



Grandparenthood from adult grandchildren's perspectives

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BACKGROUND

- ❖ Paucity of studies about grandparenthood from adult grandchildren's perspectives (Matos & Neves, 2012);
- ❖ Meaningful changes in traditional roles and intergenerational relationships (Harper, 2005; Sousa, 2006; Sousa et al., 2006; Triadó-Tur & Osuna-Olivares, 2005; Triadó et al., 2009).

OBJECTIVES

- ❖ Identify adult grandchildren grandparents' preferences;
- ❖ Analyze the quantity and quality of contact between adult grandchildren and grandparents;
- ❖ Estimate grandparents' current role and support in adult grandchildren's lives;
- ❖ Examine adult grandchildren's current role in caring and shared activities with grandparents;
- ❖ Analyze the influence of the middle generation on adult grandchildren and grandparents relationship.

[METHOD]

■ **Non-probabilistic sample**

Convenience sample (64 adult granddaughters and 64 adult grandsons)

Inclusion criteria: 18 or more years old and to have at least one living grandparent.

■ **Self-administered questionnaire**

Instruction: Participants were asked to focus on the quality of their relationships with their closest grandparent.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Sociodemographic characteristics

■ Adult Grandchildren

- Age: 18 to 37 years old (M = 21.34; SD = 2.95)
- Marital Status: 98.40% Single; 1.60% Married
- Occupation: 90.60% Full time students

■ Grandparents

- Place of residence: 86.6% Own Residence; 10.69% Relatives' House; 2.76% Geriatric Home
- Health status: 74.50% Reasonable or Good

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Adult grandchildren grandparents' preference

Table 1. Adult grandchildren gender and grandparents' preference.

Grandparents' preference		Male (n = 64)	Female (n = 64)
Maternal Grandfather	Observed frequency	7	9
	Expected frequency	8	8
Paternal Grandfather	Observed frequency	5	5
	Expected frequency	5	5
Maternal Grandmother	Observed frequency	15	24
	Expected frequency	19.5	19.5
Paternal Grandmother	Observed frequency	1	6
	Expected frequency	3.5	3.5
No preference	Observed frequency	36	20
	Expected frequency	28	28

- ❖ Evidence of matrilineality for granddaughters. Grandsons expressed an emerging indifference preference.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Quantity and quality of contact between the dyad

- Adult grandchildren perceived very positively their current relationship with grandparents, regardless of the gender.
- The majority (75.80%) of adult grandchildren were concerned about keeping a frequent or all the week face-to-face contact with grandparents. Furthermore, 60.90% had never or rarely no face-to-face contact (by letter, phone or email) with grandparents.
- No meaningful or important association between the frequency of personal contact and grandchildren's age. But younger grandchildren had a higher no face-to-face contact with grandparents.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Grandparents' current role

Table 2. T test for independent samples, Adult grandchildren's gender and grandparents' current role.

	Global Sample (n = 128)	Male (n = 64)	Female (n = 64)	t	p
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)		
My grandparents are second parents.	4.27 (0.86)	4.06 (0.89)	4.47 (0.80)	-2.72	0.007
My grandparents are an example of life and role models.	4.05 (0.93)	3.88 (0.97)	4.23 (0.87)	-2.21	0.029

- ❖ Adult granddaughters emphasized grandparents' current role as second parents, example of life and role models.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Grandparents' current role

Table 3. Correlation coefficient of Pearson, Adult grandchildren's age and grandparents' current role.

	Grandchildren's Age
My grandparents are second parents.	$r = -0.31, p = 0.000$
My grandparents taught me things I do not know.	$r = -0.33, p = 0.000$
My grandparents mean the family origin.	$r = -0.25, p = 0.005$
My grandparents are a source of wisdom and experience.	$r = -0.33, p = 0.000$
My grandparents are an example of life and a role model.	$r = -0.28, p = 0.001$

- ❖ Younger adult grandchildren recognized more their grandparents as a continuity of familiar core values, traditions, experiences and knowledge.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Grandparents' perceived support

Table 4. T test for independent samples, adult grandchildren's gender and perceived support from grandparents.

	Global Sample (n = 128)		Male (n = 64)	Female (n = 64)	t	p
	M (SD)		M (SD)	M (SD)		
Perceived support						
Emotional	4.02 (0.93)		3.89 (0.94)	4.14 (0.91)	-1.53	0.129
Instrumental	3.59 (1.01)		3.47 (1.07)	3.70 (0.94)	-1.32	0.190
Financial	3.14 (1.09)		3.13 (1.09)	3.16 (1.10)	-0.16	0.872

- ❖ Adult grandchildren, nonetheless the gender, perceived grandparents as an important source of support.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Adult grandchildren's current role

Table 5. T test for independent samples, Adult grandchildren's current role in caring for their grandparents.

	Global Sample (n = 128)	Male (n = 64)	Female (n = 64)	t	p
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)		
Grandchildren's role	3.95 (0.95)	3.67 (1.02)	4.23 (0.79)	-3.48	0.001

- ❖ Adult granddaughters perceived themselves as strongly involved in caring for their grandparents over the last year.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Adult grandchildren's current role

Table 6. T test for independent samples, adult grandchildren shared activities with grandparents.

	Male (n = 64)	Female (n = 64)	t	p
	M (SD)	M (SD)		
Domestic errands	3.00 (1.31)	3.78 (0.95)	-3.86	0.000
Grocery shoppings	2.73 (1.26)	3.33 (1.18)	-2.75	0.007
Conversations	4.39 (0.91)	4.47 (0.92)	-0.45	0.653
Hiking	2.48 (1.11)	2.78 (1.05)	-1.56	1.222
Religious activities	2.03 (0.96)	2.50 (0.99)	-2.72	0.007
Caring in sickness	3.11 (1.36)	3.90 (1.08)	-3.67	0.000
Doctor appointments	2.38 (1.19)	3.06 (0.94)	-3.63	0.000
Cultural activities	2.48 (1.25)	2.75 (1.20)	-1.23	0.221
Travels	2.28 (1.29)	2.52 (1.04)	-1.13	0.260

- ❖ Grandchildren's gender predisposed shared activities with grandparents. There was also a tendency for less shared outside activities.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Paternal influence on the dyad

Table 7. T independent test, paternal influence on the dyad relationship, accordingly to grandchildren's gender.

	Global Sample (n = 128)	Male (n = 64)	Female (n = 64)	t	p
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)		
Paternal influence on the dyad relationship	4.46 (0.86)	4.38 (0.86)	4.54 (0.82)	-1.16	0.249

- ❖ Adult grandchildren, regardless of gender, recognized parents as promoters of the current relationship with grandparents.

RESULTS

Paternal influence on the dyad

Table 8. One Way ANOVA, paternal marital status and type of contact between grandparents and adult grandchildren.

		Paternal marital status			F	p
		Married (n=93)	Divorced (n=26)	Widowers (n=9)		
		M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)		
Type of contact	Face-to-face	3.97 (1.01)	2.92 (1.13)	3.67 (1.00)	10.60	0.000
	No face-to-face	2.82 (1.33)	2.96 (1.46)	2.33 (1.32)	0.72	0.487

- ❖ Adult grandchildren of divorced parents had less personal contact with grandparents than adult grandchildren whose parents were still married.

RESULTS

Paternal influence on the dyad

Table 9. One Way ANOVA, paternal marital status and type of contact between grandparents and adult grandchildren.

		Paternal marital status			F	p
		Married (n=93)	Divorced (n=26)	Widowers (n=9)		
		M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)		
Perceived support	Emotional	4.04 (0.94)	4.19 (0.74)	3.22 (0.97)	3.96	0.022
	Instrumental	3.62 (1.01)	3.73 (0.83)	2.78 (1.20)	3.35	0.038
	Financial	3.29 (1.06)	2.84 (1.12)	2.44 (1.01)	3.81	0.025

- ❖ Parental marital status influenced adult grandchildren perception of grandparents' support.

CONCLUSIONS

- Adult grandchildren's gender discerns grandparent's preference and grandparents/ grandchildren's role.
- Gender influences intergenerational relationships, emphasizing the social construction of the role of women as caregivers.
- Different educational agents should be aware of the existence of gender bias.

CONCLUSIONS

- Intergenerational relationship is highly recognized by adult grandchildren.
- It is primordial to recognize the diversity of intergenerational relationships, to support and empower, over time, the different roles within family multigenerational relationships.