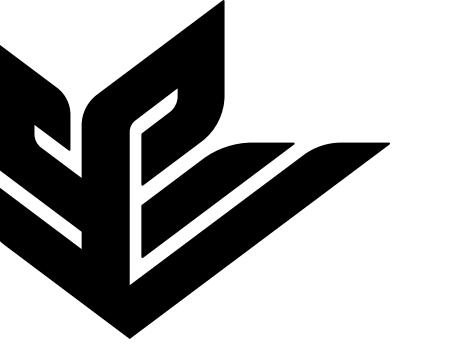


Navigating transnational ties and belonging: An intergenerational family therapy approach with South Asian immigrant families



Shreya Rangwani

ABSTRACT

The diversity of transnational experiences of families and the challenges to their sense of belonging have important implications for the broader sociocultural mental health system. This study aims to examine intergenerational family therapy to support South Asian immigrant families as they deal with the challenges of maintaining cross-cultural relationships. Family therapy for South Asian immigrants have focused on cultural stress and intergenerational conflicts, rather than family-level methods and systemic elements that form the reports of those transnational families. Through this research, the study targets to provide vital insights and realistic techniques for MFT therapists working with South Asian immigrant populations. By growing culturally responsive, family-centered interventions, this work seeks to contribute to the bigger discourse on the experiences of transnational households and help the general well-being of immigrant communities.

INTRODUCTION

- ❑ Transnational households (families with ties to past country) are increasing due to globalization and immigration.
- ❑ These families, especially South Asian immigrants, struggle with belonging socially, culturally, and mentally while balancing heritage and host cultures.
- ❑ Intergenerational differences in acculturation cause family tensions and strained relationships.
- ❑ Transnational ties (contacts, remittances, cultural activities across borders) impact family cohesion, wellbeing, and integration.
- ❑ Intergenerational family therapy supports these families by focusing on interpersonal interactions across generations and cultures.
- ❑ Culturally sensitive therapy is crucial to reduce disparities, foster belonging for immigrant families like South Asians.

PRIMARY AIM AND HYPOTHESES

Research Question

How does an intergenerational family therapy approach impact the experience of transnational ties and sense of belonging among South Asian immigrant family members from different generations?

Summarizing Purpose: This study was used to evaluate the effects of intergenerational family therapy approach on how transnational ties and sense of belonging are intergenerational in Immigrant South Asian families.

Independent variable: Intergenerational family therapy approach

Dependent variables: Experience of transnational ties, sense of belonging

Hypotheses

An intergenerational family therapy intervention is expected to improve transnational tie maintenance for South Asian immigrant families overall, while also leading to a stronger sense of belonging to the country of origin among older generations and a stronger sense of belonging to the host country among younger generations within those families.

METHODS

Participants: This quantitative study will be conducted on South Asian immigrant families living in Greater Seattle area..

Sample Size: 100 families will be chosen through community, religious institutions and personal connections within South Asian community.

Inclusion Criteria: (1) families in which at least one parent was born outside the United States and immigrated from a South Asian country, and (2) families with at least one child aged 12-18 years old.

Exclusion Criteria: Families will be excluded if there is an active crisis, severe psychopathology, or lack of a common language for communication.

Procedures

- ❑ Eligible families will complete quantitative assessments on acculturation, family dynamics, cultural values, and psychological well-being before and after a 12-week intergenerational family therapy intervention.
- ❑ The intervention, conducted by trained Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs), will involve all family members and focus on strengthening intergenerational relationships, addressing acculturation gaps, and discussing evolving cultural identities.
- ❑ The pre/post design allows for the examination of changes following the completion of the 12-week program.

MEASURES

The quantitative assessment will include:

1. The Asian Values Scale (AVS; Kim et al., 1999) to assess adherence to Asian cultural values.
2. The Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA; Ryder et al., 2000) to measure bi-dimensional acculturation.
3. The Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales IV (FACES-IV; Olson, 2011) to evaluate family dynamics.
4. The Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB; Ryff & Keyes, 1995) to measure multiple dimensions of well-being.

Data Analysis

The data collected in this quantitative study will be analyzed by relevant statistical techniques like repeated measures ANOVA and regression analyses. This will determine interrelationships cultural and familial changes over the time which will be followed by interventions. Effect sizes and statistical significance will be reported. Quantitative methods allow a comprehensive assessment of intergenerational family therapy impacts on South Asian immigrant families across all the three domains utilizing well-validated measures.

RESULTS

The quantitative data from this study will be analyzed using appropriate statistical methods to examine the impacts of the intergenerational family therapy intervention on South Asian immigrant families. To explore the hypothesis that the intervention will improve the overall level of transnational reconciliation but a different impact on the sense of generational belonging, the following research has been designed:

1. For cross-cultural relations, a repeated-measures ANOVA is conducted with Asian Value Scale and Vancouver Index acculturation scores as repeated measures (pre vs. postintervention) and relevant demographics (e.g. time from time). participants) as covariates. This requires changes in cultural norms and culture after the intervention.
2. A separate regression analysis for both older and younger adults will be organized by using post intervention scores on the belonging subscale of the Psychological Well Being as the outcome variable.

Predictors will include generational status, Asian Values Scale and Vancouver Index of Acculturation scores, FACES scores and relevant demographics. This will allow modeling of how cultural factors and family dynamics impact belonging differently for each generational group. Effect sizes and tests of statistical significance will be reported for all analyses.

Discussion

Social Implications

- ❑ The research aims to support the well-being and successful transition of South Asian immigrant families by addressing challenges in maintaining cross-cultural relationships and negotiating belonging across cultures.
- ❑ The intergenerational family therapy approach, based on cultural values, can foster greater cohesion in immigrant families struggling with cultural differences between parents and children, which is crucial for mental health protection in immigrant communities.
- ❑ The study's findings may inform culturally sensitive practices to better serve the growing population of transnational families, and the development of family-based therapeutic models that respect the complexities of transcultural relationships and multicultural identities is essential for positive integration and reducing marginalization in the context of globalization and increased human mobility.

Clinical Implications

- ❑ The intergenerational family therapy program provides therapists with a culturally diverse approach to working with multigenerational immigrant families, involving all family members and validating each generation's unique perspective.
- ❑ The therapy aims to achieve greater mutual understanding, reconnect family loyalty with value systems, and equip families with skills to effectively manage their transnational relationships.
- ❑ This study offers guidance for therapists on applying the intergenerational family therapy model specifically to South Asian families.

Future Research Implications

- ❑ This study serves as a foundation for future research evaluating intergenerational processes across various immigrant communities, and longitudinal and mixed-methods designs would provide an in-depth understanding of how family-level processes influence individual well-being and integration outcomes over time.
- ❑ Future research should focus on identifying specific therapeutic strategies and cultural adjustments that enhance the effectiveness of this approach for diverse immigrant families from different backgrounds.
- ❑ As more evidence is collected for culturally responsive, family-centered mental health practices, we can work towards creating a more equitable and supportive system for the millions of transnational families navigating belonging across borders.