yoshioka & Dang, 2001).

**Significant Findings**

When the relationship between the levels of acculturation and resilience was analyzed, a significant curvilinear relationship was found. This result indicated that bicultural youth were the most resilient. The level of resilience was lower among youth who were rated as highly Asian and highly westernized. This is consistent with Hypothesis 1. This result also confirmed the findings of several previous studies that investigated acculturation and the well-being of immigrant families and children. Most studies on acculturation used the strategies explained by John Berry and colleagues and found that biculturalism was the acculturation strategy that was related to positive adaptation and coping skills in the midst of stress among immigrant youth (Castro et al., 2007; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2007; Xiong, et al., 2005).
The results of this study indicated that the adolescents who reported that they witnessed domestic violence scored lower on the resilience measure than those who reported not witnessing domestic violence. This is consistent with hypothesis 2. However, because this study was a quasi-experiment without random assignment, caution must be taken in interpreting the domestic violence exposure as a cause and low resilience as an effect.

In addition, adolescents who reported having witnessed more types of domestic violence scored lower on the resilience inventory. This is consistent with Hypothesis 3. While it is widely recognized that domestic violence is a risk factor in children’s lives, there is less understanding on the specifics of its impact. Empirical findings from the literature review were inconclusive about the specific impacts of exposure to domestic violence due to such reasons as the definitional problems of domestic violence and exposure and the presence of other risk and resilience factors in the child’s life (Edleson, et al., 2007). Although more empirical research is needed to understand the specificity of the impact of DV, the researchers concluded that the exposure to domestic violence put children in several categories of risk, thereby potentially lowering their general ability to cope. This conclusion was supported by the results in the present study. In addition, one more explanation for the finding related to the hypothesis 3 is based on previous research on Asian American culture and one study on Southeast Asian culture emphasized that family cohesion and support were one of the important protective factors (Leong et al., 2007;
Xiong et al., 2005). In instances of domestic violence, family cohesion is often compromised; therefore, this may mean the absence of one important protective factor and greater risk among Southeast Asian youth who have witnessed domestic violence.

**Explanations, Relevance, and Significance of the Study**

This study contributes to the knowledge about acculturation and resilience among Southeast Asian adolescents. Further, this study investigated the impact of the experience of witnessing domestic violence on how well these adolescents cope and bounce back from adversity in life.

In the process of immigration including pre- and post-immigration, immigrant parents and their children may experience several stressors. Whether voluntary or forced, immigration produces a major change in the entire life situation of the immigrants. Indochinese immigrants from Southeast Asia have experienced a particularly turbulent history due to the Vietnam War and Khmer Rouge, resulting in the traumatic and forced relocation to the U.S. (Chan, 2004). This war-related trauma is likely to compound with other stressors post-immigration, which further puts immigrant youth at risk of maladjustment.

Immigrant youths have also been found to be under a lot of pressure to adjust as they have to learn to navigate and make sense of more than one set of cultures (Berry, 2001). These youth are often in the process of understanding their identity as conceptualized in two different cultures.
Biculturalism, which implies an optimal state of being able to function well in two cultural settings, has been considered in the literature on acculturation as the most preferable acculturation strategy among four strategies delineated by Berry (2001). Bicultural youth possess the knowledge and skills to function well in both cultural settings despite stresses in life.

In this study, the majority of the youth participants reported that they have witnessed domestic violence, which is considered a serious risk factor. Those who identified themselves as bicultural may possess skills and knowledge from two cultures necessary to cope with the stress caused by witnessing domestic violence more adaptively than those identified as highly Asian and highly westernized. Therefore, this result suggested that biculturalism may be a protective factor for Southeast Asian adolescents (both those who have witnessed and not witnessed domestic violence).

Further, Southeast Asian adolescents who have been exposed to domestic violence may also have several other risks present in their lives, such as direct victimization towards them, high self-blame, discrimination, and lack of an understanding of the nature of the problem because domestic violence is less recognized and/or addressed among Southeast Asian population (Southeast Asian Resource Action Center [SARC], 2003). Based on the findings in this study, the additive impacts of several risk factors of domestic violence may lower the youths’ ability to be resilient or to cope well, compared with those youth who have not witnessed domestic violence.
Furthermore, based on the findings of Xiong et al. (2005) on attributes of good Southeast Asian parents, which included respectful communication (talk nicely and do not hit), adolescents who have witnessed verbal and physical violence at home may be at higher risk than those who have not due to the confusion caused by this contradiction.

In addition, the adolescents who have witnessed more types of domestic violence were found to be less resilient than those with fewer types of domestic violence witnessed. This phenomenon may also be explained by the concept of the additive impact of risk factors. More types of domestic violence represent higher risk factors that these adolescents are facing, which can potentially lower their ability to cope well. This finding, however, needs further investigation to include the presence of resilience factors, which are believed to counterbalance the impacts of risk factors.

**Clinical Implications**

The results of this study confirmed that domestic violence is an important risk factor in children’s lives because it is associated with a reduced ability to cope with and overcome adversity or what might be explained as resilience. This study identified biculturalism as a possible protective factor. These findings can guide mental health professionals and youth programs workers to be responsive and alert to how Southeast Asian adolescents identify themselves culturally in order to assess their acculturation level from the youths’ own perspective. In addition, such high prevalence of youth
participants in this study who have witnessed domestic violence (71%) echoes the urgent need for services that are linguistically and culturally appropriate for both Southeast Asian victims and their children. It is of importance for mental health providers to continually identify Southeast adolescents’ protective factors and incorporate them in their programs and provide a holistic service to this fast-growing population in the U.S.

Furthermore, this study provides important information to developers of school-based prevention and intervention programs by highlighting the importance of acculturative processes and levels and how resilience can be fostered within this acculturative framework for Southeast Asian adolescents. Due to individual differences in acculturation processes, culturally and linguistically appropriate services are essential to understand and respect each youth’s cultural identity and experience and strengthen it as youths’ asset to support their optimal development.

**Limitations of the study**

First, the study used convenience sampling, meaning the youths were approached through the youth development programs to which the researcher had access and where the youths were already participating. The major limitation of this sampling type is that the sample was not representative of all Southeast Asian adolescents. Therefore, caution must be taken when generalizing the findings to all Southeast Asian adolescents in Washington and Massachusetts, and especially to other regions of the U.S.
Second, this study relied on self-report data without other types of information, such as collateral information from parents, teachers, and other people in the youths’ lives. This could have caused potential biases in their responses.

Lastly, this quasi-experiment can only confirm the correlation but not a cause and effect relationship between the variables.

**Directions for Future Research**

There are several potential research opportunities in this area of study. The Southeast Asian population is one of the fastest-growing immigration groups in the U.S. and the number of children, adolescents, and young adults of this ethnic group is also growing. The prevalence of domestic violence in this population has been found to be very high. A greater understanding of the well-being of this population as well as impacts of stressors (domestic violence, poverty, discrimination, etc.) on this population will guide prevention, early intervention, and treatment in a culturally responsive way.

Future researchers could study the same topic by using longitudinal approach to ensure internal validity of the measures of resilience and acculturation levels. Because this study only focused on the youths’ acculturation levels, future studies may explore both youths’ and their parents’ acculturation levels. Because a parent-child positive relationship is known to be one of the most important protective factors in youth development, it is important to understand their distinct but closely related
experiences of acculturation and resilience for possible interventions to strengthen positive relationships among them.

Another possible area of research is to collect qualitative data of what bicultural adolescents think about their identity and culture and how their culture helps or does not help them cope with and overcome stress.
References


health counseling. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 22*(2), 150-161.


http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/usinterimproj/


APPENDIX A

Demographic Form

Demographic Information

School __________________________
Grade ___________
Gender  Female  Male
Age _________

Ethnicity  Asian (please check all that applies)
Cambodian
Hmong
Mien
Cham
Khmou
Laotian
Vietnamese
Myanmar
Thai
Indonesian
Malaysian
Filipino
Japanese
Chinese
Korean
Indian-Asian  Other (please identify: ___________)

Total length of residence in the U.S.:
I was born in the U.S.  0-5 years  5-10 years  10-15 years  15 and more years

How many sessions have you had with the program are you participating in?
Less than 5 sessions  5-10 sessions  10-15 sessions  15 and more sessions

Screening questions:

1. Have you ever heard any one of your caregiver call the other caregiver names when angry?
2. Have you ever heard any one of your caregiver put down the other caregiver in front of others?
   Yes   No

3. Have you ever heard any one of your caregiver threaten to hurt the other caregiver or to hurt him/herself?
   Yes   No

4. Have you ever seen any one of your caregivers push, kick, punch, slap, hit or hurt the other parent?
   Yes   No

5. Have you ever had the impression that any one of your caregivers does not feel safe at home because of potential violence from the other caregiver?
   Yes   No
APPENDIX B
The Resilience factors from Youth Risk and Resilience Inventory (YRRI) (Brady, 2006).

**Youth Risk and Resilience Inventory (YRRI)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Very often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I have a lot of friends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I have friends I can count on</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. There are adults who I trust</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. There are adults who can help me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I usually avoid trouble</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My friends are there for me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I am a positive person</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I get along with my folks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. My folks are understanding</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I have supportive teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I’m a resourceful person</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I have the energy to do most things</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I have plans for my life</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I feel cared for</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I have established close relationships</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I have talked to someone about my concerns</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I have made responsible choices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. My family talks things over</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

Adaptation of the Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (Suinn, 2001)

INSTRUCTIONS: The questions which follow are for the purpose of collecting information about your historical background as well as more recent behaviors which may be related to your cultural identity. Choose the one answer which best describes you.

1. What language can you speak?
   1. Asian only (for example, Cambodian, Lao, Vietnamese, etc.)
   2. Mostly Asian, some English
   3. Asian and English about equally well (bilingual)
   4. Mostly English, some Asian
   5. Only English

2. What language do you prefer?
   1. Asian only (for example, Cambodian, Lao, Vietnamese, etc.)
   2. Mostly Asian, some English
   3. Asian and English about equally well (bilingual)
   4. Mostly English, some Asian
   5. Only English

3. How do you identify yourself?
   1. Oriental
   2. Asian
   3. Asian-American
   4. Cambodian-American, Vietnamese-American, Laotian-American, etc.
   5. American

4. Which identification does (did) your mother use?
   1. Oriental
   2. Asian
   3. Asian-American
   4. Cambodian-American, Vietnamese-American, Laotian-American, etc.
   5. American
5. Which identification does (did) your father use?

1. Oriental
2. Asian
3. Asian-American
4. Cambodian-American, Vietnamese-American, Laotian-American, etc.
5. American

6. What was the ethnic origin of the friends and peers you had, as a child up to age 6?

1. Almost exclusively Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals
2. Mostly Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals
3. About equally Asian groups and Anglo groups
4. Mostly Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups
5. Almost exclusively Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups

7. What was the ethnic origin of the friends and peers you had, as a child from 6 to 18?

1. Almost exclusively Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals
2. Mostly Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals
3. About equally Asian groups and Anglo groups
4. Mostly Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups
5. Almost exclusively Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups

8. Whom do you now associate with in the community?

1. Almost exclusively Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals
2. Mostly Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals
3. About equally Asian groups and Anglo groups
4. Mostly Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups
5. Almost exclusively Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups

9. If you could pick, whom would you prefer to associate with in the community?

1. Almost exclusively Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals
2. Mostly Asians, Asian-Americans, Orientals
3. About equally Asian groups and Anglo groups
4. Mostly Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups
5. Almost exclusively Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups

10. What is your music preference?
1. Only Asian music (for example, Cambodian, Lao, Vietnamese,, etc.)
2. Mostly Asian
3. Equally Asian and English
4. Mostly English
5. English only

11. What is your movie preference?
1. Asian-language movies only
2. Asian-language movies mostly
3. Equally Asian/English English-language movies
4. Mostly English-language movies only
5. English-language movies only

12. What generation are you? (circle the generation that best applies to you:)
1. 1st Generation = I was born in Asia or country other than U.S.
2. 2nd Generation = I was born in U.S., either parent was born in Asia or country other than U.S.
3. 3rd Generation = I was born in U.S., both parents were born in U.S, and all grandparents born in Asia or country other than U.S.
4. 4th Generation = I was born in U.S., both parents were born in U.S, and at least one grandparent born in Asia or country other than U.S. and one grandparent born in U.S.
5. 5th Generation = I was born in U.S., both parents were born in U.S., and all grandparents also born in U.S.
6. Don't know what generation best fits since I lack some information.

13. Where were you raised?
1. In Asia only
2. Mostly in Asia, some in U.S.
3. Equally in Asia and U.S.
4. Mostly in U.S., some in Asia
5. In U.S. only

14. What contact have you had with Asia?

1. Raised one year or more in Asia
2. Lived for less than one year in Asia
3. Occasional visits to Asia
4. Occasional communications (letters, phone calls, etc.) with people in Asia
5. No exposure or communications with people in Asia

15. What is your food preference at home?

1. Exclusively Asian food
2. Mostly Asian food, some American
3. About equally Asian and American
4. Mostly American food
5. Exclusively American food

16. What is your food preference in restaurants?

1. Exclusively Asian food
2. Mostly Asian food, some American
3. About equally Asian and American
4. Mostly American food
5. Exclusively American food

17. Do you

1. Read only an Asian language?
2. Read an Asian language better than English?
3. Read both Asian and English equally well?
4. Read English better than an Asian language?
5. Read only English?

18. Do you

1. Write only an Asian language?
2. Write an Asian language better than English?
3. Write both Asian and English equally well?
4. Write English better than an Asian language?
5. Write only English?
19. If you consider yourself a member of the Asian group (Oriental, Asian, Asian-American, Cambodian-American, etc., whatever term you prefer), how much pride do you have in this group?

1. Extremely proud
2. Moderately proud
3. Little pride
4. No pride but do not feel negative toward group
5. No pride but do feel negative toward group

20. How would you rate yourself?

1. Very Asian
2. Mostly Asian
3. Bicultural
4. Mostly Westernized
5. Very Westernized

21. Do you participate in Asian occasions, holidays, traditions, etc.?

1. Nearly all
2. Most of them
3. Some of them
4. A few of them
5. None at all
APPENDIX D

Consent Form for Research for Parents

1) **Title of Research Study:** The relationship between the levels of acculturation, environmental stress, and resilience among Southeast Asian adolescents.

2) **Researcher:** Skulptip (Jill) Sirikantraporn, M.A. (Doctorate in Psychology candidate) at Antioch University Seattle (AUS)

3) **Purpose:** The purpose of this research study is to assess the relationship between the acculturation level and the resilience level of Southeast Asian youth who have experienced stress in the home environment. The focus of this study is on the role of youth’s culture in their ability to cope and thrive despite stress at home.

4) **Procedures:**
   Participation in this study will require your child to take two sets of questionnaires which will be administered by me at the agency that your child is participating at. The questionnaires include Youth Risk and Resilience Inventory (YRRI), and Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale. Each of the two tests will take about 10-20 minutes to complete. Your child will be asked to answer a number of questions about her/his culture and factors that help your child cope with stress.

5) **Risks:**
   The risks involved with participation in this study are minimal. Your child might experience some minor discomfort from answering screening questions concerning violence that happened at home. However, your child will receive direct support from her/his youth program coordinator, who is already accessible and available through her/his youth development program.

6) **Benefits:**
   Your child may gain a greater knowledge of her/his own culture as a Southeast Asian person living in America and the satisfaction of knowing that they have contributed to a better understanding of the knowledge in the field of psychology on children/youth’s ability to cope and thrive despite stress.

7) **Data Collection & Storage:**
   Any information collected about your child will be kept confidential and secure and only the people working with the study, which include myself and three committee members, will see your child’s data.

8) **Contact Information:**
   For questions or problems regarding your child’s rights as a research participant and/or questions about the study, you can contact the principal researcher, ___Skulptip (Jill) Sirikantraporn, M.A._ at (xxx) xxx-xxxx. My faculty advisor is Patricia Linn, Ph.D. at Antioch University at Seattle at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.
9) Consent Statement:
I have read, or had read to me, the information describing this study. All of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I allow my child to take part in this study. My child can stop participating at any time without giving any reason and without penalty. I can ask to have the information related to my child returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

Signature of Parent or Guardian:_________________________ Date: ____________
Print name of Parent or Guardian:_____________________________________

Signature of Researcher: _____________________________ Date: ____________
Print name of Researcher: _______Skultip Sirikantraporn, M.A._______________
APPENDIX E

Assent Form for Research for Youth

1) Title of Research Study: The relationship between the levels of acculturation and resilience among Southeast Asian adolescents who have witnessed domestic violence.

2) Researcher: Skulpt (Jill) Sirikantraporn, M.A. (Doctorate in Psychology candidate) at Antioch University Seattle (AUS)

3) Purpose: The purpose of this research study is to assess the relationship between the acculturation level and the resilience level of Southeast Asian youth who have experienced stress in the home environment. The focus of this study is on the role of youth's culture in their ability to cope and thrive despite stress at home.

4) Procedures: Participation in this study will require you to take two sets of questionnaires which will be administered by me at the agency that you are participating at. The questionnaires include Youth Risk and Resilience Inventory (YRRI), and Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale. Each of the two tests will take about 10-20 minutes to complete. You be asked to answer a number of questions about your culture and factors that help you cope with stress.

5) Risks: The risks involved with participation in this study are minimal. You might experience some minor discomfort from answering screening questions concerning violence that happened at home. However, you will receive direct support from the youth program coordinator, who is already accessible and available through the youth development program.

6) Benefits: You may gain a greater knowledge of your own culture as a Southeast Asian person living in America and the satisfaction of knowing that you have significantly contributed to a better understanding of the knowledge in the field of psychology on children/youth’s ability to cope and thrive despite stress.

7) Data Collection & Storage: Any information collected about you will be kept confidential and secure and only the people working with the study, which include myself and three committee members, will see your data.

8) Contact Information: For questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant and/or questions about the study, you can contact the principal researcher, ___Skulpt (Jill) Sirikantraporn, M.A.__ at _(xxx) xxx-xxxx. My faculty advisor is Patricia Linn, Ph.D. at Antioch University at Seattle at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.
9) **Consent Statement:**
I have read, or had read to me, the information describing this study. All of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent to take part in this study. I understand that I can stop participating at any time without giving any reason and without penalty. I can ask to have the information returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

Signature of Youth: _______________________________ Date: ______________
Print name of Youth: ______________________________________________

Signature of Researcher: ___________________________ Date: ______________
Print name of Researcher: _______Skultip Sirikantraporn, M.A.__________