

Generation Gap Operating Cultural Hybridity: A Socio-Analytical Study of *Never Have I Ever Season 1*

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ISSN: 3006-6549 (ISSN-L)
ISSN: 3006-6557 (Online)
ISSN: 3006-6549 (Print)

Vol. 2, No. 3 (2024)

Pages: 1 – 8

Key Words

Globalization, Cultural Hybridity,
Generational Clashes, Cross-Cultural
Mentorship

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Abstract: *In the era of globalization and multiculturalism, the exploration of generational differences is often encapsulated in the terms Generation Gap and Cultural Hybridity. It becomes a compelling lens to explore contemporary narratives. The Third Space (Bhabha H.K.-1994). Bhabha-becomes a crucible for generational dialogue, where past, present, and future intersect. This analytical study delves into the acclaimed television series Never Have I Ever—specifically its inaugural season—to unravel the complexities of cultural identity, generational clashes, and the fusion of diverse influences. By examining character interactions and dialogues, one can uncover the complexities of cultural identity and generational clashes. The generation gap is highlighted by Devi and her mother’s contrasting views, reflecting a clash between modern American influences and traditional Indian values. The series provides a nuanced depiction of how this Generation Gap can lead to conflict but also growth and understanding. Through a close examination of specific scenes of the drama, this study sheds light on the intricate ways in which generational differences influence cultural understanding and representation. The findings offer valuable insights for creators to develop subtle, refined, and layered storylines that reflect diverse cultures and complex generational dynamics. Informing ongoing conversations around diversity and inclusion in educational spaces. These findings further underscore potential advantages of cross-cultural mentorship for mentors as well as mentees. This is the intellectual crossroad into which she leads the readers and it reveals the balancing act between tradition and transformation. Only through the bridging of these divides and the embracing of hybridity, a society ever hopes to forge an existence that is more compatible with all generations.*

Introduction

In times of globalization and rapid technological advances, the world becomes an intricate quilt embroidered with threads of multiple cultures and generations. In this article, the researcher analyzes two important notions, *Generation Gap* and *Cultural Hybridity*. The term *Generation Gap* was coined in 1960s. It is the distinction in communication style, approach and values among

generations often expressed through languages. While Cultural hybridity mingles several cultural influences, for example, the incorporation of the grammar or idioms and vocabulary from different cultures. The study explores these dynamics through the popular American drama series *Never Have I Ever*, which is used as an analytical lens to examine such a phenomenon. The series narrated by Tennis player John McEnroe, follows 15-year-old Sherman Oaks Asian Devi Vishwakumar. Her challenges and solutions to life (maybe) balance her Indian identity, loss of a parent; grief and being in high school make the perfect setting for storytellers trying to navigate generational differences with cultural hybridity realm.

Cultural changes of generations and generation gap affecting cultural hybridity and its normalization by way social media are unpacked in the paper. Briefly, the drama specifies an Indian-American family where mother daughter relationship is selectively studied. It helps the research be more brief and clear. This information about how groups view themselves and each other are fascinating in a multicultural world, including issues. Older people value traditional media, but the diverse representation offers an alternative perspectives. This research delivers critical learning to creators, show runner and writers as part of a wider conversation about representation of intergenerational relationships and cultural diversity, informing greater societal inclusiveness. This method offers a new way to look at the modern world.

Research Objectives

- To analyze the generational influences on perception and expression of cultural identity in multicultural environment.
- To examine the impact of cultural hybridity on immigrants intergenerational relationships.

Research Questions

- How do different generations perceive and express their identity in multicultural society?
- In what ways does cultural hybridity influence intergenerational relationships among immigrants?

Statement of the Problem

Cultural differences of different ages and experiences within a generation create differences in shared life and social style. The environment, including such things as advances in technology and changes in living standards, affect what people think about generational gaps. But, culture is the foundation of human life and one cannot denies that fact.

In order to tell how cultural changes impact today's youth and how the youth transform the culture, researcher tried to paint these things. This research aims to show the relationship between a gap propagated by the society and cultural hybridization, and to emphasize how society now popularizes such questions of complexity. It explores the way representatives of a particular generation in social media (e.g., Gen Z, Millennials, and Gen X) help make these questions normal. Drawing from Homi K. Bhabha's concept of the *Third Space*, this research looks at how cultural identities and generational gaps are either constructed or deconstructed in today's digital reality. This is important to understand, since the nature of cultural hybridity alters over time and has implications for intergenerational relations.

Literature Review

Language defines how people interact socially and where their sense of community originates. One of the ways in which people make an impact is through their cultural background, language ability and personal experiences. The way people communicate with others in their mother tongue says a lot about what type of an image every individual paints for them. Together, this stuff influences how one view and engage with others in a wide variety of communities.

Language is often a key element of cultural identity, which helps connect people with their heritage and where they come from. Also, language proficiency can have a huge influence on your social interactions. When you have a mastery of more than one, it can lead to an even better understanding across cultures and views. Through personal experiences, identity is still framed as a role in different groups and from that role there are further modes of self-expression. It is important that language, cultural background and personal experience are linked to create space for understanding and empathy in pluralistic communities. Meanwhile, Flusty (2004) emphasizes how

space is crucial in blending cultural norms together and disrupt hybridization that can prompt such disappointing outcomes as 'cultural assimilation conflicts' with the tensions on identity crises. The method of Ulrich Becks underlines interlink between transcendental social actors, extremely crucial for constructing an argument related to globalization (Becks; 2004). It also assists mentors and mentees in navigating this global village empathetically. This is because recognition and embracing language diversities, cultural backgrounds, as well as personal experiences among the mentors and the mentees allow them to become more empathetic with each other. Through Flusty's concept of hybridization and Beck's emphasis on the inter-relations of societies, an appreciation for the complications of globalization can be sowed in an individual that can then create empathy in different communities and pave the way for a greater world where each inhabitant understands and accepts others. Moreover, Pricer (2008) and Roehling et al. (2011) name technology as one of the major contributors to the generation gap, the distance between ages, leading to emotional distance and technological distance. But, with open arms to technology and using it as a channel for communication and contact, one can close this gap and promote the comprehension of youth for the elderly and vice versa. Through interaction with empathy and understanding a society can result as more cohesive and harmonious-where individuals of each generation learn from one another and grow both-the technology can be the bridge between people rather than the wall that divides, drawing all of us even closer and connecting people just a little more.

Diverse cultural practices add new perspectives and ideas that create a unity of belonging beyond the ideologies of traditional national identities. The embracement of diversity and inclusion can build dynamic and strong societies because these values provide for a variety of perspectives and strengthened social resilience. Cultural disparities emphasize the rich tapestry of global diversity. Indeed, American multiculturalism supports equal opportunity and diversity where various ethnic groups could share an existence with intact identities and cultural backgrounds (Grishaeva, 2012). Once again, though, the practices of migrants also clash with the dominant culture leading to a cultural merge and new identity.

It is in this regard that Meriweather and Morgan, 2013, have addressed cross-cultural mentoring as essential and the centrality of communication, respect, and power among mentors and mentees while maintaining that culturally sensitive mentoring has to be retained. As society evolves, people have to confront cultural differences as well as enhance understanding and acceptance. Belonging and unity in diverse communities make for a harmonious environment where every individual feels valued and respected. Through participating in community forums and education programs, barriers are broken down towards building a more inclusive society where future generations can achieve their goals.

Besides that, Marotta, (2021) talks about the hybrid consciousness that breaks down the barriers of culture, and it allows for acceptance and understanding. This awareness will allow people to look past their ethnocentric views and embrace the variety that makes our world so beautiful. Incorporating aspects of diverse cultures into our beliefs and practices helps create a more inclusive and interconnected society. Education and guidance can only help others accept diversity and work for a better, more unified tomorrow. This creates a global community where everyone is unique, but everyone has an understanding and caring for each person. Tang et al. (2022) examine cultural hybridity as cultural fusion, where newcomers blend into dominant cultures while retaining minority cultural aspects. This highlights intercultural identity formation and dynamic cultural exchanges.

However this is contradicted by global dynamics and diasporic experiences, which in turn creates a generation gap because the younger generation will incorporate different cultural practices than their parents. Perez et al. (2022) How language model behaviors, and how as these patterns of communication evolve, they will inevitably affect future intercultural interactions and intergenerational identity. They say that the electronic age has changed the way people experience their cultural identities, and that it has opened up new doors to cultural exchange and comprehension. By examining language model behaviors, Perez et al. Illuminates the intricacies of intergenerational identity construction in a world growing ever smaller.

In the same light Nguyen H. and Nguyen (2023) look at how language constructs the identity of second generation immigrants and the relationship between cultural context, linguistic choices, and social interactions, and the difficulties of keeping the heritage language and the process of acclimating into the new cultural environment. They have some interesting things to say about intercultural studies and the second generation immigrant experience. On the other hand, Erin Heys (2024) performs some research and states that, when looking at the value systems of Millennials and Gen-Z were as opposed to older generations, the two younger generations are significantly more egalitarian and fatalistic. These are all generational gaps that can be attributed to demographic factors and ideological standpoints, but they all point to the fluidity of cultural identities and the construction of new hybrid spaces. So in a sense language is an identity and it is one of the primary elements of cultural and generational representation.

This issue of the generation gap and cultural hybridity must be approached holistically, recognizing generational differences as well as cultural ones, perhaps through intergenerational workshops and cultural sensitivity training. This can be achieved through increased inclusion and understanding among all groups. And researchers can only expand their understanding through the study of generational differences and cultural hybridity in the context of a particular culture. This approach can lead to more effective communication strategies and policies that cater to the needs of diverse populations. Through intergenerational dialogue initiatives and cultural exchange programs, communities can learn to appreciate the individuality of each generation and in turn create a feeling of acceptance and togetherness for all.

Methodology

On the grand canvas of human history generations pass through those cultural crossroads, encountering the unseen and taking on new patterns. This trip is sprinkled with the echoes of old, great civilizations and the whispers of what is to come. It ends the world into a theoretical plane called the "Third Space" This Space is not bound by physical limitations, but serves as a bridge between generations, cultures, and ideologies. It is within this space that cultural hybridity transpires, offering a potential resolution to the generational gap. The Third Space is a part of the "Third Generation Synthesis," a theoretical framework which combines *Strauss-Howe Generational Theory* with *Homi K. Bhabha's* notion of the *Third Space and Cultural Hybridity*. This synthesis provides a different view to examine the intergenerational relationships and the cultural exchange.

To analyze the data effectively, researcher follow following steps;

1. **Selection of specific characters:** The researcher select the characters specifically from drama season 1 and there from different generations like from Gen-Y (Nalini) and from Gen- Z (Devi)
2. **Observation of interaction:** And look at their interactions, and conversations, and dealing with situations, and language in certain scenes.
3. **Identification of conflict and Resolution:** Those scenes where the two selected characters have a conflict with each other and how they work it out.
4. **Comparative analysis:** The researcher compares the observed events to point out the generational and cultural differences.
5. **Application of Theory:** A conceptual framework called Third generational synthesis is used on the data.
6. **Synthesis and Interpretation:** Shows how the generational gaps and cultural conflicts form a middle ground of life and connect the past to the future through the present.

Well, the researcher first chose the character of the Mother (Nalini) and daughter (Devi) and then the scenes of their confrontation, so the interactions between the mother, Nalini, and daughter, Devi, are very predominate. And the researcher analyzed all of their conversations, their language, their tone, and their emotional reactions to these conversations. Researcher also observed their decisions and actions within these scenes, identifying moments of conflict and resolution. From these and other components the researcher was able to draw out the generational differences and cultural conflicts between them. Then apply the concept of *Third Generation Synthesis*. This is the theoretical model that the researcher used to show how Nalini and Devi's

interactions produce a "Third Space" that transcends their generational and cultural gaps and ultimately allows for new meanings and reconciliations. This process also really emphasized how fluid and changing their relationship was, almost proving that theory of third space synthesis.

Discussion

It's that intergenerational, subtle cultural aspect of the "third place" that they are studying. On a mission to find the balance between old school and new school in "Never Have I Ever" one of the greatest shows ever. And Devi, and Nalini her mother, serve as our Virgil through this labyrinth of lives woven into a tapestry that reveals all secrets that marked life. Even this article makes certain assumptions about the *bigger pictures* researcher has constructed out of the experiences of those who traverse heterogeneous cultural terrain, and for that matter, those who engage with the others. But researcher will go more into these characters lives and what they have to say to us, and what they symbolize in the entire *Third Generation Synthesis* at another time.

Where Devi's eyes rolled and her teenager/restless self-appeared, "Ugh, Mom, do we really have to go to puja? It's so boring!" she groaned. The incense, the chants and all that stuffy old ritual.

But Nalini, her mother, stood firm. Devi" she says with a low authoritative voice, "it's important to honor our heritage. This is how we connect with our ancestors."

Devi's disapproval and Nalini's persistence is clearly portraying the generation gap in a few words. Each generation perceives rituals differently. Thus, it arrived—the collision of worlds. Devi ensnared between tradition and autonomy. Nalini's way of threading strands of culture into family. They both sought for meaning. That sensation came in the smoke of incense, in the fire of lamps. It was also sought in whispered prayers. Devi's indifference implies some sort of foreign contamination not of Indian descent. Cultural hybridity occurs when different cultural elements intersect. Devi's insurrection is likely a result of her own multiple personalities (strict conservative upbringing vs. modern life. This dialogue showcases how different generations express themselves. Devi's casual tone contrasts with Nalini's seriousness.

The transformation, when Devi Indianizes herself and uses India for everything in school.

Devi (during a class presentation):

"Even though I sometimes fight with my mom about it, I'm actually really proud of my Indian background. It's a big part of who I am."

(which just goes to prove how different Devi is now, that she could integrate her cultural background into her life?)

Oh, look, its Devi, in the front of the class, giving a presentation. And she's like NO I mean it, I argue with my mom about it, but I am Indian and I am very proud of it. It's a big part of who I am. She's putting a little touch of traditional in her modern experiences.

Another is when Devi wonders whether or not to wear a sari to this Indian cultural thing at school, afraid of cultural appropriation, and also of the fact that everyone would talk about her.

(Internal Monologue): Devi: *"Do I wear a sari and risk looking like a caricature? Or do I wear jeans and seem like I don't care about my heritage?"*

There it hangs—a vibrant sari, rich with colors and history. It's like a woven tapestry of her heritage. And would wear it and kind of feel a little more in "touch" with her roots. But there's a catch. Will wearing the sari be like playing dress-up? Are people in her class going to look at her as some kind of caricature, a Bollywood back up dancer? It's not even that she would want to degrade her culture and use it for a costume. Then on the other side of the closet, the loyal jeans. They're like old friends—familiar, easy, and non-judgmental. If she wears them, she'll blend in seamlessly. No one will raise an eyebrow. If she chooses jeans, will she betray her heritage? Or will she seem like she's shed her roots? Devi's mind is a battleground. It's not just about fabric; it's about identity. It's not as if she is choosing between silk and denim, she is picking what she wants to be identified as. It's like balancing on a tightrope. If she is old fashioned (that is not good enough) she is culturally bias. She must not depend on modernization too much or else she will lose touch with her roots. Devi's choice isn't just about today's event. It's about weaving own story. It's about being true to herself while honoring tradition. And there she stays suspended between fabric and memory, and it's not the clothes. It's truly about her not being able to conform in a world that's old yet always changing.

Devi says, "I'm not Indian enough for the aunties, but I'm not American enough for my classmates."
(Devi struggles with her inner conflict of being caught in between her Indian roots and her American environment.)

Devi's "aunties" represent the older generation—the guardians of tradition. THEY know how to wear a sari, they CAN cook the Indian delights that mom and dad grew up learning, and they can smile and nod their heads in unison at every puja. But Devi? She's not quite what they expect. She's not the perfect Indian daughter that idealistically follows customs. She leaves Sanskrit prayers, and one day she neglected to touch the feet of the elders. She's missing a few pieces to the aunties' puzzle.

Now shift the scene to Devi's school. It is like a rainbow in her class and each color is a race. They celebrate Diwali, Hanukkah, and Lunar New Year. They go back and forth on the family vacations India, México, Nigeria and many more. Devi, though? She's not fully American in their eyes. She doesn't fit the cookie-cutter mold. One minute she'll say "*oh I'm going to bring samosas for lunch*" the next minute "*oh man that movie.*" She's like a bridge between worlds. Devi's heart tugs. She wants to belong—to the aunties' chai sessions and the classmates' sleepovers. But it's like standing on a tightrope, arms outstretched.

She's not Indian enough for the aunties, who whisper,
"*Why doesn't she wear more traditional clothes?*"

She isn't American enough for her class mates they are all like "*why does she have to be so old school about those traditions.*" It is the dance of the self and the Devi's feet grow weary of the steps. Devi's story resonates beyond her fictional world. We all grapple with belonging. We're neither here nor there, yet somehow everywhere.

The way of Devi is the intricate tapestry woven from the threads of identity. She stands at the crossroads—neither fully Indian nor entirely American. The aunties expect tradition, while her classmates celebrate diversity. Her mother's prayer for Princeton overpowers the wings of the temple. Devi's heart doesn't just desire what Ivy dreams of, it actually bleeds for world peace, literally with the needle and thread, sewing back together the shredded borders and bandaging the wounded souls. She keeps it locked in here, she prays to herself, ambition and compassion, she only prays that her schizophrenic self does not unravel but unites and forms a masterpiece unlike any other, a masterpiece known as her and her alone. She's adding a pinch of tradition to her contemporary experiences.

They adapt, they accept, they reason, they both try to justify their own mental processes, Nalini would like her daughter to appreciate her roots, but at the same time she is pushing her daughter to become Americanized, educated, and be the top of her class. This showcases the duality of Nalini. Devi's life on the other hand is a tight rope act, a very thin line between tradition and modernity. She walks the line and wonders what strides to take, and what not to take. However they live and attempt to decipher one another, for they are in the interstitial zone of hybrid space a space where heritage meets innovation and the light of understanding blossoms. An identity like Devi's, which is similar to our own postmodern identity, is an identity that battles within a multicultural world where we are continually bouncing back and forth between choices and traditions. That's exactly what Bhabha's "Third Space" theory is about, the transformative space in which cultural identities meet and fuse to form a third, hybridized identity.

Findings

The analysis of *Never Have I Ever Season 1* showed some very interesting things about the play between generation's gap and cultural hybridity in the series. The concept of the generation gap was found to play a significant role in shaping the characters' identities and experiences, particularly in how they navigate the complexities of their cultural backgrounds. Characters from different ethnic backgrounds struggled with conflicting traditions, morals, and ideals. It is an example of the pitfalls and promises of cultural hybridity. Through a nuanced examination of character interactions, this study sheds light on the ways in which generational dynamics influence cultural identity formation and interpersonal relationships. These results highlight the need to examine the role of generational gaps in the portrayal of culture in the media and the overall national debate on multiculturalism and diversity.

This paper, in a nutshell, says that, yes it realizes the difficulties of incorporating old traditional beliefs with modern western ways and it simply points out the continual compromise between heritage and modernity. Further it elaborates the factors impact the immigrant's intergenerational relationships which are sociocultural shifts, evolving norms, communication barriers, globalization, multiculturalism and many more. Culture is the basis of this research the only thing that this research is really dealing with is closing the gap between the generations with communication, understanding one another's likes and dislikes and accepting the individuals for each other. Ironically enough modern society lives in this multicultural pot that is slowly but surely evolving towards that unicultural thing.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the journey of multiculturalism begins with whispers carried across time—stories of migration, conquests, and revolutions. Each generation inherits a legacy, like a precious heirloom passed down through the ages. They move not only with their own dreams but the collective consciousness of their ancestors on their backs as they step into the lime light.

In this dance of past, present and future, the research encounter the hybrid space—the third space. It's a place where languages mix, and dress is an intermixture of heritage and trend, and attitudes are a melting pot of tradition and modernization. Standing at the crossroads, where the echoes of wisdom of old blend with the grand murmurs of the morrow. Here, ideas clash, and diverse perspectives fuse into something entirely new—the Third Generation Synthesis. But what of this middle world to traverse? How do traditional and modern generations find common ground? It is a mystery that researchers hope to unravel, a very intricate machine that enables them to dance in harmony without treading on one another's feet. In this global age, intercultural relations and interactions between generations are an important key. Humans traverse over all types of terrain, bumping elbows with others whose lives intersect with their own. In other words, a society at peace never forgets the necessity for comprehension, respect and sympathy among its generations. Future researches could deepen the knowledge and dig out the mechanisms that enable generations of differences to exist in harmony, what would greatly include the exploration of the changing dynamics within multi and intergenerational ties. This study simply serves to reiterate that researchers will never cease to investigate or communicate and instead, they must always respect the past and move toward the future.

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