



## Multigenerational Adaptation in Highlight: The Case of Portuguese Transnational Families

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### Abstract

Amid rising challenges to care and well-being in an increasingly uncertain world, where intergenerational support is more vital than ever, understanding resilience as a dynamic adaptation process within transnational families has become crucial. Taking into account the three key resources for resilience—personal traits, family networks (connections with family members across generations), and extra-family networks (relationships with communities, colleagues, and friends)—the literature emphasizes the need for a psychosocial perspective. Focusing solely on individual adaptive capacity is limiting, as it overlooks the broader context that offers opportunities for meaningmaking and growth throughout life. Thus, it is essential to approach migration from a broad perspective to ensure the well-being of all members involved. The present article explores how psychosocial adjustment and well-being unfold within Portuguese transnational families, with a particular focus on young emigrants and the older generations who remain in Portugal. This understanding is achieved by: i) identifying the key challenges these individuals face, and ii) examining the primary resources that support their resilience. This qualitative research study, based on members of Portuguese transnational families (N=42), focuses on two groups: a) young adult children who have emigrated to Europe (n=22), and b) parental figures remaining in Portugal with adult children abroad (n=20).



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The study examines how various familial and extra-familial resources contribute to adaptation and resilience, and how these factors promote well-being. Results indicate that digital tools can enhance the integration between the two generations, highlighting the need to reframe the relationship between face-to-face and digital interactions. Additionally, the immediate social context plays a crucial role in supporting both the young adults abroad and the parental figures in Portugal, helping to alleviate loneliness and foster social well-being, which, in turn, positively impacts individual well-being.

**Keywords:** Transnational families, Adaptation, Generational Gap, Digital presence, Well-being