

Inter-Generational Conflict Among Younger and Older Generations

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Abstract

The younger generation perceives the affairs in their own way and works according to their own liking, the older generation obstructs them by their own views and experiences directly or indirectly, creating an inter generational conflict in the society. The present study focuses on intergenerational conflicts among younger and older generations. Intergenerational conflict scale developed by Km. Roma Pal (1984) was used to collect the data. The sample consists of 80 subjects include 40 from the younger generation (18–25 years) and another 40 from the age group of 55+ yrs. The data was collected by using simple randomizing technique. Results indicate that there are significant differences among young and older generation and Gender-wise and no Locality-wise differences were found with regard to Inter generational Conflict. Age, gender and locality were significantly associated with sub areas of Intergenerational conflict. Results are discussed in the light of psychological interventions..

Keywords: Inter-generational conflict; Younger and older generations.

How to cite this article:

K Lalitha, PV Suneetha. Inter-Generational Conflict Among Younger and Older Generations. RFP Journal of Gerontology and Geriatric Nursing. 2019;2(1-2):09–14.

Introduction

India underwent different types of transitions namely demographic, economic and social which effected lives of all the age groups. Lot of importance was given to India because of its family ties. Maintaining good and productive relations are considered as intergenerational relationships. Every age has its own problems. The problems affect not only the family but the community at large. Since the adjustment to a new environment is difficult at any age and the people belong to different age group hence the community focus a complicated problem. Earlier the older person used to live together with more than two or three generations and received an unparalleled sense of honour and legacy/ and had the responsibility of decision making related to all the activities of the family. They are considered as banks of experience and wisdom. Elderly are

considered as transformers of family traditions and culture and even young shows respect towards parents and grand parents (Sushma Batra & Kakoli Bhaumik, 2004). Earlier in the joint family system two or three generations are living together. Each member has to follow the rules and regulations set by the family and head of the family is generally the older person of the family. And mostly the family bonds are very emotional and used to be very strong support system (Tiwari & Pandey, 2013).

Physical and psychological well being of an older person is affected by intergenerational conflict. Intergenerational conflict sometimes leads to reduced physical and psychological well being of an individual. It also reflects the quality of relationship. For ex: Conflicts over child-rearing practices may result to problematic children (Loeber & Dishion, 1984; Patterson & Strouthamer-Loeber, 1984), and also reflects on parenting style and quality bonds with children and parents

(Bedford, 1992). Similarly, lifestyle issues between parents less attracts towards their parents (Simons, Conger, & Whitbeck, 1988); the quality of family relationships (Whitbeck et al., 1991), familial concern and effectual solidarity (Whitbeck et al., 1994) and psychological distress on children and parents (Umberson, 1992).

From the last twenty years many studies focused on intergenerational cohesion and solidarity in ageing families however litter focus on conflict, which is part of intergenerational relationships (Bengtson, Rosenthal, & Burton, 1995) Some researchers included various components of conflict, and have investigated multiple domains of conflict issues in parent-adolescent relationships and child parent relationships and their satisfaction (Galambos & Almeida, 1992; Johnson, 1978; Montemayor, 1983; Papini & Sebbi, 1988; Smetana, 1989) parental rejection (Whitbeck, Simons, & Conger, 1991; Whitbeck, Hoyt, & Huck, 1994a; 1994b); parent hostility (Conger, McCarthy, Yang, Lahey, & Kropp, 1984); unequal treatment of children by parents (Bedford, 1992); ideological differences (Bengtson & Kuypers, 1971); participation in household chores, appearance, politeness, finances, and substance abuse (Calambos & Almeida, 1992); and parental management strategies (Dishion & Loeber, 1985). From the above point of view, it is clear that intergenerational conflict is the crucial problems not only for India but almost all the Nations of the world. But it is strange to note that no tool is available to measure the intergenerational crises. Okagaki and Moore (2000) found that children are more likely to have a stronger desire to adopt different aspects of their parents' culture when they have a positive parent-child relationship than in a context where the child is emotionally distant from the parent.

The research related intergenerational issues on Indian population is very limited. Earlier studies include the nature of intergenerational conflict (Sha, 1969), psychological study of intergenerational differences (Sinha, 1972); Problems in three generational households (Jamuna, 1991). In Jamuna's (1990) study, elderly respondents indicated a preference to live with daughters than sons. Reasons cited were strong emotional attachment and the high likelihood of receiving good care from them. Intergenerational relationships in rural India (Rosenzweig, 1994). Some of the topics covered by the researchers in the special are as follows- Intergenerational relationships (Ramamurti, 2002). In India, for many older adults, children (especially male

children) represent an old age security (Jamuna, 2002). Jamuna, Lalitha, & Ramamurti (2003) reported that an overwhelming majority of care receivers (81%) preferred to stay with daughters than sons or living alone.); Intergenerational Programs and Practices (Matthew & Chadha, 2004); Intergenerational Relationships : A Study of Three Generations (Sushma Batra & Kakoli Bhaumik, 2004); Intergenerational Family Support for Older Men and Women in South India (Sudha, Rajan & Sarm, 2004) Grandmothers: Needed or Avoided (Archana Kaushik Panda, 2004) Intergenerational Issues in old age (Gangadhar & Prasad, 2004); Inter-generational Relationships and Well-being (Surjit Singh, 2004), Improving Intergenerational Relationships through mentoring programs (Prakash, 2004), Indian caregiving system (Jyoti & Adam, 2004). The above scenario clearly indicates intergenerational conflict studies ae limited on Indian sample.

Statement of the Problem

Every age has its own problems. Mental Health struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands. The younger generation perceives the affairs in their own way and works according to their own likes and dislikes. Their differ in ideas, values, way of the life and even in the mode of thinking from the older generations shows approve the rapid and drastic change in the society whereby the older generation obstructs them by their own views and experiences directly or indirectly, leads to creating an inter generational conflict in the society. Intergenerational conflict refers to the conflict between older and younger generations as they compete for jobs and resources. The related factors of intergenerational conflict are educational structure of the nation, social system, and structures traditional values, religious pursuits, authority and power, employment, political affairs etc., (Boundless, 2016).

An attempt is made in the present study to examine the Inter generational conflicts among younger and older generations.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the significant differences between young and older subjects in their Inter generational conflicts.
2. To examine differences between Male and Female subjects in their intergenerational conflicts.

3. To examine differences between Urban and Rural subjects in their Inter generational conflicts.
4. To examine the association between age, gender and locality in their Inter generational conflict.

In order to realize the above objectives, the following hypotheses are formulated to be tested in the present investigation.

Hypotheses

1. There is a significant difference between 18–25 and 55+ age group subjects in their Inter generational conflicts.
2. There is a significant difference between Male and Female subjects in their Inter generational conflicts.
3. There is a significant difference between Urban and Rural subjects in their Inter generational conflicts.
4. There is a significant association between age, gender and locality and intergenerational conflict.

Materials and Methods

The sample distribution is presented in Table 1. The total sample consists of 80 subjects of which 40 are from the age group of 18–25 and 40 are from 55+ age group. The total sample equally distributed gender-wise and locality wise. The sample was selected by simple random technique in such a way that they fit into a 2*2*2 factorial design.

Sample of the study

Table 1: Socio-Demographic details of the sample Total N = 80

| Sl. No | Sub-Groups | N | (%) |
|--------|----------------|----|-----|
| 1 | Age 18–25 | 40 | 50 |
| | 55+ | 40 | 50 |
| 2 | Gender Male | 40 | 50 |
| | Female | 40 | 50 |
| 3 | Location Rural | 40 | 50 |
| | Urban | 40 | 50 |

Variables

Independent Variables: Age, Gender, and Location.

Dependent Variable: Inter generational conflicts.

Tool

The Inter Generational conflict of the 80 subjects were assessed by using Intergenerational Conflicts Scale developed by Km. Roma Pal (1984). It consists of 30 statements in each of the 10 areas of conflicts: Education, Politics, Sex-education, Position of Men and Women, Job selection and Dissatisfaction, Selection of Life Partner, Familial Relations, Sex Rivalry, Family planning, Religion. Responses are taken in four indicates Severe conflict, Mild conflict, Average conflict, No conflict.

Testing Procedure

Having prior appointment from the village Sarpanch and ward counselor, the investigator meet the subject individually distributed the inventory and explained the significance of the study and also explained to them as how they should respond to the items. The Data is obtained from 80 subjects and the responses are scored accordingly and it constitutes the data for the study.

Research Design

As there are three independent variables in the study and each variable is varied into two ways a 2*2*2 factorial design was employed.

Results and Discussion

Actually several factors are associated to this world wide problem of intergenerational conflict. The younger generation perceives the affairs in their own way and works according to their own liking. They differ in ideas, values, and way of the life and even in made of thinking from the older generation. They approve the rapid and drastic change in the society where by the older generation obstructs them by their own views and experiences directly, or indirectly, creating an inter generational conflict in the society which is evident from the news paper in which one fourth matter is full of younger and older generations conflict (Jamuna, 1991). The younger and older generation must learn how to live together, to share, compromise, accommodate, adjust and plan together. One is required to develop a proper attitude, skill and temperament to be successful in life. Keeping this in above the present study was planned and after obtaining the data, the data was analyzed.

Firstly, the level of intergenerational conflict among younger and older generation was analyzed (Table 2). The level was divided into 4 categories.

Table 2: Level of Intergenerational Conflict among younger and older generation

| Sl. No. | Level of Intergenerational conflict | 18-25 yrs (<i>n</i> = 40) | | 55+ yrs (<i>n</i> = 40) | |
|---------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|----|--------------------------|------|
| | | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| 1. | No conflict | 2 | 5 | 5 | 12.5 |
| 2. | Average Conflict | 10 | 25 | 14 | 35.0 |
| 3. | Mild Conflict | 24 | 60 | 19 | 47.5 |
| 4. | Severe Conflict | 4 | 10 | 2 | 5.0 |

The subjects data shows that in the younger generation, 5% reported no conflict, 25% reported average conflict, 60% reported mild conflict and 10 percent reported severe conflict where as in the older generation 12.5% reported no conflict, 35% reported average conflict and 47.5% reported mild conflict and 5% reported severe conflict. The overall data directly shows that 70% younger generation reported mild to severe conflict where as only 53% of older generation reported mild to severe conflict indicating younger generation is facing high conflict than older, which need to be attended urgently to resolve the issues and to bring solidarity at the family level.

Secondly, the *t*-test was used to see differences the Inter generational conflict among the sub-group. The results are as follows:

Table 3 shows mean, SD and *t*-values related to the Inter generational conflict among different sub-groups. The age wise scores (18-25 = 61.75; 55+ = 59.15) show that the *t*-value is 2.4 which is significant at 0.01 level indicates there are age-

wise differences in intergenerational conflict. The gender-wise also the obtained *t*-value is significant indicating there are male (*M* = 61.45) and female (*M* = 59.45) indicate significant differences in experiencing intergenerational conflict. But location wise scores clearly indicate that the subjects from rural and urban subjects were not differed significantly in experiencing intergenerational conflict. Overall mean scores indicate that the 18-25 age group, the male and the rural subjects reported higher intergenerational conflict compared to other groups.

Table 4 shows the correlation matrix of Inter generational conflict level and its relationship with socio demographic groups. The educational adjustment scores of age (*r* = 0.197), gender (*r* = 0.128), Location (*r* = 0.089). It indicates that there is no significant relationship between the area of education and sub groups. In political adjustment scores of age (*r* = 0.100), gender (*r* = 0.175), location (*r* = 0.150), it indicates that there is no significant relationship between politics and sub groups. The

Table 3: shows mean, SD's and *t*-value of inter generational conflict in different sub-groups

| S. No | Sub-group | Mean | SD | <i>t</i> -value |
|-------|-----------|--------|-------|-----------------|
| 1 | Age | 18-25 | 61.75 | 2.4** |
| | | 55+ | 59.15 | |
| 2 | Gender | Male | 61.45 | 1.8* |
| | | Female | 59.45 | |
| 3 | Location | Rural | 60.73 | 0.493@ |
| | | Urban | 60.18 | |

** - 0.01 level significant, * - 0.05 level significant, @ - Not significant

Table 4: Correlation matrix of Inter generational conflicts and its relationship with socio-demographic variables

| Areas | Age | Gender | Location |
|---------------------------|---------|--------|----------|
| Education | 0.197 | 0.128 | 0.089 |
| Politics | 0.100 | 0.175 | 0.150 |
| Sex Education | 0.039 | 0.059 | 0.157 |
| Position of Men and women | 0.009 | 0.253* | 0.166 |
| Job selection | 0.135 | 0.231* | 0.040 |
| Selection of life partner | 0.074 | 0.223* | 0.019 |
| Family Relations | 0.010 | 0.157 | 0.115 |
| Sex rivalry | 0.341** | 0.149 | 0.166 |
| Family planning | 0.349** | 0.032 | 0.063 |
| Religion | 0.000 | 0.169 | 0.310** |

**significant @ 0.01 level, * significant @ 0.05 level

sex-education scores of age ($r = 0.039$), gender ($r = 0.59$), location ($r = 0.157$). It indicates that there is no significant relationship between sex-education and sub groups. In position of men and women adjustment scores of age ($r = 0.09$), gender ($r = 0.253^*$), location ($r = 0.166$). It indicates that there is no significant relationship between age and location but significant association between Gender towards position of men and women. In job satisfaction scores of age ($r = 0.135$), gender ($r = 0.231^*$), location ($r = 0.040$) is significantly correlated to gender.

It indicates that there is no significant relationship between age and location but significant difference between Gender towards job selection and dissatisfaction. In selection of life partner the scores of age ($r = 0.074$), gender ($r = 0.223^*$), location ($r = 0.019$). It indicates that there is no significant relationship between age and location but significant difference between Gender towards selection of life partner. In familial relations the scores of age ($r = 0.010$), gender ($r = 0.0157$), location ($r = 0.115$). It indicates that there is no significant relationship between familial relationships and sub groups. In the Sexual rivalry the scores of age ($r = 0.341^{**}$), gender ($r = 0.149$), location ($r = 0.166$). It indicates that there is no significant association between gender and location but there is a significant difference age towards sexual rivalry. In the family planning the scores of age ($r = 0.349^{**}$), gender ($r = 0.032$), location ($r = 0.063$). It indicates that there is no significant relationship between gender and location but there is a significant difference in age towards Family planning. In the Religion the score of age ($r = 0.00$), gender ($r = 0.169$), location ($r = 0.310^{**}$). It indicates that there is no significant relationship between age and gender but there is a significant association in location towards Religion.

Conclusions

1. The Inter generational conflict among the subjects in the age group of 18–25 and 55+ yrs. show significant differences.
2. There are gender-wise significant differences with regard to intergenerational conflicts.
3. The locality-wise differences were not significant with regard to intergenerational conflict.
4. There is significant association between intergenerational conflict and age, gender and locality.

Hence, the Hypotheses 1, 2 and 4 are accepted and Hypothesis 3 is rejected.

Implication of the Study

The present study implies to focus on the conflicting values held by different generations, negative attitudes toward the older generation, and strained intergenerational relationships, particularly in the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship need to improve relations and promote collaborative efforts to address familial, community and societal problems. It also emphasize the idea of interdependence between and among generations, at all levels of discourse. As people start to realize the richness of this idea and meaningfully operationalize it, inter-generational conflict will wane. Policies and programmes based on an intergenerational approach should promote an essential interdependence among generations and recognize that all members of society have contributions to make and needs to fulfill.

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