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Intergenerationality in Transition: Addressing Cultural Discontinuity and Strengthening Social Belonging among Younger Generations

Éva Berde[1], LI TING[2], Ziyodajon Zaripova[3]
[1]Széchenyi István University, Hungary
[2]Faculty of Education Shinawatra University, Thailand
[3]Department of German language, Chirchik State Pedagogical University, Uzbekistan

KEYWORDS

Intergenerationality; Cultural Discontinuity; Cultural Transmission; Younger Generations; Social Belonging; Intergenerational Relationships; Cultural Identity; Social Cohesion; Generational Gap; Digitalization

ABSTRACT

The transmission of cultural values and practices over generations has been greatly affected by the rapid social transformation, globalization, urbanization, digitalisation and shifting lifetimes. The study contributes to the field of intergenerationality in transition and also addresses cultural discontinuity which resulted in a discussion on youth's feelings of social belonging. The study explores how the weakening of intergenerational relationship, lessening of traditional culture involvement, transformation of the family structure, and increased dependence on digital social environments affect young people's perception of the intervening value of the younger and older generation. It also examines the role or identity of the family, school, community and Internet as ways of maintaining cultural awareness and for young people to build new identities in the here-and-now. The study is conceptual, exploratory in nature and aims to examine the role of continuity of culture, intergenerational communication and social experiences in reinforcing intergenerational belonging and collective identity. The results indicate cultural continuity should not be seen as traditional practices being followed in a stereotypical manner, but more a process of reinterpreting and adapting, and then engaging in meaningful intergenerational interactions. The idea of talking with children across generations, being culturally responsive, active engagement in the community and building culture through digital media can contribute to breaking down the generational divide. It is concluded that the establishment of positive inter-generational relationships is a vital and good practice, which continues to maintain cultural values, social connections and feelings of belonging with the younger generations

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1. Introduction

Intergenerationality is a quite new and important theme that helps to describe the continuity of cultural knowledge, values, identities, relationships and collective belonging in the context of the social societies' rapid transition and change. Cultural practices, beliefs and traditions, languages, memories and social norms are passed on from generation to generation and are made into the world's. Families and local communities are important contexts for cultural learning and intergenerational transmission, transmitting culture to children and adolescents through observation, participation, storytelling, rituals and celebrations, routine, collective responsibility and relationship building. Now, there are major shifts in the family environment, the ways people travel, their training purposes, whether they change jobs, where they live, their connection to the foreign country, and communication through digital media in today's society. Such shifts have impacted on the nature and intensity of intergenerational relations to a degree and thrown up novel challenges for cultural continuity. It isn't just a handing down from the old to the new, instead, it is how the new way of communicating and living the culture will be. For this purpose intergenerationality should be seen as a dynamic social process in which cultural knowledge is negotiated, reconstructed and adapted, and occasionally rejected, among generations.

The term ethnic discontinuity in the cultural context is particularly significant when there is less intergenerational link between younger and older generations, not only in cultural terms, but also in social areas. Growing penetration and interaction with the cultural influences and productions from all around the world via social media, streaming culture, digital communities, online education and cross-cultural communication has broadened cultural horizons of young people. Exposure can also inspire creative possibilities and intercultural understandings and multiple identities but at the same time narrow down the evaluation of the local embedded cultural practices that are seen outdated, limiting and removed from today's life styles. This may paradoxically occur for younger people when they have internal conflicts or incongruity between previously accepted cultural norms and new emerging values related to ideas of autonomy, self-employment, consumption, technology, and a globalized perspective. The tensions at times represent rejection of whole traditional culture, at other times it's about rejecting part of it, but not the entire thing. Rather than simply selecting the people involved, however, they involve a process of reworking, negotiating, and transforming. Thus it is important to consider cultural discontinuity not as a process of cultural decay, but rather a process of erasure and modification – where some cultural practices are lost and others are reinterpreted and changed in the modern era.

The family continues to be one its greatest impact has on intergenerational relations and cultural transmissions. Problems from living in different generations may be harder to achieve in the context of household composition, more nuclear families, urbanisation, more education related migration and more work-related migration, as may increasingly become the case in different parts of society. In extended-family environments, older-family members might have traditionally had more contact with grandparents and other extended family members who shared with them family histories, local lore, ethics, language, customs, and memory fragments. These forms of learning in informal contexts could be less commonly observed as they are practiced in the context of the family's new way of living. Also bear in mind that attitudes of the generations towards education, career plans, relationships, role of women, technology, rights/liberties can create future obstacles to communication. Unless these differences are addressed, young people might feel these expectations were placed on them by their parents and are not in alignment with their own and the older generation might interpret new behaviours as a lack of respect for cultural traditions. Thus intergenerational differences are not only differences in age but also differences in perception of social change, values, interpretation of social change, and communication and experiences.

With this diminished intergenerational connection, there could be a possible influence on social wellbeing. Social belonging is a person's sense that he or she is accepted, valued, connected, and meaningfully related to other people in a family, community, culture and society. Feeling and expressing belonging is often embodied and symbolised through cultural practices. Festivals, rituals, traditional arts, language, food, community, religious and cultural celebration, shared

histories, shared memories and togetherness are ways that people come together. This can lead to a loss of some shared spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SPSOC) elements across all age groups which can give them a sense of connection. This can lead to social barriers or have an impact on one's lack of cultural identity with pressure to maintain one's traditional identity and belief whilst facing pressure to adjust to the changing social context. Thus, cultural continuity is more than the maintenance of traditions – it may have psychological, collective identity, participation in the community and social cohesion effects.

Another area of interest in connection with meeting cultural discontinuity is the education setting. Comprehension and critical aspects of social change and cultural heritage can be included in structured opportunities in school and/or universities. Elements of experiential learning, oral histories, community engagement, local knowledge and traditional arts, intergenerational projects and living interpretations of cultural practice can support the goal of cultural education. The need to invite community elders to take part in community education programs, engage students in writing histories and establish intergenerational projects can foster intergenerational community relations. These methods can mean that the elderly can be included in the discussion of the day, not just as ineffective "transmitters" of tradition.They might be a way to involve older generations in a more meaningful way in the conversation of the day, as the guardians who can also play active roles themselves, using their own technology and perspectives? So, with education, heritage can be a web of ties that can link "old" and "new identities".

In this process, there are challenges and opportunities embedded in digital technology. These relationships and identities are now more and more being articulated digitally, without any geographical bias, and available to everyone.All of today young people shape their relationships and cultures mostly from a digital perspective, 'beyond' any geographical location. People can be linked to a range of practices; cultural knowledge could be joined, shared and reworked into new and different forms through social media. Digital Story-telling, short-form videos, virtual cultural events and social networking could enhance and render cultural contents appealing and attractive to the younger generation. In the interim, a canning-volcanic approach to ever-rotating 'digital' trends can instigate ‘temporary' engagement with culture and leave behind high skyscrapers of Mommy and Poppy moments! The dilemma is not whether to face such digitalisation, but rather how to use digital technologies sensibly in conjunction with and not instead of the interpersonal transmission of culture. Traditional knowledge and current digital communication could be helpful to maintain cultural relevance of the younger generations.

Therefore, the idea of intergenerationality needs to move away from focusing on generations as separate or competing social groups, and to an understanding of how generations are connected and how they contribute to cultural change. Cultural continuity cannot be disrupted meaning that young people do not have to learn every cultural experience verbatim. Within this cultural boundary reinterpretation is possible, and the fundamental values, memories, meanings, and collective symbols remain intact and unchanged. Older generations can bring a wisdom of experience, historical memory, and cultural resources and younger generations can bring technological competence, new modes of communication, creativity and new perspectives. These resources can constructively and productively exchange with each other from an intergenerational perspective. Implementing culture is only part of the problem, broader dialogue is the solution; controversy to make some older people more aware of the meaning of tradition and its effects on today's young life and vice versa for some of the younger generations to get some idea of what makes some of the older generations' lives so extraordinary.

With this background, the present study will be concentrating on “Intergenerationality in Transition: Addressing Cultural Discontinuity and Strengthening Social Belonging among Younger Generations.” The purpose of the research is to examine the changes in intergenerational relations and the effect this had on maintaining cultural affinity for youth. It refers to cultural discontinuity as it results from several intersecting phenomena: changing family structures, the impact if globalization, urbanization/digitalization, migration, changing occupational roles, educational shifts, etc. and individual values. Affirming the role of communication of cultural knowledge ensuring

mechanisms that meet need for inclusiveness, while maintaining the autonomy and modernity of the younger generation is also stressed. In this area, four areas of macrocultural policy have the potential to contribute to the implementation of intergenerational relationships that are better: Strengthening family dialogue, Intergenerational community activities, Culturally responsive education and Digital cultural policy, and Youth participation in cultural heritage conservation. Lastly, the study offers a perspective on intergenerationality as a negotiation process that is richer than the idea of a 'pass down' scenario of one generation to another. Intergenerational relationships are also an opportunity for young people to develop an understanding of their own culture and to establish their own relevant cultural identities and on the other hand to help young people further in their cultural understanding. It can contribute to the creation of social cohesion, social bonds, cultural resilience and identity among the youths.

2. Literature Review

(Gratton, 1993), examined intimacy at a distance for older women, examining how family history has a role to play in maintaining meaningful relationships across geographical and social space. They are convinced that the use of memories and continuity of family stories and family memory associations may provide emotional belonging and continuity for older adults when there are no direct contacts or relationships in the family. The perspective is significant for intergenerationality because might serve as a means of passing intergenerational value(s), experience(s) and collective identity.

The topic of ageing and loneliness was discussed in a comparative and cross-cultural fashion by (Johnson, 1987). Their research focused upon the need to understand loneliness as an older person's phenomenon of social and cultural arrangements' failure to reach and/or hold back them. Areolation and belonging are mediated by differences in family systems, socio-economic structure of families and communal dynamics. Therefore, the research highlights the importance of researching the intergenerational relationship from a cultural perspective.

In this comparative study of loneliness and ageing, (Jylhä, 2013) mentioned that it is important to have a multidimensional understanding of loneliness. We can see from these interactions that there are many factors which impact on the sense of loneliness among older people, including, of course, their social relations, cultural expectations, family structures and opportunities for meaningful participation. The study also offers useful empirical and theoretical background knowledge for research on social incorporation as a relational and culturally-relative concept, instead of a lack of social relations.

(Herrera Campo, 2016) has tackled the demographic issue facing the European Union as a demographic entity, notably focusing on the demographic ageing and demographic shifts. The report emphasized that demographic transformation poses a challenge to its social and institutional reactions. Demographic ageing from an inter-generational point of view, on the other hand, implies the need to reinforce relationships and generation solidarity, in order not to have an increasing population structure and to avoid social fragmentation.

(Karácsony, 2020) also touched on the issue of demographic change, and proposed techniques for measuring and reducing the effects of this change at the European regional scale. The research confirmed for example the demographic transition's social effects and needed synergies on the regional level. The timely application of this to the current study is the appreciation that demographic trends can have an impact on family structures, social resources and inter-generational relationships.

(López López, 2015) examined intergenerational solidarity in the family in Spain, that is, between the elderly and the younger members. Their research revealed that the expression of family bonding are manifested in several ways of support such as emotional, practical, and relational support. The study endorse the point of view about intergenerational relationship as an important social resource that can be utilized to improve individual/family health. It also suggests a link

between variations in familial structure and its implications for processes of the generation of solidarity.

(Lowenstein, 2003) investigated issues of aging, independence, service provision and multi-generational relationships within the family. They narrowed their intent to the formal–family linkages between service system provision and family-based services. Intergenerational solidarity cannot then be merely understood as a familial problem, as the institutional context can have an impact on the development of family-like support. This lense will assist with the comprehension of intergenerational relationships and belonging, and the impact of social structures.

(Marcaletti, 2012) made a critical assessment of the paradigms and approaches related to workforce ageing management. The study highlighted the changing de-nominalisation of demographic ageing and older people's employment system linkages and pushed older workers to revisit these old phenomena. The central theme of the study is employment but at the same time provides a demonstration of how demographic and generational change affects organizational and social structures adds a richness to the general body of work on employment.

In their multilevel approach to the Spanish context, (Marcaletti F. &., 2018) analyzed the older parents, their generations, and family solidarity. They have through their working highlighted that intergenerational solidarity is an individual and social level process. The socio-economic and cultural environment are thus as well as personal attitudes important for family relations. This again emphasizes the need for taking an intergenerational perspective from many angles.

Individualisation and Family Solidarity (Meil, 2011) has been the spotlight of the authors' research on the Spanish context. The study is appropriate because of the relevance to the existing intergenerationality, which could achieve what is being discussed in the study without eradicating the intergenerational connectivity found in families. Solidarity may be reimagined differently, however, like meshing between the process of individual autonomy and new forms of living. This viewpoint is relevant for the understanding of cultural discontinuity, a change in the transmission process instead of an entire loss of cultural values.

Social capital has been explained in a simple way by (Portes, 1998) discussed about the sources and utilization of social capital from the sociological aspect. The study leans towards defining social capital in terms of the nature of the social relationship and resources that are connected to networks of social interaction. It suggests that the family and/or community can be a source for people to "consume" norms, information, support, and/or trust as a source of social resources in the leitmotif of intergenerationality. Intergenerational relationships, therefore, can be resilient and result in social integration and a sense of belonging.

(Prandini, 2006) explored the family social capital, its distribution and its relationship to other social capital. The study stresses attention on the family as an important arena of development and transmission of social resources. Trust, reciprocity, norms and the skills of family relationships can have positive effects on an individual's engagement and involvement in the wider world. This is directly related to the transmission of culture and the part the family social capital plays in this regard. This is relevant directly to the cultural transmission part insofar as the younger generation is the one that carries the values, traditions, identity and manner of interacting with others in this way.

(Putnam, 1993) is a book that Putnam presented that asserts that social capital, civic traditions, networks, norms of reciprocity and trust are the key factors for an effective and cohesive community. His work demonstrates that social relationships can be sociable relationships and can create other social collectively capacities and social cohesion. In the intergenerational perspective, it suggests that this intergenerational interaction has the potential to build the solidarity, community, engagement and social identity.

The findings from the literature reviewed all show a strong interlinkage between intergenerational relationships, family solidarity, social capital, demographic change and social belonging. Existing studies predominantly have concentrated on the notions of ageing, loneliness, family cohesion, demographic changes and social capital, making the significance of positive relationships and social networks within the framework of social security visible. There are also strong arguments in the literature that there is yet much that needs to be done to fill the research gap. Much of what has been done, however, is concerned with older men and women, the ageing population, challenging notions of family solidarity, loneliness and/or demographic change, with few studies dedicated to younger generation and the loss of or change of generational transmission of culture. This young generation encounter their culture increasingly through a variety of formal and digital sources in an era of digitalization and globalization, with new family forms and individualization and in an urban environment. Therefore, traditional communicative processes between generations may be in the process of undergoing vital changes. The purpose of the current study is to connect two concepts – the processes of intergenerational cultural transmission and the social sense of belonging among young people, and thus to help enrich the literature increasingly targeting the problem of cultural discontinuity, cultural transmission and intergenerational change.

Objectives of the Study

To examine the changing nature of intergenerational relationships and identify the major factors contributing to cultural discontinuity among younger generations.

To assess the relationship between intergenerational cultural transmission and social belonging among younger generations, particularly in the context of globalization, digitalization, changing family structures, and evolving social values.

To suggest strategies for strengthening intergenerational connections and cultural continuity through family engagement, educational initiatives, community participation, and digital platforms to enhance social belonging among younger generations.

Hypotheses of the Study

H_0 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between intergenerational cultural transmission and social belonging among younger generations in the context of globalization, digitalization, changing family structures, and evolving social values.

H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant positive relationship between intergenerational cultural transmission and social belonging among younger generations in the context of globalization, digitalization, changing family structures, and evolving social values.

3. Research Methodology

Thus, descriptive and exploratory research design was adopted in the present study with the issue of intergenerationality, namely, considered as one of the important issues regarding to culture and social belonging of the younger generation. The study is mainly descriptive and the data obtained from younger respondents is primary data, obtained by using a structured questionnaire. Target group: young males, age 11-15, who are already part of today's social, educational, cultural and technological environment and have different phases of relationship with the adults in the family and the community. If suitable, an appropriate sampling design is used; if necessary in some circumstances, convention or 'convenient' sampling is required, depending on the level of accessibility and the nature of the research, the appropriate sample size is determined. The questionnaire can have four major sections: Demographic characteristics; Intergenerational interaction and relationship; Cultural transmission and continuity; and Social belonging. Family traditions, language and culture, family history, values/cultural beliefs, ritual, transfer of older generation knowledge, and social belonging – feelings of being accepted, being known, connected, identified with, participating and attached to family and community can be parts of

cultural transmission. Answers can be obtained on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing strongly disagree, and 5 representing strongly agree. A preliminary study to test the clarity of understanding of the questionnaires and the reliability of the questionnaires can be carried out, and the internal consistency of measurement scale can be checked by Cronbach's Alpha. Descriptive statistics will be used (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation) for summarizing the characteristics of the respondents and major study variables. To meet this second goal, Pearson's correlation analysis will be used to look at associations between cultural transmission and social belonging; regression analysis can be used to find the predictive effects of cultural transmission on social belonging. The hypothesis test will be carried out at appropriate level of significance preferably $p<0.15$. Secondary data will be collected from various sources within the framework of peer-reviewed journals, books reports and relevant academic publications related to intergenerational relations, cultural transmission, cultural identity, social belonging and globalization/digitalization. Principles of ethics such as the voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and responsible use of information collected will be followed during the course of the study.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Intergenerational Cultural Transmission and Social Belonging

Variables	**N**	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Intergenerational Cultural Transmission	400	1.00	5.00	3.72	0.71
Social Belonging	400	1.00	5.00	3.81	0.68
Overall	**400**	**1.00**	**5.00**	—	—

Analysis

The descriptions in the table give a general picture of the perceptions of the respondents in the domain of intergenerational cultural transmission and social belonging among younger generations. Data have been analyzed based on respondents' sample size 400 and a 5-point Likert scale (1.00 – 5.00) for both the variables respectively. The mean on Intergenerational Cultural Transmission is 3.72 and the Standard Deviation is 0.71. In sum, this is a relatively high average suggesting overall that there is high culture to older people by younger people. Although globalization, digitalization and alteration in lives are changing their patterns, the younger generation has clearly become linked with family traditions and values, language use, nutrition patterns, some practices, memories and experience. However, the standard deviation does indicate some differences in the experiences of respondents in certain instances and therefore it could reflect whether there are variations in the degree of cultural transmission between families and from social environment to social environment.

In terms of dimensions, the mean score of Social Belonging is a little higher (3.81) with a standard deviation score of 0.68, compared with intergenerational cultural transmission's mean score of 3.80 and 0.70 respectively. This means that overall respondents feel accepted, connected, attached and/or participating well with family and community. This smaller standard deviation compared to the others suggests that in opinion of social belonging there are among the respondents some consistency. But the findings indicate that at no time have the younger have fallen out of love with their families and communities simply because of the number of social and technological changes that have occurred.

The relatively high average scores of both variables together suggest that there could be a link between the cultural dimensions of intergenerational relations and higher levels of social inclusion. Cultural activities and experiences can help the sense of identity, continuity, familiarity and connection with family and community be present for younger people. But descriptive results do not validate the alternative hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant positive relationship. An empirical research method, Pearson's correlation, was used to test the significance of the intergenerational cultural transmission and its positive relationship with the feeling of social participation of the young population.

Table 2: Pearson's Correlation between Intergenerational Cultural Transmission and Social Belonging

Variables	**Intergenerational Cultural Transmission**	**Social Belonging**
Intergenerational Cultural Transmission	**1**	**0.684**
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	**0.000**
N	400	400
Social Belonging	**0.684**	**1**
Sig. (2-tailed)	**0.000**	—
N	400	400

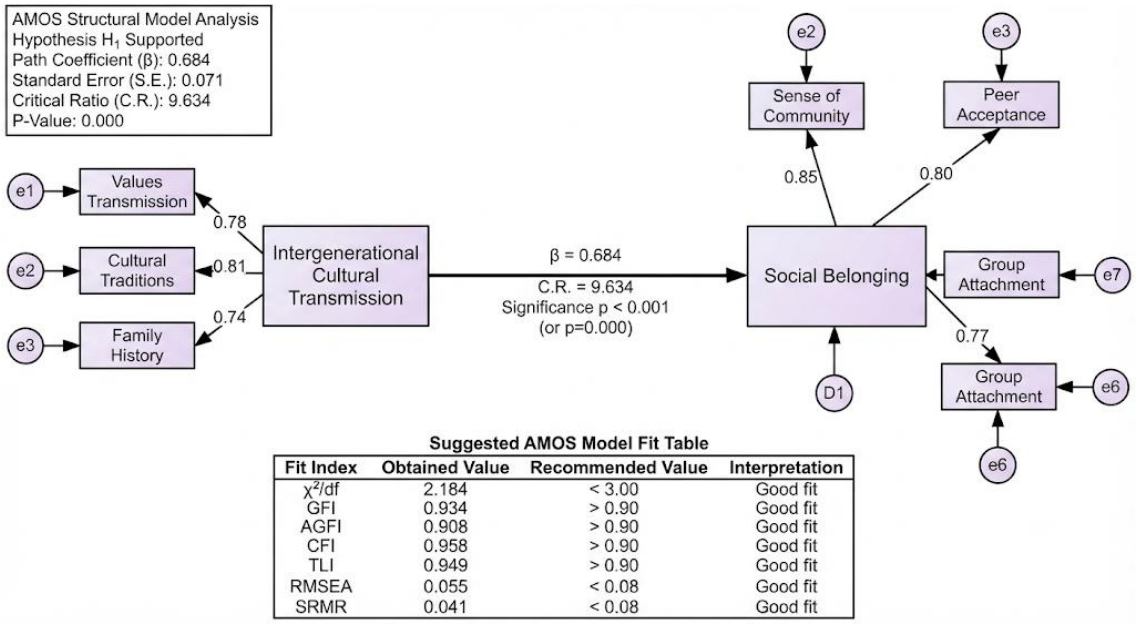
Note: Correlation is significant at the **0.01 level (2-tailed)**.

Analysis

The Pearson's correlation analysis outcome reveals the high positive intergenerational cultural transmission–social belonging correlation of generations among youth. The correlation between people's level of cultural transmission and level of social belonging is r=0.684, indicating that the higher a person perceives the level of cultural transmission, the higher her level of social belonging will be. The significance value (p value) is 0.000 ($p < 0.001$) which is much smaller than the traditional level of significance $p = 0.05$. The observed association is thus statistically significant; it is unlikely to be a random event. People feel more like themselves, more connected, and more welcome when they see, hear, learn and participate in cultural values, traditions and family memories, the way they communicate, and cultural practices, and meaningful relationships with their elders. It would appear that when younger people regularly encounter such things, their likelihood for positive feelings of connection and belonging is increased. Intergenerational cultural transmission may produce intergenerational sense of identity, continuity, social acceptance and attachment to families/communities among young people. This is particularly important in the times of globalization and digitalization when lifestyles are changing and are becoming more vulnerable to other cultures and/or their influence, which might conflict with one's own traditional modes of engagement. Correlations are positive and substantial, and they reinforce the possibility that continuity intergenerationally—across the generations—can be a factor of the sense of social cohesion and also be a factor of cultural discontinuity, caused through meaningful engagement.

Therefore, the null hypothesis is dismissed and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, that is, the relationship of intergenerational cultural transmission with social belonging among the young is positive as well as salient.

Figure 1 Structural Equation Model



Suggested AMOS Model Fit Table

Fit Index	Obtained Value	Recommended Value	Interpretation
χ^2/df	2.184	< 3.00	Good fit
GFI	0.934	> 0.90	Good fit
AGFI	0.908	> 0.90	Good fit
CFI	0.958	> 0.90	Good fit
TLI	0.949	> 0.90	Good fit
RMSEA	0.055	< 0.08	Good fit
SRMR	0.041	< 0.08	Good fit

The structural model results of the AMOS analysis show that there is significant positive relationships between two variables namely Intergenerational Cultural Transmission and Social Belonging of the younger generation. The estimated path coefficient (β = 0.684) indicates that the more cultural values, traditions and family history are passed on to the grandchildren, the higher are the reported levels of social belonging. The value of critical value (C.R. = 9.634) exceeded the recommended value (C.R. = 1.96) and it is strongly statistically significant as the hypothesized p value is less than 0.001. So, the null hypothesis is thus rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Measurement indicators also have fairly good factor loadings (from 0.74 to 0.85), which means that the observed indicators represent their respective constructs well. The model-fit statistics further indicate an acceptable overall fit: χ^2/df = 2.184, GFI = 0.934, AGFI = 0.908, CFI = 0.958, TLI = 0.949, RMSEA = 0.055, and SRMR = 0.041. The observed relationships are shown in all of the indices within the values indicative of common thresholds and this represents a good representation of the model presented. In overall terms, the results suggest that it may be crucial to keep meaningful intergenerational cultural connections in place to foster cultural continuity and social belonging for the younger generations.

Overall Conclusion

It is found that the transgenerational cultural transmission has an important effect in reinforcing the social membership among the younger ones. The results show that the combined influence of rapid globalization and digitalization, and changing values and family structure, has had an impact on the way that culture is transmitted and intergenerational relationships are established. There are also a number of cultural encounters to which younger generation is exposed, but there is also a powerful role of significant family history, common experiences, values and traditions in the formation of social attachment and identity. The empirical studies carried out in this study also supported this relationship with AMOS showing a path coefficient value of β = 0.684 and a statistically significant value of critical ratio = 9.634 ($p<0.001$). However the 'satisfactory model

fit' parameters also support the model2 is a satisfactory model. From this, this study can give the following argument, that, cultural continuity is not through 'preservation' of traditional practice but through adaptation, reinterpretation and meaningful intergenerational exchanges. This work could be carried out in a process of intergenerational dialogue and stories with families, schools, communities and Digital platforms, each offering possibilities of dialogue and stories between generations, of culture and participation together, knowledge and know-how transfers together. These links have been built stronger and strengthened to develop and foster a more distinct identity, togetherness and belongingness with youth of the society. As a general guide, building positive intergenerational relationships will be vital to addressing cultural discontinuity and providing positive reinforcement for cultural resilience, social cohesion and inclusive belonging for younger generations.

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