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 Narrative for Tenure and Promotion Review
 September 15th, 2024

Dear Members of the Review Committee and Faculty:

I am pleased to submit this narrative, which outlines my research, scholarship, teaching, and service accomplishments, in support of my promotion and tenure application to the rank of Associate Professor at the University of Washington (UW) Tacoma. Since being appointed Assistant Professor at the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice at UW Tacoma in the Fall of 2019, I have built a robust research trajectory and consistently developed my scholarly contributions focused on the intersections of gender-based violence and mental health among women from marginalized communities both in India and the United States. I have enhanced my pedagogical skills and practice to support my students effectively and actively led and contributed to service initiatives within my school, the campus, and the larger community.

Aligned with UW Tacoma's strategic priorities and the mission of the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice, social justice and community-engaged work is the thread that ties my research, teaching, and service. For over ten years, I have worked (as a social worker and now as a social work researcher) with women from marginalized communities who experience mental health challenges and intimate partner violence (IPV).¹ My research centers on women's narratives and recommendations on how formal institutions and services can better support them. My teaching approaches focus on building relational, collaborative, and transformative learning environments for students in the classroom and beyond. Like my research and teaching agenda, my service commitments aim to create sustainable, supportive, and equitable environments within the school, campus, and communities from the local to global levels. Aligned with the principles of feminist praxis, I begin this narrative by situating myself, my background, and how that has shaped my trajectory as a social work researcher and educator. Later in the narrative, I describe my contributions and accomplishments in research, teaching, and service.

The roots of my social work education lie in India, where I earned my Master of Arts in Social Work (MSW) from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai. Post-MSW, I worked on a community project that facilitated community integration for women living with serious mental illness and with limited familial support at a psychiatric institution. As a social worker, I provided psychosocial support to women as they transitioned from the institution to the community and supported them in securing employment, thereby breaking the vicious cycle of poverty, violence, and marginalization. These practice experiences shaped my research motivation to build gender-sensitive and culturally responsive models of care that honored and responded to women's social realities. Based on my practice experience, I developed a nuanced understanding of the various structural factors (e.g., gender-based violence, discrimination, poverty, inaccessible mental health care) that contributed to women's mental illness and prolonged confinement in psychiatric institutions. However, despite the growing numbers of women in psychiatric institutions, I was surprised at the limited (almost absent) research that focused on the experiences of women living with serious mental illness in psychiatric institutions in India. This shaped my interest in pursuing doctoral research and I moved to the United States to pursue my Ph.D. in Social Work at Columbia University in New York City. My dissertation research used a qualitative feminist narrative approach to document the lives of formerly institutionalized women in India living in a halfway home at the time of the study. I examined how women's narratives of illness, recovery, and community integration were shaped by gender and their social positioning. I also examined how social, cultural, and institutional discourses and attitudes towards gender and mental illness impacted the quality of mental health care women received.

One of the primary reasons I came to the University of Washington Tacoma is the value, significance, and priority that the campus (and the larger university) places on community-driven and community-engaged research. As a community-engaged researcher, it was incredibly important for me to work and thrive in an

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While I use the term intimate partner violence while discussing my research, I acknowledge that among women in India and within the South Asian community in the United States, violence against women by intimate partners is often exacerbated by violence perpetrated by extended family members.

academic community that held a shared understanding and vision of community-engaged work. The University of Washington Tacoma is one of the three campuses of the University of Washington. The vision of UW Tacoma is to “foster a thriving and equitable society by educating diverse learners and expand knowledge through partnership and collaboration with our communities.” UW Tacoma caters to a diverse student body, many of whom are from minoritized communities (e.g., students of color, first-generation students, students with fewer financial resources, students transferring from community colleges, and students who are older and manage family and full-time employment while attending school). UW Tacoma places a high value on teaching, and teaching excellence is a core value shared by all faculty members. As an Assistant Professor at the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice, I teach six courses yearly (2 each quarter). In addition, I work with students on independent research projects and serve as an advisor to several BASW and MSW students. Together with teaching and service commitments, tenure-track faculty members are expected to maintain high standards in research and scholarship and produce, on average, 1-2 publications annually, an expectation I have met since my appointment. Given that UW Tacoma is an urban-serving university, and its mission is to serve the community, because my research primarily engages culturally diverse communities through participatory approaches, it is a valued goal both at my school and the larger University.

Research and Scholarship

Research and Scholarship Contributions

Six months after I began my appointment at UW Tacoma, Covid-19 led to a shutdown. Despite the myriad ways the pandemic impacted our research (shifting to remote community-engaged work, higher workload, long delays in peer reviews of submitted manuscripts, etc.), my research and scholarship have grown and flourished. Since my appointment at UW Tacoma, my scholarship accomplishments include nine peer-reviewed publications (7 peer-reviewed articles, one peer-reviewed book chapter, and one peer-reviewed article-length conference proceeding), thirteen refereed conference presentations, and six invited talks. I currently have one peer-reviewed article under *revise and resubmit* in the *Journal of Rural Health*. I have published one book review and contributed to writing two technical reports (one in progress) to the Washington State Legislature related to intimate partner violence (IPV) research priorities (as recommended by survivors and service providers) and the socioeconomic impact of commercial sexual exploitation on Black and African American female-identifying survivors in Washington State. I am the first author of six of my nine peer-reviewed publications. My research and scholarship are interdisciplinary and use theoretical frameworks and evidence from Social Work, Feminist Theory, Sociology, Global Mental Health, and Cultural Psychiatry. The interdisciplinary nature of my work is reflected in the high-impact journals I have published within my primary field and in allied disciplines. These include the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *Social Work Research*, *Violence against Women*, *Community Mental Health*, *Journal of American College Health*, and *Methodological Innovations*. During my tenure at UW Tacoma, I have been awarded four competitive research grants as a Principal Investigator (three completed and one in progress). These include two competitive internal School of Social Work and Criminal Justice research grants (for a total amount of \$7820), the UW Tacoma Faculty Fellows Research Award, Office of Community Partnerships (\$10,000), and the tri-campus University-wide Royalty Research Fund Award (\$39,977). I am currently collaborating on two research projects; the Center of Excellence in Domestic Violence Research, Policy, and Practice, University of Washington, Seattle (funded for \$900,000 by the State of Washington) and another research project that is exploring the ‘Impacts of the Commercial Sex Economy on Black Female Survivors of Commercial Sexual Exploitation,’ (funded by the Washington State Department of Commerce for \$145,000). In addition, as part of a BIPOC Faculty team at UW Tacoma, we were awarded the Faculty Research Grant to Advance Equity and Inclusion (\$5000) and UW Tacoma Covid-19 Relief Funds (\$7200) to advance a BIPOC faculty-led Social Justice Research Scholarship Institute at UW Tacoma aimed at fostering community and collaboration among UW Tacoma BIPOC faculty and staff.

Research Philosophy as a Community-Engaged Scholar

As stated in the introduction, my social work practice experience of working with women from marginalized communities shapes my research agenda. My research is intentionally intersectional, survivor-centered, and grounded in the five critical elements of feminist research methodology, i.e., a focus on how

gender and other intersecting identities shape one's life experiences, valuing women's lived experiences as knowledge, attention to researchers' positionality and reflexivity, and conducting research with a transformative and emancipatory agenda. My research is informed by a social constructivist standpoint that reasserts women's agency by honoring the subjective meaning they assign to their life experiences. Furthermore, approaching my research through an anti-racist and critical feminist framework is critical. I do so by centering research participants' perspectives because it helps contextualize data related to the disproportionate impact of mental health and intimate partner violence among women from marginalized communities without reinforcing community and cultural stereotypes.

As a social work researcher, I recognize the inherent value in placing communities' contexts, needs, and expertise at the forefront of my research. Community engagement is critical to reduce the research-practice gap and because, historically, voices of women from marginalized communities have been excluded or misrepresented in mental health and violence-related research and practice. In my work so far, communities have included mental health and domestic violence agencies but, more importantly, women impacted by mental health challenges and intimate partner violence. The latter group is often hard to reach because of the everyday challenges and barriers they experience. Flexibility with research approaches is central to building relationships and inviting participation from women who are the most impacted yet hard to reach. I have led four community-engaged research projects since my appointment at UW Tacoma. Through each project, I have built partnerships with community-based agencies and women with lived experiences in India and the United States. My different research projects are connected across similar themes, and more importantly, each subsequent research project builds on my past research. This is because I follow the leads from my community collaborators and ask follow-up research questions that emerge from previous research study findings and inquiries that can help address community needs.

My approach to community engagement is embedded in relationality, reciprocity, and sustainable partnerships. A key aspect of the relationship-building process is investing time with community members to share my research motivations and know their strengths, resources, and challenges. I aim to create a shared research vision and ultimately ask research questions that can have strong practice implications and be of value to community members and their identified needs. For instance, in my research project on *intimate partner violence and help-seeking* (described later), my Community Advisory Board, comprising three women survivors, expressed the desire to create a resource guide where they can share their journeys of healing, experiences seeking help and resources, challenges encountered, and lessons learned to support other women survivors in their healing. While this was not part of my initially planned research project, we decided to adapt the project to add the creation of the resource guide.

My Positionality as a Social Work Scholar

Personal experiences and motivations also shape my research agenda. I have written about how my mother's story of gender-based discrimination and consequently living with clinical depression influenced my research inquiry to examine the social and cultural determinants of women's mental health (Bhattacharya, 2016). As a caregiver and later as a social worker, I witnessed how mental health services devalued women's experiences and agency, expecting them to take on a passive role in the treatment process. Women's experiences of living with mental health challenges that were often shaped by structural inequalities were narrowed down to 'illness symptoms,' further invalidating their experiences. My identity as an Indian woman born and raised in a patriarchal context also motivates my intersectional feminist research pursuits. I share my social positionality because, as a researcher, I consistently pay attention to my role in the research process. I write about how my identities and positionality shape my theoretical positioning, relationship with research participants, and research inquiries, impacting the research process and outcomes (Bhattacharya, 2020, 2021). My research involves interviewing women on deeply personal aspects of their lives. Therefore, I employ reflexivity and self-awareness as critical methodological elements to minimize power differentials and create a space of shared vulnerability and trust with my research participants. For instance, while I often hold a shared identity with participants in terms of gender, culture, and language, I am mindful of the several social categories in which I hold privilege (e.g., caste, socioeconomic status, familial and social support, geographic location, etc.). These intersections of privilege and marginalization make me an *insider* and an *outsider* in the research process. Participants share experiences related to gender-based discrimination that are sometimes like my own. However, they also share stories of poverty, domestic violence, and family abandonment that are outside my frame of

reference; under these circumstances, centering participants' narrative agency is crucial. As a researcher, I consistently evaluate my standpoint to ensure that my research approaches actively challenge systems of violence, exclusion, and discrimination that women from marginalized communities frequent in their everyday lives. Demonstrating cultural humility is central to ensuring that participants' perspectives are invited and honored at each stage of the research process.

Research and Scholarly Agenda

My research centers on experiences, perspectives, and recommendations of women survivors of intimate partner violence and those living with mental health challenges to build gender-sensitive and culturally responsive models of care. My scholarship agenda is two-fold, interconnected, and spans India and the United States. The first part of my scholarship used narrative approaches to highlight the social determinants of women's mental health in the Indian context with a focus on how gender and other intersecting identities (e.g., socio-economic status) shape women's experiences living with mental illness. In addition, I have used ethnographic approaches to examine how mental health services in India (both institutional and community-based) understand and respond to women's contextual needs and circumstances. Given this inextricable link between gender-based violence and mental health, the second aspect of my scholarship is focused on exploring the needs and experiences of women survivors of intimate partner violence. My research explores how individual, interpersonal, and socio-cultural factors shape survivors' help-seeking decisions and implications for improving the cultural relevance of the services they receive. Below, I describe specific objectives that I have accomplished through my research and scholarship, thereby advancing the knowledge base and discourse in two interconnected domains of mental health and intimate partner violence among women from marginalized communities.

Research and Scholarship Objectives:

1. Highlight the Social Determinants of Women's Mental Health in India
2. Create a Shared Definition and Identify Best Practices in Gender-Sensitive and Culturally Responsive Care
3. Examine Help-Seeking Patterns among Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence to Identify Gaps in Services
4. Adopt and Document Research Methodologies that Center Communities' Needs, Expertise, and Priorities

1. Highlight the Social Determinants of Women's Mental Health in India

The Movement for Global Mental Health has highlighted that women's mental health is disproportionately affected, particularly in low-and middle-income countries (Burgess, 2016). As a doctoral student, I published a meta-ethnography (in *Qualitative Health Research*) that systematically synthesized qualitative scholarship on women's experiences living with depression in India. This review is frequently cited, most notably and recently in an international systematic review of the social determinants of mental illness (Huggard et al., 2023) because it corroborates the links between women's mental health and their disadvantaged social circumstances (e.g., poverty, violence, traditional gender roles, and disproportionate burden of caregiving) (Bhattacharya et al., 2019).

While Global Mental Health research has brought to attention how social determinants shape women's mental health, one consistent critique of the Global Mental Health discourse has been how these social determinants are primarily discussed with limited or no input from women with lived experiences (Burgess, 2016). My first scholarship objective addressed this critical gap by bringing women's voices to the forefront to highlight their perceptions of how social norms shape their mental health. Mainly, my scholarship highlighted the needs and experiences of women living in psychiatric institutions in India, a community of women who are underrepresented and underserved both in research and practice. I used an intersectional feminist lens to examine women's experiences and perceptions related to illness and institutionalization (Bhattacharya et al., 2023-*Community Mental Health Journal*). The study is an important contribution to the minimal research examining women's illness narratives and gendered pathways to psychiatric institutions in India. It offers an intersectional analysis of factors that prevent women with limited familial support from returning to their communities. The most critical finding was that women's disadvantaged social context (domestic violence,

poverty, gender and illness-related stigma, and families' inability or unwillingness to offer support) that led to women's initial admission to psychiatric institutions also served as deterrents to their reentering the community (Bhattacharya et al., 2023). Based on women's narratives of limited familial support, the article advocates for gender-inclusive community reintegration programs that consider women's contextual needs and circumstances while delivering care. More importantly, this article is one of the very few in the Indian mental health discourse where women with lived experiences who are directly impacted offer insightful recommendations on how institutional and community-based mental health services can better support them.

India has one of the world's highest rates of domestic violence in the world (World Health Organization, 2018), and women living with mental illness are at an increased risk for intimate partner violence. Unsurprisingly, my research has highlighted that among women living with mental illness, there are shared experiences of family violence, disruptive familial relationships, and absent social support that either contribute to or worsen their illness experiences (Bhattacharya, 2021). Using the *self-in-relation theory* (Miller, 1976) and through 34 in-depth interviews with 11 participants, I explored women's narratives related to family, marriage, and violence in familial relationships prior to entering a psychiatric institution. This area of work has not received much attention in India. Despite the growing presence of women in psychiatric institutions in India, we know little about women's histories prior to their entry into psychiatric institutions. Women's narratives highlighted how the presence of mental illness exacerbates the violence they experience. Given the histories and traumas of abuse, violence, and neglect in women's lives prior to entering psychiatric institutions, I argue that mental health services (including institutional-based mental health care) in India should promote practices that are trauma-informed, relational, and foster empathic connections with women seeking care. These findings and recommendations were published in *Violence Against Women* (Bhattacharya, 2021).

2. Create a Shared Definition and Identify Best Practices in Gender-Sensitive and Culturally Responsive Care

Based on my experiences of working with women from marginalized communities, I have witnessed how system-level responses continue to harm and retraumatize women. My research has highlighted how institutions of formal support often mirror similar dynamics of violence and discrimination that women experience within their families and in their intimate relationships (Bhattacharya, 2021). Based on these insights, I directed my research toward examining gender sensitivity and the cultural responsiveness of support offered to women experiencing mental health challenges and confronting intimate partner violence. There is limited collaborative work with community agencies to understand how they employ gender-sensitive and culturally responsive care in everyday practice. To address this gap, I conducted a research project to identify best practices, needs, and challenges in delivering gender-sensitive and culturally responsive care to women confronting intimate partner violence and living with mental health challenges. I received the [UW Tacoma Faculty Fellows Award](#) from the Office of Community Partnerships to carry out this project. This competitive campus-wide grant is awarded to faculty whose research proposal 'addresses a community-identified need and actively includes community partners in the co-learning and co-production processes.' Through this project, I built partnerships with community-based domestic violence agencies and women with lived experiences both in India and the United States. Over one year, I worked with 28 practitioners and 13 women through community advisory board meetings, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews. Based on findings from this project, I published a peer-reviewed book chapter in the book titled, *'Families and Gendered Violence and Conflict: Pan Continent Reach.'* This co-edited book (by Dr. Ruchi Sinha and Dr. Pekham Basu) highlights academic discourses and practices around family, gender, and violence in social work from different countries. My first authored chapter in this book describes the critical elements of a gender-sensitive and culturally responsive practice framework. More importantly, this chapter highlights that effective IPV-related programs are practices embedded in relationality and care. Furthermore, gender and cultural sensitivity in practice is significantly enhanced when survivors of intimate partner violence are supported by agencies and providers who share similar cultures and, therefore, are well-attuned and familiar with their clients' language, cultural histories, and community beliefs and norms related to IPV (Bhattacharya et al., 2024). Based on this research, I was also invited for an interview by two journalists who were awarded an Impact Fellowship from the University of Southern California, Annenberg Center for Health, to report on domestic violence among South Asian women in the United States, demonstrating the impact of my expertise across institutional contexts and to the field-at-large. During this interview, I shared my research findings based on my work with women survivors of intimate partner violence

in the South Asian community in the US. I spoke about how identities such as gender, mental illness, and immigration status interact to exacerbate challenges in seeking care for South Asian women experiencing intimate partner violence and its implications for practice (Bhattacharya et al., 2024).

3. Examine Help-Seeking Patterns among Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence to Identify Gaps in Services

My third research objective is to systematically examine help-seeking patterns among women survivors of intimate partner violence, particularly those from minoritized communities in the United States. This research inquiry grew from my community partners' identified needs and priorities. Community-based domestic violence agencies in the United States shared that while intimate partner violence-related services exist for women survivors from minoritized communities, there is no *singular body of data* available on how these services come together to support IPV survivors holistically. Similarly, women survivors shared that despite the pervasive presence of emotional and psychological abuse by their partners, there are inadequate resources for women experiencing severe forms of emotional violence (Bhattacharya et al., 2024). While there are several best practices, innovative strategies, and promising resources that community partners have adopted to address the gender and culture-specific needs of marginalized women, there remain significant barriers to systemizing and increasing access to them. This finding pointed to a critical need for a deeper understanding of the on-the-ground realities, needs, and challenges that women experiencing IPV face as they access care, particularly those from minoritized communities. I was awarded the highly competitive *Royalty Research Fund (RRF)* at the University of Washington to support my research inquiry examining survivors' help-seeking pathways over time. With RRF support, I expanded my research on intimate partner violence-related help-seeking in a novel direction by following individual trajectories of help-seeking over time, thus illuminating how women's experiences with service use unfold over time and, more importantly, how individual, interpersonal, and socio-cultural factors influence their pathways to help-seeking. Reviewers listed several notable strengths of this study. These included 'the research study's sound theoretical and methodological approach,' 'emphasis on participant care and safe contact with reassessment and ongoing consent across the study period,' and 'strength-rather than deficit-based study approaches that build on survivors' existing capacities to navigate both intimate partner violence and at times unhelpful or damaging systems.' The study also integrates an Intersectional Feminist lens that is critical because women belonging to an intersection of multiple minoritized identities (e.g., race, immigration status, language barriers) encounter challenges that formal services may often overlook.

This research project advances the field by responding to the need for more survivor-centered research and practice, particularly among racially minoritized women in the United States. The study also advances theory and knowledge around how stages of help-seeking operate across time for women from minoritized communities. One critical innovation and contribution of the study is the focus on emotional and psychological abuse and survivors' experiences seeking help when the abuse does not solely focus on (or include) physical violence. Immediate outcomes related to this research project are identifying areas of need based on survivors' perceived and experienced barriers to accessing services and resources. Some of my partner organizations have also expressed the need to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of direct service programs (e.g., advocacy-based services) that benefit survivors. Investing in these collaborative program evaluation efforts is critical to strengthen opportunities for community partners to secure funding, thereby contributing to its sustainability and potential replication in other areas and settings. Data collection for this help-seeking research project is underway and expected to conclude in September 2024. As of this date, I have conducted multiple interviews with women survivors to understand their experiences seeking help and eliciting their recommendations on improving services. Three women survivors serve on my Community Advisory Board, and I meet with them every month to seek their input and suggestions on the research process. Their continuous input/insight on the data collected is an integral part of this research project.

Examining Victimization and Help-Seeking Patterns for Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence

I have also expanded my scholarship domain to examine other forms of interpersonal violence victimization (sexual assault and sexual harassment) and related help-seeking patterns. I sought out this opportunity based on the UW Climate Survey (conducted in 2020) that gathered data on students' experiences related to sexual victimization and help-seeking. I was one of the faculty members who led UW Tacoma campus climate survey efforts and co-chaired one of the implementation teams charged with acting on issues identified

by undergraduate and graduate students. Sexual harassment is a widespread problem in higher education in the United States (Cantor et al., 2019). However, campus sexual violence research has primarily focused on students attending residential campuses (otherwise termed ‘traditional’ students). Our research focused on mostly commuter students and students attending non-residential (NR) campuses, a community of students who have traditionally been underrepresented in research on sexual harassment in higher education and make up most of the student population at UW Tacoma. Based on students’ responses to the UW Climate survey, along with my co-author, Dr. Erin Casey, we published a paper in the *American Journal of College Health* to highlight significant differences in victimization characteristics and post-assault help-seeking across students attending residential and non-residential programs. This paper is an important contribution to the literature because this is the first study that looks at the prevalence of sexual harassment victimization (research has primarily focused on sexual assault) and centered findings on students enrolled in nonresidential campuses, many of them being from minoritized communities (e.g., students of color, women, sexual and gender minority students, first-generation students). We also underscored that sexual victimization experiences in higher education are impacted by students’ multiple identities and experiences (e.g., race, gender, and sexual identity, etc.), and considering those intersections, we offer tailored recommendations to improve campus-based support (Casey & Bhattacharya, 2023).

Similar to sexual harassment victimization, we know little about the post-victimization help-seeking behavior of students on non-residential campuses, and this limited research impacts the kind of campus-based resources offered to students. There is considerable heterogeneity in survivors’ responses to experiencing violence, and it is important to use survivor-centered research methodologies to acknowledge the heterogeneity in survivors’ experiences and their different needs and expectations related to services. I first authored a study (based on the UW climate survey) that used a latent class analysis approach to explore the heterogeneity in help-seeking patterns among students experiencing sexual harassment. In this article (published in *the Journal of Interpersonal Violence*), we expand the knowledge related to interpersonal help-seeking by focusing on sexual harassment among students on campus. Our study highlighted that students access support (for sexual harassment) in diverse ways and understanding these distinct help-seeking patterns is important to support students effectively (Bhattacharya & Casey, 2024). This is a critical area of work, given that the percentage of students who seek on-campus support for sexual harassment continues to be low. We argue that to bolster help-seeking, there is a need for targeted campus-based prevention and intervention programs that align well with the heterogeneity in students’ distinct help-seeking responses. We offer recommendations that can be adapted across different university settings to enhance campus-based resources and support related to sexual victimization.

4. Adopt and Document Research Processes that Center Communities’ Needs, Expertise, and Priorities

A central goal of my research and scholarship is to stay accountable to the process of conducting research that engages marginalized communities by documenting best practices, challenges encountered, and lessons learned, thus providing methodological insights, guidelines, and support for students and scholars who may want to adopt similar approaches. My interest in documenting social work research processes began as an MSW student when I published my first paper in the *Indian Journal of Social Work*, where I wrote about my experiences of navigating complex research ethics as I worked with girls living on the streets in India to understand their vulnerability to sexual abuse (Bhattacharya & Nair, 2015). Since my appointment at UW Tacoma, I have published three methodology-based articles. The first methodological article (sole-authored) was a case study titled “*Doing Feminist Research with Vulnerable Communities: Key Challenges and Opportunities*,” describing my experiences conducting a feminist research study in cross-cultural settings, with particular attention to ethical considerations while working with women from marginalized communities. Based on this published case study, SAGE Publishing invited me to contribute to their Research Methodology in Medicine & Public Health collection. In the [March \(2021\) video-recorded interview](#), I discussed the intricacies of feminist health research. The video was aimed at students and researchers interested in learning about the current issues within the methodology and what it means to do intersectional feminist research.

As a violence researcher, I strive to conduct research that fosters healing and empowerment for survivors. Including communities’ input on study designs (not just data analysis) is central to anti-oppressive community-engaged work. In a one-year funded research project, I invited community members (domestic violence advocates and women survivors of intimate partner violence) to provide their feedback on the proposed

Royalty Research Funded longitudinal study design to understand help-seeking pathways among women survivors. Participants provided insightful recommendations on conducting survivor-centered research that moved beyond safety and centered relationality, collective support, and healing. I summarize these methodological insights in a first-authored paper (accepted for publication in *Social Work Research*). This article underscores the importance of researchers fostering spaces and opportunities for survivors to lead the work. Assuming that survivors may not be able to participate in research because of the overwhelming life circumstances is a paternalistic assumption. It is critical to value survivors' agency, autonomy, and decisions about their capacity to participate in research and what they can offer (Bhattacharya et al., 2024). The third article (Camacho et al., 2023) published in *Methodological Innovations* documents how to adopt trauma-informed principles when engaging in narrative inquiry with older Latinx adults. Older Latinx communities, including sexual minorities, are disproportionately impacted by social, health, and historical stressors. The article discusses specific trauma-informed methodological practices adopted in a life history narrative study with older Latino immigrant gay men living in New York City. Based on this study, we offer suggestions on how to apply trauma-informed principles in narrative research with minoritized communities impacted by cumulative traumatic events and experiences.

Other Research Collaborations:

Based on my experience and expertise in leading community-engaged research projects and through my methodology-focused scholarship, researchers working on projects related to interpersonal violence and community-engaged work have invited me to consult and assist with the methodological aspects of their studies. I describe these collaborations below. Another notable accomplishment was an invitation to lead a panel at the Society for Social Work and Research Conference (2020), titled "*Navigating an Integrated Personal and Scholarly Identity: Experiences of Participatory Action Research Scholars of Color.*" This roundtable discussion was grounded in findings from a phenomenological study of social work doctoral students and pre-tenured faculty who conduct participatory action research (PAR) within the U.S. We discussed our motivations to pursue our research agendas embedded in the community, the underrepresentation of both scholars and communities of color in social work research, and common facilitators and barriers in academia as encountered by PAR scholars.

Internal Planning Group Member and Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Consultant for State-funded Center of Excellence in Domestic Violence Research, Policy, and Practice, University of Washington, Seattle

I was invited to serve as the CBPR Consultant to a team developing a plan for the State-funded Center of Excellence in Domestic Violence Research, Policy, and Practice at the University of Washington, Seattle. The center aims to "conduct IPV research, widely disseminate evidence-based and other high-quality research to best inform policy and practice-based efforts in IPV prevention and harm reduction, and ensure these efforts are informed and responsive to the needs of survivors and others impacted by IPV in Washington State." (Center on Intimate Partner Violence Research, Policy and Practice Planning Group, 2024). As a CBPR consultant on this project, along with Dr. Dana Cuomo, I led the data collection plan and solicited inputs from diverse community members, i.e., intimate partner violence survivors and advocates. I also assisted the team in developing community advisory teams to ensure that the Center's work is informed and guided by those most affected by intimate partner violence. The work involved planning recruitment, data collection (through focus group discussions), and data analysis centered on CBPR principles. Along with my co-consultant, Dr. Dana Cuomo, our written report on the findings from the community discussions was integrated into the [Planning Report](#) drafted by the University of Washington, Center on Intimate Partner Violence Research, Policy, and Practice and submitted to the Washington State Legislature in January 2024. The report summarizes advocates and survivors' perspectives and recommendations on research priorities for the development and direction of the Center. The Center has received funding support (\$900,000) from the State of Washington to advance some of the priority areas laid out in the report.

Researching the Impacts of the Commercial Sex Economy on Black Female Survivors of Commercial Sexual Exploitation

I am currently collaborating on a Washington State Department of Commerce Funded project to examine the impact of the commercial sex economy on Black Female survivors in Washington State. This project is led by Our Sisters' House (Domestic Violence Agency in Tacoma), Jasmine Conway (author of, 'One Survivor to Another: A Personal Memoir and Call to Action Regarding Preventing and Healing from Sex Trafficking,' peer advocate, and survivor-leader) and Dr. Carolyn West (Professor, UW Tacoma). The project is a rapid ethnographic assessment conducted over two to four months, in which we examine the socioeconomic impacts of the commercial sex economy (CSE) on female-identifying Black and African American individuals across the state of Washington to explore intervention and prevention pathways. I am supporting the team in developing research processes, data analysis plans, and data collection instruments to conduct interviews and administer surveys to CSE-impacted individuals, direct service providers, and community leaders to gather their personal and professional descriptions of the social, economic, and cultural factors that shape risk and resiliency among CSE impacted Black female-identifying survivors. Findings from the project (currently ongoing) will be documented in a research report and submitted to the Washington State Legislature in September 2024.

Designing Language Access in the South Puget Sound

Dr. Alison Cardinal (Assistant Professor, UW Tacoma) invited me to collaborate on the project "*Designing Language Access in the South Puget Sound.*" The project used a community participatory approach to identify the most pressing areas of need related to language access and offer solutions to improve language access among multilingual individuals and communities in South Puget Sound. I served on the Designing Language Access Community of Practice group with other local community leaders. The group met monthly to share and build knowledge to improve language access in Puget Sound. The group accomplished the following: 1) wrote a statement defining language access as a problem created by white supremacy; 2) developed a language access-related values statement that can be adapted in different agencies; 3) created resources for language justice approaches to language access; 4) designed an extensive handbook for creating holistic language access plans. The work also resulted in a peer-reviewed article-length conference proceeding titled, '*From language access to language justice: Creating a participatory values statement for collective action.*' (Cardinal et al., 2021)

Future Research Plans & Trajectory

I have invested the last five years at UW Tacoma, reaching out and building partnerships and relationships with community-based agencies and survivors with lived experiences who are deeply committed to improving system-level responses and services. I am excited to continue these collaborative partnerships and expand the research discourse on IPV-related help-seeking among women from minoritized communities in the US. My current research on help-seeking has highlighted key areas that will serve as future research priorities and sustain my scholarship trajectory for the next few years. For instance, there is a need for an in-depth investigation of survivors' interactions with legal systems, a system that women survivors have shared is often their first point of formal contact and, unfortunately, experience the most significant number of challenges and barriers with. A specific area of inquiry will be examining how biases operate within legal systems for women survivors who hold other marginalized identities (non-English speaking, immigrants, mental health challenges, etc.) and how that deters women from accessing other forms of help. Other areas for future research will include exploring and documenting how intimate partner violence tactics and dynamics are evolving (e.g., perpetrators using survivors' legal status against them, use of technology to control survivors, and transnational abandonment frequently reported among South Asian immigrant women in the US). Increased knowledge and awareness related to these evolving dynamics will ensure that service providers feel prepared to respond and intervene in the best way. I am currently working on a manuscript that highlights women survivors' experiences related to coercive control and emotional abuse and their suggestions on how formal services can better support them. My current research on help-seeking has provided me with important pilot assessment data that will serve as the foundation for many new lines of inquiry to sustain my research program for the next few years. Working in collaboration with community agencies and survivors will continue to be critical to this project. Ultimately, as a tenured faculty member, I plan to move towards implementing culturally and contextually adapted interventions for women experiencing intimate partner violence (from minoritized communities) and improving

the quality of existing services (particularly in under-resourced settings) through training and capacity building that will be considered international models in practice-based settings.

I am also interested in pursuing collaborative research opportunities with faculty with similar interests (both within the school and tri-campus) in shared areas of research, both as a form of mentorship and mutual growth. For instance, I am currently working with colleagues from the School of Medicine, School of Nursing, and School of Public Health at UW Seattle on a systematic review of interventions that address language access barriers among IPV survivors in the United States. I collaborated on a study (led by Dr. Asia Bishop, School of Social Work and Criminal Justice, UW Tacoma) that examines disparities in contraception use among rural youth and the social determinants driving these disparities. The manuscript addresses a critical gap in the literature and points to strategies for reducing adverse youth outcomes like unintended pregnancy or STIs (article currently under revise and resubmit, *Journal of Rural Health*). Additionally, we have conceptualized a follow-up study that will use a latent class analysis approach to examine intersectional disparities and heterogeneity in contraception use among rural youth in Washington State.

Teaching

Teaching Philosophy

Social justice and self-awareness are critical elements of my teaching philosophy, particularly as they relate to my social identity and positionality. As a social work educator, irrespective of the courses I teach, there are key teaching philosophies that I integrate into my pedagogy. Inspired by the work of bell hooks, I foster pedagogical practices that center on ‘*education as the practice of freedom*.’ This includes adopting teaching approaches that push students to challenge, question, and unlearn taken-for-granted assumptions and beliefs about the social world. I do so by valuing students’ experiential knowledge and encouraging students to critically evaluate academic, social work, and related knowledge based on who is included and who is left out. I make my social positionality and worldviews known to my students and encourage them to share theirs. For instance, in my graduate cultural diversity course (TSOCW 504), students are encouraged to critically examine their assumptions, beliefs, and behaviors regarding diversity (race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, etc.). I achieve this through a ‘location of self’ assignment, where students are asked to define their social locations and critically reflect on how the intersection of their dominant and marginalized identities shapes their perceptions of the social world and informs their social work practice. As a woman scholar of color, this is an engaging yet challenging class to teach and one in which I have consistently received high student evaluation scores (4.8 out of 5).

I encourage students to develop a comprehensive and critical understanding of social work theories, research, and direct practice while demonstrating continued commitment to advocating for the rights of culturally diverse and marginalized communities. For instance, I teach the graduate course on *Interpersonal Violence* using frameworks such as intersectionality, ecological understandings of violence, and practice emphasizing resilience and survivor-centered models of care. These frameworks help students see that interpersonal violence is not just a consequence of gender oppression. They understand interpersonal violence through a power-based analysis that recognizes and acknowledges how the intersectionality of identities (e.g., race, socioeconomic status, age, disability, immigration status, gender identity, and sexual orientation) shapes communities’ experiences with interpersonal violence. Through my teaching, I emphasize that research or knowledge is not apolitical; there is no one way of knowing, and knowledge is enriched by integrating multiple perspectives. To foster pluralism and global perspectives on social work, I present readings from non-western contexts and examples from my work in India so that students are aware of the myriad ways in which different cultures contribute to the evidence base of social work. For instance, I teach theories of human development, assessment, and intervention development in practice-level courses. However, I do not present these modules in a vacuum. I discuss strengths and shortcomings in using westernized models of care in non-western contexts, where illnesses have cultural meanings and communities’ distress is often situated in social, economic, and other structural inequalities. I emphasize the real-world applicability of course content by tying readings and classroom discussions to students’ field experiences, reminding students to focus on small accomplishments, and encouraging them to value process over outcomes in both classrooms and the field.

Teaching Summary

As an Assistant Professor, I am expected to teach six courses yearly, typically two per quarter. Until the summer of 2024, I have taught twenty-three sections of graduate-level courses and eight sections of BASW undergraduate-level social welfare courses. I also serve as an advisor to BASW and MSW Students and have supervised one undergraduate BASW student and three graduate MSW students on independent research studies; two of these independent research studies with two MSW students and one BASW student culminated in one published peer-reviewed book chapter and one peer-reviewed journal article. In addition, I serve as an external dissertation committee member to Priyanjali Chakraborty, a doctoral candidate at the University of Texas Arlington. Her dissertation is focused on ‘Unmet family planning care and health-literacy needs among low-income immigrant women in the United States.’ I am also an affiliate with the Gender and Sexuality Studies Minor, a cross-campus academic program anchored in the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington Tacoma.

My overall combined median score for student teaching evaluations is 4.7 out of 5.00, demonstrating my deep investment in teaching and positive outcomes for student learning. In the Fall of 2024, I was nominated for the UW Tacoma Distinguished Teaching Award. While I did not receive the award, the awards committee commented, “Dr. Bhattacharya has exemplified a proactive and student-centered teaching methodology, consistently checking in with students through various methods to refine the course content and structure.” The committee also noted my ‘holistic approach to teaching, a genuine investment in student growth, and a commitment to creating an inclusive and intellectually stimulating academic environment.’ I was also the student-nominated faculty speaker for the 2024 MSW Hooding Ceremony at the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice, UW Tacoma.

At the BASW and MSW levels, I have mostly taught social work theory, diversity, and practice-related courses. I have significantly redesigned every course to focus on diversity, inclusion, and advocacy for marginalized communities. This includes adapting course content to reflect perspectives from scholars of color and designing assignments that ask students to critically reflect on the content through a critical advocacy lens based on its relevance for the communities they intend to serve. One notable highlight of my teaching has been the two-sequence (over two quarters) MSW Integrative Practice course that focuses on designing, implementing, and evaluating research-informed intervention programs. This is a course that students take in the last year of their MSW program and apply skills and competencies gained through the program. Students begin by defining a social problem, conducting a community-based needs assessment to understand the problem better, and writing a research review to identify a critical need. The course culminates in each student developing a Capstone project in which they propose and design an intervention that addresses a critical need in their communities of interest. This class requires time-intensive and individualized supervision and mentorship on my part. While challenging, it has been a joyful and gratifying experience seeing my students think about, brainstorm, and critically design potential solutions to address a community need they are passionate about. Students present their innovative interventions to a broader community of faculty, student peers, and community practitioners at the Annual Capstone Fair. Through this course and proposed projects, several of my students have made significant contributions to their agencies of practice, and some have also received funding support to implement their projects post-graduation.

Enhancing my Pedagogical Skills and Practice

Teaching social work students has been an enriching experience, yet also challenging. As a woman scholar of color who experiences gendered racism in my everyday life, I have often experienced microaggressions in the classroom, which is also well-documented in the literature (Carroll, 2017). Biased comments related to my ‘heavy accent’ and ‘overt feminist stance’ have surfaced in student evaluation reports. Students from dominant groups sometimes challenge my stance and perspectives central to my identity, teaching, and scholarship. Navigating these power differentials in the classroom and checking my emotions and biases while not compromising students’ learning are critical. I believe pedagogical approaches are as critical as course content for a course, such as cultural diversity and societal justice, where we engage in discussions related to identities, experiences, and standpoints. Teaching is a skill that cannot be mastered in isolation. I rely extensively on debriefing and learning with colleagues and have sought several professional development opportunities since my appointment at UW Tacoma to enhance my pedagogical skills. For instance, in 2021, I was selected as a *Fellow at the Strengthening Educational Excellence through Diversity (SEED) Teaching Institute at the University of Washington Tacoma*. Participation in this program was critical because the SEED

institute's cornerstone values, i.e., developing students' voices, creating inclusive classroom environments, enhancing critical thinking, and nurturing personal cultural competency, deeply resonated with me. Based on inputs and perspectives from SEED facilitators and peers, I worked on three key areas: 1) Being explicit about my identities and role as an educator, 2) Rethinking classroom space to foster connections and relationships, 3) Integrating students' voices in courses' syllabi, content, and assessment.

As an international scholar, I carefully attend to the needs of students for whom English is not the first language. I have actively collaborated with the Teaching and Learning Center to seek their input on how to support students in developing strong and effective writing skills. I have met with the staff at the Teaching and Learning Center several times to discuss course content and locate relevant material, find ways to design assignments with instructions and prompts that are helpful to students, and have invited the writing center to my class, where they have provided specific instructions to my students related to my course assignments. I was also selected to be part of the *UW Tacoma Writing Fellows Program* in Spring 2022. As a participant in this program, I learned strategies to create writing assignments that address writing bottlenecks and strengthen students' critical thinking skills while deepening their understanding of the course content. Several of my students have raised concerns about the increasing cost of course materials. Keeping this critical feedback in mind, I enrolled in faculty training on *Open Educational Resources* to learn ways to redesign course syllabi to offer students free, openly licensed materials. This approach is critical because it significantly reduces the financial burden on students without compromising learning. I also participated in the *Teaching Online Workshop* offered by the *UW Tacoma Office of Digital Learning* in Fall 2021. During this workshop, I learned strategies to engage students in online courses and create spaces for them to feel closely connected with me as their instructor and the course despite being in a remote learning environment. My efforts to enhance my skills as an educator and mentor will continue. For the 2024-2025 academic year, I will be participating in the *UWT Undergraduate Research Faculty Fellows Program* to share and learn best and impactful practices in working with undergraduate research assistants and I have also applied to participate in the [Faculty Learning Community: Teaching to Transform](#), dedicated to increasing faculty awareness about the talents, cultures, and diverse perspectives of our Asian American and Pacific Islander students (AAPI), many of whom are first generation.

Teaching Evaluations

During my first year of joining Tacoma, COVID-19 led to a university shutdown and caused us to navigate rapid and unpredictable changes in our personal and professional lives. Within a week, we moved to online teaching, and this included significant additional work, including redesigning course syllabi, lectures, and assignments while keeping students engaged and motivated. Given the sudden disconnect from students, as instructors, we felt the increasing need to maintain close contact with students through frequent connections and check-ins to ensure they successfully progressed through the program despite the myriad challenges resulting from the pandemic. As an educator, I adopted practices such as more frequent evaluations and check-ins to gain students' feedback and make changes to better suit their needs. Students presented several challenges to online learning (e.g., missing in-person class interactions) but, by and large, acknowledged several supports that I, as an instructor, could offer them. These included detailed lectures with audio narration, interactive discussion boards, additional course materials such as podcasts and videos to replace the monotony of course readings every week, and, most importantly, grace and flexibility in meeting course expectations while not compromising the learning. Even through the pandemic, my teaching evaluations remained consistently positive, and students appreciated the flexibility and grace that I provided.

Based on students' feedback, I believe that students have appreciated my teaching style, which is a mix of creating collaborative learning environments and safe spaces where students can learn and challenge perspectives on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Students have also appreciated and valued the global perspectives on social work education and practice I bring to the classroom. They have shown interest in my research, and I have actively worked towards seeking student involvement in my research projects. I believe that as mentors, it is critical to offer students such opportunities. I have also served as a mentor to several students who have approached me with a myriad of reasons (e.g., applying to doctoral programs, navigating social work education as students of color, suggestions on field internship, creating strategic plans to maintain healthy school and work-life balance, and writing letters of recommendation for graduate programs and scholarship opportunities). I have invited colleagues from my school (Dr. Marian Harris, Dr. JaeRan Kim, Dr. Erin Casey,

and Dr. Jarrod Call) and Dr. Rachel Endo, Dean of the School of Education at UW Tacoma, to observe and evaluate my classes. I have also conducted four collegial peer evaluations for my colleagues at the school (part-time instructors, assistant teaching professors, and assistant professors) to co-learn and share teaching tools, styles, and strategies.

My teaching experience has taught me that students appreciate and value authenticity and compassion in their instructors. Critical self-awareness is central to achieving this authenticity. Furthermore, the average University of Washington Tacoma student experiences several personal and systemic challenges. Empathic and supportive mentorship is critical to students' success. We are living in a uniquely volatile time in which conversations and action to address systemic inequality and injustice in this country and across the globe are necessary. During these times, my role as an educator is to move beyond delivering course content and employ teaching approaches that reflect an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens. I want to acknowledge the value and strength I bring to classrooms as a woman scholar of color. I hope that my own personal and professional experiences of navigating white-dominated academic spaces can inspire my students (mainly from underrepresented minoritized communities) to take pride in their journeys, use their experiences as assets and expertise to enhance social work practice/knowledge, and more importantly remind them that they belong and are much needed in the social work academy and profession.

Service

As a new faculty member in 2019, the pandemic limited opportunities to connect with the larger campus. Despite the remote work environments, I actively sought out opportunities to serve on committees that would enable me to build relationships with colleagues and students within the school and the larger campus. Like my teaching, research, and scholarship, I describe below how my service within the school, the university, and the community is directed toward creating anti-racist, inclusive, and equitable environments.

Service to the University of Washington Tacoma

One of my most notable contributions to the University was my involvement in the *Campus Climate Survey work*, a tri-campus university-wide collaboration on building an anti-racist, inclusive, and equitable campus climate. In the first year of this work, along with Dr. Rachel Endo, I served as Co-Chair of the *UW Tacoma Climate Survey Graduate Study Implementation Plan Team*. We were tasked to review the Campus Climate Survey results and recommend actionable steps. These actionable steps directly centered and addressed the concerns and experiences of student members of the UWT community, particularly students from minoritized communities. As a team, we worked on reviewing survey findings, gathered additional data through online surveys and hosting student community forums, and recommended concrete action items to improve campus climate for students (mainly from minoritized groups) and create inclusive and equitable spaces to foster students' learning and growth. Based on our work, we drafted an action report that was presented to the campus community in June 2021. In the second year, along with Dr. Christine Stevens, I served as co-chair of the *UW Tacoma Climate Survey Monitoring Committee* for graduate and undergraduate students. The committee aimed to monitor the implementation of campus-level action items recommended to transform UW Tacoma's climate. Given the nature and intensity of the work and because it is unusual for junior faculty to serve on university-wide committees within their initial years, I was offered a one-course release for one quarter. As a committee, we regularly assessed and provided feedback to all responsible entities charged with taking action on problems and issues identified in the climate survey implementation plans for undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff. In the Winter of 2022, I was selected to participate in the Leading for Anti-Racism, Equity, and Diversity (LEAD) Institute at UW Tacoma. The LEAD institute was a 6-week cohort-based leadership program. Weekly cohort discussions included collective debriefing and learning practices to help ground our work (related to teaching, research, and leadership) in equity, antiracism, and diversity. The institute culminated in us drafting tangible action plans that reflected how we planned to adapt anti-racist learning frameworks in our research, teaching, and service at UW Tacoma.

I serve on the *Advisory Council for the Office of Global Affairs (OGA)* at the University of Washington Tacoma. As an Advisory Council member, I provide input and feedback on OGA's proposed initiatives and programs, including aligning them with the campus-wide strategic planning. My research in India and with the South Asian Immigrant community in the United States was featured in the [OGA's 2021-2022 Annual Report](#). As someone who was once an international student herself, I value this opportunity to think of ways our campus

can enhance its global presence and commitment to supporting international students. Along with my South Asian social work colleagues in other universities, I look forward to planning a study abroad program (in India) for students at UW Tacoma. I am currently *a member of the Social Justice Research and Scholarship Institute (SJRSI)* at UW Tacoma. As an Institute, we were awarded two campus grants to foster opportunities for community building and connection among BIPOC faculty across campus. These included hosting community events where faculty and staff shared their scholarship and professional development interests and built connections with colleagues with common research and pedagogical interests.

Service to the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice

Within the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice, my service contributions have included 1) Serving as a member of the Professional Standards Committee, 2) Serving as Co-Chair on the Equity and Inclusion Committee for one year, and as a member since my appointment, 3) Serving as Faculty Advisor for Xi Pi Chapter of Phi Alpha Social Work National Honor Society. As the Advisor for the Xi Pi Chapter, my responsibilities include reviewing and accepting new student applications, attending monthly meetings, and supporting and mentoring student officers in their planned initiatives. Working with student leaders on campus initiatives (e.g., Campus-wide food pantry drive) has been a great opportunity. In addition, we have discussed future initiatives that the organization can lead to support new students in the program. I served as Co-chair (for one year) on the School's Equity and Inclusion Committee and as a member for the remaining four of my five years since my appointment as an Assistant Professor. As a member of the E&I committee, we have organized several school-wide initiatives to foster connections among faculty and staff. One notable task was conducting a school survey to assess the current climate and identify areas of need and improvement. Based on the responses from the survey, we organized several events and planned initiatives to address expressed needs. For instance, faculty and staff members expressed concerns about ableism. To address this concern, we organized two lunch and learn sessions where we invited experts on *Access and Universal Design in Teaching and Addressing Ableism in the classroom*. In addition, we organized a campus-wide social justice event where we asked community leaders to share with students how they engage in social justice work. In addition, we organized a DEI retreat for our school faculty and staff, and as part of an E&I subcommittee, we assessed and designed a DEI course syllabus rubric for the school that aligned with our school and mission. The revised rubric was shared with school and faculty staff at the annual DEI Retreat. As a tenured faculty member, I would be committed to continuing to lead and serve in the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice, including mentoring and supporting new/newer faculty and part-time instructors, creating and supporting innovations and adaptations to MSW and BASW curriculum to support students better and continue to build and strengthen the school's outward community presence and impact.

Service to Profession and Community

I am deeply committed to service to the profession and various communities and have demonstrated a sustained record in these areas. I am an active member of the Society for Social Work and Research. I serve on the editorial board for *Clinical Social Work Journal*. As an editorial board member, I aim to increase the global presence, contributions, and impact that social work practitioners and researchers are making beyond the United States. In addition, I serve as a reviewer for journals including *Clinical Social Work*, *Violence Against Women*, *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, *Qualitative Social Work*, and *Qualitative Health Research*. I was elected Early Career Scholar at Large for the South Asian Social Work Educators' Association (SASWEA). The mission of this association is to promote social work excellence in education, research, advocacy, and practice for scholars and educators of South Asian origin and scholars concerned with the South Asian region and the South Asian community in the U.S. As the Board of Directors of SASWEA, we highlight the ongoing impactful and exciting social work research in the South Asian context with the broader social work community and the expansion and formalization of mentorship networks between South Asian faculty and social work doctoral students in the United States.

Within the community, I served as a board member at YWCA, Pierce County, for two years. As a board member, I also took on the role of co-chairing the Board's Racial Justice and Public Policy Subcommittee. As committee co-chair, I led efforts to review and revise the agency's Bylaws and align them with the national YWCA Bylaws through a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We substantially revised voting policies and board composition that reflected inclusive and equitable practices. In addition, as a board member, I attended the

organization's monthly meetings and supported them in their fund development initiatives. My most notable highlight was an invitation from the agency to deliver the Keynote address at YWCA's Lean into Love Breakfast Fund Raiser in 2023. My talk focused on the importance of doing anti-violence work through a racial justice lens. Because I partner with the YWCA in my research projects, serving as a board member was a meaningful opportunity because it helped me to understand the agency and its needs better, ensuring that my research programs align with the priorities laid out by staff, leadership, and the community of survivors that they serve. I have also served on the Board of Directors for Influencing Social Policy (ISP) to further its dedicated efforts to enhance social work's involvement in transforming policies. I was invited to be a member of the organization's anti-racist sub-committee. Currently, I serve as a member of the *Washington Association of Child Advocate Programs Diversity Council* (WACAP). This Council trains, supervises, and supports Child advocates tasked with understanding, addressing, and advocating for the best interests and well-being of children involved in dependency and family law cases. As a member of the Diversity Council, we support WACAP in achieving its goals by reviewing organization policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that they promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, assessing the organization's current diversity efforts and advising them on best practices and initiatives, and developing recommendations to strengthen WACAP's DEI policies, procedures, and practices.

Conclusion and Prospects for Future Employment

Through this narrative, I have described how my research, scholarship, teaching, and service are embedded in equity-conscious and reciprocal approaches to community engagement and how, in each of these domains, I seek to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion for minoritized communities, core priorities reflected in the University of Washington's expressed commitment to excellence, equity, and diversity. Aligned with promotion and tenure guidelines at the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice and the UW Faculty Code and Governance criteria as noted in Section 23-34-2: "Appointment to the rank of associate professor requires a record of substantial success in teaching and research" (n.p.), my research, scholarship, and teaching demonstrate a clear commitment to advancing equity and excellence in higher education, as well as in the field of social work and allied disciplines. My research and scholarship, which is an optimal blend of independent and collaborative work, reflect a cohesive line of inquiry, have strong implications for mental health and intimate-partner violence-related practice and policy, and advance new methodological directions (rooted in anti-oppressive practice) in working with women from marginalized communities. My teaching contributions demonstrate my unwavering commitment to understanding and addressing students' needs and offering mentorship and support that can foster thriving and joyful learning environments, inclusion, and belonging. In all, I have intentionally integrated my research, scholarship, teaching, and service to advance UW Tacoma's urban-serving mission and commitment to our diverse students pursuing their education with us to experience upward mobility, which will positively impact the future generation and their communities' long-term vitality. As a scholar, I have constantly relocated from countries and homes to pursue academic aspirations. I have finally found a permanent home, a school, a university, and a supportive and collaborative community, reflected in how we take pride in individual and collective accomplishments. It will be an honor to continue my work and service at the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice at the University of Washington Tacoma and have a long-lasting impact on the University and, more importantly, several communities, including those we serve locally and internationally. I hope I have achieved or exceeded the criteria required for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor at the University of Washington Tacoma. Thank you for taking the time to review my narrative. I am deeply appreciative.

Sincerely,

Anindita Bhattacharya

Anindita Bhattacharya, MSW, PhD

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