

**PERCEPTIONS OF GRANDPARENTS ABOUT
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN
TRANSFERRING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGES TO
THEIR OVERSEAS GRANDCHILDREN**

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>This study explores the impacts of migration on intergenerational relationship, particularly emphasizing on the dynamics of transnational grandparenting. As the most evident impact of migration on family structure has duly resulted in changing the role of grandparents; this study further investigates both the opportunities and constraints that grandparents face while performing their role in a transnational context.</p> <p>Employing a qualitative research methodology, data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Using purposive sampling the data was collected from five primary and three subordinate participants. Thematic data analysis method has been employed in analysing the data because of its suggestive and latent characteristics, which are proven useful to navigate the nuanced experiences gained by the participants while fulfilling their roles across borders. This technique has become efficient analysing method to explore underlying codes from data on intergenerational relationship in a transnational context.</p> <p>The findings indicate that intensifying interest of grandchildren in using English language has affected in the quality of communication within grandparent-grandchildren dyad. Grandparents' efforts for preserving cultural heritage - through sharing traditional knowledges, promoting native language, and revitalizing the identity - are on the verge of brink. Furthermore, the quality in interaction between these two generations are immensely compromised due to the challenges of different time zones, insufficient support of middle generation, degrading health, and language barriers.</p>	
Keywords transnational grandparenting, grandparents, grandchildren, migration, traditional knowledge sharing	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Throughout the human history, grandparenting has always played a vital role in the lives of grandchildren (GC), enduring as a universal practice across diverse cultural contexts i.e. in Tongan culture (Vakalahi, 2011), in Māori's culture (Godinet et al., 2023), in African cultures (Busari & Adebayo, 2023; Michel et al., 2019), in Asian cultures (Knodel & Nguyen, 2015; Lie, 2010). Grandparenting in various nations and cultures have ensured the resilience of families and communities, while also safeguarding the richness of diverse cultures (Godinet et al., 2023).

For their wise and tireless support to the grandchildren, grandparents have been recognized as preservers of traditional practices (Muruthi & Lewis, 2017), a traditional support system (Svensson-Dianellou et al., 2010), "Guardians of the history" (Ramos & Martins, 2020), historians (Taylor et al., 2005), and key caregivers (Knodel & Nguyen, 2015). The trend of providing care services to grandchildren in a transnational setting, is defined as 'diasporas of care' where the term 'diasporas of care' has been used to refer to grandparents who travel across international borders to offer childcare (Williams 2001; as cited in Lie, 2010).

The practice of grandparents engaging in transnational mobility for caregiving, although relatively recent in Nepal, is ordinary practice in other migration passages (Limbu, 2021). Globally, many grandparents are involved in the care of their grandchildren whereas grandparenting within the diaspora, on the other hand, necessitates the relocation of a grandparent to a different country (Busari & Adebayo, 2023). Furthermore, according to Neysmith & Zhou (2013), to some extent, border-control systems and its rules determine the possibilities and limitations for transnational grandparenting.

In the context of a family, the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is often considered as a foundation for solidarity. It is also because in the traditional Nepalese household practices, living under the same roof and caring for grandchildren is a common trend, which consequently strengthens the bonding between GP and GC (Thapa et al., 2020). Additionally, grandparents also acknowledge their relationship with grandchildren as a special bonding experience (Muruthi & Lewis, 2017). However, in a transnational setting, maintaining special bonding between grandparents and grandchildren seems to be a challenging job. A study indicates the influence of GP on GC is entirely based on geographical proximity; those who live close to grandparents are highly likely to align with their grandparents' instructions (Criss et al., 2020). Those grandparents who actively participate in raising grandchildren have a close bonding with their grandchildren (Mehta, 2007). Likewise, some other studies have also indicated the more the geographic distance between GP and GC expands the less frequent contact in person takes place (Hayotte & Brunson, 2022; Lie, 2010; Sigad & Eisikovits, 2013).

A considerable number of Nepalese youths have migrated to various nations, where they have established their own families and found comfort in the bonds of family fraternity (Adhikari & Khadka, 2020). Nevertheless, their parents residing in their country of origin are compelled to suffer a transnational family dynamic. As a result, the interaction between these parents (grandparents) and their offsprings (grandchildren) predominantly takes place within a virtual sphere. Many researchers have recently shifted their focus towards studying various aspects of transnational grandparenting. However, only a limited number of studies have specifically examined grandparents' perspectives regarding the challenges and opportunities associated with transnational grandparenting. Additionally, I could not trace any specific investigations of transnational grandparenting in the context of Nepali grandparents. Therefore, this research aims to explore and understand the phenomenon of transnational grandparenting within the specific context of Nepal.

This study mainly deals with the constraints and opportunities that grandparents face in a transnational context while performing their duties. To deepen understanding of intergenerational traditional knowledge sharing between grandparents and grandchildren in a transnational context, this study has attempted to answer the questions - *How do grandparents perform the task of traditional knowledge sharing with their overseas grandchildren? And why is it important for them to perform it?* Furthermore, based on research on migration followed by Intergenerational solidarity and Life course theory, this research navigates the findings to the queries such as *What sorts of challenges do grandparents face in transferring traditional knowledge to their offspring? What*

noteworthy differences do they experience in GP-GC relationships due to the lack of living proximity? Furthermore, this thesis supports the development of research on the interaction between grandparents and grandchildren in transnational contexts specifically within the Nepalese context. Correspondingly, I am highly driven to conduct this research not only because this topic has been under-researched in a specific context, here in the case of Nepal, but also because my own parents have been dealing with this phenomenon. Thus, their lived reality has entrusted me to understand the anonymity of this situation.

1.1 Historical Legacy of Intergenerational Relationship

Intergenerational relationship has always been considered as an opportunity for grandparents to impact the lives of their grandchildren – mostly in shaping values and promoting cultural understanding by being actively present in raising grandchildren (Roberto & Stroes, 1992; King & Elders, 1997; Dunifon et al., 2018; Sajjad & Malik, 2023). Understandably, the historical legacy of intergenerational relationships continues to impact our society today.

Grandparents are inevitably genuine sources of one’s own family history. Likewise, they have often played a central role in providing emotional, financial, and practical support to their grandchildren (Roberto & Stroes, 1992; King & Elders, 1997; Dunifon et al., 2018). The grandparents’ roles can be discussed under two different categories such as transferring traditional knowledge, and providing support and care. Mostly, the grandparents consider such roles as moral obligations even when they do not live under same the roof with their grandchildren. A case study on retirees from other countries resettling in various parts of Spain has also revealed that they specifically chose these places because these are easily accessible from their home countries and they can travel back home to provide care to their grandchildren in case of any urgent events (Repetti & Calasanti, 2020).

According to the findings, providing care for a grandchild during their crucial developmental years establishes a strong bond between grandparents and grandchildren, irrespective of the cause for providing such care (Brown, 2003). The support from grandparents may vary as per the different circumstances that a family faces. For instance, grandmothers in Africa are indispensable to the survival of 13 million children orphaned in the AIDS pandemic, making it crucial not to take them for granted (Michel et al., 2019).

Navigating the role of a grandparent within a transnational setting, particularly for grandparents from developing nations like Nepal, presents a complex and challenging situation. This is primarily due to the strict visa regulations imposed by the host country where their offspring reside. Aryal & Guveli (2023) highlight the considerable difficulties encountered by Nepalese grandparents when applying for visas to visit England. Similar cases are reported in Wyss & Nedelcu (2020)'s research where they state that the discriminating migration *policy* of western countries have affected the mobility of zero generation grandparents.

1.2 Changing Contexts in Intergenerational Relationship

Due to migration, the grandparents and grandchildren have settled in different locations, which has undoubtedly impacted on GP-GC relations. The children who migrated with their parents or were born in the host country often consider their grandparents as the source of cultural knowledge (Schuler et al., 2022). To accomplish such duties in the physical vicinity with their grandchildren, the grandparents need to follow complex bureaucratic procedures such as visa application (Aryal & Guveli, 2023; Limbu, 2021). Furthermore, Aryal & Guveli (2023) specifically emphasize on the psychological and economic burden that grandparents face while lodging visas. Arguably, grandparents also need to perform additional essential preparations for their trip, which they might not have to do it ever if their grandchildren lived with them in their home country. Consequently, the transnational grandparenting practice differs from the traditional grandparenting practice.

1.2.1 Emergence of a virtual world

As grandparents and grandchildren do not necessarily live in the closest proximity or happen to be living in two different countries many hours flight apart, which ultimately necessitates creating a common domain where they can be virtually available. This trend of strengthening bonding by using internet mediated communication tools is normally denoted as “digitalization in intergenerational relationship” in academia (Arpino et al., 2022; Sakari, 2019). Similarly, other researchers like Brandhorst et al. (2020), Nedelcu (2017) and Schuler et al. (2022) define this trend as grandparenting “through virtual co-presence”. In the same way, Hayotte & Brunson (2022) believe that information and communication technologies (ICTs) mediated communication is equally useful in establishing intergenerational relationships just as likely face-to-face contact strengthens such bonding.

1.2.2 Deconstruction of intergenerational relationship between GP and GC

In a transnational setting, when grandchildren are separated from their grandparents, it may lead to a different view of the grandparent-grandchild relationship. A study among second generation Vietnamese immigrants living in a European country - Czech Republic by Suralová (2019) reveals that grandchildren who live far away from their grandparents and are cared for by nannies and babysitters may form strong bonds with their caregivers instead, and even regard them as their own grandmothers. In this context, deconstruction of relationship refers to the transformation of the traditional structure and function of such relationships, where biological grandparents do not necessarily have to act on their traditional roles. Consequently, it can manifest shifts in roles and responsibilities, or weaken ties between GP and GC.

Previous research, for instance that by Levitt and Schiller (2004), has highlighted the challenges encountered by transnational families while maintaining cultural identity across generations. The conflicting idea on selecting, particularly among adult children, cultural norms, values and identities either of host or home countries often leads to modification of cultural norms. However, the physical absence of grandparents in transnational reality, makes grandchildren comfortable in adopting cultural values of the host country, resulting a gap in intergenerational relationship between GP and GC.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Migration and Change in Family Dynamics

Under this topic, my focus will be in assessing the direct and indirect link between migration and its impact on intergenerational relationships, particularly between grandparents and grandchildren. To deepen the understanding about the changes that migration has brought upon family dynamics, resulting a development of contrasting ideas on familial dynamism specifically of so-called collectivistic cultures, a plethora of related literatures have been thoroughly studied.

Migration does not represent a single event but attributes to various social and economic contexts. For that reason, the life course theory has been utilized in studies related to aging and migration, with a focus on understanding the reasons and outcomes of transformations that arise due to the social, cultural, and economic circumstances in which individuals live during their later years (Nguyen, 2022). Specifically, research on transnational grandparenting significantly highlights the outcomes and impacts of migration in family dynamics and intergenerational relationships.

The demographics of Nepal are significantly impacted by the rising rate of youth outmigration, particularly with regard to the elderly and younger generations (Speck, 2017), this will be an exciting opportunity to delve into this matter. As research has suggested such occurrences of migration have caused changes in family dynamics resulting the divergence of an extended family system into small units of a family. As it used to be a common practice among Asian for an extended family to live under one

single roof, however, the massive trend of outmigration has slowly but surely deduced this practice (Knodel & Nguyen, 2015; Speck, 2017).

Traditional family living arrangements have been challenged in recent years (Liang & Zhang, 2017). Same cases have been reported in other studies as well. Extended family system is no longer a popular type of family system due to people's rapid mobility from one place to another (Thapa & Kattel, 2019). However, another research suggests that a significant number of grandparents still either prefer or are obliged to live with their grandchildren, more likely because their adult children are away from home for work or other reasons (Knodel & Nguyen, 2015). In contrast, a few researchers have stated about a recent trend that a notable number of grandparents prefer living by a close proximity of their offspring rather than living under the same roof (Liang & Zhang, 2017; Plaza, 2000).

Of all the consequences that migration has created on an individual's life course, particularly on grandparents, contains negative impacts. Mostly such occurrences have caused emotional damages, and loss in intergenerational solidarity (Busari & Adebayo, 2023; Liang & Zhang, 2017). In one hand, as Subedi (2022) states the trend of migration among middle aged youths with their spouse and children to other countries has negatively impacted on elderly people's (grandparents') quality of life; on the other hand, overseas grandchildren lack prominent opportunities of getting support and care by their grandparents, resulting a fragile bonding between them (Brown, 2003).

For some young Polish migrants, a new kind of identity is developing – a "trans-local" identity. This means their sense of home is evolving to include feelings and images from both their place of origin and their current residence (Moskal, 2015). In such circumstances, grandparents living in their place of origin and their overseas grandchildren contradict in defining their real identity. For instance, one study on American grandparents has reported ambiguity in intergenerational bonding with their grandchildren raised in Israel. Although the children are American, they are Israeli as well, and their Hebrew language, Israeli culture, and even their transnational culture add foreign elements to the generation gap between grandparents and grandchildren (Sigad & Eisikovits, 2013).

Nevertheless, absolute 'withdrawal of care' in transnational families is not a case just because of physical distance or immobility through the lens of Brandhorst et al. (2020). Furthermore, the researchers emphasize that mutual connections and support in a family can always be maintained through other various means despite physical

distance. The most appropriate and affordable means of mutual connections happens through an internet based medium. Despite living in different countries, transnational families maintain strong bonding (Baldassar, 2007) by focusing on improving emotional attachment and avoiding confrontation (Guo et al., 2018).

In general, based on literatures of intergenerational relationship in migratory context, the impacts of migration on intergenerational relationships can be categorically discussed as follows:

2.1.1 Changes in Family Structures

Migration is relatively a significant socio-economic phenomenon that redefines and reshapes family structures. A study by Speck (2017) in Nepal, reveals that traditional family structures i.e., multigenerational households have been replaced by nuclear families. A profound consequence of migration is observed in the dynamics between different generations, specifically within grandparent-grandchild dyad. The physical separation of a family demands to redefine the roles within the family. In the absence of the parents, the grandparents are often seen as caregivers, or conversely, considered as distant figures due to geographical separation. A study by Schuler et al. (2022) examines the unique relationships between grandparents who remain in their country of origin and their migrant grandchildren. The research highlights how these relationships maintain cultural transmission and emotional bonds despite physical distances.

A brief report on the changes in family structures due to migration will be further discussed in the findings section.

2.1.2 Grandparents as Caregivers: Redefining the Role

In many cases, migration has compelled grandparents to be actively involved in their grandchildren's rearing. Mostly, this occurs when parents migrate for work and their children are left in the care of their grandparents. Studies on such circumstances have asserted that this sort of living arrangement builds a stronger emotional connection between grandparents and grandchildren, resulting in a huge transmission of cultural and familial values (Ramos & Martins, 2020; Taylor et al., 2005; Xie & Xia, 2011).

Furthermore, the central role of grandparents in upbringing their grandchildren does not only reinforce their grandchildren's emotional and social development but also lifts their emotional attachments. This is relatively spectacular in societies with strong extended family traditions, such as in Nepal, where three generational cohabitation is common practice. Consequently, the sense of grandparenting responsibility

among grandparents provides the grandchildren with a certain sense of belonging and identity (Baldassar, 2007; Becker & Steinbach, 2012; Guo et al., 2018; Ramos & Martins, 2020). In the process of creating belonging and identity grandparents mostly focus on familial values, reciprocity of support and respect between generations.

The perspective on the role of grandparents is contextual. For instance, the role of grandparents in an ordinary context is remarkably different to the role practiced by same grandparents in a transnational milieu. Busari & Adebayo (2023) suggest that ‘incompatibility of role in social life’ is highly likely to be reconstructed. Grandparents particularly focus on constructing the idea of identity or belonging in a transnational context (Ramos & Martins, 2020), whereas they might emphasize on strengthening intergenerational bonding in their home context (Liu, 2019).

2.2 Geographical Separation and Its Impact on Relationship

On the contrary, when migration causes a separation between family members, the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren may be severely compromised due to physical distance. A research on Chinese grandparents carried out by Liang & Zhang, (2017) discovers that grandparents those living with grandchildren reported less depressive symptoms compared with those living alone. Moreover, the separation may deteriorate emotional connections, as regular face-to-face interaction turns out to be challenging. As observed by Baldassar (2007), intended efforts, such as ICTs based communication, are essential in order to continue the intergenerational relationship in transnational context; nevertheless, the communication made through ICTs relies on digital literacy and willingness of the participants. Likewise, research on the effects of migration in family dynamics, specifically focusing on the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, directs towards the importance of psychological and social adjustments among grandparents and grandchildren of immigrant families (Patel & Reicherter, 2016).

2.3 Living in Cultural Dichotomies

Due to exposure to the host country’s culture, grandchildren may develop a mixed cultural perspective, which may contradict with grandparents’ idea of culture. As grandparents perform a vital role in transferring cultural values and norms to their

grandchildren; such opportunities for migrated grandchildren are likely to be limited or unappealing. However, this role of grandparents is particularly prominent in immigrant families, where grandparents yield a sense of belonging to grandchildren growing up in a different cultural context.

A research by Miah & King (2023) has revealed significant stances of such accentuated ambivalence of cultural dichotomies particularly among the first and second generation of Bangladeshi immigrants in Great Britain. The research implicitly indicates the migrated Bangladeshi's views on 'desh' (homeland) and 'bidesh' (abroad) where they consider Bangladesh as their homeland and Great Britain as foreign land. This research does not focus on intergenerational relationships, yet it sheds light on prevalence of ambiguity among immigrant families regarding their belonging. To some extent, such ambiguity in relation to one's own identity has significant impact in defining other family relations i.e., intergenerational relation between GP and GC.

2.4 Emotional Well-being and Compromised Support System

In a transnational setting, when grandchildren are separated from their grandparents, it can lead to a different view of the grandparent-grandchild relationship. Grandchildren who live far away from their grandparents and are cared for by nannies and babysitters may form strong bonds with their caregivers and even regard them as their own grandmothers (Souralová, 2019). The consequence of migration on intergenerational relationship goes beyond physical separation. This has significant effect on emotional well-being of both grandparents and grandchildren. Physical detachment from grandchildren may lead grandparents to feelings of loneliness, especially in the case had they been primary caregivers (Liang & Zhang, 2017). Likewise, grandchildren might also experience lack of familial support, which may affect on their emotional development (Taylor et al., 2005).

In contrast, migration can also stimulate resilience and adaptability in grandparent-grandchild dyad. Grandparents may sort out other ways to get engaged with their families, and grandchildren often enlarge a broader worldview as well as adaptability to a greater extent. Baldassar (2007) concludes the physical distance between grandparents and grandchildren may disrupt the care exchanges between them but it does not necessarily disparage reciprocal care and support systems.

2.5 Bonding Between Grandparents and Grandchildren in Transnational Contexts

Under this title, I will attempt to explore the bonding between GP and GC in transnational contexts. My focus will be specifically on how the attachment styles of GP and overseas GC influence their intergenerational relationship. Similarly, I will extensively extract stances from previous literature on what they have asserted on the challenges that grandparents-grandchildren dyads face because of physical distance and cultural differences. In addition, the impact of different gender on intergenerational relations will be thoroughly studied.

Generally, the role of historical and cultural settings in shaping GP-GC relationships is primarily a key aspect (Dolbin-MacNab & Yancura, 2018) in grandparenting. For instance, the migration history of a family impacts on the communication between grandparents and grandchildren in terms of the frequency and quality of such interactions. Migrated grandparents are more attached to the cultural values of their country of origin whereas grandchildren who were born in the host country hold strong ties with the cultural norms and values of the host country (Ramos & Martins, 2020). Furthermore, the life course perspective emphasizes on the effects of major life events, for example changes in health status, in the ability of grandparents to fulfil transnational grandparenting duties (Bengtson & Allen, 1993). Another prominent consideration is the concept of intergenerational solidarity referring to the emotional and other instrumental bonds between grandparents and grandchildren. In a transnational context, maintaining these bonds can be challenging due to geographical separation and conflicting cultural experiences. However, technological development, such as video calls and social networking sites, have arbitrated more frequent and meaningful interactions, assisting to endure these relationships despite physical distance (Demirsu, 2022; Duflos, 2022; Taylor et al., 2005).

Through the perspective of life course theory, intergenerational relationships between GP and GC in a transnational context involves examining the influence of different life stages, historical contexts and transitions on these relationships. The theory emphasizes the importance of factors such as timing, sequencing and social context in understanding individual and family development (Davis & Brazil, 2016). These factors emerge as more significant in the context where families are scattered across different national borders (Lynn-Ee Ho, 2008).

According to Hayotte & Brunson, (2022), The life course theory is widely used in the field of intergenerational studies. For them, this theory is particularly beneficial in

navigating contextual understanding of family and social relations. The researchers assert that family situations have special impacts on grandparenting. Also, the Life Course Perspective helps in understanding the uniqueness of grandparenting on an individual level. Furthermore, they have studied the use of ICTs in relation to other aspects of grandparental relationships.

For Giordano (2020) the family is a social realm that relies on ‘giving’ across all stages of the life course. By giving, he refers to the continuation of being a source of influence. In addition, such a source of influence generates a sense of providing various forms of support and care within a family. Other researchers have also used Life Course Theory to understand the various dimensions in intergenerational relationships particularly focusing in certain contexts, for example (Xie & Xia, 2011) focus on intergenerational relationship between GP and GC in Chinese immigrant families in the USA. The researchers conclude that Chinese parents and their adult children show that their lives remain interconnected in various ways, even when separated by migration. Family ties are not diminished by physical distance. Significant life events and transitions are often shared, observed, and supported by family members, regardless of geographical location.

Lastly, life course theory also accentuates the importance of individual effort and flexibility in navigating intergenerational relationships. Both parties are often involved in exploring creative ways to get connected and support each other, even across borders. This resilience is essential in sustaining family cohesion to ensure that family traditions and cultural heritage are transmitted down through generations (Crosnoe & Elder Jr., 2002).

While exploring the ways that grandparents and overseas grandchildren employ to maintain and develop their relationship despite the physical distance between them, the researchers have revealed that the relationship between GP and GC is maintained either through virtual presence or by being physically present at GCs’ location. Many literatures have profoundly discussed about those grandparents who fly to their grandchildren’s host country for fulfilling their grandparental roles. However, very few discourses are made upon grandparents who cannot travel across borders due to various unforeseen constraints, for example, strict requirements for obtaining a visit visa. To a great extent, physical access for grandparents into their grandchildren’s host country, especially those residing in developing countries like Nepal, is often hindered by complex visa procedures (Aryal & Guveli, 2023; Wyss & Nedelcu, 2020). Consequently, the emergence of virtual presence has become an inevitable obligation

for these grandparents, if they desire for maintaining emotional and other normative bonds with their offsprings.

2.6 Traditional Knowledge and Importance of Language

Filial piety that refers to obedience, respect, love and care to one's own parents, grandparents and ancestors, is linked to Chinese culture, particularly in the family context (Da, 2003). However, the concept of filial piety is prevalent in other cultures as well, for example in Turkish culture (Tezcan, 2021), in Yupik culture (Lewis et al., 2018) where grandchildren are expected to display respectful behaviours, and be obedient to their elders.

The socialisation of grandchildren is influenced by the intersection of migration, gender, and social class, creating an intriguing aspect (Ramos & Martins, 2020). Consequently, the grandparents face challenges in instilling the idea of identity, teaching their grandchildren the native language and their own traditional foods (ibid). For grandparents, their traditional way of living is an important aspect throughout the life course. Turkish grandparents found that some German cultures do not fit with the concept of Turkish culture. Therefore, they express distress on their granddaughters' adaptation of German culture, for instance the German way of dressing, smoking and luxurious lifestyle (Tezcan, 2021). Similarly, the study on grandparents of Yupik culture suggests that grandparents emphasize on passing down traditional knowledge to their grandchildren for instance teaching them native arts and crafts, traditional spirituality and more importantly inspiring them to learn their tribal language and native foods (Lewis et al., 2018). The Hispanic grandparents express distress on their grandchildren's preference of fast-food consumption over their traditional foods (Criss et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the grandparents focus on teaching traditional understanding about respect, family values, food, language and other aspects of their native cultures. However, their efforts of performing all these activities is compromised due to the difference of language between them and their grandchildren (Dovie, 2023; Ramos & Martins, 2020; Vakalahi, 2011).

2.7 Emergence of Virtual Presence

Undoubtedly, physical detachment from the place of origin is the most notable concomitant caused by migration. Physical detachment also refers to a separation in intergenerational emotion due to limitation in communication across distant spaces and time. However, research on intergenerational communication in the transnational context elucidates that “transnational families have various tools at their disposal and modes of connecting with loved ones” (Demirsu, 2022, p. 2). Such tools are available in the traditional and digital forms of contact between grandparents and grandchildren (Arpino et al., 2022), however, Arpino and his colleagues do not discuss the contents and causes of such inter-generational contacts in their research.

Physical divergence between grandparents and their overseas grandchildren necessitates an emergence of a virtual sphere where specially the grandparents could express their emotional support to their grandchildren (Nedelcu & Wyss, 2020). Already in early 2000s, Sanford et al. (2007), asserted that the online based communication has facilitated grandparents and grandchildren to express their love, care and respect to each other. Not surprisingly, such contact through internet mediated communication takes place in the case of geographic distance between grandparents and grandchildren (Hayotte & Brunson, 2022). Moreover, smartphones, possibly connected to the internet, are still a popular mode of communication between grandparents and grandchildren, which have facilitated grandparents to get a glimpse of their grandchildren’s mundane activities regularly (Demirsu, 2022; Walton, 2023).

Overall, the emergence of virtual presence has become essential for grandparents who face barriers to physical travel, such as strict visa requirements. Online communication tools have enabled grandparents to express their love and support, bridging the emotional rift caused by geographical separation. Smartphones and internet connectivity have further enhanced these interactions, allowing grandparents to stay involved in their grandchildren’s daily lives (Demirsu, 2022; Pandya, 2022; Walton, 2023).

2.8 Flying Families Between Countries

The recent development in demographic trends have explicitly changed the different aspects of life. The impact of demographic trends is also visible on grandparental roles. Knodel & Nguyen, (2015) point out that the recent demographic trends seen in three

southeast Asian countries, i.e., Thailand, Vietnam, and Myanmar, caused by migration have impacted in aspects of grandparental care. Based on the suggestions made by Baldassar et al., (2007), the prevalence of transnational intergenerational support occurs in different conditions, such as through routine visits if the financial condition allows them to do so, in crisis period when their hands on care is inevitable, and most popularly through tourist visits when grandparents sojourn and provide their care to their grandchildren.

Similarly, a comparative study on grandparenting between two distinct groups of Nepali family residing in the UK: Gurkha families (those affiliated with the British Army) and non-Gurkha families (those not affiliated with the British Army) by Aryal & Guveli (2023) on the accessibility of transnational grandparenting support, shows that the grandparents belonging to Gurkha families were more actively engaged in grandparenting due to the special visa granting provision for them whereas the grandparents from non-Gurkha families experienced grandparenting as a daunting task because of unprecedented requirements to get a visa for their entry into the UK.

Among Bangladeshi grandparents, grandmothers are found to be more reluctant to pay visit to their descendant's host country, unless they feel that their need is more tangible there (in Britain) than here (in Bangladesh) (Miah & King, 2023). At least, for the Asian grandparents these needs are rather moral obligations; particularly the grandmothers are invited in order to provide their intensive care for the first grandchild if the next one is about to be born (Lie, 2010). However, travelling to grandchildren's host country does not only solely depend upon grandparents' wishes or needs; the terms and conditions set by the host country in obtaining a visa for grandparents are undeniably decisive factors. Nedelcu & Wyss (2020) have also mentioned that strict requirements on global south citizens for obtaining a visa for visiting western countries have created disparities among grandparents to make visits to their overseas grandchildren. Similar findings have been reported in many other studies for examples (Chen & Thorpe, 2015; Lie, 2010; Wyss, 2020).

In conclusion, intergenerational relationships between grandparents (GP) and grandchildren (GC), specifically in transnational contexts, are complex and multifaceted, influenced by various factors such as attachment styles, physical distance, cultural differences, and gender. The life course theory provides a valuable framework for understanding these relationships, emphasising the importance of timing, sequencing, and social context in family development. Furthermore, major life events, such as changes in health status, can significantly impact the ability of grandparents to fulfil their roles, highlighting the concept of intergenerational solidarity.

Technological advancements, such as video calls and social networking sites, have facilitated more frequent and meaningful interactions, helping to maintain these bonds despite physical distance. Demographic trends and migration have also influenced grandparental roles. Some grandparents can visit their grandchildren's host countries more easily due to special visa provisions, while others face significant challenges. The willingness and ability of grandparents to travel are often influenced by their perceived need and the immigration policies of the host country.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Qualitative methods are useful to explore authentic subject areas that are comparatively less known or ensure their exploration opens up a new horizon of understanding (Stern, 1980). Already, in the late 90's, Strauss and Corbin (1998, as cited in Yilmaz, 2013) viewed qualitative research methodology as capable of producing findings (Thapa, 2017), which surely cannot be defined by any other quantitative measures. Later, they emphasised that qualitative methods are immensely useful in obtaining in-depth information of abstract feelings such as emotions using conventional research tools (Corbin, 2008).

As discussed in many literatures, the use of qualitative research approach is a prevalent research method in the field of social science. Since this study aims to explore the challenges and opportunities experienced by grandparents in transnational grandparenting; the selection of this research method is highly useful to navigate through the grandparents' real-life experiences in the given context.

3.2 Aims and Research Questions

This research aims to investigate transnational grandparenting practices particularly carried out by Nepali grandparents, and their perceived experiences of opportunities

and challenges while performing this task. To obtain the research goal, I have set the following objectives based on four different spectra of this study.

The first objective of this study is to investigate the impacts caused by geographical separation in the relationship between GP and GC. Likewise, the second objective of this study lies on the spectra of identifying the challenges that grandparents face in establishing and strengthening relationships with their overseas grandchildren. The third objective of this research is to deepen the understanding of intergenerational traditional knowledge sharing between grandparents and grandchildren in a transnational context. The fourth and the final objective is to explore the opportunities that grandparents perceive in transferring traditional knowledge to their overseas grandchildren. These four objectives of the study are entirely based on the following research questions:

RQ1. How do grandparents perform the task of traditional knowledge sharing with their overseas grandchildren? And why is it important for them to perform it?

RQ2. What are the challenges that grandparents face in transferring traditional knowledge to their overseas grandchildren? What do grandparents experience while maintaining GP-GC relationship in a transnational context?

The first research question has helped me to explore the various ways that Nepali grandparents practice while sharing traditional knowledge with their overseas grandchildren. Moreover, it has offered an opportunity to understand the primary reasons why grandparents place such importance on sharing traditional knowledge. The significance of this question lies in understanding these methods and motivations, thus promoting appropriate appreciation for the efforts made by transnational grandparents to preserve cultural heritage across generations and national boundaries.

Similarly, the second research question has assisted me in formulating further interview questions to explore the challenges such as the language barrier that grandparents face while transmitting traditional knowledge. Moreover, this question examines the possible impacts on GP-GC relationships caused by physical separation. Based on the outcomes generated by this question, as a researcher I will be able to suggest possible strategies to overcome this situation.

3.3 Population and Sampling

Many researchers are positive in using purposive sampling because it allows researchers to develop a set of requirements in selecting the participants for their research work, which ultimately ease researchers to get projected outcomes (Thapa, 2017). Noticeably, the benefit of using purposive sampling is not only limited in selecting the most relevant participants for the study, but also extending to several other advantages, for instance, researcher can adapt one's own sampling criteria based on the progress of study. Adopting this strategy is highly recommended if the aims of the study require the inclusion of a specific group of people for their different and important views about the issues (Campbell et al., 2020). Therefore, this sampling depicts more appropriate for the nature of this study. It allowed me to select the most relevant participants, for instance, the grandparents who have at least one grandchild living abroad as well as the grandparents who are in contact with such grandchildren.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

In fact, interviews assist the researchers to unfold their participants' lived world in their perspective (Roberts, 2020). Interview entails open-ended, detailed findings on dimension of lived experiences, generally pitching remarkable insight (Charmaz, 2008 as cited in Roberts, 2020). As discussed in many research papers, interviews contain qualities that serve the needs of a study (Roulston, 2010) that aims to interpret the depth of an individual's personal and societal experiences.

While skimming through previous studies on intergenerational relationships, I discovered that interview seemingly prevails as a persistent method for collecting data. It is because it allows the researchers to create an avenue to their respondents where they can freely express what they have experienced or achieved in relation to that particular phenomenon (Hurst, 2023). Therefore, I projected that interviews would be an appropriate technique in order to understand the participants' lived experiences.

To achieve the objectives of this study, I have implied a semi structured interview method. The interview consisted of 22 questions in total. The interview questions

were prepared both in English and Nepali while the interviews were conducted exclusively in Nepali. Essentially, this approach ensures that the participants could respond comfortably in their native language. In the process, the number of questions varied between 16 and 22 based on participants' willingness to respond and the contents of their experiences in relation to the context of this study. Thus, the duration of interview time also varied between participants from 20 to 55 minutes. Also, the voluntary participation of respondents' partners impacted on the length and depth of these interviews.

3.5 Data Analysis

In this study, the thematic data analysis method has been used to analyse the data. It is generally an accepted analysing method while exploring people's perception or knowledge from a set of qualitative data – for instance, survey response, interview transcripts. Since interview has been used as a data collecting technique in the study; thematic analysis is a considerably useful method to analyse the data set.

Thematic analysis is subjective and allows the researchers to reflect carefully on their interpretations and selection of themes (Thebe, 2015). Therefore, I have acted extra cautiously while making choices on the themes, particularly on the codes, regardless of their nature i.e., evident or obscure. Consequently, I have used both the semantic and latent approach in analysing contents of the data. The semantic approach has helped me capture the clear, explicit content, while at the latent level, thematic analysis goes beyond just examining the explicit content of the data. It seeks to uncover the deeper ideas, assumptions, and conceptual frameworks, as well as the ideologies that are thought to shape or influence the semantic content of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Combining these methods has resulted in a comprehensive understanding of the data.

As per the stages introduced by Braun & Clarke, (2006) in thematic analysis; all those six stages of data analysis process have been thoroughly utilised in this study. Firstly, familiarising with data began with using verbatim transcription technique to transcribe interview data into the written form of the data. Then after I resumed familiarisation of data by reading and re-reading the transcribed data set. As a result, I explored the ways of finding underlying aspects of data as latent themes. One example drawn in the process is presented below.

Figure 1 Illustration of data with latent quality

He prefers talking with his parents more; he does not seem to be attracted towards us.

This data does not only simply concentrate on the preference of the person that interlocutor has pointed out, but it also indicates an underlying message of gap in the relationship between the third person and the interlocutor himself. Semantic themes within data somehow indicate the latent quality of data itself. With the abovementioned example, I intend to justify that the simple appearance of data does not entirely void its speciality.

Then comes the second stage where initial codes begin to emerge. Conscious and continuous effort of sensing the essence of data helps researchers to begin appropriate coding out of their data (Boyatzis, 1998). Therefore, with a simple looking excerpt from the pile of my data, I am able to obtain meaning codes. Below is the one instance out of tens of others.

Table 1 Illustration of coded data out of data quotation

Extract from data	Codes
Not that special. We only talk about simple things like eating, playing, and going outside.	Shared experience Reciprocity in exchanging information Uncomplicated bonds
We do not know anything about the procedure to follow for visiting that country. We would have visited him if our children had invited us.	Complicated visa procedures Dependence on others for travel assistance

The third phase of data analysis starts after compiling an extensive list of the various codes identified throughout the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Hence, at this stage, I concentrated rather at the wider level of themes. The concentration at this stage included differentiating the various codes into probable themes, and organising all

the related coded data within the recognized themes. An example of organising coded data under potential themes is shown through the following illustration.

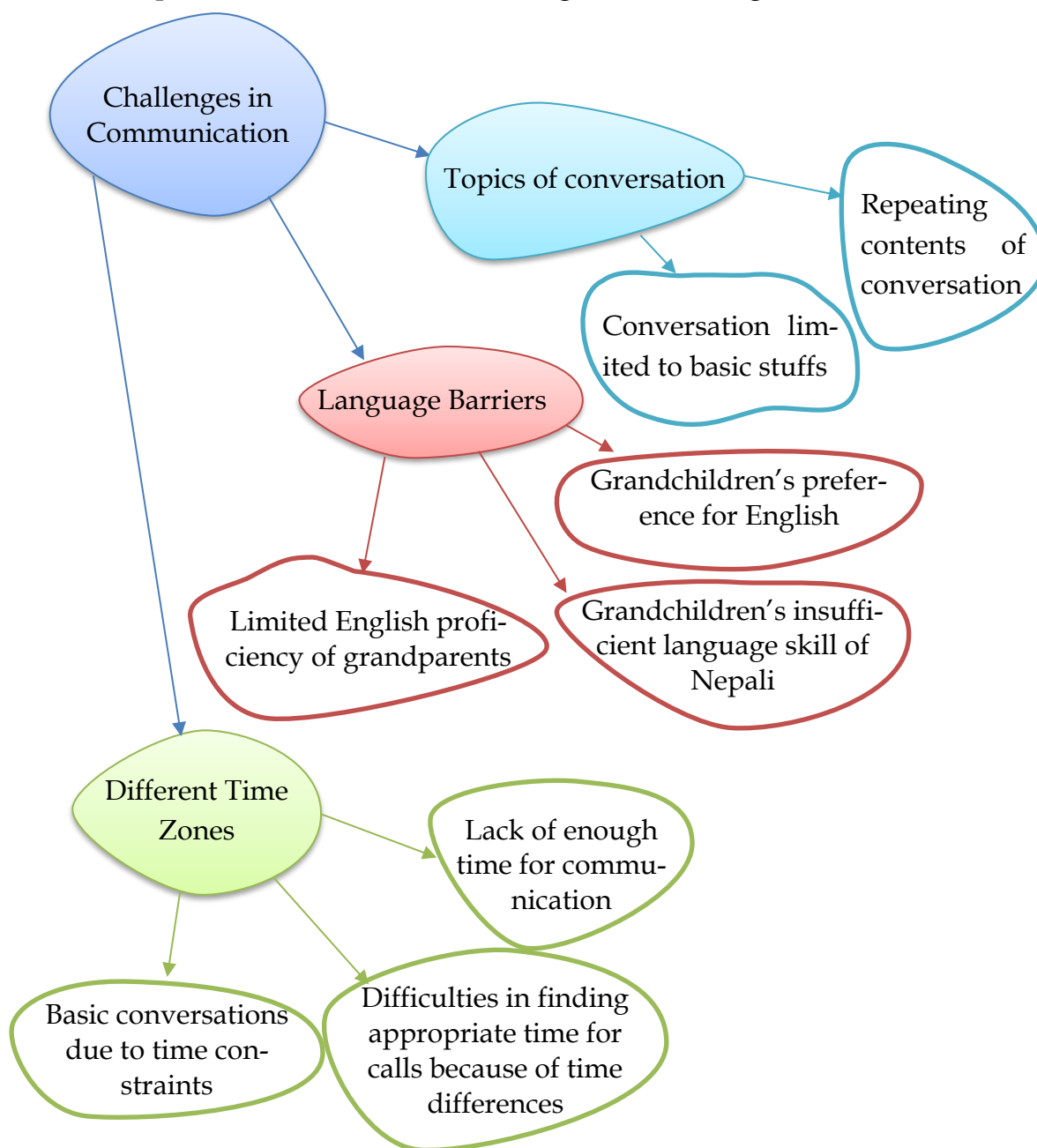


Figure 2 Illustration of organising codes under themes and sub themes

During this rigorous process of coding, recoding and developing themes, I had to repeat the process many times in order to finalise the belonging of codes into their respective sub themes and themes. The process of organizing codes, developing sub themes and themes may end up with transformation of some codes into themes or sub themes and discarding of some other codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Reviewing sub themes and themes are the key aspects of working through phase four. As discussed in Braun & Clarke (2006), I either discarded some sub themes or merged them with others. This process of refining sub themes and themes have ensured the validity of themes in accordance with the appropriate data set. In addition, I had the privilege to add some missing codes in this stage, which basically enriched my coded data to collate with their respective sub themes and themes. For instance, I considered 'Topics of conversation' as a sub theme under the theme 'Challenges in Communication', however, I later rejected this as a sub theme due to lack of sufficient back up from the data sets. A glimpse of finalising themes and producing of themes can be observed in the figure 3.

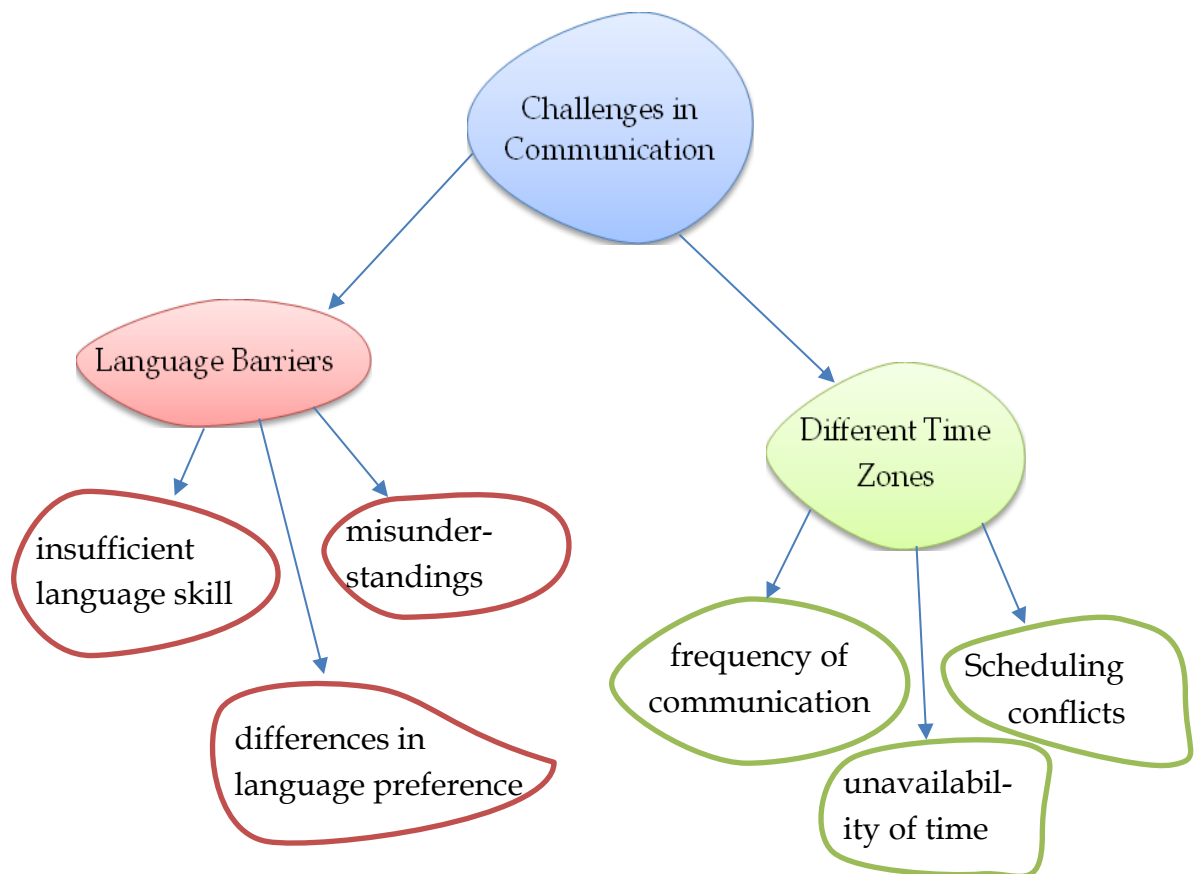


Figure 3 Final thematic map illustrating two sub themes for the main theme

Finally, I started working simultaneously on the fifth and the sixth stages of data analysis by capturing the essence of each theme, and redefining their scope through the reflection of the respective dataset. At some points, refinement of the themes was carried out rather than sticking with their initial forms.

I have used grounded theory in analysing the findings of this study. It is because some themes in the study were already generated based on findings of previous studies and the essence of research questions. Also, the use of latent approach in analysing data necessitates the use of this theory as findings through this approach either have been reflected with the previous findings or used in terms of minimising the equivocality or enriching the content of findings.

3.6 Ethical considerations

In this study, university's research guidelines for ethical considerations have been thoroughly followed. The interviewees were informed about the purpose of conducting an interview with them. Additionally, they were asked for their consent regarding their participation. They were informed about the possibility of withdrawing the interview at any point during and after conducting interviews until the data from their interview gets published in the study. One of the participants later used this flexibility and withdrew from his participation.

The interviews were conducted using WhatsApp call, with the consent of participants, recorded in audio mp3 format. Following the guidelines set by the university, the recorded files were destroyed after transcribing them. I never asked the names and addresses of participants; their age and gender were used as coded form to identify them instead. Thus, their real identity cannot be decoded at any cost, which indicates my commitment as a researcher in anonymizing the participant's identity.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Demographic Profile of Participants

In this study, we delve into the profiles of grandparents and their long-distance relationships with grandchildren. The participants exhibit diverse characteristics, reflecting the multifaceted nature of intergenerational bonds. There were 5 main respondents. Additionally, the wives of 3 male participants also actively participated in the interview, resulting in equal participation of both genders.

Table 2 Demographic profile of participants

Respondent	Age	No. of GC	GC in abroad	Age of GC	Frequency of communication
GPM1 (With his wife)	69	4 3F, 1M	2F	9 and 6	Very high (daily if possible)
GPM2	59	1 1M	1M	4	Normal (once or twice in a week)
GPM3 (With his wife)	65	4 1M 3F	1F	4	Very high (daily if possible)
GPF1	73	6 1F 5M	1M	6	Normal (once or twice in a week)
GPM4 (With his wife)	66	2 1F 1M	1F 1M	5 and 2	Very Low (once or twice in a month)

GPM1 (With his wife), is 69 years old, and have four grandchildren – three granddaughters and one grandson. Of which, two of them reside abroad. Their communication frequency with their grandchildren, is comparatively high among participants, which emphasizes the emotional closeness that they maintain through daily interactions. **GPM2**, aged 59, has a single grandson living abroad. Their communication takes place at normal pace, typically once or twice a week. **GPM3 (With his wife)**, is his mid 60’s. His communication frequency reflects GPM1’s pattern. With four grandchildren (one grandson and three granddaughters), they share a strong bond. One granddaughter living abroad is in daily interaction, strengthening their connection across borders. **GPF1**, the only key female respondent of this study is in her early 70’s. She has six grandchildren – five grandsons and one granddaughter. Like of GPM2, her one grandson resides abroad. Their communication rhythm aligns with normal frequency, which occurs once or twice in a week. Finally, the last participant, **GPM4 (With his wife)**, is 66 years old who faces the challenge of maintaining connections with his overseas grandchildren (one granddaughter and one grandson). Their communication frequency is remarkably scarce, occurring only once or hardly twice a month.

4.2 Opportunities in Knowledge Transfer

Grandparents facilitate the transnational socialisation of their grandchildren by upholding the cultural traditions, linguistic proficiencies, and food practices of their country of origin (Nedelcu, 2017). Also, with active involvement in grandchildren's day to day life, grandparents knowingly and willingly may develop a reciprocal sense of care among their grandchildren.

4.2.1 Reciprocity in knowledge sharing

The sense of intergenerational reciprocity among grandparents is somehow evident in this study. As research among grandparents in Southeast Asia highlights, the reciprocal obligations are an important attribute in the grandparent-grandchildren relationship (Qin, 2020). One participant mentioned about the reciprocity in knowledge sharing in conversations with his granddaughter. Although the discussions reflect a general tone; however, they involve a mutual exchange of information about daily activities, cultural practices, and familial connections. He said -

Our conversation with grandchildren is very general. We normally talk about what they eat? Since our granddaughter goes to school, we ask her how she spends day at school. We also show her what we are eating here, for example while drinking buffalo milk. Also, I talk about her cousins living in Nepal. (GPM3)

From the conversation with his grandchild, this grandparent does not simply know what his granddaughter eats on that particular day but he also knows about the eating pattern of his granddaughter. The food type that his granddaughter consumes in her daily routine can be completely different from what he eats. Furthermore, this conversation includes special contents of the conversation. Such as, to the answer of how his granddaughter spends time in school; he gets to know about her involvement in specific activities, from which he further learns about her hobbies. Similarly, the participant shares experiences and cultural knowledge, such as discussing the consumption of buffalo milk – a practice that might be unfamiliar to his granddaughter

This reciprocal knowledge sharing does not only strengthen the bond between generations but also serves as a medium for the transmission of cultural knowledge and familial ties. Mentioning grandchildren's cousins in Nepal further underscores the exchange of knowledge about family networks and cultural roots, creating a shared understanding that links different cultural experiences and contexts.

Another participant shared his experience on reciprocity in knowledge sharing through the intergenerational exchange of educational and language experiences. He acknowledged the importance of their grandchildren learning Nepali, which would connect them to their cultural heritage, if not now, then in the future. He stated –

It's like they did not learn Nepali in their early childhood. They do not know Nepali that well. They are learning. I have completed high school level so I know basic English. I can talk only for a while in English. Therefore, I have asked my daughter to teach our grandchildren to communicate in Nepali. We ask them which school they go to? What did you study today? I ask them to show what they study. They show us their drawings. We normally talk about the topics that they love to talk about. (GPM1)

This participant actively engages in language sharing by motivating communication in Nepali and by requesting adult children to assist their grandchildren in learning Nepali. This reflects the effort of grandparents on preserving cultural identity by encouraging their overseas children to learn their native language. Equally, this participant, who has basic English skill, attempts to bridge the language gap by speaking in English whenever he senses it's essential in their communication. As a result, his effort enhances mutual understanding by adjusting their communication styles. Furthermore, his engagement in asking about the grandchildren's activities in school and encouraging them to share what they have learned represents the next instance of reciprocal knowledge sharing. By showing interest in the grandchildren's art works, the grandparents get insight into their grandchildren's educational environment and interests. In return, the grandchildren gain deepest appreciation and encouragement from their grandparents, which ultimately enhance their bonding and enrich their knowledge about each other's contextual experiences.

Overall, this mutual exchange of language skills, educational experiences and traditional knowledge highlights the reciprocal attribute of knowledge sharing within the family, where both generations – even though they live apart - contribute to and benefit from the shared learning process.

4.2.2 Opportunities for Cultural Exchange

The findings of this study reveal that there are noteworthy opportunities for cultural exchange between GP and their overseas GC. Despite geographical separation and differences in understanding cultures, grandparents are noticeably active in their role for transmitting cultural aspects with their grandchildren. For example, one participant expressed a desire to convey cultural values and customs to her grandchildren –

I feel like teaching more about Nepal's language, culture and customs. I have also requested my children to teach their children about our culture. I ask them to raise our grandchildren in our way. If she learned only about there, what would she do when she comes here to visit us? I even want my granddaughter to get married as per Nepali culture. We should not ignore at least our language and culture. (GPM3)

This excerpt emphasises the responsibility that grandparents are taking to ensure that their cultural attributes are not gone, even their grandchildren are growing and immersing in a different cultural setting. The importance given on raising grandchildren “in our way” and the concern over losing cultural identity in a transnational setting, illustrate the emphasis placed on continuity of culture. Another respondent shared their experience with their young granddaughter who is in the early stages of cultural exchange -

Grandson is still a baby whereas my granddaughter is 5 years old. She can talk a little bit in Nepali like about eating, and doing leisure activities. She notes about new things, for instance, when we have tika (red mark) on our forehead. However, she does not want to explore much. (GPM4)

This statement by the participant provides insight into the early stages of cultural exchange. The five years old granddaughter has started to get engaged with cultural aspects of Nepali culture, such as by communicating in basic Nepali, and recognizing cultural symbols like the tika. Nevertheless, her reluctance to know more about Nepali culture further recommends that cultural exchange takes place at a gradual pace, influenced by the children's interest and their surroundings.

Despite the challenges posed by language barriers and time differences, the participants reported about the possibilities that latest technological developments have

brought in establishing meaningful connections through digital platforms such as video calls, resulting in exchanges of cultural experiences between these dyads. Grandparents use these platforms to share their understanding about cultural norms and encourage their grandchildren to follow such norms.

4.2.3 Strengthening intergenerational bonding

By studying grandparenting from a life course perspective, it becomes possible to examine how the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren may both remain consistent and evolve over time (Brown, 2003). This study also reveals that grandparents have taken several measures to strengthen their bond with their overseas grandchildren. Among them, frequent communication is a key strategy, with many grandparents using video calls through platforms like Facebook Messenger to stay connected. One of the participants talked about the frequency of communication that they have with their grandchildren.

We regularly do video calls. You can say that we have video calls daily. If for some reason, the internet connection is not available then we have direct phone calls. (GPM1)

For these grandparents (including his wife), regular communication with their grandchildren is very important to keep the intergenerational relationship intact. In order to do so, if they do not have an internet connection for some reason; they do not hesitate to make direct phone calls even though it is a costly service to use or whatsoever. Similar effort can be observed in another participant's response where he answered to the question on frequency of communication with grandchildren -

Definitely, very often. We do video calls. They make video calls through facebook messenger, and we regularly have video calls. (GPM3)

However, for some grandparents having regular communication with their overseas grandchildren resembles a daunting task. One participant said -

We talk with our grandchildren once or twice a month. They (adult children) go to work, and grandchildren go to school. They have to feed their children, play with them after coming from work. They hardly get any time. The kids get free time only on Saturdays and Sundays. (GPM4)

Despite facing many challenges i.e., time difference, work and language difference, the grandparents found to be fond of bonding relationships with their grandchildren. When it comes to the various aspects of intergenerational solidarity, grandparents engage in associational and affective solidarity from afar (Hărăguș & Földes, 2020).

They often engage in daily or weekly conversations, discussing topics that interest their grandchildren, such as school activities and hobbies. Some grandparents also make efforts to learn basic English to overcome language barriers and encourage their grandchildren to learn Nepali. Grandparenting practices have been established to have an influence on grandchildren's emotional and behavioural disorders (Li et al., 2019). In response to the question that asks about the topics, which they interact with their grandchildren, one participant responded –

We ask them which school they go to? What did they study that day? I ask them to show what they study. They show us their drawings. We normally talk about the topics that they love to talk about. (GPM1)

Likewise, the other grandmother mentioned that she normally talks about her deteriorating health causing difficulty for her mobility. She stated,

I ask about his health. How he is doing, and what he eats. I tell him I am not healthy. I have become old. He repeats what I ask him to do. He blabbers otherwise, because he does not know Nepali that well. (GPF1)

Face-to-face visits, although rare, are cherished and remembered fondly. Grandparents recall these visits as joyful and fulfilling, providing an opportunity to create lasting memories. GPM1 recalled his granddaughters' first visit to Nepal.

Very happy. I felt so happy. We stayed together for 3 months. I held them on my lap. I felt so happy. Daughter, son-in-law, and two granddaughters came, stayed with us. We ate, spent time, and had fun together. It was so good. (GPM1)

While recalling the first face-to-face visit with his granddaughters, he joyously said – “very happy”. Starting with an English phrase, he continued talking in Nepali afterwards. It does not only reflect his excitement about his first visit with granddaughters but also indicates the possibility that face-to-face visits hold in strengthening the intergenerational relationship. Overall, the visit is marked by shared meals, engaging activities, and overall enjoyment, creating cherished memories and strengthening familial bonds.

4.2.4 Preservation of heritage

Grandparents are effective cultural agents, assisting grandchildren maintain their heritage language and cultural identity through stories, traditions, and virtual interactions (Schuler et al., 2022). Among Albanian grandparents in a transnational setting, preserving aspects of Albanian language and culture within the migrant household can be identified as a potential role of zero-generation grandparents (R. King et al., 2014). For Italian transnational grandparents, encouraging their grandchildren to learn Italian language is the first priority in a transnational setting. Study on Italian families residing in Belgium by Scocco (2020) suggests that the transmission and preservation of Italian language through generations is perceived, as a basic element attributed to Italian culture and also as a medium, to communicate in intergenerational relationships.

In contrast, for the participants in this study, preservation of heritage refers as well to religious practices. For instance, they believe, by visiting temples during religious festivities, one can get exposed to the cultural realm. One of the respondents unfolded his desire as such –

I hope that our son and daughter-in-law will take our granddaughters to Hindu temples during religious celebrations. It would provide them with valuable insights of Hindu civilization. I also wish that our grandchildren would embrace their Hindu heritage and not feel like foreigners. It would bring us great joy if our grandchildren could fully embrace and follow Hinduism. (GPM1)

This expression of the grandfather shows the emotional and spiritual significance of preserving heritage for the older generation of a family, especially in a transnational context. His desire indicates an effort of ensuring that their overseas grandchildren are adequately familiarised with their cultural and religious heritage, which is crucial to preserving heritages across generations. Moreover, he underscores the value of their grandchildren's identity in not feeling like "foreigners" within their own cultural context. This concern of the grandfather is guided by the feeling of losing connection with their overseas grandchildren due to cultural differences.

By mentioning about 'great joy', which he hopes would feel, if their grandchildren could fully embrace or practice, reflects the fulfilment grandparents stem from their traditional legacy being carried successfully across generations. Likewise, this statement also refers to that heritage preservation in a transnational context is not only about sustaining traditions but also about making sure of its continuity.

4.3 Challenges in Transferring Knowledge

The movement of people across borders leads to cultural differences and emotional detachment, which may hinder grandparents from fulfilling their grandparenting duties optimally due to the physical distance (Sigad & Eisikovits, 2013). Similarly, the special challenges in transferring traditional knowledge reported by the participants of this study are categorically presented as follows-

4.3.1 Challenges in communication: Language barriers

One of the challenges repeatedly mentioned in various literatures, is language barrier between grandparents and overseas grandchildren. A study by Nguyen (2022) on Vietnamese transnational grandparents in Australia also reveals that language can be a barrier when grandparenting in a transnational context. Likewise, the study among Chinese transnational grandparents in the Us, also reports the lack of English language skill as a challenge causing difficulty for grandparents in establishing intergenerational bonding with their grandchildren (Xie & Xia, 2011). Majority of the respondents in this study also reported similar experiences, for example, one of the respondents explained the difficulty in communication with their grandchildren -

As illiterate individuals, we find it challenging to communicate with our grandson, who has already started school. He prefers speaking in English, which we struggle to understand. He has limited knowledge of Nepali, resulting in our conversations being quite limited. (GPM2)

The participant does not only state their (his and his wife's) difficulty in communication with the grandson, but also hints at a similar experience of their grandson. More importantly, he indirectly points out an insufficient effort made by his son and daughter-in-law in teaching Nepali to their son. Another respondent also said about insufficient proficiency in Nepali language of their granddaughters hindering their communication.

Currently, our granddaughters have not learned Nepali, but they are in the process of learning. They have grasped a few basic courteous phrases such as "How are you?" and "What are you doing?" I have completed my high school education, so I am able to engage in basic conversations in English, but my wife is unable to do so. Due to this, we have earnestly requested our daughter to encourage our granddaughters to learn Nepali. (GPM1)

Here, the participant emphasises his qualification has enabled him to engage in basic English conversation with his granddaughters whereas his wife does not have the same privilege due to her incapability of doing so. Also, the respondent has sought his daughter's assistance for teaching her daughters Nepali; therefore, the grandparents and grandchildren would have proper communications in future.

In this study, English appears to be a completely new language for some of the respondents whereas some other participants seem to have a limited language skill of English. One of the participants shared about his efforts to communicate in English with his grandchild despite having limited language skill. He said -

... I have completed my high school education, so I am able to engage in basic conversations in English, but my wife is unable to do so... (GPM1)

The family faces a language barrier due to varying levels of English proficiency. While one member is comfortable with basic English, the other struggles to understand it. For another participant, their grandson's preference of English causes difficulties for them to comprehend the conversation.

... he prefers speaking in English, which we struggle to understand. He has limited knowledge of Nepali... (GPM2)

The preference for English complicates communication, especially when the native language (Nepali) is not a strong alternative. Similar findings are reported in the recent research done by Dovie (2023) where he asserts that the exposure of grandchildren to the English language has caused difficulties for grandparents to communicate with their grandchildren in their local languages.

Despite their age, some grandchildren may initiate addressing the problem in having proper communication with their grandparents. However, their alternatives may not be as helpful as they were supposed to be. For example, the third participant revealed that her granddaughter asked her if they could communicate in English to understand each other well.

My granddaughter asks me if we can communicate in English, as it is the language commonly used in the United States. However, my English proficiency is very basic, which often leads to difficulties in understanding our granddaughter. She has limited vocabulary in Nepali, as English has become her primary language. (GPM3)

It is so obvious that language is a key for strengthening intergenerational solidarity. To achieve that solidarity, some grandparents may entirely depend upon the assistance of their adult children to communicate with their grandchildren.

4.3.2 Living in different time zones

According to Becker & Steinbach (2012), availability of personal resources (time and health), and human capital factors (education, income) are determinant factors in grandparent-grandchild relationships. Similarly, this study also reflects on their findings. Almost all participants perceive inadequate education and degrading health status have immeasurable impacts on the relationships with their grandchildren. In response to the question - 'what are the challenges in communication with grandchildren?' One of the respondents replied as follows -

Due to my illiteracy and hearing problem, I face significant challenges in comprehending conversations with my grandson. Consequently, he does not wish to continue our conversation. Moreover, considering his young age, engaging in deep communication is difficult for him, and he also struggles to understand my native language, Nepali. (GPF1)

The participant mentioned her miserable hearing condition as a key disturbing factor in communication with her grandson. Not only the health-related issues that hinder their intergenerational communication but also the education level of grandparents come into play in comprehending their grandchildren's verbal cues. Besides these issues, most of them reported that the difference in time has also obstructed regular contact with their overseas grandchildren. As one respondent points out the unavailability of appropriate time to have communication because of the different time zones in Nepal and Belgium. She said -

We engage in conversation with our grandchildren once or twice a month. While their parents are at work and our grandchildren are attending school, neither we nor they have sufficient time for regular communication. We face difficulties in finding a suitable time for consistent contact due to the time difference between Belgium and Nepal. (GPM4)

Understandably, the time difference of 3,75 hrs in summer, and 4,75 hrs in winter between Belgium and Nepal is a substantial time difference. The grandparents in Nepal might have already gone to sleep by the time the grandchildren in Belgium have just arrived home after their school. Another respondent whose grandson lives in the US, also mentioned the time difference as one of the major obstacles in limiting their regular communication.

.... the time difference between Nepal and the US makes it difficult for us to find a suitable time for regular communication with our grandson. (GPM2)

4.3.3 Cultural mismatch: ambiguity of cultural adaptation and transmission

The grandparents appear to be concerned in imparting the basic parts of their cultures, which they refer to as 'culture of origin'. However, their unfavourable social standing may have a severe influence on intergenerational relationships, as the grandchildren may fail to accept their Portuguese migratory history (Ramos & Martins, 2020). Grandparents often struggle to communicate with their grandchildren due to their inability to fully assimilate into the culture of the host country, in contrast to their younger counterparts who have already been a part of the new environment (Muruthi & Lewis, 2017). As discussed in many studies, the cultural influence of the host country on the younger generations is overwhelmingly worrisome for the grandparents (Sun & Mulvaney, 2021). Similarly, in this study, some of the participants have implicitly stressed on influences of foreign culture on their grandchildren. For example, one of the participants mentioned the Americanisation of their grandson.

The cultural differences between our grandson's upbringing and our own have had a significant impact on them. Had he been raised here in Nepal; the situation would have been different. However, since he was born and is being raised in the United States, he has adopted an American identity and lifestyle. As a result, he resembles an American in many ways. (GPM2)

The extract visibly shows the concern of grandparent over cultural influence on his overseas grandson. He does not even hesitate to comment on his grandson's cultural adaptation. Older relatives have concerns regarding their younger children's "Americanisation", which they believe has diminished their traditional values (Muruthi and Lewis, 2017). Likewise, here the grandfather seems to demark a clear line of 'we vs them'.

The study noted that the adaptation of host country's cultural practices has a significant impact on family relationships (Muruthi & Lewis, 2017), i.e., in intergenerational relationship. In addition, their research advocates that "feelings of ambivalence were evident in the context of pending intergenerational rifts caused by a significant difference in the rate of acculturation between generations" (p.138).

To very extent, parents' role is comparatively prominent to construct children's idea on their identity, belonging and culture. Their role becomes more crucial while teaching their kids about familial and cultural values in grandparents' absence. One

of the participants immaculately presented that the knowledge of one's own culture in overseas kids is limited to what they hear from their parents. He described -

Our granddaughter is residing in a completely different environment. She is learning a different language, adapting to a different culture, and receiving a high-quality education. Her knowledge of our culture is limited to what she has heard from her parents. (GPM3)

In conclusion, the grandparents perceive their grandchildren's cultural adaptation is a normal and necessary process to adjust for their grandchildren into a new environment. All the participants, however, accentuate their adult children's active involvement in familiarising their children to the cultural values, will produce a positive outcome in terms of preserving their own culture.

4.3.4 Traditional vs modern scope of learning

Influence of modern technologies and social media on grandchildren may cause them to be less interested in learning traditional knowledge. Their exposure to modern technology undoubtedly encourages them to immerse into the horizon of much refined knowledge. The participants in this study frequently referred to the notion of 'developed or advanced society'. As per their understanding the societies where their grandchildren reside are advanced whereas their own societies, in their view, are 'traditional societies'. The grandparents in this study strongly believe that the traditional scope of learning, which includes traditional values, respect, cultural norms and familial ties, has been challenged by foreign and modern influences. The wife of one participant clearly expressed a sense of detachment between GP and GC. She elaborated her experience this way -

... we wish they would catch up with good manners, what else do we wish for? They were born there; they talk only about there. How could it be like being at the same place? They have not seen us in person. We love them because they are our grandchildren, but they do not know. Why would they care about here? (Wife of GPM4)

The grandmother's concerns, however, are the realities of grandchildren. The grandchildren's focus on their current environment—where they were born and where they live—may lead them to prioritise their immediate surroundings over their ancestral roots. Here in this case, the grandchildren of this respondent live in the US; and, their immediate surroundings consist of modern and advanced societies. For

example, their schooling there completely differs from the one in Nepal. This could symbolise the modern scope of learning, where globalised context and contemporary practices may have impacted the learning process of grandchildren. In contrast, the phrase used by grandmother, “we wish they would catch up with good manners” suggests a desire for their grandchildren to learn and adopt traditional values and behaviours, which are perceived as important by the grandparents. Also, this reflects the traditional scope of learning, consisting of respect, manners, and traditional values are passed down through generations.

Furthermore, the statement “how could it be like being at the same place?” emphasises the emotional and somehow cultural distance between GP and GC. As the grandparents and grandchildren have not seen each other in person, which is a result of modern living arrangements due to global migration. Such physical and emotional distance obstructs the transmission of traditional knowledge and values in a real sense. Consequently, the emotional bond turns to be one-sided, which can be distressing for grandparents who long for a deeper connection. Moreover, the possibility of exchanging knowledge between generations may be limited as a study refers “depending on the emotional proximity, exchange of knowledge between GP and GC takes place reciprocally” (Criss et al., 2020, p. 225).

4.3.5 Logistical and other practical constraints

Being a mobile grandparent necessitates certain prerequisites, such as robust health, adequate cultural and financial resources, and the absence of competing familial obligations or responsibilities in one's home country or other locations (Wyss & Nedelcu, 2020). When offering grandparenting support overseas, their responsibilities and commitments elsewhere may be impacted (Busari & Adebayo, 2023).

Some grandparents would never travel to meet their overseas grandchildren because of unbearable travel expenses; instead, they would be in contact through telephone calls (Plaza, 2000). Also, Face to face interaction is limited in a transnational setting because of the travel costs and complication in arranging annual leave from the work (Guo et al., 2018, p. 368). Grandparenting being physically present at grandchildren’s disposal does carry an essence of real involvement in the process. One of the participants overtly indicated the advantages of physical proximity in grandparenting.

There are disadvantages of physical distance, if we were living close by with our grandchildren then we would be visiting them quite often or our granddaughter would come to our place. We would celebrate Dashain and Tihar together. This is what lacking. I feel somehow, we have sold our children to foreigners. There is no visiting. They might not see our faces even at the very last days of our lives. (GPM1)

As per his experience, physical proximity is directly associated with cultural and ritual celebrations. The inconvenience caused by physical distance, particularly the lack of regular visits, is evident through their emotional remarks. With all his heart, he expressed profound dissatisfaction and uncertainty about seeing each other in the near future.

As observed in other research, “lack of communicative skills of children” is evident in intergenerational communication because of their age (Demirsu, 2022, p. 126). The participants in this study also emphasised that the age of their grandchildren significantly affects the quality and length of their conversation. One of the participants pointed out the age of his grandson as an obstructing factor in their communication –

My grandson does not talk that much because he is too young for two ways of communication, however, he asks me about my wellness. We do quite basic conversation. (GPM2)

Same is the case for another participant. He emphasised on how his granddaughter’s small age, with insufficient language skill of Nepali, has restricted their intergenerational communication.

... she is running in 4 years; because of her small age, she does not completely understand what we are talking about... (GPM3)

Interestingly, the other participant mentioned that his granddaughter’s mood also plays a vital role in continuing the conversation. He supposed-

...due to her age, the conversation does not last for a long, it ends when her mood changes. (GPM5)

According to both grandparents, the frequency and the length of the conversation with their grandchildren is noticeably limited. Also, their conversation lacks the essence of two ways communication. The wife of another respondent highlights the difference between grandparenting by being physically present and with virtual presence. She said,

We love and miss them a lot; however, they forget us. We really care for them. It's already been 5 years since I came back after visiting them. (Wife of GPM1)

This grandmother portrays a complex mix of love and longing with their grandchildren. Moreover, she doubts the reciprocity of love from their grandchildren. Furthermore, time (Földes, 2016; Földes & Savu, 2018), and everlasting effort (Levy et al., 2021), are other prominent factors affecting intergenerational relationships even if the physical distance is not a case. As observed by these researchers, time and sufficient effort from grandparents are likely to be crucial factors in developing a transnational intergenerational relationship. As one participant responded to the question how they be in contact with their grandchildren -

Video call. We contact them through video calls. Direct phone calls are very expensive. It costs a lot of money. (GPM5)

This same grandfather has repeatedly mentioned about different time zones, cost of phone calls and unavailability of time throughout the interview. He has further emphasised that those are the factors constraining their effective communication. Similarly, the role of their adult children is also an underlying factor for sustaining such bonding between GP and GC. One participant acknowledged the support she gets from her adult children to get connected with her grandchildren-

His (grandson's) parents make contact once in 3-4 days. I ask him (grandchild) what he eats? Where he goes? And how is he doing there? Also, I mention about my health. (GPF1)

It shows the active involvement of the middle generation is clearly visible where both grandparents and grandchildren have to rely on their respective children and parents' assistance even to make a contact. Share et al., (2018) confirm that

grandchildren's ability to communicate in a similar language to their grandparents, for example in their mother tongue, enriches intergenerational solidarity.

4.4 Factors Influencing the Communication between GP and GC

A quick reflection on other factors influencing the communication between these dyad presents some interesting facts. The data presented in this study illustrate the various factors that influence the frequency of communication between GP and GC.

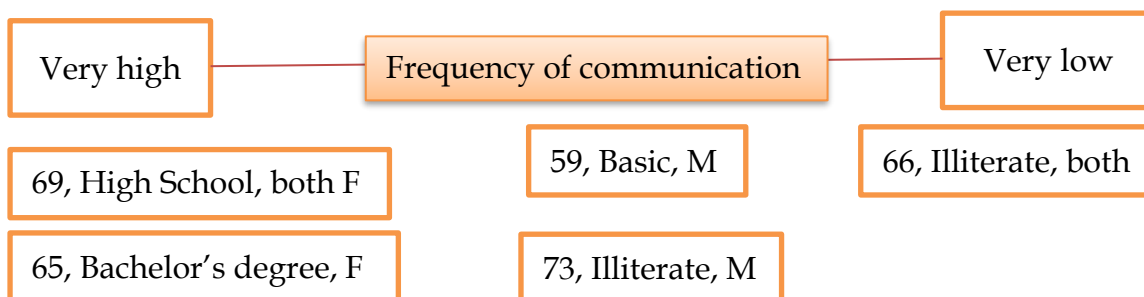


Figure 4 Illustration of factors influencing frequency of communication

Each box contains three codes referring to specific attributes of the data: the age of the grandparents, their educational status, and the gender of their grandchildren. The first number indicates the grandparent's age, the second represents their educational level, and the third represents the gender of their grandchild, with "M" for male and "F" for female. In cases where grandparents have both a grandson and a granddaughter, the term "both" is used.

The explicit suggestion of this data is that age does not significantly influence the frequency of communication between grandparents and grandchildren. However, some research for instance Hayotte & Brunson, (2022) reported the age of GP and GC play vital roles in determining the frequency of their interaction. In this study, for instance, two grandparents within the 65 to 70 years old age group show high frequencies of communication, while another grandparent in the same age group displays very low communication frequency. This variability indicates that age alone is not a critical factor in determining the frequency of communication between them.

Although, the educational status of grandparents appears to play a substantial role in influencing such frequency. The findings present that grandparents with higher educational levels tend to have more frequent interactions with their grandchildren. This could be attributed to several factors, including greater comfort with using technology, better language skills, and possibly a higher value placed on maintaining familial connections. However, better language skills do not necessarily depict GPs' excellent command over English. For example, one of the respondents accepted that he cannot continue having conversation in English because of his limited English language skill. He reported,

...that is an English country. She asks me if I can talk in English with her. Then, I try to use some basic languages. For example, I ask her if she is doing okay? Then after that I cannot continue talking in English. (GPM3)

Despite the language barrier, this respondent is one of those who communicates most frequently with their overseas grandchildren. It is because the focus of this grandparent is on 'strengthening the bond with granddaughter through communication'. While answering interview questions, he used some English words such as "culture", "zero", "boil", "talking" etc. In fact, his responding style replicates his communication style, which shows that his skill of language mixing has been beneficial for him to make more frequent communication with his overseas grandchild. Similar language style was observed in conversation with another participant who has a very high frequency of communication with overseas granddaughters. He used many English words during the interview. For example, in response to the question - "how does your conversation with overseas grandchildren build up?" He replied -

Sānō umērakō saṅga alī simple word mā bōlnu paryō. (GPM3)

{we should use simple words while interacting with young kids.}

There were many other English words that he used like, "very happy", "high school", "English", "travelling", "garden", "data", "school", "drawing", "language", "use", "speed" etc. Largely, the trend of language mixing has helped grandparents to prolong the interaction with their overseas grandchildren. In addition, the grandparents are hopeful for more quality conversation in future with the mere hope of grandchildren's success in learning Nepali language. One of the participants talked about such hope -

The difficulty is that they use English more in our conversation. Since I do not have a strong educational background, I cannot catch up with their English-speaking speed, which is difficult for me. There are no other difficulties. Gradually, they have been learning Nepali; it will be very easy when they will fully adapt Nepali language. (GMP1)

Conversely, those with basic educational backgrounds or who are illiterate tend to engage in normal to very low levels of communication. This trend underscores the potential impact of educational achievement on the ability to maintain transnational family relationships. For example, GPF1 recurringly mentioned that her grandson does not fully understand her native tongue and she cannot comprehend her grandchild's interaction. She said,

He babbles in his own way; I cannot comprehend what he says or wants to tell me about.
(GPF1)

It clearly shows her incapability of comprehending the interaction with her grandchild. Since she is not literate and does not understand foreign words used by her grandchild; their interaction does not go hand in hand.

Another captivating pattern – even if there was no specific question regarding the role of genders in communication within this dyad - emerges when considering the gender of the grandchildren. The data reveal that grandparents who communicate more frequently with their grandchildren tend to have granddaughters. Conversely, when grandsons are involved, the frequency of communication is comparatively lower. This difference may be influenced by cultural factors, such as the perceived roles of grandsons and granddaughters within the family, or differing expectations and interests that shape the nature of these interactions. It could also reflect broader societal norms and gender dynamics within a family setting.

In conclusion, while the age of grandparents does not appear to significantly impact communication frequency, whereas educational status and the gender of the grandchildren play vital roles in determining the communication frequency between this dyad. Grandparents with higher educational levels and granddaughters tend to communicate more frequently, highlighting the influence of socio-cultural factors on transnational family communication. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play in maintaining intergenerational relationships across borders and underscore the importance of considering multiple intersecting factors when analysing family communication patterns.

5 DISCUSSION

This research aimed to explore the perceptions of grandparents about challenges and opportunities while transferring traditional knowledge to their overseas grandchildren. In addition, this study briefly examined the impact of migration on intergenerational relationships, particularly focusing on the changes it imposes on family dynamics. To guide this study through its findings, the following research questions were addressed.

RQ1. How do grandparents perform the task of traditional knowledge sharing with their overseas grandchildren? And why is it important for them to perform it?

RQ2. What are the challenges that grandparents face in transferring traditional knowledge to their overseas grandchildren? What do grandparents experience while maintaining GP-GC relationship in a transnational context?

The findings suggest that migration has impacted on family dynamics, which specifically alters grandparental roles resulting in a different world view about their roles and communication styles. For example, grandparents whose children live abroad as migrants are more likely to travel abroad and provide care for their grandchildren. Some participants in this study also reported such visits to their grandchildren's host country, however, those with complex living arrangements did not choose to visit their grandchildren living abroad (Hărăguş & Földes, 2020). Despite living in different places, the grandparents in this study remain committed to enhancing their grandchildren's Nepali language skill. Similar efforts made by the Portuguese grandparents' role in maintaining their grandchildren's language proficiency at an impressive level has been reported in Ramos & Martins (2020).

The physical separation caused by migration, undoubtedly has necessitated the families to rely immensely on digital platforms for establishing communication. For some grandparents such provision does not help in reducing the complexity of bonding with their overseas grandchildren. Thus, they rather prefer face-to-face interaction with their grandchildren, which indeed offers grandparents to establish or revitalise bonding with their grandchildren. Also, they get opportunities to travel to new destinations, explore the cultures as well as modern developments of developed countries (Busari & Adebayo, 2023; Hărăguș & Földes, 2020). However, the visa policy of the host country is a decisive factor in obtaining a visa; moreover, such visits are often managed and accommodated by grandparents' adult children. "The middle generation may encourage or even decide their parents' mobility behaviour" (Ramos & Martins, 2020, p. 339), which ultimately suggests the active involvement of middle generation turns out to be a key factor influencing the relationship between their parents and children (Becker & Steinbach, 2012).

The grandparents perceive that they can maintain discipline among their grandchildren through cultural guidance (Vakalahi, 2011). Similarly, the potential to act as cultural guardians, is identified in this study as a significant opportunity for grandparents, by being actively engaged in transmitting Nepali traditions, language and cultural values to their overseas grandchildren. The respondents described their various techniques to facilitate the cultural exchange, such as by putting tika (red mark) on forehead, talking about religious places, and most importantly by encouraging grandchildren to communicate in Nepali language. By performing these acts, the grandparents have maintained a crucial role in creating a sense of belonging among grandchildren who are growing up in a completely different cultural setting. One study notes that the adaptation of host country's cultural practices has significantly impacted family relationships, i.e., intergenerational relationships (Muruthi & Lewis, 2017). Muruthi and Lewis, (2017) argue younger generations are highly likely to adapt with new cultural norms by contradicting older generation's understanding of cultural norms. Moreover, their research findings state, one's own cultural values are essentially compromised or changed in order to adapt to a new cultural setting. Notwithstanding what researchers have suggested, the grandparents in this study believe that their grandchildren can still be associated with the norms that are inherited to their culture.

Moreover, the study highlights the education level of grandparents plays a crucial role in comprehending conversation if that is not in native language i.e., in Nepali. For instance, GPM1 has a high school degree and he attempts to communicate in English with his grandchildren living in the US whereas GPM2 is unable to read and write,

and does not bother himself if his grandchild codeswitches. Similar findings were reported in the study on Italian grandparents (Arpino et. al, 2021). Both active and passive engagement of grandparents in communication are equally important to ensure that they are interacting rather than having one-sided conversation. Consequently, it helps them to address the generational and cultural gaps, ensuring the transmission of traditional aspects is passed on while also permitting grandparents to learn about their grandchildren's cultural context. Similar findings have been reported in the study by Levy and his colleagues, who conclude age and education are two decisive factors in relation to the ability of an individual's openness and adjustment to other languages and cultures (Levy et al., 2021).

Besides these opportunities, this study additionally explores many other challenges that complicate the process of traditional knowledge sharing in transnational contexts. As one study indicates, grandparents seem to be constantly irritated by the transnational factor that defines their daughters' family life (Sigad & Eisikovits, 2013). Language barrier is mostly reported as a primary constraint in this process, specifically for grandparents those having very limited proficiency in English. This language barrier often limits the depth of interaction and probability of conveying cultural knowledge. As it is reported in other studies, the language shift can not only result in surface, restricted interactions between generations, but it can also weaken familial ties, thereby hindering grandparents and grandchildren from completely embracing their familial roles and fostering emotional detachment that may endure for a lifetime (Ramos & Martins, 2020). Similarly, this study suggests the difficulty in teaching Nepali to grandchildren who are more adapted to English further exacerbates the situation; thus, it will possibly cause a gradual detachment of overseas grandchildren from cultural connections over time.

Furthermore, this study reveals the challenges associated with maintaining regular communication due to time zone differences between countries, and other logistical and health constraints. The previous studies mostly discuss about challenges associated with grandparents' health, their financial status and their other liabilities or responsibilities in their home country (Becker & Steinbach, 2012; Bengtson & Allen, 1993; Wyss & Nedelcu, 2020), whereas this study additionally notes the different time zones between the location of grandchildren and grandparents has evidently impacted in their communication patterns. Consequently, the irregularity of contact degrades the intergenerational bond, making it difficult for grandparents in sustaining a formed cultural influence on their overseas grandchildren.

Another important finding of this study suggests that the age and gender of the grandchild, the grandparent, or both can also differentiate the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren as similar to the findings of Dunifon & Bajracharya, (2012). Moreover, grandmothers have a closer bond with their grandchildren than grandfathers do (Busari & Adebayo, 2023; Mehta, 2007; Repetti & Calasanti, 2020; Sigad & Eisikovits, 2013); it is because grandmothers focus on conversation that hold emotional bonding whereas the grandfathers rather emphasise on cultural and traditional norms and values in their conversation.

Consequently, when these important aspects such as age of GP and GC, their genders, educational background of GPs, are considered together, this study suggests that the most frequent communication happens among grandparents who are rather well-educated and have granddaughters. Contrariwise, those who are less educated and have only grandsons do not have similar experiences. These findings suggest a complex relationship of educational background and gender in shaping the frequency of communication. In such cases, where education potentially is a key factor in enhancing the ability and desire to maintain close ties, whereas, gender norms influence the dynamics of these interactions.

Overall, this study underlines the necessity to explore intergenerational grandparenting within a transnational context, with a specific focus on grandparents in Nepal. The research has made progress in examining the opportunities and challenges that Nepali grandparents encounter while providing transnational grandparenting. Most importantly, this study suggests investigating the impact of migration on the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren.

6 CONCLUSION

As far as I know, this study is the first to explore the dynamics of transnational grandparenting in the context of Nepali grandparents. This research has provided new insights into how Nepali grandparents navigate through the challenges and opportunities while transmitting traditional knowledge and maintaining intergenerational relationships in a transnational context. This study acknowledged the self-realisation of grandparents about the potentiality for knowledge transfers across generations. They also appreciated the reciprocity in sharing such knowledge with their grandchildren. With regards to the living reality of overseas grandchildren, the grandparents considered that the language and cultural exchange could be useful to enrich their grandchildren's experiences, at least, in defining their cultural roots.

As the first study to investigate the pros and cons of transnational grandparenting among Nepali grandparents, this research also aimed to explore how migration affects intergenerational bonds. The findings reveal that, while language barriers and geographical distance pose significant challenges, however, Nepali grandparents have put significant effort on strengthening the bonding with their overseas grandchildren. For their effort in enhancing connection with their overseas grandchildren, recent technological development, particularly the prevalence of social media, have played an important role in establishing two ways communication between them. Internet-mediated communication tools have enabled real-time interactions, allowing this dyad to stay connected despite physical separation.

This study has also facilitated the examination of the challenges that arise in the process of knowledge transfer in transnational contexts. Firstly, language barrier is a key obstacle in the process because of the difference in language environment of grandparents and grandchildren. Secondly, geographical separation with substantial difference in time zones plays a significant role in limiting their interaction. Thirdly,

cultural mismatch, particularly among overseas grandchildren, is a common issue. Grandchildren's exposure to different cultures hinders them from relating to their grandparents' traditional beliefs and cultural values. Consequently, some of the grandparents have started considering that they have been gradually omitted from family ties of their overseas grandchildren. As a result, there would be no role or whatsoever for grandparents to play in their overseas grandchildren's lives.

Overall, transnational reality in grandparenting includes both opportunities and challenges. Recent technological development has indeed helped bridging the gap between grandparents and their overseas grandchildren. However, proactive initiatives from grandparents associated with adequate support from their adult children are essential to deal with cultural differences and ensure fruitful intergenerational connections, particularly between grandparents and grandchildren in a transnational context.

6.1 Limitations and Implication of the Study

This study provides prominent insights into the dynamics of transnational grandparenting among Nepali families. However, the study consists of some limitations, which may affect the scope and applicability of the findings in a large population. It is because this study was carried out with a relatively small sample size. The sample size may not entirely represent the range of experiences and perspectives within the broader context of Nepali grandparents who are involved in providing transnational care and support. Similarly, the focus of the study is limited on Nepali grandparents; the findings from this specific cultural and regional background of the participants may not be applicable to grandparents from different cultural backgrounds. Thus, such cultural uniqueness of this study limits its generalizability to other samples.

The data used in the study come from self-reported data collected through interviews with participants. Despite the richness of data, the perspectives of the participants may have been influenced by factors such as under or over emphasis on challenges and opportunities against their authentic experiences. Such biases could influence the findings. In addition, the usage of cross-sectional design in the research does not allow for an investigation of how the changes in transmission of traditional knowledge develop over time. Therefore, a longitudinal approach would be a more

useful approach to provide a richer understanding of the evolving nature of such phenomena.

The future studies should aim to include a larger and more diversified sample of population. Inclusion of a more diversified sample of Nepali grandparents varying socio-economic backgrounds, region of residence for example urban and rural, cultural contexts, ages, level of education, and gender of participants could provide comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the dynamics of transnational grandparenting. Besides, a mixed method approach could enrich the generalizability of the findings.

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