

## PARENTING STYLES, GENDER ON HERITAGE LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE OF SECOND-GENERATION SOUTH-ASIAN IMMIGRANTS LIVING IN UAE

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### ABSTRACT

Heritage language acts as a gateway to communicating, representing thoughts, and perceiving reality. Second generation immigrants when ideally inculcate a hyphenated bicultural/bilingual identity foster positive attitudes towards their heritage, a sense of belonging and higher family cohesion. However, individual's maintenance of heritage language is effected by many factors. Previous research found that elder siblings impact the majority of younger siblings' language development and are major contributors in shift of family language practice and ideologies. Further, girls were found to have higher heritage language maintenance than boys. This study uses a correlational survey design to understand if individuals' perceived parenting style, sibling status, birth order, age at immigration and gender have any effect on heritage language maintenance, living in a multicultural environment like UAE. Regression and chi-square analysis found no effect of perceived parenting style, birth order, and gender on individuals' maintenance of their heritage language, which is contrary to previous research, however, the age at which they immigrated to UAE played a significant role. This study results thus points towards other factors which may have potential effect on individuals' language maintenance, such as, their attitudes towards language use and maintenance, societal pressures, and overall increased literacy. These factors consequently effect language policy of families in addition shape the language development and maintenance of immigrants.

**Keywords:** *Heritage Language, Heritage Language Maintenance, Parenting styles, south Asian Immigrants, second generation immigrants*

### INTRODUCTION

In a globalized era where borders are crossed for working and living more than ever, maintaining one's culture is equally important as acculturating, so as to maintain connectedness with one's culture and represent it at a global level. Experiencing diversity and maintaining proficiency in heritage language (HL) can foster linguistic skills which help to develop and sustain existing ties with one's own culture while acculturating in new ones (Gollan et.al., 2014). One's perceptions and behaviors associated with maintaining one's HL, and cultural connections to this language are referred to as Heritage Language Maintenance (HLM) (Kelleher, 2010). And HLM enhances individuals' ability to deal with abstract concepts, thus resulting in greater cognitive flexibility (Lee & Oxelson, 2006). Further, cultural identity has an impact on one's self-esteem, and subjective wellbeing (Usborne & Taylor, 2010). HLM and parent-child relations also have been found to go hand-in-hand, further self-esteem of children is also associated with Parenting Style (PS) (Oh, 2004, as cited in Aziz et.al., 2021). Thus, this project aims to establish a relationship between HLM and perceived PS, based on Baumrind's (1971) categorization of parental authority (Permissive, authoritative, authoritarian PS) furthermore HLM with birth order and gender is explored.

#### *Immigrants and language adoption*

Maintaining one's HL helps strengthen and reinforce bonds with heritage community and appreciate cultural values, resources, and important shared knowledge codified in one's language (Wang, 2009). Furthermore, it helps in developing a sense of belonging to both host and heritage cultures, preserves affinity towards one's heritage culture, and entails positive attitude towards linguistic norms of ethnic group (Phinney & Ong, 2001). Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS) surveys conducted by Portes & Hao, (2002) have also shown positive outcomes of fluent bilingualism in late adolescence such as high grades in school, higher self-esteem, educational aspirations, and reduced intergenerational conflict. They are also capable of translanguaging, which is unique to multilinguals.

Translanguaging, which is a common experience for most bi/multilingual families is referred to as shifting between distinct linguistic structures and systems (Tyrrell et.al., 2014). Wei (2011) proposes that translanguaging has transformative capacity to create new identities, values, and practices, as it brings together various dimensions of multilingual language users in their linguistic performances. They are capable of structural transpositions, and transformations which result in creative utterances, and express an array of translingual, transcultural identities which is impossible in mono language speakers (Weiyun He, 2013). This frequent mingle of languages, and multiperformance of speakers is referred by Weiyun He (2013) as celebrating speakers' multi-competence.

Though nurturing HL literacy is an extremely challenging task it can help achieve resistance to loss of HL and give access to ethnic identity. Portes & Rumbaut (2001) found children who are not fluent in their HL report poor self-esteem and develop feelings of embarrassment about their parents' cultures. Thus, it is ideal for second-generation immigrants to develop a hyphenated identity- a bilingual, and bicultural identity (Gibbons & Ramirez, 2004) i.e., having competencies in both their home HL, and dominant language in education. However, young members of immigrant families are more likely to lose their HL, especially in early years of school (Fillmore, 2000).

To explain the language evolution in immigrants, Fishman (1978) proposed a three-generation transition process of language. This process outlines that the first-generation immigrants learn English enough to communicate in workplace and use HL at home, while the second generation acquires fluent English and continue to communicate in HL with parents, whereas the third generation acquires English, transforms it as the home language and residual of other languages gradually disappear. Thus, once the youth advance in language adaptation to monolingual (English), their immigrant parents or heritage community's cultural world, views, social directives become increasingly irrelevant, and unworthy of attention (Portes & Hao, 2002).

This can also be explained by the linguistic marketplace concept by Bourdieu (1991), where a certain language is valued and preferred over others, commonly in places like schools. This indicates minority language speakers that majority language holds a higher status, is most preferred, and valued by peers and teachers. This makes adolescent immigrants often feel caught between two distinct cultures to pursue. Eventually learn to perceive things a certain way, behave in a certain way, believe in verbal and non-verbal messages communicated through socially dominant language. Hence adopting to varying degrees socially dominant group's linguistic, cultural values, beliefs, and practices. Consequently, preventing them from engaging in wider language practices beyond home and community environment due to concerns regarding integration and language use (Bezioglu-Goktolga & Yagmur, 2018).

#### ***Parents, parenting styles, and language maintenance***

As described in Fishman's language transition process (1978), parents or first-generation immigrants are the first point of contact for transmitting knowledge related to their culture, HL to their children/second generation immigrants'. In a study by Oh & Fuligni (2010) found HL proficiency (apart from language use), and high-quality parent-child relations go hand in hand. Adolescents and parents of immigrant families who mutually communicated in their HL reported higher levels of family cohesion and engagement in the discussion about their present and future (Tseng & Fuligni, 2000; Tannenbaum & Howie, 2002). Conversely, difficult parent-child relationships led youth to use English as their language to further distance themselves and disengage in discussions with their parents (Tseng, & Fuligni, 2000). These studies even though conducted with different immigrant populations, conclude at a point that, parent child relationships play a crucial role in transmitting HL to their children.

Study by Sok & Schwartz, (2021) with women who successfully transmitted their HL (Korean) to their daughters found, parental involvement as greatest predictor, additionally this was intricately tied with individual, institutional, and contextual factors such as, in children's HL education, socialization, exposing children to a variety of resources, HL, and native culture. However, extreme parental involvement might not always guarantee high HL acquisition, it operates in collective with other contributing factors for successful maintenance of HL. This can be broadly connected with Baumrind's categorization of PS- Authoritarian style. This includes a high degree of control, less affectionate relationships, detached parenting, as parents try to mold child according to set benchmark behaviors, by directing, appraising child's conduct, and attitude (Baumrind, 1971).

Further, adolescents HL proficiency is more correlated with family relationship quality than language environment. The quality of parent-adolescent relationships found to influence languages parents and adolescents employ to communicate with one another. Adolescents who undertake renegotiation of their relationship with their parents may choose to distance themselves from their parents and their culture, by choosing to speak in English to their parents (Cooney, 1997). This could be similar to Permissive PS, which is characterized as reasonably lenient, warm, less controlling, nondemanding, parent exhibits nonpunitive, accepting behavior of child's needs, activities, impulses (Baumrind, 1971).

Similarly, supportive family environments are conducive for HL development and maintenance (Guardado & Becker, 2014; Tseng & Fuligni, 2000). Parents who have close relationships with their English-speaking children and who often engage in discussions with them might have an easier adjustment to using English with them (Tseng & Fuligni, 2000). Relates to Authoritative parenting, which is when parents support two-way communication to explain issues, policies with logic to their children, have an affective relationship and approachability (Baumrind, 1971). Research presented above is mostly from the adolescent population or younger children, as most linguistic research, especially HL has been with this sector of population, hence we have focused on the adult population in this study. Further, linguistic diversity of samples is usually an added challenge (especially for comparisons) in this research field.

#### ***Language shift in families, and siblings***

Siblings explore HL in interactions with parents, and act as guardians of family multilingualism through their choice of SL, contributing to shift in family language (Barron-Hauwaert, 2011). Siblings are an added opportunity provider for immigrant families as multiple speakers' input is helpful in bilingual language development, it also increases functional value as more people promote, and provide opportunities to practice and interact (Place & Hoff, 2011). Siblings furthermore create ground for use of SL in the family. The first-born siblings usually have different language experience than their later born siblings, as first born gets more one-to-one interaction with their parents. They also significantly contribute to family's language practice, ideologies as they acquire SL and introduce it to their household (Luykx, 2005), through schoolwork, peers, television (Barron-Hauwert, 2011), or by engaging in school like teaching activities with younger siblings (Williams & Gregory, 2001). Nevertheless, in a study by Stevens & Ishizawa (2007) found, first born children as more likely to communicate with caregivers in HL compared to their siblings. Further, Kibler et.al., (2014) study among Latino families found that, younger siblings are less likely to communicate in Spanish as the number of older siblings increased in a family. Thus, the first-born siblings usually introduce SL into family, but also are likely to maintain higher HL by communicating in HL within family and HL community.

This family language shift usually has negative impact on family relations as the family members fail to comprehend each other due to differences in languages used by children, and parents. Additionally, as children excel in SL (English in most cases) compared to parents, children increasingly start responding to their parents in English in which the parents do not have much knowledge. This results in disappointment for the child, as parents fail to understand children's identity crisis, further, resulting in weakened parental authority, and parental control (Park, 2004). Thus, the loss of HL grows estrangement from their culture, disrespectful attitudes towards them, further, decreased family solidarity, and greater parental conflict.

#### ***Gender and HLM***

Different genders have different societal roles and participate in divergent social environments, which impacts their language proficiency. In a study by Lutz (2006) with English speaking Latino youth found that, girls have higher HL proficiency compared to boys, as girls have different linguistic context than boys and have a stronger attachment to their HL (Portes & Hao, 2002), as they are more confined to their home environment resulting in more exposure or contact with parents (Portes & Schaufli, 1994). Furthermore, study by Sevinç (2016) with married immigrants found that, Turkish women immigrants have little knowledge of the SL, as they were more isolated at home in obedience to their husband's authority. Although these studies have been conducted with different cultural groups in different settings, nevertheless come to a common conclusion of females maintaining higher HL compared to males. However, due to increased gender equality, women empowerment, and higher literacy rates among women, we hypothesize that this difference among genders in terms of HLM might not be the result anymore. As UAE has a literacy rate of around 95% for both genders, women at 95.8%, as published by UAE's Gender Balance Council (GBC). Further, UNDP Human development report published in 2020 awarded UAE 18<sup>th</sup> rank in gender equality

index. Hence, women are not as isolated, and confined to home environment as in the case of previous studies.

### ***Hypotheses***

As most of the existing literature is on adolescent population and do not look into how adults maintain HL, as well mostly relates to parent-adolescent relationships and not how the parenting style itself effects the HLM of children, especially in their youth, our study sample includes second-generation immigrants above the age of 18. Further, analyzing if having siblings or being a single child effect one's HLM, as previous sibling comparison has mainly focused on toddlers or children, but not on adult siblings, hence this project aims to answer if sibling bonds, still stay strong in adulthood in terms of HLM. Finally, gender differences in terms of maintenance of HL. This project will focus on a self-selective sample, only south Asian immigrants living in UAE, so as to maintain homogeneity of study sample in terms of cultural background. Nevertheless, it has to be noted that, UAE has an extremely complex multilingual structure which can be attributed to continued influx of transient international labor force (Siemund et.al.,2021). This in turn can effect the results of this study, as in terms of blurred language policy for immigrants. This project intends to help immigrants of second (and future) generations maintain their HL, by their PS, as language is not just a way of communicating, but a way of representing thoughts, processing, and perceiving reality (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). Therefore, the aim of the study was to test the hypotheses, 'single child immigrants who perceive authoritative PS have significantly lower HLM, compared to first-born immigrants who perceive authoritative PS', 'females, and males will have similar HLM, with no significant difference among groups', 'immigrants without siblings, and third/fourth-born will have similar HLM irrespective of perceived PS', and 'higher the birth order, and later they immigrate, higher is their maintenance of HL'.

## **Method**

### **Participants:**

The criteria for inclusion for all participants were as follows, must be: a south Asian second-generation immigrant, have shifted to the UAE before or at the age of 6 (to maintain homogeneity of study sample in terms of age at immigration), living in the UAE, and above the age of 18. All individuals were recruited online, by sharing posters of the study, through social media like LinkedIn, further, by snowballing (participants were asked to share with friends/family who might fit in the required criterion). Ethics approval was established by Heriot-Watt School of social sciences committee and prior to the onset of testing, informed consent was obtained from all individuals who took part in the study. Initially, The final sample of 197 participants had 82 immigrants with more than one HL, while the rest (115) had only one HL, with Hindi being the HL of 83 participants.

### **Materials:**

#### *Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ):*

The PAQ is a self-report questionnaire, designed to measure parental authority, or disciplinary practices, from the point of view of the child (of any age) (Buri, 1991). The PAQ has thirty questions/ statements to rate on a Likert scale (i.e., ranging from score of 1 if response is 'strongly disagree', to 5 for response of 'strongly agree'). These questions have been designed to assess three subscales of parenting styles: permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative/ flexible. Although mother and father forms of the assessment are identical except for references to gender, for generalizing and inclusion, in this project, words like 'mother' have been replaced with 'parents(s)' referring to any of the parent or primary caregiver. The PAQ is scored easily by summing the individual items to comprise the subscale scores, ranging from 10 to 50. These scores are provided separately for three subscales, and indicate the level of each PS and not the dominance of a specific PS over others. These subscales, based on Baumrind's categorization of parenting styles, have high external consistency with low social desirability scores. Further, report high test-retest reliability for both mother and father questionnaire forms on all subscales (Buri, 1991).

#### *Bilingual Language Profile (BLP):*

BLP is a self-assessment questionnaire, consisting of nineteen questions, categorized into four modules assessing different language domains, (a) Language history, which collects information on the age of acquisition of languages, comfort, and usage of languages. (b) Language use, it gathers percentage of average use of languages in different environments. (c) Language proficiency, i.e., how well they speak, listen, read, and write each language and (d) language attitudes, i.e., reflect their identification, importance given to each language (Birdsong, et.al., 2012). This measure is developed using factor analysis, and claims high validity, reliability, high level of test-retest reliability, and equally reliable for various dominant bilinguals (Olson, 2023). These are measured in a different Likert scale ranging from 'not well at well (0)' to 'very well (6)' and 'disagree (0)' to 'agree (6)', and indication of numbers for years (Gertken et.al., 2014). Scoring is given for each module and collectively as global dominance score, ranging from -218 to +218, a positive score denotes dominance of English, whereas a negative score indicates dominance of HL in this case. Further, a balanced bilingual is indicated by a score closer to 0, i.e., implies dominance of neither languages (Birdsong, et.al., 2012). Additionally, Cronbach's alpha for questions related to English proficiency indicated high level (.92) of consistency between variables (Gertken et.al., 2014).

#### **Design:**

A correlational survey design was used to determine if there is a relationship between HLM of an individual and their perceived PS, birth order, and gender. The variables measured were: maintained heritage and English language dominance in participant's everyday life through Bilingual Language Profile, and perceived PS using Parental Authority Questionnaire. Whereas birth order along with age, gender, ethnicity, and age at which they shifted to UAE was collected through a demographic questionnaire.

#### **Results**

The primary aim of this study was to determine whether different PS had an improvement in immigrants HLM in self-reported proficiency in HL, English, further, effect of birth order, gender, and age at immigration on HLM among second-generation immigrants. To verify if immigrants perceiving same PS and are single child or first born have an effect on their HLM, and if both genders have similar HLM. Further irrespective of PS, if immigrants without siblings, and third/fourth born have similar HLM and finally higher would be their HLM if higher in birth order (third/ fourth) and/ or immigrate later. All analyses to test these hypotheses were conducted using IBM's statistical software SPSS. The mean age of the sample which included 125 female participants is 20.34 (SD= 3.02) and mean of 72 males is 21.5 (SD= 2.04) with ages varying from 18 to 48 years. Further birth order distribution among participants is as follows, 21 single children (with no siblings), while 81 were first-born, 77 second-born, and 18 third-born. Furthermore, 102 participants were born in the UAE, while 95 of them shifted to UAE before or at the age of 6.

#### *Categorizations prior to data analysis*

BLP which measured HLM has been categorized into three groups, i.e., bilingual, English dominant and HL dominant immigrants, using median split (45.59). Thus, scores near 0 (-45.59 to +45.49) were categorized as bilingual, and the negative scores after the median split are categorized as English dominant, positive scores (beyond median value) indicate HL dominance. However, the third group, i.e., HL dominant group consisted of only two participants, hence, were removed from analysis, as it would not be balanced within groups for comparisons. Further, the age at which second generation immigrants immigrated to UAE has been broadly categorized into two groups, i.e., born in UAE, and shifted at a later point before or at the age of 6, for easier group analysis. Additionally, fourth-born immigrants were only three in the entire sample, hence were removed from analysis too, as it would not be balanced for within group comparisons.

#### *Hypotheses 1 & 2*

PAQ is a continuous scale, providing scores for all three sub scales, and since previous studies have conducted regression analyses for PAQ when determining its effect on other variables (see Turner et.al., 2009), the same has been used here as well for our variables. However, since BLP (dependent variable) scores were categorized, logistic regression was performed, with variables,

BLP score (representing HLM), PS (all three- authoritative, authoritarian, permissive), birth order, age at when they shifted to UAE, and gender.

The logistic regression analysis showed a negative significant relationship between birth order and BLP ( $B = -.49$ ,  $SE = .197$ ), as the birth order increased (from first child to further) HL dominance decreased. Further, found a negative significant relationship between the age at which they shifted to UAE and BLP ( $B = -.89$ ,  $SE = .307$ ), indicating that the later they immigrated, lower is their English language dominance. Additionally, there was no significance observed between all three PS sub scales and gender. The overall model was statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 16.987$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $p = .009$ ) and accounted for 11% of HLM in second generation immigrants, correctly classified 62.4% of cases (Table 1 presents the results of logistic regression).

#### *Hypotheses 3 & 4*

To understand the effect of birth order, and age at immigration on HLM of immigrants, chi square analysis was performed. A Chi square test of independence showed that there was no significant association between birth order and HLM,  $\chi^2 (3, 197) = 4.82$ ,  $p = .19$ , thus, immigrants birth order has no effect on their HLM. Whereas there was a significant relationship between age at immigration and HLM, with a chi square value of,  $\chi^2 (1, 197) = 6.21$ ,  $p = .015$ . Indicating, immigrants who shifted later had maintained higher HL, similarly, immigrants who were born in the UAE had higher English language dominance. Table 2 presents chi-square correlations of these variables.

## **Discussion**

Losing one's HL results in everyone losing something. Parents bonding with children may be effected due to difference in most comfortable languages for each, community loses its cultural heritage, and nation as wider community may lose crucial human resources required to bridge communities, and cultures across the nation (Au, 2008). We found that second generation immigrants' maintenance of HL is not effected by their perceived PS. Further is not related to their birth order or have any gender differences in HLM. This could be attributed to many other factors at interplay, such as changing language policy model within families, or higher SL knowledge among the first-generation immigrants/ first point of contact for transmitting HL. Additionally, parents' attitudes regarding maintaining HL, and society in turn shaping parents' attitudes regarding HLM. However, these results are inconsistent with previous studies which were discussed earlier, hence falsifying research in parent-child relationships, gender, and sibling status of HLM (at least in our specific study sample). Nevertheless, the result we found regarding the age at which they immigrated and their level of HLM is still in line with previous research.

Since we found that perceived PS has no effect on HLM of second-generation immigrants. There might be other factors effecting their HLM in line with their parents, such as, attitudes towards HLM, education level, their family's language policy, and even parents' nativity. As mentioned earlier, linguistic marketplace (like, schools) which emphasizes SL as the most valued language, induces contradiction and confusion to immigrant HL speakers. And without parents' interference and establishment of HL as a default means of communication at home, children will have lower productive skills in HL, found Park and Sarkar, (2007) in their study with polish immigrants. It should also be noted that the questionnaire used to collect information regarding participants' language dominance (i.e., BLP) did not include any questions regarding parents' attitudes towards HLM. Thus, we did not have enough information of parents' attitude in our sample to interpret its effect on HLM. However, even for parents to establish HLM practices, their attitudes, educational levels, or knowledge in SL/English and societal pressures interfere with their efforts to transmitting culture or HL to their children.

Further, as children/second-generation immigrants start schooling, parents/first generations' English is greatly improved, and feel more comfortable using English in the home environment (Brown, 2011). Thus, suggesting that Tseng & Fuligni's (2000) conclusion that first-generation immigrant parents' lesser fluency in English (or SL) hinders their ability to understand their English-speaking children's viewpoints might not be standing true. As both parties, i.e., parents and children have similar levels of SL/ English proficiency and

are capable of comprehending each other. Nevertheless, this eventually effects younger children in the family as this results in fewer opportunities for the younger children to hear and use HL at home, which will be discussed later in birth order effects on HLM. Thus, schooling of children, family attributes, household dynamics all go hand in hand impacting children's language use and preferences.

Family thus has a crucial role in providing resources, a sense of belonging, and responsibility towards their own ethnic identity, culture, and community, especially as these are not taught in schools (Fillmore, 2000). These factors can be cultivated by the Language policy model as proposed by Spolsky, (2012). This model includes the following components, language perception of family members which is, language ideology; language usage or language practices; and finally, undertakes made to maintain any language i.e., language management. Each family has their perceptions and values ascribed for certain languages that determine their perceptions towards those languages (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014). Decision-making process regarding these also depends on parental beliefs, goals they have for their children's linguistic development, parents' education, economic status, and previous language learning experience (Romanowski, 2021). Thus, combines parental ideologies, decision making, strategies regarding language and literacies in context to child language learning in broad social, and cultural context of family life.

In line with the family language policy model discussed above, a study by Hollebeke et.al., (2022) with 776 multilingual families living in Belgium, representing hundred different HLs. Found that, families who adopt more HL aimed practices, such as, greater exposure to HL, are more inclined to maintain their HL. Consequently, as parents observe improvement in their children's HL comprehension, they might feel motivated to sustain and continue their efforts in maintaining their HL. Additionally, higher HL proficiency also leads to increased interest in the language and a feeling of satisfaction, which may also increase willingness to know it and use it. On the contrary, parents who portray SL oriented practices might not value or be comfortable in using HL and have a sense of internal, and societal pressure to abandon their own HL, and this pressure could be even higher in the absence of HL speakers (Eisenclas & Schalley, 2017). Further Hollebeke et.al., (2022) study found that HLM efforts of parents were positively correlated with family policies and were strongly predicted by management (general language related conscious management efforts, such as, agreed language use in home environment). And advice from other sources, (such as, other multilingual families, friends, and social media) regarding multilingual childrearing practices, was also positively associated with HLM efforts of parents, contrary to advice of Early childhood care education professionals. However, they found that parental educational and linguistic resources also have a negative correlation to parental HLM efforts, i.e., the more educational resources parents have, the less likely they tend to transmit their HL to their children. Thus, although language policy of family can develop responsibility and sense of belonging towards one's culture, it is in turn effected by many other factors. Factors such as exposure to HL, societal pressure, level of education and advice from different groups regarding maintenance of HL interfere with family's HL ideology, management, and endeavors to sustain HL.

Additionally, in a study by Lutz (2006) with Spanish immigrants found that first generation immigrants' birthplace has a strong effect on second generation immigrants HL proficiency, suggesting parents' nativity as more important in predicting higher levels of their children's HL speaking proficiency. Even in our information gathered from participants anecdotes, participants parents had been immigrated to another place in their childhood (such as a neighboring state in their native country which in itself has its own culture, and HL). Because of which first-generation immigrants in UAE themselves did not have a proper knowledge of their culture and HL to transmit to their children.

However, families are not isolated in a vacuum, instead co-exist in a larger interactional sociocultural context. Thus, it is beyond their home parenting, and HLM is effected by identity, education, religion, cultural, and political allegiances as well (King et.al., 2008). Similar to the way child's HL development depends on multiple factors, wider SL processes, and ideologies effect family's language practices and child's resistance (Blommaert, 2010). Notwithstanding the importance of the language that parents use with their children, many other factors are considered to play a significant part in language acquisition, including the language parents use with each other, the language choices of siblings and caretakers, and environmental influences such as neighbours and friends, extended family, mass media and nursery school (Baker, 2011).

Teachers' (integral part of school, i.e., linguistic marketplace) are crucial societal influencers, as their way of depicting or perception of HL in schools can effect second generation immigrants' language

maintenance. Lee & Oxelson (2006) argue that even though K-12 teachers are not expected or see a role in teaching HL to students in school, teachers can act as voice of authority and validate, give wider recognition and importance to HLM which parents try hard to impart in their children. If schools and teachers have a problem-oriented attitude towards HL, it is difficult to transmit HL as a resource. HLM is not just an individual process, it is a societal one (Lee, & Oxelson, 2006). Furthermore, the way schools give importance on teaching English, without emphasizing HL, can be a strong environmental factor as well.

Although English is a universal language and is used in most schools as medium of instruction, even in most private schools in UAE (to which most immigrant families send their children to) teach in English (with Arabic being a mandatory language subject). Phillipson (2008) argues that English imposed in higher education is assumed incorrectly as, the language that serves equally well, free of any cultural barriers, and its portrayal as a neutral language. Further proposing that, language always has its cultural and political associations, but especially English evokes the colonial past. Nevertheless, UAE has integrated English into its linguistic dualism policy resulting in Emirati youth believing English as superior to Arabic (Hussein & Gitsaki, 2018). This might in turn effect parents' attitudes on English as it being superior to HL. Therefore, the geographical location of the study sample adds to the complication, as UAE has an intricate linguistic texture. Although Arabic is the official language, in practicality it is the second language. Emiratis too converse in English with immigrants; thus, an extremely complex multilingual situation exists in the Emirates among/ between immigrants, and natives (Siemund et.al., 2021). Thus, further complicating language acquisition and language maintenance for immigrants.

This difficult situation of English getting convenient in-home environment and diminishing use of HL, results in infrequent interaction in HL among parents and children. Further, parents' intentions and efforts might not be sufficient to offset English usage. Parents' might stop battling with their children regarding the same, use or no use of HL in home environment, and eventually all younger siblings become monolingual in English (Brown, 2011). Thus, making very complex compositions of HLM even within second generation siblings, which makes it even harder to pass it on to their third generation or to even maintain in their second generation itself. Hence the three-generation language evolution in immigrants' model of Fishman cannot account for household/ family variations within second generation siblings (Kinsella, 2021). This could be attributed to the result that we found that, sibling status has no effect on HLM of immigrants. The siblings' interactions, social activities, all influence family language practices, and use of SL usually begins with the first child entering educational setting (Luykx, 2005) and soon siblings start conversing in language spoken at school. Eventually SL gains more weight in family interactions, reducing use of HL in families. Nevertheless, it should also be noted that, the BLP questionnaire which has been used in this project under its 'language use' category includes questions regarding use of HL and English with family as a whole. Thus, although we did cover this aspect of family, unfortunately does not clearly distinguish between parents and siblings.

Another crucial factor in the HL development of immigrant children appears to be their age at the time of immigration in the host country. Previous research indicated that immigrant children who arrive to the host country at an older age, maintain their native language academic skills better than younger immigrant children (Cummins et al., 1984). In this regard even our results stand true, as immigrants who shifted later to UAE had higher rate of bilingualism, compared to immigrants born in UAE who had higher English dominance.

However, gender differences in HLM did not stand true with our sample. As found in previous studies (such as, Lutz, 2006) there was no difference between males and females' maintenance of HL in our immigrant population. This could be attributed to increasing literacy rate and gender equality in UAE. Literacy rate of women in UAE is 95.8%, which has seen an extreme increase compared to adult literacy rates in 1975 were women and men's literacy rate was at 31 and 54 percent respectively, today it is at around 95 % for both genders, as published by UAE's GBC. UAE women are reported to comprise 30% of leadership roles, 66% of public sector workers, at least 30% of health sector, and over 40% of all employees in education. UNDP Human development report published in 2020 awarded UAE 18<sup>th</sup> rank in gender equality index (reports UAE GBC). Now, considering these factors it can answer why the results did not confirm to previous research, and showed no effect of gender on maintaining HL. Previously women and men had different societal roles, but with increasing gender equality (especially as mentioned in regions like



UAE) evolving societal roles of both genders, women too equally are equally exposed to home and outside environment.

Thus, this could be summed up that immigrants do not need to portray a particular style of parenting to impart, and sustain their cultural knowledge, and HL. Hence, immigrant parents can transmit their HL by focusing on various other factors like re-evaluating their personal attitudes towards maintaining HL, and thus work on endeavors to sustain their HL. Further, providing HL resources (in terms of exposure), motivating, and developing sense of responsibility towards one's culture. Although immigrant families face societal pressures, environmental influences especially from wider SL practices, ideologies regarding HLM and practices to sustain their HL can help their children sustain their HLM at least to a certain extent. Therefore, it is important to establish family language policies according to these factors and engage in practices accordingly. Nevertheless, linguistic homogeneity within our study sample is self-selective thus, results cannot be representative of all languages, hence, it is not generalizable to all languages. Linguistic diversity of study samples is usually a challenge in the language research field. As each study comprises of its own set of unique participant population (especially in immigrant population, combinations of immigrants' native land, and their home country can be extremely diverse). Thus, the diversity and complexity in this research field might also prevent from making accurate or generalizations regarding other language policies.

### Conclusion

Knowledge in our HL is the key to accessing the uniqueness of one's own culture. There is no replacement, loss of language is loss of culture, one's heritage, values, perceptions, and connections. Although due to several reasons such as increased globalization, gender equality, changing ideologies, and perceptions towards one's culture and other cultures, has consequences on our ideation and maintenance of our culture. It is crucial to maintain this integral part of our lives, our ethnic identity which we are gifted with, on a personal level helps better connect with our family, societal level of being connected with our community, and global level to understand our cultural similarities, differences, and shared knowledge. HLM of second-generation immigrants is effected by many other variables in a greater picture, apart from the perceived PS, sibling status and gender that we have considered in this project. This could be attributed to parents', children's changing ideologies, management practices, higher educational levels, societal pressures, SL supremacy in overall environment of immigrants. The questionnaires we had considered for this project did not include questions regarding parents' attitudes towards HL or their background such as nativity. PAQ too did not clearly distinguish between different PS of immigrants instead is a continuous scale, which might have effected the results as well, as all three types of parenting have been under the same analysis, without labeling each participant's dominant perceived PS. Thus, further projects can include these questions.

**Table 1**

*Logistic regression analyzing effect of below variables and HLM of second-generation immigrants.*

Effect	df	Wald $\chi^2$	p
Gender	1	.390	.532
Age at immigration	1	8.504	.004*
Birth order	1	6.270	.012*
Authoritative PS	1	.401	.526
Permissive PS	1	.882	.348
Authoritarian PS	1	.417	.518

Note: \*p < .05

**Table 2**

*Crosstabulation of sample population age at immigration and language dominance*

	Bilingual	English dominant	Total
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Age at immigration			
Born in UAE	42	60	102
Shifted later (before or at age of	56	39	95
6)			

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