The Relations of Parental Autonomy Support to Cultural Internalization and Well-Being of Immigrants and Sojourners

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Previous research has demonstrated that autonomy support is one particularly effective means of promoting internalization and fostering well-being. The present study sought to determine if this would also be the case with regards to culture by testing the relation of perceived parental autonomy support to the cultural internalization and well-being of multicultural students. In Study 1, 105 multicultural participants living in Canada were more likely to have fully internalized their host and heritage cultures and to have higher self-reported well-being when they reported that their parents were autonomy supportive. In Study 2, 125 Chinese-Malaysians sojourners were also more likely to have fully internalized their heritage culture and indicated higher well-being when they perceived their parents as autonomy supportive. In both studies, heritage cultural internalization was also associated with higher well-being.

Keywords: autonomy support, cultural internalization, well-being

In the modern world, how one identifies oneself has essentially become a wide open question. While the increased choice in how to define oneself may seem desirable, it is equally true that the difficulty of this developmental task is now greater. Furthermore, for a growing number of people, the difficulties surrounding the formation of their identity is additionally complicated by the question of how they will define their cultural identity. In 2005, 191 million people or 3% of the world's population were living outside of their country of birth (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2006). Migrants are particularly concentrated in more developed regions where they account for approximately 1 in every 10 persons. The challenge in these societies where immigrants join other established ethnic minorities is to decide how to negotiate this diversity. In plural societies, immigrants and ethnic minorities may be encouraged to develop a bi- or multicultural identity. In such societies, minorities may be given more choice as to how or if they will maintain or develop competence in regards to their heritage and host cultures.

Biculturalism

While developing a bi- or multicultural identity is not without its challenges, it does however seem to be the preferred and most psychologically adaptive strategy for ethnic minorities (Berry, 1999; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001). A substantial body of research with diverse samples has demonstrated that individuals who can competently function in each of their cultures exhibit greater adaptation to their environment and improved well-being (Rivera-Sinclair, 1997; Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000). According to LaFromboise and colleagues (1993), effective functioning in each culture requires the individual to have knowledge of the cultural beliefs and value systems, an ability to function in various cultural settings, an understanding of the necessary language and communication skills, and positive attitudes toward the two societies. Minorities who have never lived in their heritage culture or who left that culture at a relatively early age may be particularly dependent on others in this process. Not only may parents influence the extent to which children learn about the culture, but the manner in which they teach their children may affect the attitudes the child develops toward that culture. It is important to note that the impact of parental socialization of the heritage culture has been found to extend beyond the time that their children are living in the home (Killian & Hegtvedt, 2003). The purpose of this study was to examine how young adults perceive their parents' attempts to socialize them with respect to their heritage culture. This perception was expected to influence the manner in which young adults regulate themselves with respect to the culture or, in other words, it should influence how they internalize the culture.

Cultural Internalization

If the stability and transmission of any culture is at least partly dependent on members of that culture internalizing the associated values and norms (Ryan, Rigby, & King, 1993), then socialization becomes critical for those immigrants who wish to pass on their culture to subsequent generations. One important way for acculturating individuals to become socialized in their heritage culture is through their parents. For successful parental socialization to occur, parents need to ensure that their children effectively internalize their heritage culture. Internalization is the process of trans-

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forming previously external regulations or values into something that an individual can personally endorse (Ryan et al., 1993). According to self-determination theory (SDT), internalization is a natural process whereby individuals learn to identify with the importance of a previously external social regulation and accept it as their own (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Full internalization occurs when a person volitionally and whole-heartedly endorses the practice. However, full internalization does not always take place; a regulation may remain under the control of external forces (i.e., rewards) or internal pressure (i.e., guilt).

The degree of cultural internalization has been shown to have an impact on an individual's well-being. A cross-cultural study of South Koreans, Americans, Turks, and Russians found that in each culture fuller internalization was associated with greater well-being (Chirkov, Ryan, Kim, & Kaplan, 2003). That is, individuals who reported a sense of volition and autonomy about adopting cultural guidelines also reported greater well-being. Moreover, internalization of multiple cultures appears to be possible and is related to an individual's feelings of competence and well-being with respect to that culture (Downie, Koestner, ElGeledi, & Cree, 2004). Thus, beyond having the ability to competently interact in a culture, feeling volitional when doing so is also important to the well-being of multicultural individuals.

Parental Autonomy Support

Given the relation between cultural internalization and well-being (Chirkov et al., 2003; Downie et al., 2004), it is important to explore what factors promote the internalization of cultural values. We hypothesized that parents would play a central role in a child's cultural internalization, particularly with regard to the heritage culture. We predicted that the way parents regulate their children's cultural behavior would influence how the children subsequently regulate themselves (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Autonomy-supportive environments are thought to promote full internalization and effective self-regulation whereas controlling environments interfere with an individual's inherent tendency to internalize previously external regulations (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001). Thus, the type of environment parents create should influence an individual's motivation toward participating in their heritage culture.

Parenting practices can be differentiated along a continuum ranging from highly controlling to highly autonomy supportive (Grolnick & Farkas, 2002). A parent who supports their child's autonomy would take their child's perspective, provide a rationale for why their child should engage in particular cultural activities, and offer their child choice as to how they negotiate their cultural identities. The critical element of autonomy support is that a parent does offer guidance, but ultimately the parents are willing to respect their child's choice, when the decision is one that the child is developmentally capable of making.

While most of the research on the benefits of autonomy support has been conducted in North America (e.g., Joussemet, Koestner, Lekes, & Landry, 2005; Williams, Frankel, Campbell, & Deci, 2000), there has been some cross-cultural replication. In a sample of Russian students, it was found that the perception that parents were autonomy supportive was associated with greater academic self-motivation and well-being (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001). Given that the Russian culture is traditionally viewed as relatively authoritarian (Ipsa, 1995), this would suggest that even in a control-

ling atmosphere support for autonomy is associated with positive outcomes. Autonomy support, as defined by SDT, was also found to be beneficial for schoolchildren in collectivistic Taiwan (d'Ailly, 2003), despite the more hierarchical and deliberate child rearing practices typically endorsed in Asian families. Moreover, parental autonomy support appears to be of value for ethnic minorities, such as Turks and Moroccans living in the Netherlands (van der Veen & Meijnen, 2002).

We expected that if parents regulate cultural guidelines in an autonomy supportive manner then their children will be more likely to fully internalize the norms of that culture. That is, the children will "stand behind" their heritage culture behaviors and view them as emanating from themselves (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001). By contrast, if a parent adopts a controlling stance with regards to how their children engage in their heritage culture then the children will not truly internalize their culture. Children may conform to the cultural behavior, but this will reflect "coerced conformity" based in feelings of pressure rather than authentic volition (Chirkov, Ryan, & Willness, 2005). It is important to note that the parenting-to-internalization relations were expected to hold regardless of whether the multicultural young people had a heritage culture that was hierarchical versus egalitarian. As in previous studies, it was also hypothesized that autonomy support would foster psychological well-being (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001).[1]

Study 1

The purpose of this study was to consider the challenges faced by immigrants from a developmental and motivational perspective. Immigrants and their children are exposed to the cultural norms, values, and regulations of their unique heritage culture and their new host culture, which they must attempt to make their own through a process of internalization. Parents are likely to play a key role in facilitating or impeding the cultural internalization process. Previous research suggests that parental autonomy support facilitates full internalization of guidelines in the academic domain (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Joussemet et al., 2005). We hypothesized that autonomy supportive parenting experiences would be associated with young people's greater internalization of their heritage culture. Furthermore, based on findings with four monocultural samples (Chirkov et al., 2003), it was predicted that full cultural internalization would be associated with psychological well-being. It remained to be seen whether heritage or host internalization would be differentially related to well-being.

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[1] An interesting question that the present study also addresses is whether maternal and paternal autonomy support are equally predictive of internalization and well-being. An earlier study using the child version of the autonomy support questionnaire employed in this study found little difference between perceptions of maternal and paternal influence on the child's motivational development (Grolnick, Ryan, & Deci, 1991). Further research with teenagers did not assess maternal and paternal autonomy support separately (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001; Wiest, Wong, Cervantes, Craik, & Kreil, 2001). As a result, no specific hypotheses were made regarding the differential impact of having more or less maternal or paternal autonomy support.

Methods

Participants

One hundred and five multicultural individuals participated in this study. Participants consisted of 29 males and 75 females; one participant failed to specify his or her gender. The average age of the participants was 20.2 years ($SD = 2.0$). Seventy-four percent of the participants were born outside of Canada; on average, they had been living in Canada for 6.3 years. Participants were comprised of members of over 45 ethnic groups. The most frequent self-identified heritage cultures were Chinese ($N = 10$), Russian ($N = 7$), Italian ($N = 6$) and Indian ($N = 5$). The majority of participants (72%) spoke in their heritage language at home. However, overall participants indicated that they felt more proficient in the English language than in the language of their heritage culture, $t = 6.36$, $p < .001$.

Procedure

Participants were recruited from the paid participant pool at McGill University. At the beginning of each semester, interested students fill out a slip of paper indicating their willingness to be contacted to participate in social psychology studies. Potential participants were asked to indicate their ethnicity on the slips. If participants had spontaneously self-identified as coming from a culture distinct from English- or French-Canada, they were considered multicultural and were contacted to participate in the present study. Since the participants were studying at an English language university, the questionnaires were administered in English. Respondents were paid $10. Participants completed a self-report questionnaire consisting of demographic information as well as the scales described below.

Research Materials

Demographic information. Participants were asked to indicate their gender, age, ethnic identity, generational status, year of arrival in Canada, and the language spoken predominantly in their home.

Autonomy support. A modified version of Robbins' (1994) college-student Perception of Parents scale was used.[2] The measure assessed the extent to which parents were autonomy supportive, as opposed to controlling, in terms of the participant's involvement with their heritage culture. The scale consisted of 14 items; or seven items each for their mother and father. Sample items include, "My mother, whenever possible, allows me to choose how I will participate in our heritage culture" and "My father insists upon my doing things like a typical member of our heritage culture" (reverse-scored). Participants rated the items on a seven-point scale ranging from *not at all true* (1) to *very true* (7). Cronbach's alpha for the scale was .80.[3]

Internalization of heritage and host culture. The methodology developed by Chirkov and colleagues (2003) and adapted by Downie and colleagues (2004) was used to assess the manner in which individuals had internalized cultural norms. For both their heritage and the host culture, participants were asked to endorse their reasons for "participating in the cultural traditions," "maintaining the cultural practices," and "believing in the specific cultural values." For each statement, participants were asked to indi-

cate "How much do you pursue this for the following reasons?" Four possible reasons representing the types of internalization proposed by self-determination theory were provided. *External regulation*, "Because my parents and relatives want me to"; *introjected regulation*, "Because I would feel ashamed, guilty or anxious if I didn't – I feel I ought to do this"; *identified regulation*, "Because I really believe that it is important to do – I endorse it freely and value it wholeheartedly"; and *intrinsic regulation*, "Because of the fun and enjoyment of participating—the primary reason is simply my interest itself."

The reasons reflect an underlying continuum of autonomy with external representing the least autonomous and intrinsic the most autonomous (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Possible responses ranged from *Not at all for this reason* (1) to *Completely for this reason* (9). Cronbach's alphas for the four subscales for both heritage and host cultural practices were all satisfactory (higher than .73). From this scale, an index of internalization or relative autonomy was calculated separately for the heritage and host cultures based on the formula used by Ryan and Connell (1989): (-2) x External regulation $+ (-1)$ x Introjection $+ (1)$ x Identification $+ (2)$ x Intrinsic. Thus, higher values represent greater internalization. It should be noted that over 60 studies have used the same procedure to assess internalization in various domains (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Psychological well-being. Ryff and Keyes (1995) 18-item scale was used. The scale consists of three items for each of six dimensions. The six dimensions are personal acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the statements on a 5-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). Cronbach's alpha was .77.

Hierarchical character of heritage culture. Schwartz (1994, 1999) assessed the level of hierarchy in large samples in 49 nations around the world. A culture that supports hierarchy emphasizes the "legitimacy of hierarchical role and resource allocation" (Schwartz, 1994, p. 103). The cross-national scores reported by Schwartz (1994) were applied to the heritage cultures identified by the participants in order to provide an objective assessment of the hierarchical versus egalitarian nature of the values of each culture. This enabled us to assess whether autonomy support facilitates cultural internalization regardless of the hierarchical nature of the heritage culture. Given Schwartz's (1999) assertion that nations cluster according to geographical location, shared history, and religious affiliation, individuals from nations that have not been assessed were assigned the values of the most similar countries, based on these criteria. For example, a French-speaking Belgian was assigned the cultural value for France. In our sample, hierarchy scores ranged from Italians who were assigned the value 1.69

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[2] The child version of this scale (Grolnick, Ryan, & Deci, 1991) has been more widely used (d'Ailly, 2003; Gagne, Ryan, & Bargmann, 2003).

[3] In order to confirm the validity of this scale, two measures of autonomy support were included in the initial study, the measure outlined here and a second measure that was scenario-based. The two measures were highly correlated. Analyses were conducted with both measures; the results were quite similar across measures. We opted to present results relevant to this measure in the interest of brevity and because it was the measure that most closely corresponded to previous measures of autonomy support.

to Chinese who were assigned the value 3.70. In Schwartz's (1994) cross-cultural assessment, the mean hierarchy score was 2.60 and the standard deviation was 0.57.

Results and Discussion

Preliminary Analyses: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations

The means, standard deviations, and correlations between all the key variables are presented in Table 1. It can be seen that all of the hypothesized relations are evident in the correlation table. Autonomy support was significantly positively associated with heritage internalization and with well-being. Both heritage and host cultural internalization were significantly positively associated with well-being. Because maternal and paternal autonomy support were highly correlated ($r = .69$, $p < .0001$) and were similarly correlated with the other variables in the study, they were combined for the central analyses that follow.

Central Analyses

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to examine our central hypotheses. The analyses examined the relation of parental autonomy support to heritage internalization and well-being. In each analysis, a first set of variables included gender, generational status (first or second), and heritage culture hierarchy. Autonomy support was entered next. The interaction terms of gender by autonomy support, generational status by autonomy support, and cultural hierarchy by autonomy support were entered as a third set of predictors. Because none of the interaction terms approached significance (p's $> .10$) in any of the analyses, we report the multiple R, F test, and significance levels after the second set was entered.

The results are presented in Table 2. The regression of heritage internalization revealed a multiple R of .38, $F(4, 84) = 3.06$, $p = .02$; parental autonomy support was the only significant predictor. For well-being, there was a multiple R of .36, $F(4, 86) = 3.11$, $p = .02$; parental autonomy support was again the only significant predictor.

Supplemental Analyses

Further analyses were conducted to determine whether internalization of the heritage or host culture was more strongly related to the well-being of ethnic minorities. In this hierarchical regression, gender, generational status, and heritage culture hierarchy were

entered first. Heritage internalization was entered next, followed by host internalization. The interaction terms of gender by internalization, generational status by internalization, and cultural hierarchy by internalization were entered last. Because no interaction terms were significant, we report the multiple R, F test, and significance levels prior to their entry into the regression.

The regressions of psychological well-being on heritage and host internalization revealed a significant multiple R of .52, $F(5, 83) = 6.21$, $p < .01$. Both heritage internalization and host internalization were significantly positively related to well-being, betas = .39 and .36, respectively (p's $< .01$). These results indicate that autonomous engagement in both heritage and host cultural practices were associated with enhanced well-being. Given the significant relations between autonomy support, heritage cultural internalization, and well-being obtained in the regression analyses, it seemed appropriate to determine if heritage cultural internalization mediated the effect of autonomy support on well-being. Following the criteria outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986) to determine mediation, we had previously found that autonomy supportive parenting was significantly related to both heritage culture internalization ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < .001$) and well-being ($\beta = .32$, $p < .01$). Moreover, heritage culture internalization was also significantly associated with well-being ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < .001$). Finally, the effect of autonomy supportive parenting on well-being was reduced to nonsignificance when heritage culture internalization was added to the model ($\beta = 0.18$, ns). Thus, the relation between parental autonomy support and well-being was fully mediated by the influence of heritage internalization.

To summarize, the findings of Study 1 supported our hypotheses by showing that parental autonomy support was significantly positively associated with heritage cultural internalization and well-being. It is important to note that these associations were not qualified by the gender, generational status, or specific hierarchical quality of the heritage culture of the participants. Furthermore, both heritage and host internalization appear to be important to the experience of well-being. One limitation of this study, however, is that all of the participants were living in the same urban area of North America, Montreal, Canada. The goal of Study 2 was to consider if we would obtain the same results with a more homogenous sample that had emigrated to different countries.

Study 2

The purpose of this study was to replicate the previous findings relative to autonomy support, cultural internalization, and well-being with a sample of individuals who begin with a common

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations Across all Variables, Study 1

	Mean	SD	N	2	3	4	5	6
1. Parental autonomy support	4.9	0.9	105	.93**	.92**	.33**	.18	.33**
2. Maternal autonomy support	5.0	1.0	105		.69**	.27**	.15	.31**
3. Paternal autonomy support	4.8	1.0	102			.34**	.17	.30**
4. Heritage internalization	9.1	7.0	103				.49**	.39**
5. Host internalization	12.3	5.3	105					.47**
6. Well-being	4.0	0.5	105					

* $p < .05$.   ** $p < .01$.

Table 2
Hierarchical Regression of Parental Autonomy Support on Heritage Internalization and Well-Being, Study 1

		Outcomes					
		Heritage internalization			Well-being		
		β	*t*	*p*	β	*t*	*p*
Step 1							
	Gender	.06	0.56	.57	.07	0.67	.51
	Generation	−.01	−0.01	.94	.10	0.93	.36
	Hierarchy	.08	0.75	.46	−.10	−0.92	.36
Step 2							
	Autonomy support	.35	3.37	.001	.32	3.09	.01

cultural context and subsequently migrate to varied Western host cultures. To this end, we utilized the same measures as in Study 1 including the modified version of the perception of parents scale (Robbins, 1994), cultural internalization (Downie et al., 2004), and psychological well-being (Ryff & Keyes, 1995) with a sample of Chinese-Malaysians who were sojourning throughout Australia, North America, and the United Kingdom.

Chinese-Malaysians sojourners were chosen for the second study for several reasons. First, for the purpose of measurement reliability, the Chinese represent an Asian sample in which the constructs and measures of SDT have been found to be ecologically valid, despite the socialization differences between Asian cultures and the Western cultures where the majority of these measures were constructed (d'Ailly, 2003). Second, if SDT is indeed a universal theory, replications need to occur in societies that are characterized by distinct values and cultural orientations. Third, to relate the potential findings to the results with a multicultural sample of North Americans, it was desirable to have a sample of participants for whom cultural socialization was largely influenced by their parents. In this respect, Chinese-Malaysians are ideal candidates because of the ethnic composition of Malaysia. Malaysia's population is largely comprised of three ethnicities: Malays at 65.1%, Chinese at 26%, and Indians at 7.7% (Malaysia Department of Statistics, 2000). Thus, while Chinese-Malaysians do represent a cultural minority, they are still fairly large in numbers. Thus, in the interest of making the sample for Study 2 more comparable to that of Study 1, we recruited Chinese-Malaysians sojourning in the West. As sojourners, the host cultures they would be exposed to would be quite similar to that of the participants in Study 1.

It is important to note that Chinese-Malaysian sojourners are not particularly unusual in large part due to the sociopolitical context that exists in Malaysia. Enshrined in the Constitution of Malaysia are special rights for the Malays who are considered Bumiputera, or "sons of the soil" (Kim, 2003). Racial tension between the Malays and the Chinese- and Indian-Malaysians has been an issue for the multicultural nation ever since this constitution was established in 1957 when Malaysia gained independence from Great Britain (Crouch, 2001; Lee, 2000; Tan, 2001). The results of this racial tension are that as a group, Chinese-Malaysians are very much aware of their ethnicity. Particularly at the intergroup level, the Chinese, Indians, and Malays have tended to remain relatively segregated. This segregation has persisted despite strong govern-

mental efforts to promote racial integration, such as the implementation of a mandatory military service program that was expected to form a bond among the youth of Malaysia that would ease the existing racial polarization. The racial tension and the relative English fluency, due to Malaysia's status as a former British colony, may be a contributing factor in the trend for many Chinese-Malaysian young people to go abroad to further their education.

Thus, similar to the multicultural Canadian participants in Study 1, the Chinese-Malaysian participants in Study 2 may have relied heavily on their parents for socialization in their heritage culture. Additionally, they are attempting to internalize similar types of host cultures, specifically Western cultures. However, the Chinese-Malaysians cultural background is seemingly more complex due to their minority status in Malaysia. It is important to note that this additional complexity would potentially limit our capacity to extrapolate the results obtained in Study 1 to this sample. However, if we are able to replicate those results with the present sample, then this should be a testament to the cross-cultural value of autonomy support and cultural internalization.

Methods

Participants

One hundred and twenty-five Chinese-Malaysian student sojourners completed a survey over the Internet. Participants consisted of 55 males and 70 females. Participant's mean age was 20.8 years (*SD* = 2.8) and they had been living abroad for an average of 2.0 years. Sixty-six of the participants were studying in Australia, 19 in Canada, 22 in the United States, and 18 in the United Kingdom.

Procedure

Participants were recruited by the second author who is from Malaysia. She contacted former high school peers (via email, instant messenger, etc.), who then proceeded to contact other Chinese-Malaysian students, using a snowball technique. In addition, she contacted Malaysian student societies at universities throughout Australia, North America, and the United Kingdom. The survey was conducted online (www.surveymonkey.com).

Given that participants were all studying in English institutions, the questionnaire was administered in English.[4]

With the rise of the World Wide Web, Internet surveys are increasingly popular as a research tool (Huang, 2006). A number of studies have shown that the data quality of Internet surveys is equal to the traditional paper-and-pen method (Boyer, Olson, Calantone, & Jackson, 2002), and the response rate for Internet surveys is better than mailed surveys (Truell, 2003).

Research Materials

Demographic information. Participants were asked to indicate their gender, age, ethnicity,[5] where they were studying, and the length of time they had been there.

Measures. Participants completed the following scales that were identical to those completed in Study 1: autonomy support, relative autonomy of internalization, and psychological well-being. The *autonomy support* measure was comprised of the same seven items; however, this time they asked about the "parents" as opposed to assessing maternal and paternal autonomy support separately. Cronbach's alpha was .70. (One item from the original scale was deleted because it did not correlate with the full scale in this sample). *Cultural internalization* was assessed in the exact same manner as in Study 1. Here, however, participants were asked about Chinese culture and the country where they were sojourning. Cronbach's alphas for both cultures on each subscale were satisfactory (all above .87). Once again, Ryff and Keyes (1995) measure of psychological well-being was used. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .79.

Results and Discussion

Preliminary Analyses: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations

The means, standard deviations, and correlations for all the key variables are presented in Table 3. It can be seen that all of the hypothesized relations are evident in the correlation table. Autonomy support was significantly positively associated with heritage internalization and well-being. Both heritage and host cultural internalization were significantly positively associated with well-being.

Central Analyses

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to examine our central hypotheses. The first two analyses examined the relation of parental autonomy support to heritage internalization and

well being. In each analysis, the first set of variables included gender, country in which sojourning (dummy coded), and length of sojourn. Autonomy support was entered next. The interaction terms of gender by autonomy support, length of sojourn by autonomy support, and country by autonomy support were entered as a third set of predictors. Because no interaction terms were significant we report the multiple R, F test, and significance levels prior to their entry into the regression.

Results are presented in Table 4. The regression of heritage internalization revealed a multiple R of .34, $F(6, 118) = 2.51$, $p < .05$. Parental autonomy support was the only significant predictor of heritage internalization. The regression of psychological well-being revealed a multiple R of .30, $F(6, 118) = 1.98$, $p = .07$. Parental autonomy support was the only significant predictor of well being, $\beta = .29$, $p < .01$. These results suggest that, regardless of the country in which students are sojourning, autonomy supportive parenting experiences are associated with heritage internalization and higher well-being.

Supplemental Analyses

A further analysis examined the relation of heritage and host internalization to well-being. Gender, country in which sojourning (dummy coded), and length of sojourn were entered first. Heritage internalization was entered next, followed by host internalization. The interaction terms of gender by internalization, country by internalization, and length of sojourn by internalization were entered last. Because one significant interaction emerged, we report the multiple R, F test, and significance levels after all variables had been entered into the regression equation.

The regression of well-being by internalization revealed a multiple R of .44, $F(16, 108) = 1.60$, $p = .08$. Heritage internalization was significantly positively related to well-being ($\beta = .25$, $p < .01$). Host internalization was not related to well-being. The only other significant effect to emerge was an interaction between the dummy code for US residence and host internalization ($\beta = .23$, $p < .05$). To understand this interaction, we examined the relation of host culture internalization separately for Malaysians sojourning in the US versus in the other three countries. This revealed that host internalization was especially strongly related to psychological well-being for sojourners in the US ($r = .62$, $p < .01$) compared to those residing in the United Kingdom, Australia, or Canada ($r = .15$, ns). These results suggest that the full internalization of heritage cultural values is positively associated with psychological well-being regardless of country of residence, but

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations for All Variables, Study 2

	Mean	SD	2	3	4
1. Autonomy support	4.5	0.9	.33**	.09	.27**
2. Heritage internalization	8.6	7.3		.58**	.23**
3. Host internalization	10.1	7.0			.24**
4. Well-being	3.7	0.5			

* $p < .05.$ ** $p < .01.$

Table 4
Hierarchical Regression of Parental Autonomy Support on Heritage Internalization and Well-Being, Study 2

		Outcomes					
		Heritage internalization			Well-being		
		β	t	p	β	t	p
Step 1							
	Gender	.03	0.31	.76	.01	0.13	.90
	Australia	−.11	−0.88	.38	.09	0.72	.48
	Canada	.10	0.90	.37	.01	0.10	.93
	United Kingdom	−.03	−0.25	.81	.13	1.12	.27
	Length of Sojourn	−.04	−0.43	.67	.05	0.54	.59
Step 2							
	Autonomy support	.29	3.26	.001	.28	3.14	.01

that the relation of host internalization to well-being may depend on the particular country in which one is sojourning.

Because we once again found associations between parental autonomy support, heritage internalization, and well-being, it seemed appropriate to test if there was a mediation effect similar to that found in Study 1. Again following the criteria outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986), we had found that autonomy supportive parenting was significantly related to both heritage culture internalization ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < .001$) and well-being ($\beta = 0.28$, $p < .01$). Additionally, heritage culture internalization was also significantly associated with well-being ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < .01$). Finally, the effect of autonomy supportive parenting was slightly reduced when heritage culture internalization was added to the model ($\beta = 0.23$, $p < .01$). Thus, in this study heritage internalization only partially moderated the effect of parental autonomy support on well-being.

General Discussion

The purpose of these two studies was to consider the influence of autonomy supportive parenting on immigrants and sojourners. Autonomy supportive parents were able to take their child's perspective, provide their child with a rationale for why they should engage in a given activity, and offer their child choice. It was hypothesized that autonomy supportive parenting would foster full cultural internalization and well-being. Furthermore, we expected to replicate the finding that full cultural internalization is associated with enhanced well-being. These hypotheses were tested with two distinct samples. The first sample consisted of immigrants from diverse cultures who were living in a multicultural urban area in Canada. The second sample comprised Chinese-Malaysians sojourners who were living throughout North America, the United Kingdom, and Australia. The results obtained in the two studies were relatively consistent across these diverse samples.

In both studies, parental autonomy support was associated with internalization of the individual's heritage culture; these two variables in turn were associated with enhanced well-being. With the multicultural Canadian sample, both heritage and host internalization were associated with well-being. This finding supports previous theory and research on the benefits of having a bicultural identity, as full internalization of each culture was beneficial for

those individuals who were permanently residing in the host culture. However, this was not the case for the sample of Chinese-Malaysian sojourners. For these participants, heritage internalization was related to their well-being, whereas host internalization was generally unrelated. This would suggest that for some sojourners separation might be a viable acculturation strategy. However, this does appear to be moderated by where the individual is sojourning. Host culture internalization was particularly adaptive for the sojourners now residing in the United States. This suggests that when a minority is adapting to a culture that emphasizes rapid assimilation, like the United States (Killian & Hegtvedt, 2003), feeling autonomous about the culture's norms is critical to the minority person's well-being even if they only intend to remain in the country for a relatively short duration. Overall, the findings of the two studies demonstrate the importance of autonomy support and internalization to the well-being of immigrants and sojourners. The consistency of findings across two such unique samples highlight the underlying similarity of the processes that are associated with well-being for immigrants and sojourners regardless of where they emigrate from or migrate to.

An interesting issue raised by these two studies is the meaning of autonomy support. As previously described, autonomy support is typically considered to be comprised of three elements: perspective taking, provision of a rationale, and choice. Researchers have emphasized the importance of providing an individual with choice as being critical to fostering a person's autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000). However, it may be that there are cultural differences in how autonomy support is perceived and therefore implemented. The possibility that the meaning of autonomy may differ across cultures is important to consider further since a previous study comparing American and Russian students' perceptions of autonomy support and internalization found mean differences on these constructs, such that autonomy support and internalization were significantly lower in the more authoritarian context that exists in Russia, compared to the US (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001).

Thus, it may be that a country's relative emphasis on hierarchical versus egalitarian values does influence the propensity for members of these countries to demonstrate autonomy support or autonomously internalize the associated values. Unfortunately, the components of autonomy support could not be reliably distin-

guished based on the nature of the measure employed in this study. However, even though the level of autonomy support and autonomous internalization may differ across cultures, our results suggest that the impact of processes related to autonomy and well-being are identical across cultures. Chinese-Malaysians sojourners, parental autonomy support and full internalization of cultural guidelines were significantly positively associated with well-being. These results support Deci and Ryan's (2000) claim for the universal importance of the satisfaction of the need for autonomy across cultures. Previous studies by Chirkov and colleagues (2003) and Sheldon and colleagues (2004) have made the same point.

It is also important to note that while the present studies advocate for parents being autonomy supportive, this is not to be confused with permissive or laissez-faire parenting. That is, parents may be concerned that being autonomy supportive means that they may have to sit back and watch their child distance themselves from their heritage culture. Our results would contradict this notion. Just as teens who were autonomously dependent on their parents were more likely to seek out their parents' advice (Ryan & Lynch, 1989), the present studies would indicate that young adults with autonomy supportive parents were more likely to have internalized their heritage culture. Moreover, previous research has found that internalization is related to cultural competence and the experience of positive affect in the cultural context (Downie et al., 2004). Although parents may be threatened by the acculturation gap that occurs when their children are perceived as adapting to the host culture at a faster rate while parents are perceived as holding onto the heritage culture, the present results would suggest that parents who pressure their children in controlling ways to engage in heritage cultural practices may inadvertently alienate their children from the culture. Alternatively, parents who offer their children choice, understand their perspective, and acknowledge how they feel, are more likely to achieve their desired outcome of having their children more fully engaged in the heritage culture.

There are some limitations with the present research that should be noted. First, both samples were comprised of university students. While this does allow for better comparisons across the studies, it does mean that the experience of these participants may not be particularly representative. As in any research on acculturation, there is a self-selection bias that must be considered. Why is it that some individuals choose to leave their native culture while others remain? Study 1 was largely comprised of participants who would have had little input into the decision to migrate, whereas participants in Study 2 were likely the ones who made this decision. It would be interesting to determine if internalization plays a role in this decision process. It may be that individuals choose to immigrate or sojourn in another country in part because they have failed to internalize the norms of the culture where they are currently residing. This may be particularly true of Chinese-Malaysians due to the political situation in Malaysia. Unfortunately, we were not able to assess whether this was the case because we did not measure internalization of Malaysian culture. However, despite the differences between the two groups of participants, in both studies the processes appear to be the same. Parental autonomy support influenced how participants related to their heritage culture and it had an impact on their well-being.

The correlational nature of the study is a further limitation that prevents us from inferring causation. While we have hypothesized that autonomy support will foster autonomous internalization, it is possible that children who show a proclivity toward their heritage culture may elicit an autonomy supportive response from their parents. It should also be noted that in assessing parental autonomy support we asked children to report on their parents. Further study is needed to determine whether parental and child reports of autonomy support are generally congruent and whether parental or child assessments of autonomy support are more predictive of internalization in situations in which there is a mismatch between parent's and children's reports.

Finally, in any research conducted across cultures, there is always a concern that the measures are culturally biased. While it is always possible that there is a more culturally appropriate measure of any construct that we are assessing, it is noteworthy that in both studies the measures were given to participants living in Western contexts, which should allow that the constructs being assessed were not completely foreign. Furthermore, neither generational status nor length of sojourn had any impact on the relations between the variables, which gives some assurance that degree of acculturation was not influencing how participants interpreted or responded to any of the measures.

In conclusion, our studies showed that parental autonomy support is associated with autonomous cultural internalization and well-being for ethnic minorities in Canada and sojourners from Malaysia. Parental autonomy support appears to enable diverse ethnic minorities to achieve their goals of maintaining their cultural heritage, participating in the new society, and maintaining their level of psychological well-being in diverse cultural contexts.

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