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### Title

Policy Brief: The Generational Divide in Asian Parent/Child Healthcare Choices

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## **Policy Brief: The Generational Divide in Asian Parent/Child Healthcare Choices**

This policy brief explores the generational divide observed in Asian parent/child relationships and their utilization of Holistic versus Western medicine. Historically, older, immigrant Asian generations have relied on holistic medicine due to its affordability and accessibility through cultural traditions. However, American-raised Asian children have shown more acceptance of Western medicine due to its scientific research, effectiveness, and the advantage of health insurance coverage. This policy brief suggests creating a comprehensive, inclusive healthcare approach that caters to the diverse needs of Asian populations through culturally sensitive practices.

### **Introduction:**

Many Asian immigrants brought their cultural knowledge with them, including holistic medicine, to the United States. For them, practices and home remedies have been passed down from generation to generation as a means of treating their sicknesses. However, as their children grow up in America exposed to Western medical practices – their relation to cultural remedies becomes estranged as Western medicine continues to advance at a much faster rate than cultural practices.

### **Factors Influencing Traditional Versus Modern Medicine Usage:**

1. **Affordability:** According to the parents, holistic medicine is often seen as a more cost-effective alternative to Western medicine in their home countries. However, the offsprings see holistic and Western medicine as equally costly.
2. **Accessibility:** Parents viewed traditional medicine as more easily accessible to immigrant communities due to its homemade, “do-it-yourself” (DIY) nature with the use of household ingredients. They also found it more convenient due to language barriers as holistic healers tend to speak their home languages. Children did not believe holistic healing was as accessible, especially if they did not speak those languages. Instead, they believed modern medicine was easier to obtain as Western medical institutions are favored and promoted in American society.
3. **Modernity:** Parents and children both acknowledged that Western medicine was effective due to its evidence-based treatments and technological advancements that have sought to treat certain illnesses.

4. **Cultural Beliefs:** Parents believed in the betterment of all aspects of their health, expressing favoritism in traditional medicine due to its holistic nature/practices unlike Western medicine that targeted a specific issue/health concern. Although children acknowledged that traditional medicine tended to be more diverse in terms of its ability to improve oneself, they still believed that Western medicine was worth indulging in to address an illness.
5. **Speed:** Parents and children acknowledged that Western medicine often provides quicker diagnoses and treatments. However, the parents expressed hesitancy to use Western medicine due to the unknown side effects and/or long-term research of certain medicine/practices for particular treatments.
6. **Health Insurance:** Parents expressed a lack of health insurance coverage in their home countries which led to their seeking traditional medicine/clinics. However, with their children having access to health insurance (specifically through school or Medi-Cal), Western medicine was a lot more attainable.

## **Policy Recommendations:**

To be culturally sensitive and inclusive to Asian patients, the following suggestions should be considered:

1. To be culturally sensitive and inclusive to Asian patients, the following suggestions should be considered:
2. Train healthcare providers to understand and respect the cultural beliefs and practices of Asian patients and their families.
3. Provide in-person or online language interpreters to bridge communication gaps between healthcare providers and their patients.
4. Promote awareness and acceptance of both traditional and Western medical practices by launching public health campaigns in-person or through online media services.
5. Encourage collaboration between holistic and traditional practitioners by offering both solutions as forms of treatment for patients and their care.

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6. Advocate for health insurance coverage that expands beyond Western medicine to make alternative medicine options more affordable.
  7. Research prevalent holistic medical practices and their impact on health outcomes along with the barriers faced by different Asian communities.

## **Conclusion:**

The generational differences observed in Asian parent/child relationships regarding the usage of traditional versus Western medicine highlight the complex intersectionality between cultural identities, accessibility, and different forms of healthcare choices. As we continue to be more accepting of different cultures in America, practitioners, policymakers, and community members must address these differences. In embracing cultural differences and working towards fostering both forms of medical practices, we can foster a mutual understanding and respect for other cultures and their practices. Moreover, the implementation of both healthcare systems promotes a respective, patient-centered approach to an individual's healthcare needs that will leave patients more confident in their healthcare plans. In creating an inclusive healthcare plan that meets the unique needs of Asian, immigrant communities in the United States – we can ensure a healthier and more equitable healthcare future for all.