

# Analysis of multi generation families in singapore article: review of independent...

[Family](#)



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This chapter by Mehta & Thang (2008) on 'Multigenerational Families in Singapore' explores the dynamics of interdependence between generations of the grandparent, link parent and grandchild among the Chinese, Malay, and Indians ethnic groups. The qualitative research study involved 30 interviews conducted with 10 families that comprised questions related to level of satisfaction with relationships with family members, the role, and functions of the grandparent, and the common types of activities the grandparent and grandchild participated in that foster the bonding.

Findings from the study have identified that physical care, financial support, and the transmission of values and cultures were common types of interdependence among the 10 families surveyed. According to the authors, Asian grandparents' role and functions were recognised as "wardens of culture" in guiding, preserving and transmitting of traditional values, knowledge, experiences, and skills to the next generation. Grandparent was also recognised as reserve army that the link parent can count on for a caregiving, given to the fact that grandparent was expected to help out in caregiving tasks for their grandchild when co-residing together. Although looking after grandchildren can be stressful, it also gives them a sense of gratification and satisfaction. Therefore, grandparent' assistance with childcare is of important as mean of support among the multigenerational families. The study also found that those who live in the same household tend to be closer in relationship, as compared with link parent and grandchildren who live apart from their grandparents.

Chinese families were observed still holding strong Confucian valued supporting the grandparent caregiving role. Filial piety are expected of the <https://assignbuster.com/analysis-of-multi-generation-families-in-singapore-article-review-of-independent-dynamics-between-the-generations/>

link parent to take care of their parents when they aged. The joy of having first born grandsons were highly value, as noted in both Chinese and Indian ethnic groups whereby there was preference for male genders. The sense of pride and achievement were further enhanced if their grandchildren have grown up and were successful in their careers. Aside from above mentioned, religions played an important culture in all three generations of ethnic groups, whereby Hinduism and Islam were practiced among the Indian and Muslims families respectively. The younger generations tend to blend the older traditions of their Buddhism or Taoism religions into more contemporary practices such as Christianity to realistically suit the modern world. Spending time together such as watching TV, going overseas trip together occasionally or having meals together during weekends were common activities that grandparents enjoyed in engaging with their grandchildren. These activities tend to reduce when the grandchildren's school workloads were getting heavier as they progressed to higher level of education or involved in extracurricular activities in schools.

The middle generation, hence plays an important role in facilitating and making possible more opportunities for the alternate generations to communicate and interact. With more recent cohorts having even smaller families and change of living arrangements, there will be fewer children for parents to rely on in old age, especially for emotional support. It is also important for a grandparent and the grandchild to maintain close ties with each other even when they do not stay together. The current cohort of grandparents who are more educated and financially less dependent on their children, the practice of interdependence may be reduced. They may be in a

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position to decline to look after their grandchildren on the daily basis due to physical demand of caregiving. A desire of engagement on their availability to help when there is a need, while enjoying occasional playing and hugging with them will be a better arrangement.

There is a need to strike a balance to maintain harmony between generations due to the benefits in reciprocity in caregiving. What makes this interaction “ reciprocal” is the sense of satisfaction the grandparent feels in caregiving, and the closeness of the relationship fosters with the link parent and grandchild. The authors highlighted the value of studying the changing dynamics of intergenerational relationships and its impact on policies, services and intergeneration programmes, within the context of a fast urbanised city. One way is to organise more intergenerational activities or programmes aimed to abridge generational gaps between the elderly and the young. Hence, close contact, especially through regular caregiving is vital in building the emotional attachment between a grandparent and grandchild. The time spent between grandparent and grandchild during childhood makes a lasting impact on the grandchild’s development in the later years. On the whole, Singaporeans value intergenerational closeness and unconditional love and respect for their parents. It is important that older generations are not merely seen as a money-saving measure when it comes to grandparenting. The time, energy and experience grandparents give can mean sacrificing their own plans and ambitions. The benefits of promoting intergenerational ties lies not only in building bonds, but also giving the grandparent a sense of purpose. This helps to improve their

emotional health and gives them a stronger sense of purpose and dignity, enabling them to age successfully.