

Canadian Punjabi Sons and Daughters and Elderly Care | Text Transcript | CIRCLE

This is a text transcript of the recorded webinar “Canadian Punjabi Sons and Daughters and Elderly Care” presented by the Canada India Research Centre for Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at the University of Guelph. This event was recorded on March 10, 2021. The guest speaker was Ashna Jassi.

Transcript:

Sharada Srinivasan:

Welcome everyone, I am Sharada Srinivasan, the director of the Canada India Research Center for Learning and Engagement, CIRCLE for short. CIRCLE was established last year in February, it intends to be an interdisciplinary nucleus for cutting-edge research related to India and the Indian diaspora. It intends to showcase, advocate, catalyze, and foster an equitable, respectful, and sustained exchange of knowledge between Canadian and Indian scholars on complex and emerging topics related to sustainability and social and economic well-being. You can learn more about CIRCLE by visiting the website canadaindiaresearch.ca.

Today's webinar would be the 15th webinar in the series of events that CIRCLE has hosted since last summer. Today we have Ashna Jassi, who is a PhD candidate in Applied Social Psychology at the University of Guelph. Prior to her PhD program, she completed her master's in Social and Cultural Psychology at the London School of Economics, and she also has a Bachelor's of Science Honors in Psychology from the University of British Columbia.

In addition to completing her PhD Ashna is also a Manager of Partner Services at the Canadian Center for Diversity and Inclusion, where she provides data-driven consulting to organizations from various sectors on their diversity and inclusion initiatives. In addition to all of this, Ashna is also a very active member of CIRCLE's steering committee.

Today, Ashna will share findings from her PhD research, which focuses on Punjabi-Canadian sons and daughters and care for the elderly. Over to you Ashna.

Ashna Jassi:

All right, thank you very much Sharada for the kind introduction there. I will just get us set up by sharing my screen, so I'll be a few seconds. Okay so again, I did want to say thank you to Sharada, to CIRCLE and also to Shirley for providing this opportunity to speak about my dissertation research. In addition to Sharada's introduction, I would also just add that I am also a second generation Canadian Punjabi woman, so this topic at hand is quite relevant to me and my identity has really shaped my interest in this topic.

So the topic is Canadian-Punjabi elderly care, and I was interested in looking at elderly care amongst the Punjabi diaspora in Canada but also taking a gendered lens to this, so understanding the experiences and understandings of sons and daughters in terms of elder care.

So before diving into Canadian-Punjabi elderly care it's important to understand the context of Punjab and how that shapes elderly care in terms of norms, and gender norms. So first, Punjab is one of India's states, it lies on the northwest border of the country. One of the key aspects of the context that shapes eldercare is, there's little social security measures in place for aging citizens.

In addition, there is a law where adult children are legally obligated to ensure the welfare of elderly parents. According to this law adult children are considered those who are over the age of 18, and elderly parents are those over the age of 60. So already we see sort of an economic and legal context around elder care. In terms of thinking about gender, this law does not of course state the gender of the child that is expected to ensure this elder care, but there are other aspects of the Punjab context that lead to particularly sons being expected to ensure this elder care.

So one of the other contextual aspects of Punjab is that is a primary and agricultural estate, so its first economic activity is agricultural related. I'll speak more a bit about why this relates to gender as we continue. So amidst the sort of economic and legal context there, there's also important systems to consider in terms of family and marriage. In terms of family, we see a system, which is referred to as a patrilineal kinship system. What this refers to is that the males of the family sort of carry the family line onwards, so we see for instance that the last name of the family is carried on by sons and sons sort of carry on this this heritage.

In addition, we see a marital system which is referred to in the literature as a patriarchal exogenous marital system. What this refers to is that at marriage daughters tend to move away to reside with their in-laws after marriage, whereas sons tend to stay within their natal households and stay with their parents for the duration of their parents lives. So there's kind of a myriad of contextual features here in terms of again the economy, the legal aspects, family systems and marriage systems, and they all sort of dynamically interplay to lead the expectation that particularly sons will engage in elder care.

This of course goes along with a whole host of other expectations as well. I do want to throw in a caveat that this might not be the case for all Punjabi families but this is sort of what shows up as trends when looking at marriage and gender and elder care. So, along with all of these features the sort of expectations we see for sons are included on the left side of your screen, whereas the expectations that typically fall onto daughters are on the right side of your screen.

So following that patrilineal kinship system where family line is carried by males, sons are typically expected to carry the family name onwards. They're also typically expected to assist with economic activities and again the primary economic activity in Punjab is agricultural

related. So sons may be expected to support in these agricultural activities, as well as inheriting these lands as well.

Sons may also play a role in assisting the regulation of family honor in the family and as I touched on already, they would be also expected to provide finances for the family and care for parents as they age. Again, this ties into that patrilocal exogenous marital system where sons would be staying with their parents for the duration of their parents lives, whereas daughters would move away and reside with their in-laws. So on the opposite side, there's sort of contrasting expectations that we tend to see for daughters that also interplay with all of these contextual features.

For daughters there's a tendency to expect them to carry the family honour or is up. There may also be wedding expenses, in terms of the bride's family may tend to take up a lot of the wedding expenses whereas the groom's sides may not really accrue so many expenses themselves. A part of this is increased dowry expenses as well, and what dowry refers to is the provision of gifts or finances from the bride's family to the groom's family. And, although this practice was actually made illegal, there's some documentation that it might still be occurring in some ways. In relation to all of this, again, there's the expectation that daughters may move away to reside with their in-laws, and along with that, any money that they earn could perhaps go to their in-laws residence and family.

And lastly, they would care for their parents-in-law as they age rather than their own parents. So again, a small caveat that may not be the case for all Punjabi families, and of course things are sort of shifting as there's modernization occurring and a lot of these gender norms are being kind of resisted.

But in terms of the sort of the trends that we see along history, those are sort of the expectations in place. And it does seem to interplay with what we sort of see manifesting as an issue in terms of son preference. So son preference refers to preferring to have, and sort of nurture sons over daughters and unfortunately the state of Punjab does have a history that indicates some son preferential attitudes and behaviours. One of the sort of statistics we can look at to understand if this is occurring is looking at Child Sex Ratios. Child Sex Ratios compare the amount of boys to the amount of girls.

Specifically, it'll provide you a number which tells you how many boys there are per 100 girls. And those are the state of Punjab's child sex ratios for 2001 and 2011 and we can see they are unnaturally high. So there's an unnatural increased level of boys over girls, at both of these years and also this occurs at both zero to one years of age and also zero to six years of age.

I also want to mention here that the issue of son preference is not limited to Punjab or it's not also limited to India as well. There's a fantastic article by Postulart and Sharada, who introduced me, on the various ways son preference appears in different contexts, and also in present day America there are some studies that indicate fathers may spend more time with sons than daughters.

So, I do just want to share that to highlight that this is an issue that exists in different contexts and it's important to think about this in whichever context we are considering, and for myself this was particularly in the context of Punjab. So with all of these features in place, and these issues of gender norms and son preference, the question sort of leads to, so why is there this preference? And I think all of those factors I mentioned that dynamically create this sort of issue and it's very complex and multifaceted.

However, some authors do argue that it is particularly that expectation for elder care that drives, or is at the root of some of these son preferential attitudes and behaviours and some of those references are there if you're interested to read further. So it does seem that elder care is one of the key features of why sons may be preferred and nurtured over daughters. So bringing this back to my topic, so again I am interested in the Punjabi diaspora in Canada and there's a lot of different contextual features to consider when we're thinking about the diaspora in the Canadian context.

So firstly just to introduce, you know, this population in this community, there's sort of a long history of migration that goes back to 1897, so the first Punjabi migrants arrived in Canada in 1897. In present day, it seems as though Punjabi immigrants constitute the second largest immigrant group in Canada. So Punjabi is the second highest language spoken amongst Canadian immigrants, followed by Chinese dialects, so they constitute a large thriving part of the Canadian community and landscape.

And I'll just jump ahead to speak about why I was interested in this issue in particular amongst the Canadian Punjabi diaspora. So unfortunately, there is some evidence that some preference may be occurring, although on a much smaller scale amongst Indian immigrants in Canada. So there are a few researchers who have looked at sex ratios amongst immigrant groups and those who are from India do show an unnatural sex ratio favour towards males, but again on a much lower scale than what I presented previously in Punjab.

So, to dive into this further, Sharada has conducted a study with Punjabi migrants in Canada. This included first generation and second generation immigrants, and sixty percent of the sample did report that sex selection, whether that was son preference or daughter aversion, that this issue is prevalent amongst the Canadian Punjabi community. And when asked why son preference occurs in Canada, old age security was actually the top reason given by the men who participated in the study.

So, it seems that even in the Canadian context we see that this elder care expectation for sons continues to be somewhat of a driving force here in terms of preferring or perhaps just nurturing sons over daughters. So, this finding is very interesting to me, and it's also interesting because the Canadian context is quite different, there's a few different elements to it then the Punjab context. One of the differences is in Canada we do see more social security measures in place.

Canada as a whole, the population is aging, and the government does try to promote 'aging in place' is what they refer to it as, and so they do try to support their elders in maintaining some

independence and ability to live at home. And so one of the social security measures that are in place is the old age security benefits, so these are payments that occur for citizens above the age of 65.

Another sort of interesting difference in these contexts is that in Canada, statistics show that daughters tend to be more active in elder parent care than sons, and so there's this interesting gendered norm in Canada. There's also some studies amongst the Canadian majority, this would involve white Canadians, that there may be an active choice in deciding to provide care, rather than any sense of expectation or obligation.

So just to recap, there seems to be some issue of son preference occurring amongst the Canadian-Punjabi diaspora. It appears that elder care is one of those key driving factors. However, this is occurring in a different context, with a few different elements at play. So, this leads me to ask my research question, which is: how do Canadian-Punjabi sons and daughters themselves understand and experience elder care?

Another important piece of the Canadian context that I should touch on before going further is that the Punjabi community in Canada, there's another intersectional layer to this, where this community are immigrants in the Canadian society and they're also marginalized in various ways. So there's evidence in terms of economic discrimination. There's also evidence in terms of the marginalization of seniors in the Canadian context.

So for Canadian-Punjabi seniors, this may involve some limitations in terms of language or in terms of transportation, as well. And again with that economic situation they may not find work for themselves in Canada. And another important piece of this is actually that some of these social security benefits are not available to immigrants until they've been in Canada for at least 10 years.

So although Canada does offer some social security measures, there's additional elements to the context which may marginalize the Canadian-Punjabi diaspora as well as seniors in particular. So I believe all of these are important to consider when we're looking at elder care in Canada. So in terms of my PhD dissertation I conducted two studies to explore the understandings and experiences of Canadian-Punjabi men and women.

My first study included 14 interviews, this was with seven Canadian Punjabi men and seven Canadian-Punjabi women. All of these participants were first generation immigrants and all of the participants had at least one parent or parent-in-law who was 60 or above in age. The second study I conducted was an online questionnaire with 103 participants. Again, these were first-generation immigrants and for these participants, they had both of their parents residing in Canada as well, and both parents were age 60 and above, and I'll dive more into the details of each of these studies.

So I'm first diving into the qualitative findings that I collected during my interviews, and one of the themes that emerged was that for both men and women, some of these gendered ideas and expectations began shaping in their childhood. So, for example, men described how the

expectation was in place for them to take up elder care responsibilities, and their sisters would move away from their households.

On the opposite side, women described expectations in terms of becoming a suitable daughter-in-law to enter another household. This woman in particular described how she resisted these expectations, as she was a child. In terms of entering Canada, and then navigating the Canadian context, an interesting difference emerged among men and women, where men described seeing themselves as more of support in terms of transitioning to the Canadian culture, and supporting in the Canadian landscape essentially.

So there's also different approaches to this in the men, so this was one approach that came up, for example, this participant said, "Their whole life, they lived over there. It's hard for them to adapt to everything because we are the one, we are taking care of them... from the beginning. So kind of, if they go ... out on their own, probably they won't manage."

And I found this to be quite interesting and thinking there seems to be a perspective here that the elderly parents will face a lot of difficulties in terms of being independent. And I think although this participant was trying to be helpful in his role, I think there may be a danger, and maybe sort of overtaking too much responsibility and perhaps limiting the agency of the parents in the situation.

There was another perspective shared, which is now on the right side of your screen, and this participant more so described the process of engaging his parents in the experience of learning about the Canadian context and more so fostering that independence and agency for his parents. So he spoke about connecting them to different resources in the community, and he felt that as a son it was a responsibility to show them different aspects of Canada, and foster their ability to engage in this environment independently. So in terms of my perspective I think that is a more healthy approach to supporting elder parents and reducing some of the barriers that they may face.

So I did mention that was the difference between men and women, so that topic didn't quite emerge with women, which was quite interesting. Another topic that came up with men that didn't come up with women was the idea of being a primary decision maker in the household.

So, some men described how they were defaulted as a decision maker for their parents. This man here actually also described how he asserted his role in his household, and he spoke about a conversation he had with his father in terms of being the primary decision maker in the house, and he concluded with, after this conversation, his father left all the decisions up to him.

So that was another interesting difference between men and women, where this didn't quite come up for women. Another element of the conversation that men brought up was that there's intersections to their experience as immigrants, and these may have intersected with their care in various ways. So they described entering a racialized society and how they had to compete to survive in Canada. They also described how there's additional time constraints in the Canadian workforce compared to working in agriculture in Punjab.

So there's sort of some different constraints occurring for men in terms of their intersectional experience in Canada. So again, these themes didn't quite emerge for women, but a different thing that did emerge for women was after they migrated. So they had that experience of transitioning to various degrees, but they're more vocal about speaking about transitioning to their in-laws households expectations after marriage, so they described how they felt.

This one participant on the left described how she felt she had a bit more agency in her own parents household, and she had to navigate and negotiate different expectations as she entered her in-laws household, and that was described by that other participant you see on the right there as well. So we see an interesting situation of women, again sort of intersectional aspect, they are immigrants but also they're kind of negotiating different levels of expectations in terms of what's expected of them as a daughter-in-law, and then kind of navigating all of those hierarchies that may be in place in their in-laws households.

In terms of speaking about care in particular, for men they described caring for their own parents as just very fundamental and very natural and something they felt very positive about. So that was for men, an interesting piece here was none of the men I spoke to were actually involved in supporting their parents-in-law, so all of these things that emerge are in relation to their own parents only.

For women, they were a bit more active in discussing both care for their own parents as well as for their parents-in-law, and the women described understanding that there was some shame in society in terms of parents seeking out care from daughters, but they also described the ways they sort of navigated this and also met the expectations of their in-laws.

So it just seems that women were very active in finding ways to balance expectations and also their personal goals in caring for their own parents. So, I'm just taking a look at these quotes, yeah, so the first quote there is explaining an experience in terms of shaming around daughters supporting parents.

The second quote describes a woman who had her parents living near to her, but she was living with her mother-in-law and she describes how she protects her parents from feeling like they're interfering with her in-laws expectations. And lastly, the last quote refers to a woman who describes a more dynamic situation where her mother split up her time across different siblings depending on how the relations were going in each household.

So that brings me to this next theme, where both men and women were describing situations of a dynamic situation to care. So it seems as though care wasn't being fulfilled by one child alone, there was instances of siblings being involved as well. So for example, one man described how his parents would visit his sister's place and they would spend a night there. In terms of this quote from the women, this woman is describing how this situation may also lead to further independence of elders, where they can now choose who they want to spend their time with, and where their positive relations are is probably where they will choose to go.

Another really important piece that came out of the interviews was that care was unidirectional, sorry, not unidirectional. Care was, I'm forgetting the words, but it was happening in both directions. So it was not unidirectional just from adult children to parents but it was occurring in both ways, it was very fluid.

So, both men and women describe the support they received from either the parents or parents in law, this included support with child care activities as well as domestic activities, such as cleaning and cooking and I think this really highlights that perhaps we shouldn't think about care as just from adult children to the parents but perhaps we should think about the whole household and understand care as relational within the whole family.

The last theme that emerged from the interviews was that essentially for both men and women, senior residences or long-term care homes were considered last resort options and basically every other option to avoid the situation would be explored before considering a long-term care home.

So, men described some aspects of shame attached to having parents in care homes, however, other participants describe that there may be more awareness of what benefits could be, of a care home if the situation presented itself. So for example, they describe it is the last resort option if they need constant sort of care and attention in terms of health or medicine or physical ability, then perhaps that would be the time they may consider a senior residence home.

But that was the only, it was basically a very last resort sort of situation. I will also say these interviews happened all before the onset of COVID 19, so I'm thinking that attitudes around care homes may have also changed or shifted since I have done these interviews. So that may be just something important to consider as well. But even before COVID, these residences were seen as last resort options.

And again, this sort of emerged similarly amongst women, there's a bit of shame around having elders in care homes, and then one woman did describe how a care home, there's a potential for it to be an opportunity for elders to receive care if they didn't have strong familial relations. So if they do not have positive relations with their family members, perhaps this could be an option for those type of elders, who may be isolated otherwise.

Okay, so this brings me to my second study, which was again an online questionnaire with 103 participants. All of the participants were first-generation immigrants, they had both parents living in Canada, so the participants were their sons and their daughters. Both parents were age 60 or above, the gender breakdown was pretty close, there's a slight majority of sons over daughters, and there's just a few more demographic details there in terms of the average age of participants and the average age of their parents.

So you'll see the average age was around 35/36 years old, and the average age of immigrating was around 19 years old. Average age of fathers was around 66/67, and average age of mothers was 64/65. In terms of what was included in the study, I first asked participants to complete a

demographic questionnaire. I then asked them to complete a questionnaire in terms of instrumental daily activities of living.

So these are considered, these are sort of the prevalent items that people go to in the literature, in the research literature, when thinking about elder care, and they sort of refer to basic activities that caregivers may engage in. So I asked participants to indicate which of these activities they support their parents with. The last was a comprehensive filial responsibility inventory scale and this scale touched on five different aspects of care.

So it touched on a few aspects of care that are particular to immigrants in that intersectional aspect. So the first factor of the scale refers to social affair management, so this involves sort of contacting institutions such as banks or doctors, supporting with booking appointments, also ensuring that parents weren't being exploited in any ways, that was the first theme. The second factor of the scale involved cultural transitioning, so this involved teaching parents about Canadian history, Canadian norms, and navigating the Canadian context.

The third factor was language translation, this referred to supporting parents and visiting different institutions such as hospitals or offices, and also providing a role in translating important documents for parents, so perhaps mail or statements, etc. Financial support tapped into paying for parents housing or also providing any gifts for parents, and lastly emotional support tapped into consoling parents in tough times, being a friend to your parents and being that social support.

So for each of these factors, participants were able to, participants were essentially asked to report if they helped their parents with each of the items in each of these factors, and they answered on, I believe it was a seven point Likert scale, which tapped into their agreement rate of supporting them, the parents, in all of these factors.

So I'm first presenting to you how sons and daughters responded in terms of those instrumental activities of daily living. So again, I asked sons and daughters to share which of the activities they supported their parents with, and these are the results from that question. So we do see the levels of numbers are pretty similar amongst sons and daughters, which is again an indication of daughter's involvement in elder parent care in the Canadian context.

We do see the ranking of items differs for sons and daughters, so shopping was the first, finances appears second for sons, whereas transportation came second for daughters, and I think overall we do see the more physical activities are falling closer to the bottom and I think an important piece of this was that participants were also asked to rate the health of their parents, and most persons did rate their parents health as good or very good.

So this may be an indication of also the types of supports that were needed, so perhaps their parents were in pretty good health and didn't quite require as much of that physical care. I also conducted a one-way ANOVA to test the differences in responses between sons and daughters in agreeing with supporting the parents across these five factors.

So this one-way ANOVA found that sons were greater in agreeing that they provide cultural transition support to their parents than daughters. So this is an indication that sons, at least, I should say that my sample was not representative of all Canadian Punjabi, the whole population, so I can only speak to this one sample and not the whole community, but for the sample it seemed as though sons perhaps were more active in engaging in cultural transition supports than daughters reported.

Another important piece is that there's no differences in terms of social affair management, language translation, financial support and emotional support, and I think this again highlights that active role that daughters are playing in elder care.

I also asked participants whether their parents expected them to support them with each activity in the scale, and I conducted a one-way ANOVA to test if there's any differences between sons and daughters in terms of what their parents expected for them. And again, so similar to earlier, I found that sons were higher, they reported higher parent expectations to support them with the social affair management and cultural transitioning, whereas there's no reported differences in language translation, financial support, or emotional support.

So in terms of these findings, I think this collaborates with those qualitative findings I presented earlier where sons also reported to be involved in that cultural transition piece, whereas daughters did not mention that piece at all. So, it seems like the difference that may be occurring in the Canadian context seems to be particularly in that cultural transitioning piece, in navigating the Canadian context.

So I'm getting to my discussion now, so again just to reiterate, the studies I conducted are not representative of the whole population and I can only speak to what my sample showed. But in terms of the sample, there was evidence that Canadian Punjabi daughters were active in caring for the elderly parents.

They did seem to be negotiating care for both their in-laws and their own parents in various ways. Sons are understanding care for their own parents as a fundamental duty, and it seems as though there's, the way that gender differences may emerge in the Canadian context is that, perhaps sons are being leaned on in terms of navigating the Canadian context, and sort of dealing with being in that marginalized position in Canada.

So again, a percentage of different perspectives that men shared on this, I think the one approach was slightly more healthy in terms of fostering independence of elderly parents, and I think that would be a great direction to go in to further reduce gender differences that may be occurring. So again, we see that difference, that cultural transition piece is perhaps what's kind of playing a role, perhaps that contributing role in that son preference.

But I think more research essentially needs to be done, because again, this is quite a small sample, but from what I can say from my sample, is the cultural transition piece is important, and I think to further reduce gender differences in elder care in the Canadian context, elders, we could be providing them more support in transitioning to Canada. And this could involve

government supports, it can involve further supports from nonprofit organizations, and I know many nonprofits are already very active in this, so, perhaps just more awareness around the supports that are available.

And I think the idea would be to foster that independence of elders, could help to reduce the reliance on sons in the Canadian context. Another important piece of this conversation is that it seems as though care may be shifting to a more of a shared situation across sibling networks, instead of being only put on sons and wives, and I think this is also a positive direction where elders could perhaps choose who they want to spend their time with and where their positive relations are basically, and perhaps that could also reduce the gender differences in terms of relying on sons versus daughters, if this is something that's shared across siblings, perhaps we'll see more reduction in any gendered norms occurring.

Lastly, men and women did also receive support from their elder parents and parents-in-law, and that's also really important to consider in these conversations, that care was not just one direction, elder parents were very active in supporting their households. Okay, so I think that brings me to the end of my discussion.

I want to say thank you so much to everybody who joined and also a quick shout out, happy belated International Women's Day to everyone, and I'm happy to answer any questions or hear any thoughts that you have at this point.

Sharada Srinivasan:

Great! Thank you very much Ashna, so it's just wonderful to get a very nice overview after interacting with you on this topic for several years, so very impressive, so thank you. So, this is question time, you're welcome to type in your question in the chat box, or you could raise your hand, so at the bottom of your screen, the zoom screen, you should see reactions, and there's the raise hand symbols, so you could raise hand and then I could invite you to ask your question directly, so you have these two options.

So let's just give a couple of minutes for people to start, so we'll just collect their questions. Okay maybe while people are thinking of their questions and getting their, okay there's Anupama, Anupama, would you like to unmute yourself and ask your question?

Anupama:

Yes thank you, hi Ashna, that was a really great presentation, thank you so much, and I was just curious if, for at least the, maybe the online questionnaire, whether socioeconomic data was collected just to see if there were any differences on that basis? And I also just wanted to say that I'm really happy to see that the Canada India Research Center exists, I didn't know about this before this event, so that's really great, thank you both.

Ashna Jassi:

Thank you Anupama for the great question, and welcome to the Canada India Research Center as well. I did collect a few more socioeconomic variables and I do actually have a slide that I can show you. So I did collect a few more variables and I was interested to understand if there was any variable that sort of predicted the likelihood to provide cultural transition support, and the expectation to provide the support since this was one of the key variables that came up as important.

So some of the variables I did look at included the age at which they immigrated, also the number of sisters and the number of brothers they had to understand further if there's any further gender differences occurring. I did ask one question which asked how often participants visited Punjab as well, and the last piece there it tapped into, there's a theory around that's called acculturation and it taps into how associated one feels with the Punjab culture as well as the Canadian culture.

So these were the variables I looked at, what I did see was that age of immigration, as this did have a significant role in terms of the sample for providing cultural transition support as well as the expectation to provide the support. So, basically, as the age of immigration increased, or as participants came at an older age, they were more likely to be engaging in the support as well as being expected to provide the support, and I think that highlights how there may be a particular vulnerability for those immigrants who come at a later age.

And there's some evidence that indicates those who come after the age of 65, I think in particular, are particularly vulnerable to isolation, so I believe this sort of highlights that the older immigrants may be particularly marginalized and may require a bit more support in terms of transitioning. I also found with more visits to Punjab, this type of support increased, as well as the expectation and interestingly the more people felt associated with the Canadian culture, they were more active in providing this support.

So perhaps they felt more familiar with the context and more able to provide the support, just, yeah, that's one potential interpretation. Thank you Anupama.

Anupama:

Thanks for answering, thank you.

Sharada Srinivasan:

Great! So we have a couple of questions, that I'm also being mindful of at the time, so I'm going to, so there are three questions in the chat I want to draw your attention to. There are three of them and all three are fantastic. So the first one is from Bela Ravi, so very nice Bela that you could join the session. So Bela's question is, "how does your own experience compare with the findings?" So that's Bela's question.

The second question is related to, comes from Preeti Daliwa and her question is basically if mental health issues came up in the context of your research, not only as people age but also lifelong conditions. So, how did that affect your findings?

The third question is from Brian Ray, I mean again, it's not just one question, I think that can be a presentation in and of itself, "are there differences in the involvement of men and women in care of parents". That's a question that I've asked you several times, especially if the parents are ill and they need a great deal of physical support, and the second part of the question is, "if an obligation to care for parents also influences where children choose to be?" So you have five presentations to me.

Ashna Jassi:

Thank you Sharada, I'm sorry, I didn't quite catch the last question you posed if you could please repeat it.

Sharada Srinivasan:

So, the last question is, if the obligation to care for parents, does that influence where children choose to live?

Ashna Jassi:

Okay thank you, thank you everybody for the wonderful questions. So perhaps I'll jump to the first question which asked about my personal experience, and this topic is quite relevant for me, I come from a family of only daughters, So I have two sisters and no brothers.

So, already we are kind of working against the gender norms that may be in place in terms of sons versus daughters. Fortunately my parents are in great health, and we are not quite at that stage yet where we're thinking about elder care but it will be my role and my sister's role to ensure that care.

Okay the second question was on mental health, and the question was if mental health came up at all in my studies. So I will point out one limitation of my study, was for both studies, was that they didn't capture the understandings and experiences of elderly parents. So, I think as I said earlier just more research needs to be done.

But in terms of the adult children, one man's one son in particular did describe how he felt just a lot of pressure, and in his situation his siblings were not involved in sharing the care, it was his primary responsibility. And he described a lot of pressure he felt in terms of balancing his work constraints being the primary, in the caregiver role as well as being a husband and a father, and all of these intersectional elements.

So it seems as though the participant that didn't have that shared sibling network felt the most stressed and pressured. I think that was one interesting piece about mental health. I didn't hear

much about caregiver burden, I heard a lot of positive experiences around care, so that pressure didn't come up except for that one participant that I can think of.

Okay and then the third question was in regards to, are there differences in care across men and women, and I think so. Again, I could perhaps only speak about my sample and sharing that. In terms of quantitatively, the difference that did come up was just in transitioning to Canadian culture.

If you look again at the IADLS or the numbers, they do seem quite similar, so here there is evidence that there may be a similar uptake of caregiving across sons and daughters, but I think there's a few limitations to consider here as well. So, all of my study advertisements asked about elder care and I think those who were providing care were the ones who completed my study.

So perhaps this is only showing us those who are actively involved in care. I think future studies can maybe look at a household perspective, perhaps comparing different households and understanding what care looks like, and involving elderly parents in that conversation to really understand if there's any differences occurring. So I think as most researchers, I have to say more research is required, and it's perhaps not quite clear at this point.

And the last question asked about the obligation, if this came up as an important reason for providing care. Interestingly, the words themselves like obligation did not quite come up, but I wonder if it's because you're in this, perhaps that's sort of an outsider perspective on care rather than how you think of it yourself.

So I did find sons to say this was a very fundamental duty and it allows them to have a very positive experience, I'm just going to that. So this slide in particular, I think, highlights they didn't see it as an obligation, but also they thought as very important and very natural. So it didn't seem to be something they were burdened by.

And in the same way, I think it was just a very natural situation, that perhaps just the term obligation is something that could be applied, but perhaps from the outside, rather than how they were thinking of it. So, the term obligation never came up, or burden never came up.

Sharada Srinivasan:

Okay so the next question is from Mamta Vaswani, "could you share whether you found any host orientation and gender interaction effects". Another question is methodological, "could you talk about how you recruited participants?" And to that I would like to add, could you also tell us something about the geographical spread of your samples?

Ashna Jassi:

Yes, thanks for your question. I did take a look to see if there's any interactions between gender and acculturation orientations, and interestingly, I didn't actually see any interactions

statistically. So I think that was also interesting to see, but I think also perhaps my sample was a little small, it's 103 participants, so maybe this would come up in a larger sample.

So the regression I did show you involved, so maybe perhaps I'll go back to that slide, this regression here involves all participants. And so, in terms of teasing apart any gender differences further, perhaps a larger sample would be helpful to really understand what's happening for sons and for daughters.

Okay and the next question was in terms of recruitment of participants, and the geography of participants. So, the first study I conducted was, I conducted it in British Columbia in the lower mainland area, and I essentially recruited participants through networking. So I actually grew up in British Columbia and have family and friends there, so they were active in helping me recruit some participants for this.

I also reached out to various nonprofit organizations, and this came up a lot more in terms of the second study. So the second study was open to participants across the whole country, and I did have a lot of support from non-profit organizations, this included the Punjabi Community Health Services, thank you very much for the support there.

And also, it also involved a lot of social media posts. So, I found there to be a lot of Facebook groups actually for immigrants from India, and most of these groups are very welcoming and supportive, so sharing some ads in there helped recruit some more participants. And again, just trying to reach out to various networks of family and friends to get the word out.

I would say this was a bit of a challenge though, it took a lot longer than expected to recruit participants for my survey, and I think perhaps building more relationships would be useful for researchers who are considering engaging with immigrant groups. I think building relationships with various non-profits and communities is really an important piece of that recruitment process that takes time, so I would say if you're interested in this type of work perhaps volunteering or just getting connected with various groups and it's a great way to build your network.

Sharada Srinivasan:

Thanks Ashna! So maybe I will throw in a question, could you go back to slide 23 the reported IADL support?

Ashna Jassi:

Sure.

Sharada Srinivasan:

Yeah, no, the next one, there we go, yeah. The reported ideas before. So one of the questions that always comes up for me, when men, especially adult men, talk about the support that they

are offering to their elderly parents is, the fact that a lot of the activities, what we call household chores are pretty gendered.

And it's pretty gendered even among white Canadian families, right? So, the Status of Women in Canada survey clearly shows that. So, when men say that they are helping their parents in bathing, dressing, feeding, toilet, food preparation, are they doing it themselves or is it their wives? I mean, we're still talking about a heteronormative context, right? So did you, can you speak to some of those gender differences? So when men say, "I take care of my parents," how much of that care is actually provided by their wives, right? So that's my question, thank you.

Ashna Jassi:

Yeah, that's a really fantastic question, and I think it speaks to the overall limitation of self-reporting and asking participants to self-report how much they care, or what they care with. So I think you're absolutely right that we have to be very critical of these findings because they are just based on what people reported.

I think what tends to be the situation is that, so, for example, one participant did mention his role in supporting his parents, this was in the interviews, but getting down to the specifics of it, he would use the term "we" a lot. So, we do this, we provide rides and social activities, et cetera.

So I think of that participant in particular with this question, where he first presented it as, this was his role and he was doing a great job providing care, but then also the conversation involved to, we as a family do this together to provide the support. So I think that's definitely a valid issue to think about when we're researching care and caregiving in terms of ways to perhaps get around it in the future.

I think we would also need to involve the elderly parents in this research and perhaps doing more triangulation to understand who exactly is providing this care, so I do understand that's one large limitation of my studies, but I do hope that it contributes to, highlights the involvement of daughters. I think that perhaps, that could be more of the takeaway for the studies rather than, quite understanding what is occurring with sons.

Sharada Srinivasan:

I think your study is very important because, I think the studies that do exist especially focusing on South Asian communities, or Punjabi communities in Canada, don't really talk about the gender differences among children themselves, so I think it's still a great contribution. And of course, every research has its limitations, which then becomes the building blocks for future research.

So I don't see further questions in the chat and we are nearing closing time, but there is a lot of conversation that I'm sure will happen around dinner tables today and Ashna, you and I should continue our conversation. Thank you very much everybody for joining us at this event, I would

like to thank Ashna of course, but i also want to thank Shirley Shanahan who has been a great advanced support for the conduct of these events smoothly, so thanks Shirley.

I want to draw your attention to our next event which is happening tomorrow, and the day after, 11th and 12th which is a virtual conference open to everybody, anybody who's interested. It's on women in film, social media and beyond, but largely focusing on Indian film, and film industry, so you're most welcome to check out the details, it's at Canada India Research dot ca.

So thank you very much everybody, stay safe, and have a good day, bye.

[End of Transcript]