

# ORAL PAPER PRESENTATION 4: INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

## Role of technology in the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren in Asia

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**Purpose** Traditionally, the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren has been built upon the value of filial piety as the foundation of Asian society. However, this relationship has been evolving with the times. Due to urbanisation, the social impact of family structure and its development has undergone changes. However, grandparents remain an integral part of the family dynamics, most notably in the role of care for their grandchildren. Indeed, factors such as increased life expectancy (United Nations, 2022) and an increase in the number of married female participation in the workforce (MRSD, MOM, 2022) mean that the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren remain prominent in the family. However, some believe that the integration of technology into the community has created a generation gap between grandparents and grandchildren that can strain their relationship. This paper aims to examine the role that technology plays in the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, and how it is related to the traditional value of filial piety in the relationship. **Method** We conducted a review on existing literature. A search of three databases, Scopus, Web of Science, and PubMed, was done using a combination of the keywords “elderly”, “grandparents”, “grandchildren”, “technology”, “ICT”, and “Asia”, excluding articles on medical technologies instead of communicative ones. 10 articles were found through the search and their results were discussed and evaluated. **Results and Discussion** The integration of technology into the community, for the most part, has been able to aid in fostering a sense of closeness between grandparents and grandchildren. As technology becomes more user-friendly and older persons’ digital literacy increases, grandparents and grandchildren are now more able to remain emotionally close even if they are separated by physical distance (Ho & Chiu, 2020). Grandparents need only to send a text or audio message to communicate with their grandchildren. Even if face-to-face meetings are not available, video calls are a natural substitute (Bakshi & Bhattacharyya, 2021). Furthermore, some grandchildren invited their grandparents to use technology by posting their photos and contents on social media platforms. These digital platforms serve as a medium that grandchildren use to share their lives with their grandparents (Ebbeck et al., 2021). More importantly, being a more technologically-savvy generation, the grandchildren often take up the role of reverse mentoring in teaching and levelling up their grandparents’ digital literacy (Cheng et al., 2021). Technology can create opportunities for intergenerational bonding and close physical divides between grandparents and grandchildren, serving as a platform for each party to carry out their responsibilities to the other. In contrast to long held views that technology creates barriers in human relationships, this is not necessarily the case. Filial piety in the grandparent-grandchild relationship is augmented by technology.

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