

Intergenerational Relationships between Young Men and Immigrant-Bangladeshi Parents in Canada: The Process of Couple Formation



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Men's immigration experiences: better understanding for better engagement

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Why this research?



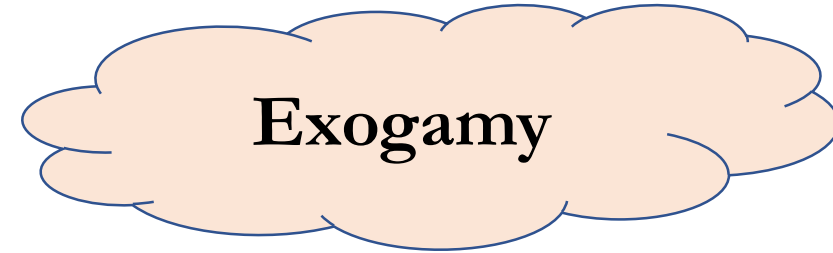
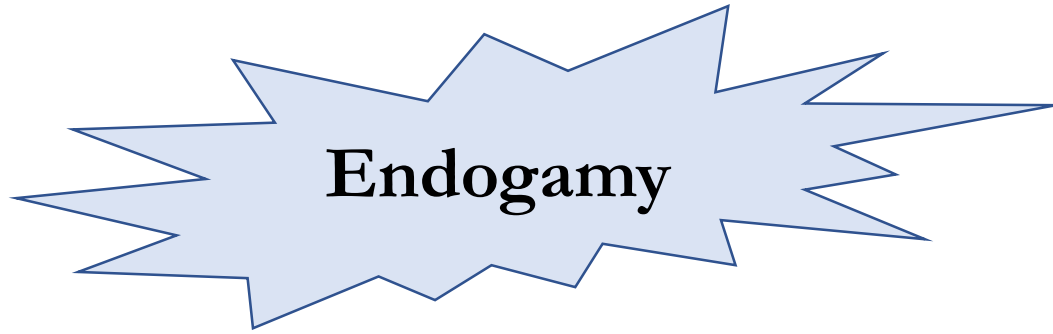
Movie: **What will people say** (2017)

- Portrayed the differences between immigrant Pakistani Muslim parents and their daughter in Norway;
- Conservative Muslim parents;
- Their Norwegian daughter;
- Dating > beating > forced marriage > honor killing.

Literature Review: Couple Formation in immigrant families

- Couple formation is a complex process (Brooks & Moore, 2020) and a major decision of human life across the majority of cultural contexts.
- Recent studies, mostly in the USA and different European countries, have investigated the union formation process of immigrants, their intermarriages, and mixed marriages (Baykara-Krumme, 2017; Berrington, 2020; Cheng, 2017; González-Ferrer et al., 2018; Jeffreys & Wang, 2021; Kalmijn & Kraaykamp, 2018; Keskiner, 2020; Kuhnt & Krapf, 2020; Kulu & Hannemann, 2019; Qian & Qian, 2020), but **this process is relatively unknown in respect to the children of immigrants.**
- Young adults of immigrant families are influenced by their immigrant **parents' origin culture, religion, cultural values, norms, and socialization** within the family (Hannemann et al., 2020; Keskiner, 2020; Samuel, 2010; Wiik, Dommermuth, & Holland, 2021).
- On the other hand, the **host country and its culture, school and education, peers, local society, the social structure** may impact the views, preferences, and choices of the children of immigrants (van, Kalmijn, & Verbakel, 2015; Wiik et al., 2021).

Literature Review: Couple Formation of South Asian immigrant families



- **Endogamy**- Children establish a close connection with their parents' origin culture and follow parents' guidance, cultural norms and values for choosing life partners. It is one of the most practiced methods of couple formation among immigrants (Model, 2021; Carol, 2016; Samuel, 2010; Uskul et. al., 2011).
- In 2019, Rashid found that immigrant Bangladeshi parents in Australia influence the couple formation process of their children and encourage children to accept endogamy through socialization. Immigrant Bangladeshi parents in Australia were seen to put more **emphasis on cultural and religious similarities** regarding the couple formation process of their young adults.
- Hannemann et al. (2020) found that South Asian women in the UK show a high tendency towards endogamous marriages.
- **Exogamy**: marry outside of their own ethnic group, culture, or religion (Irastorza & Elwert, 2021).
- In North America, the rate of intermarriages has been increasing with the prolonged residence of immigrants (Carol, 2016; Huschek et al., 2012).
- In Canada, the increasing rate of intermarriage is a bit slow compared to the USA (Singla & Ganapathy-Coleman, 2020; Statistics Canada, 2021b). Usually, immigrant people from Muslim society have the lowest rate of intermarriages (Carol, 2016).

Gap Identified in Literature

- To date, there has been no literature on the formation of couples in immigrant BD families in North America;
- Family dynamics, in respect to life partner selection, have been unfolded;
- Women focused, ignored the situation of men

Research Question

How do intergenerational relationships play out in the couple formation process of children of Bangladeshi immigrants, from the perspective of young children who have grown up in Canada and key informant social workers?

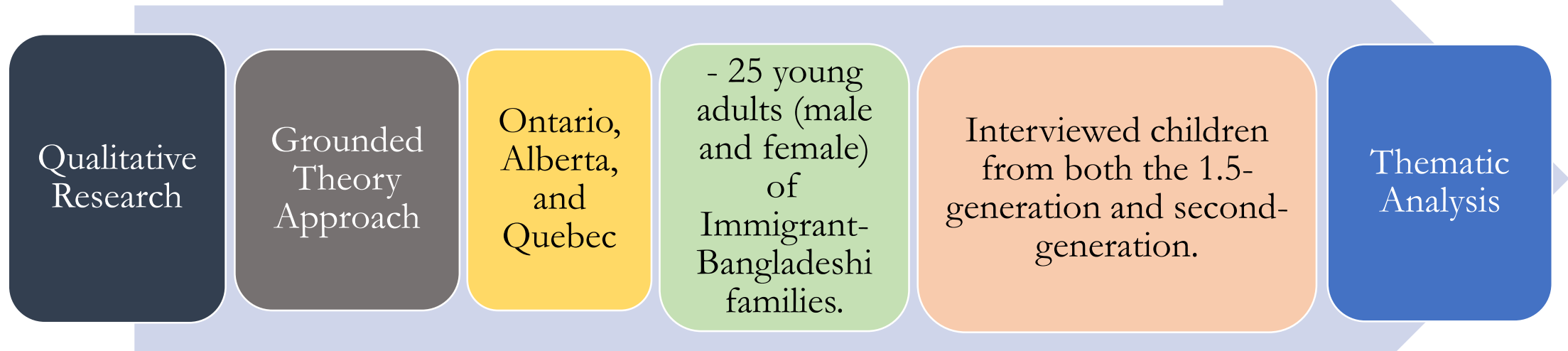
Sub-questions

- a) Which factors (i.e., class, education, religion, etc.) influence variation in the couple formation process of young adults from immigrant Bangladeshi families in Canada?;
- b) How do young adults perceive their relationships with immigrant Bangladeshi parents in respect to couple formation process?
- c) How can social workers encourage supportive and positive relationships between immigrant parents and young adults?

Key Terms

- ✓ Couple Formation/Life partner selection process: Dating, Cohabitation, and Marriage
- ✓ Immigrant Parents: 1st generation immigrants in Canada from Bangladesh
- ✓ Children of immigrants:
 - 2nd Generation: Children of both foreign-born parents.
 - 1.5 Generation: Children who were born outside of the country of residence (for instance, Canada) but migrated to that destination country at an early age or in their teens, commonly before adolescence (Nesteruk & Gramescu, 2012; Sheilds & Lujan, 2018). More specifically, those who were born outside of Canada, but arrived in Canada before adolescence are called 1.5-generation children in Canada.

Methodology



Interview: Young Adults of Immigrant Bangladeshi families in Canada

- 10 Male
- 15 Female

Key informants Interview: Social Workers

- 10 Social Workers in Canada who deal with immigrant family's issues (Ongoing)

Methodology (Cont.)

SN	Name (pseudonym)	Age	Location	2 nd Generation/1.5 Generation	Marital Status	Religion
01.	Abir	30	Montreal	2nd	Single	An agnostic person
02.	Hasib	23	Montreal	2nd	Single	An agnostic person
03.	Maruf	29	Toronto	1.5	Married	Islam
04.	Kafi	21	Calgary	1.5	Single	Islam
05.	Firoz	23	Toronto	1.5	Single	Islam
06.	Tony	20	Calgary	1.5	Single	Islam
07.	Papul	20	Montreal	2nd	Single	Islam
08.	Salim	23	Montreal	2nd	Single	Islam
09.	Abu	21	Montreal	2nd	Single	Islam
10.	Nihal	22	Montreal	2nd	Single	Islam

Findings: How do young adults (Men) perceive their relationships with immigrant Bangladeshi parents in respect to couple formation process?

Intergenerational Relationships in Immigrant Bangladeshi Families
over Couple Formation Process

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graph TD; A[Intergenerational Relationships in Immigrant Bangladeshi Families over Couple Formation Process] --> B[Intergenerational solidarity on marriage]; A --> C[Restriction on dating and cohabitation]; A --> D[Lack of mutual understanding];
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Intergenerational solidarity on marriage

Restriction on dating and cohabitation

Lack of mutual understanding

Findings: Intergenerational Solidarity on Marriage

- Show respect to parental preferences in choosing life partners;



“They [parents] would want me to be with someone who is going to be good for me, at the end of the day they want what's best for me, right? And so, if they think that a Bengali Muslim girl is going to be the best for me, then they're going to stick to it...I would [consider their preferences]...” (Hasib, 2nd Generation, Montreal)

- Immigrant Bangladeshi parents: Muslim and Bangladeshi Ethnicity
- Decision-making power
- Parental consent, not permission.
- Age-specific factor

Findings: Restriction on dating and cohabitation

- Immigrant Bangladeshi parents are against of dating and cohabitation
- Children engage in dating relationship but not cohabitation

“Yeah, I was in a dating relationship, but they did not come to know about it....So, my parents are very typical of what you would call strict immigrant parents, they're relatively “conservative” too. So, when they think of dating or they think of in the very western sense. And they're scared of their children going and doing other things beyond dating. So, they're very strict about that [like] many [other] immigrant parents...” (Maruf, 1.5 Generation, Toronto)



- However, a few young men said that their parents will allow dating if it is a Muslim Bangladeshi girl.
- Cohabitation is considered a serious ‘sin’ from the perspective of the Islamic faith. Young Men who are inclined to the Islamic faith would not consider cohabitation even if their parents do not impose any restrictions.

Findings: Lack of Mutual Understanding

Young men feel that their Bangladeshi parents often are unable to fully comprehend the feelings and struggles of their children.



“...it is a toxic relationship....there are physical abuse, mental abuse if you question them anything...they’re [parents] enacting their parenting style that they were exposed to when they’re children...”(Salim, 2nd Generation, Montreal).

Conclusion and Recommendation

- Young men and immigrant Bangladeshi parents have a solidarity relationship, no conflict on couple formation process.
- Though immigrant BD parents are against of dating and cohabitation, some children are in dating relationships. Children hide their dating relationships but they prefer Muslim and Bangladeshi.
- Communication, mutual understanding, and sharing are lacking between many parents and children.

Recommendations from young men for a better family relationship:

- Create a space for open discussion and sharing in the family;
- Parental training initiatives should be taken and awareness programmes in different events.

Future Steps

- Present a comparative analysis between men and women respondents, and portray the intergenerational relationships and conflict aspect in immigrant BD families
- Publish articles and share my findings with global scholars

Thank you
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