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Effects of Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies on Korean-American Young Adults' Psychological Well-being, through Communication Quality, Mattering, and Autonomy Support

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my beloved grandparents, in loving memory.

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Abstract

Effects of Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies on Korean-American Young Adults' Psychological Well-being, through Communication Quality, Mattering, and Autonomy Support

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Korean-Americans are one of the fastest-growing racial subgroups, representing 0.4% of the total population of the U.S. as of 2019. Many Korean-American immigrant families consist of Korea-raised parents and their 1.5- or second-generation children. Because these families experience both mainstream and heritage cultures, cultural discrepancies may arise between the children and their immigrant parents. The main purpose of this study is to examine the mediating effects of parent–child communication quality, mattering to parents, and parental autonomy support on the relationship between intergenerational cultural discrepancies and psychological well-being, among Korean-American young adults. Participants were recruited through Korean-American communities in the U.S. and participated in this study through an online survey and follow-up one-on-one video interviews. A total of 161 Korean-American young adults between age 18 and 34 (M age = 23.14) were included in the final sample for the survey study, and 10 of the 161 also participated in the follow-up interview study. A mixed methods approach, including several mediation models and interview analysis, was used to test the hypotheses of this study. Key

results from the quantitative analyses showed that greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies affected their lower communication quality, and this lower communication quality subsequently affected lower mattering to parents, but this lower mattering did not affected children's depressive symptoms (Model 1). Also, greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies affected both lower parent–child communication quality and less parental autonomy support at the same time, which in turn affected lower levels of young adults' life satisfaction (Model 2). The qualitative results provide a rich description of specific examples of these effects and possible reasons for the quantitative results. In addition, the participants shared messages to their parents during their adolescence as well as advice for current Korean-American adolescents who may face similar experiences. The results of this study support and extend the findings of previous work linking parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies to children's psychological adjustment in immigrant families, as well as those linking parent–child communication, mattering to parents, and parental autonomy support. Future studies could investigate whether these relationships are different between mother–child and father–child dyads, and whether these results have any Korean-specific characteristics, by comparing them with results from young adults in other ethnic groups.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Over the past several generations, a large influx of immigrants from diverse countries has reshaped the ethnic dynamics in the U.S. According to the *2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates* (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019a), as of 2019 foreign-born immigrants comprised 14% of the total population of the U.S. Specifically, the proportion of Asian-Americans increased by 1% between 2010 and 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, 2019b). Overall, 5.7% of the total U.S. population is Asian-American, mostly (82%) in six ethnic groups: Chinese (1.3% of total U.S. population), Asian Indian (1.3%), Filipino (0.9%), Vietnamese (0.6%), Korean (0.4%), and Japanese (0.2%). Of these populations, Korean-Americans are one of the fastest growing racial subgroups (Kim, Kim, & Rue, 1997; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019b).

Despite this rapidly diversifying population, our understanding of how acculturation-related processes impact ethnic minority families and their children's psychological well-being remains limited. Given that ethnic minorities may have a higher risk for experiencing psychological problems as they acculturate and develop across generations (Hwang, Wood, & Fujimoto, 2010), and that the Asian-American population is one of the largest as well as the fastest-growing minority group in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019b), we need a richer and more accurate understanding of how acculturation-related processes affect family relationships and children's psychological well-being in these immigrant families.

Acculturation is generally defined as the extent to which individuals have maintained their culture of origin or adapted to the larger society (Phinney, 1996). This concept involves both *mainstream acculturation*, which is the acquisition of the host culture's beliefs, behaviors, and values, and *heritage enculturation*, which is the retention or relinquishment of one's culture

of origin (Hwang et al., 2010). Many immigrant parents are likely to not only maintain their culture of origin and language, but also to expect their children to maintain and follow their heritage culture and lead traditional lifestyles (Hwang et al., 2010; Kim & Omizo, 2006; Lee et al., 2000; Sung, 1985).

Since immigrant parents and their children grow up in different cultures and environments, however, *parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies* which stem from their acculturation gaps are likely to occur in the relationships between them (Hwang et al., 2010). Furthermore, these discrepancies can lead to more intergenerational cultural conflicts and weakened family cohesion (Farver, Narang, & Bhadha, 2002; Kim, Chen, Huang, & Moon, 2009), as well as to children's psychological problems (Choi, Meininger, & Roberts, 2006; Choi, Stafford, Meininger, Roberts, & Smith, 2002) in immigrant families.

Asian-American students have often been perceived as "model" students (Choi, Kim, Park, & Dancy, 2012), since their academic achievements (e.g., grades, standardized test scores) are higher (Hsin & Xie, 2014) and their levels of risk-taking behaviors (e.g., substance use) are lower (Au & Donaldson, 2000; O'Hare, 1995) compared to other ethnic groups. However, Asian-American students have also reported high levels of psychological problems such as social and mental distress (Choi et al., 2006), acculturative stress (Choi et al., 2002; James, 1997), depression (Choi el al., 2002; Stewart et al., 1999), anxiety (Farver et al., 2002; Talkovsky & Norton, 2015), and low levels of self-esteem (Choi et al., 2006). More attention to this population is needed to identify the factors which contribute to their psychological adjustment.

Psychological problems such as depression or poor psychological adjustment occur very often among children (Hudson, Elek, & Campbell-Grossman, 2000; Stark et al., 2008). Thus,

psychological adjustment and mental health have long been recognized as important issues in the study of child development (Dishion & Patterson, 2006). Although these phenomena might be considered as developmentally normative and indicate inevitable shifts in this age group of adolescents through emerging adults (Hill, Bromell, Tyson, & Flint, 2007; Steinberg, 2004), it is important to understand what factors contribute to children's adjustment and their potentially negative consequences.

Of the many studies analyzing acculturation-related issues in immigrant families, most have dealt with immigrant parents' acculturation and little research has focused on the difference in acculturation levels between parents and children. Also, many studies have relied on parents' reports on their relationship with their children and their children's behavior problems, but few studies have measured how children perceive those phenomena themselves. In addition, most such studies on Asian-American families have focused on Chinese-Americans—the largest subgroup of Asian-Americans in the U.S. (Choi et al., 2002)—or on other Asian-American population groups (e.g., Indian-Americans, Southeast Asian-Americans). By contrast, relatively few studies have examined these topics among the Korean-American population. Furthermore, the majority of the previous studies have focused on early adolescents, rather than late adolescents, emerging adults, or young adults.

Considering the recent growth in Korean-American populations and the seriousness of Korean-American young adult children's reported psychological issues, more research on Korean-American children's perceived intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their parents and how they affect psychological well-being is needed. This study seeks to fill that gap, as well as to examine the factors that can possibly contribute to the relationship between

intergenerational cultural discrepancies and Korean-American young adults' psychological adjustment. Specific study objectives are described below.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The key objectives for this study are:

- Define the concept of *intergenerational cultural discrepancies* and review the existing literature on this topic.

- Introduce the concept of *perceived mattering to parents* to measure and understand children's interpretation of parent–child relationships and parenting behaviors more precisely.

- Investigate whether the framework of the Acculturation Gap-Distress Theory can be applied to Korean-American families, particularly those with young adult children.

- Examine possible factors (i.e., parent–child communication quality, children's perceived mattering to parents, and parental autonomy support) that can contribute to the relationship between parent– child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's psychological adjustment.

- Focus on young adults' perceptions of intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their parents, communication with their parents, feelings of mattering, perceptions of parental support, depressive symptoms, and life satisfaction.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I review the existing literature to clarify the main constructs relevant to the current study. I begin by describing what parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies refer to and how this concept is associated with children's psychological adjustment. Since the concept of an intergenerational cultural discrepancy basically stems from the gaps in acculturation levels between parents and children, I briefly review the construct of acculturation first, to help define acculturation, distinguish different types of acculturation, and demonstrate how this concept relates to children's psychological adjustment. I also review how these topics have been studied among Asian-American populations. This section also deals with parent–child communication quality as a relevant aspect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies, which might be ultimately relevant to children's psychological adjustment.

Next, I review parent–child relationships and parenting behaviors as well as children's perceived mattering to parents, which might be related to the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and the children's psychological adjustment. I first review the construct, then review how this topic has previously been studied in terms of children's psychological well-being. Building on this foundation, at the end of this chapter I finally detail the current study's motivation, research questions, hypotheses, and rationales.

ACCULTURATION

As of 2019, 14% of the total population of the U.S. were foreign-born immigrants, totaling approximately 45 million people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019a). These immigrants may

need to adapt to their host cultures to become part of U.S. communities, schools, and society. Therefore, it is necessary to understand how immigrants adapt to a new culture and how they deal with the acculturative problems they may encounter (Booth, Crouter, & Lansdale, 1999). While the term *immigrant* indicates only physical status, *acculturation* indicates psychological adaptation (Berry, 1997). In the past, acculturation was regarded as a group-level phenomenon. For instance, Redfield and his colleagues (1936) defined it as "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (Redfield et al., 1936, p. 1). More recently, however, it has been defined as an individual-level phenomenon. For example, Phinney (1996) defined it as "the extent to which individuals have maintained their culture of origin or adapted to the larger society" (p. 921).

Acculturation attitudes, according to Berry (1994, 1997, 2001), refer to two fundamental choices facing immigrants: the decision to maintain one's culture of origin (cultural maintenance), and the extent to which one has contact with and participates in the mainstream culture (contact and participation). When both issues are considered simultaneously, the lattice of intersecting positive or negative responses defines a framework of four acculturation strategies: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization (see Figure 1). Specifically, *integration* involves accepting both the original culture and the host culture, *assimilation* involves rejecting the original culture in order to assimilate to the new host culture, *separation* involves adhering to the original culture, and *marginalization* involves refusing both cultures. For example, if an immigrant seeks to maintain his or her original culture while still interacting with other groups, that approach indicates integration.

Host Culture Acquisition

	Low	High
Low	Marginalization	Assimilation
High	Separation	Integration

(Row labels: Heritage Culture Maintenance — Low, High)

Figure 1. Berry's two-dimensional acculturation model (Berry, 1994)

Berry (1980) emphasized that integration has been found to be the most desirable acculturative attitude in many studies, while marginalization is the least desirable type. The second most preferred form of acculturation differed according to the characteristics of the immigrant groups being studied (Dona & Berry, 1994; Krishnan & Berry, 1992; Sam, 1995), and acculturative strategies could vary even within the same ethnic group, family, or individual (Berry, 2005).

Previous studies have found that immigrant parents' levels or types of acculturation were associated with their own psychological well-being as well as their children's adjustment. For example, an examination of the relationship between acculturation and stress level revealed that integration-type mothers experienced less stress (Dona & Berry, 1994) and were more likely to experience good mental health (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987), while assimilation-type mothers perceived less pressure to improve their skills in the language of the host country (Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008). In addition, adolescents whose immigrant parents did not adapt to a new culture showed more mental health problems than those whose parents had either

integrated or assimilated (Koplow & Messinger, 1990).

The relationships between Asian-American children's acculturation and their psychological adjustment have been investigated by many researchers. Specifically, Asian-American children were likely to report more bicultural stressors, which might result from immigration or acculturation issues, or from discrimination or prejudice in family/school contexts, at a higher frequency than for European-Americans (Romero, Carvajal, Valle, & Orduna, 2007). In addition, Indian-American adolescents who had integrated or assimilated acculturation types showed higher self-esteem than those who had separated or marginalized acculturation types (Farver et al., 2002). Language proficiency has also been an important factor in the acculturation-related research (Guarnaccia & Lopez, 1998): adolescents' language proficiency in the host language was positively related to higher academic performance, such as higher grades and higher math scores (Hao & Bonstead-Bruns, 1998). However, Lee and Chen's (2000) study found no relationship between adolescents' heritage language proficiency and their mental health, while Romero et al. (2007) found that a preference for not speaking the host language was associated with more stressors. In another study, higher proficiency in one's heritage language was associated with fewer depressive symptoms for foreign-born adolescents, but not for U.S.-born adolescents (Liu, Benner, Lau, & Kim, 2009).

Another study (Sam, 2000) set in Norway evaluated how youths' acculturation types were related to their mental health. While integration was positively associated with the youths' life satisfaction, marginalization was negatively associated with their self-esteem. Interestingly, separation, which has often been viewed in a negative light in acculturation studies, was also positively associated with their life satisfaction. To explain this result, the author suggested that

an important aspect of life satisfaction for adolescents with immigrant backgrounds may lie within the home setting, where a cordial relationship with one's parents is of supreme importance (Sam, 2000). In Shim and Schwartz's (2007) study of acculturation among Korean immigrants, people who lived in or were educated in the host country for fewer years similarly showed less behavioral acculturation than those with more experience. In addition, people who more strongly adhered to traditional values from their countries of origin had greater difficulties adjusting to the host country's culture, as well as more adjustment problems overall.

PARENT–CHILD INTERGENERATIONAL CULTURAL DISCREPANCIES

Children of immigrant parents have two sets of cultural norms: one set from their heritage culture that is naturally acquired within their family, and the other set from their mainstream culture that is usually acquired through peers, social networks, or education at school (Giguere, Lalonde, & Lou, 2010; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993). These 1.5-generation or second-generation children tend to experience being bicultural by holding group memberships in both heritage and mainstream cultures, and by drawing on both sets of cultural norms to determine appropriate behaviors in different situations (Giguere et al., 2010). Therefore, they are often able to switch their cultural identities from one norm to another to avoid conflict (Giguere et al., 2010). Sometimes, however, bicultural children do not simply alternate between heritage and mainstream cultural norms; instead, they tend to hold both norms simultaneously (Berry, 1990; Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000; Stroink & Lalonde, 2009).

The experience of both mainstream and heritage cultures among second-generation children differs from that of their first-generation parents, which may lead to discrepancies or conflicts between the child and his or her parents (Giguere et al., 2010). *Intergenerational*

cultural discrepancy refers to the difference between immigrant parents' and their 1.5- or second-generation children's preferences for American ways (Ying & Han, 2007), or to discrepancies occurring between immigrant parents and their 1.5- or second-generation children due to their different acculturation levels or rates (Lee et al., 2000; Portes, 1997; Uba, 1994; Wu & Chao, 2005). Greater acculturation gaps have been associated with more intergenerational cultural conflicts and weakened family cohesion among immigrant families (Farver et al., 2002; Kim et al., 2009). Specifically, 1.5- or second-generation children may have conflicts with their immigrant parents arising from their dual cultural frames, or from arguments which stem from discrepancies in acculturation orientations or speeds of acculturation/enculturation (Giguere et al., 2010; Lui, 2018; Uba, 1994).

This is because immigrant parents tend to maintain the cultural values from their country of origin (Kim, 2001; Lee et al., 2000; Uba, 1994), while their children's values tend to be influenced by the dominant culture (Chao, 1994; Uba, 1994). Specifically, children with immigrant parents are likely to face intergenerational conflicts generated by their incompatible values or different acculturation levels (Lau, Jernewall, Zane, & Myers, 2002; Lee & Liu, 2001), and by cultural differences in values and lifestyles, areas which are often seen as incompatible between immigrant parents and their 1.5- or second-generation children (Lee et al., 2000; Portes, 1997).

Despite the rapidly growing immigrant populations in the U.S., not many studies have been done to address those populations' specific needs for adapting to the mainstream American culture. Fortunately, however, there have been a few conceptualizations in the existing literature on intergenerational cultural discrepancies/conflicts (Hwang, 2006). The Dissonant Acculturation

Theory, the Acculturation Gap-Distress Theory, and the Acculturative Family Distancing Theory are frequently cited in the literature to explain how such discrepancies/conflicts could be shaped and how these acculturative issues could affect immigrant families' psychological well-being across generations.

First, immigrant parents are likely to acculturate to the host culture relatively more slowly than their children. In other words, the children's patterns of learning American society are normally faster than their parents' patterns, a differential pattern called *dissonant acculturation* (Kao, 1999; Nguyen & Williams, 1989; Portes, 1997; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001; Szapocznik et al., 1978; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993), often because children are exposed to the media or school settings in the host society (Choi, He, & Harchi, 2008; Wu & Chao, 2011). This implies that immigrant parents and their 1.5- or second-generation children may give up their heritage culture at different rates and also acquire the host culture at different speeds (Hwang et al., 2010), which may lead to more intergenerational cultural gaps between them as the children grow up.

This theory suggests that immigrant parents are more likely to maintain the cultures and values from their heritage cultures because they believe these resources are helpful for them to successfully adapt to the mainstream American culture. While these parents adapt to American culture relatively slowly, their 1.5- or second-generation children are less likely to maintain the values of their heritage cultures and to go through the cultural transition process rapidly, as coping strategies to adapt to the mainstream culture. These children tend to rely on their peers, schooling, and media rather than on their parents, and these different ways of adjusting may create intergenerational cultural discrepancies within immigrant families (Portes & Rumbaut,

1996, 2001). Thus, when parents try to adhere to their heritage culture more than their children and their children try to adhere to their host culture more than their parents, such discrepancies are going to be the most problematic (Lau et al., 2005; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001).

Second, *Acculturation Gap-Distress Theory* is an empirical framework that explains the association between intergenerational cultural discrepancies among immigrant families and their offspring's psychological well-being (Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993). This theory postulates that the differences in cultural values, self-identities, and acculturation preferences between foreign-born immigrant parents and their 1.5- or second-generation native-born children lead to their intergenerational cultural conflicts, which ultimately lead to children's mental health problems and maladjustment (Portes, & Rumbaut, 1990; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993). In other words, acculturation gaps or mismatches between immigrant parents and their children can lead to conflicts, while discrepancies in the speed, content, or timing of acculturation between generations predict the children's psychological adjustment directly, as well as predicting it indirectly via family functioning (Lui, 2015; Lui, 2018; Lui & Rollock, 2018). For instance, previous research has shown that acculturation gaps between immigrant parents and their children predicted the children's depressive symptoms and psychological distress through parental warmth, parenting behaviors, or family conflicts (Hwang & Wood, 2009; Juang et al., 2007; Kim et al., 2009).

Third, *Acculturative Family Distancing Theory* (Hwang, 2006) is an integrated theoretical framework, referring to the distancing that occurs between first-generation immigrant parents and their 1.5- or second-generation children as a result of their cultural differences and different acculturation levels. Hwang (2006) first proposed this concept, focusing on Asian-

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American families, and asserted that acculturative family distancing generally occurs in two dimensions: difficulties in communication and incongruencies in cultural values between the immigrant parents and their children. According to this theory, these two problems may increase over time, leading to more distancing between parents and children; these gaps subsequently increase the risk for family conflicts, and in turn, these conflicts ultimately increase the children's mental health problems (e.g., depression, other psychological problems) and family dysfunction.

One primary dimension of the Acculturative Family Distancing Theory is the malfunction of parent–child *communication* in a family, including both *verbal communication* and *non-verbal communication*. To begin with, one of the most common acculturative stressors is having difficulty speaking English fluently (Vega, Khoury, Zimmerman, Gil, & Warheit, 1995). As 1.5- or second-generation children are exposed to mainstream American culture through school life and peer interaction, they are likely to acquire English language proficiency faster than their parents. Also, they come to prefer speaking English over their native or parents' mother language as they get more chances to use English in their social or work environments (Portes, 1997; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001; Uba, 1994; Veltman, 1983), and finally they begin losing their ability to speak their native or parents' mother language (Hwang, 2006). Loss of a common language between parents and children increases the likelihood of misunderstandings between them, decreases family cohesion (Tseng & Fuligni, 2000), and in turn, increases the chance of family conflicts and breaks down their positive emotional bond (Hwang, 2006). This is called "Asian American Silence Syndrome," meaning broken-down communication in a family as a result of acculturative family distancing (Hwang, 2006).

In addition to verbal communication, non-verbal communication often occurs in families. This communication style includes proxemics (e.g., use of interpersonal space), kinesics (e.g., use of facial expressions or movements), paralanguage (e.g., use of vocal cues), and high-low context communication (e.g., use of implied communication through nonverbal means vs. use of more direct and explicit communication) (Huang, 2006). While immigrants are more likely to use high-context communication than low-context communication (Hall, 1976), their children are likely to use more liberal communication styles (Uba, 1994). This is because the children acculturate at different rates from their parents; this discrepancy in turn impedes their communication and finally leads to conflicts between them (Huang, 2006).

ASIAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN'S INTERGENERATIONAL CULTURAL DISCREPANCIES WITH PARENTS AND THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT

Second-generation Asian-American children represent a large proportion of the immigrant population in the U.S. (Kim et al., 1997; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019a). Asian-American children with access to sets of both Eastern and Western cultural norms tend to have more experience with discrepancies or conflicts between the two cultures, compared to children who have only a single set of norms (Giguere et al., 2010). For instance, Asian-American youths reported the highest likelihood of family conflicts, compared to Hispanic and European-American youths (Greenberger & Chen, 1996; Lee & Liu, 2001; Lau et al., 2002). In addition, Korean-American children who were born in or immigrated to the U.S. have reported numerous challenges relating to acculturation, particularly conflicts with their parents, identity confusion, acculturative stress, and language problems (Aronowitz, 1984; Berry, 2006; Choi et al., 2002). Their families may likewise experience more intergenerational cultural discrepancies due to

different acculturation levels and incompatible values between the immigrant parents and their children (Chao, 1994; Kim, 2001; Uba, 1994). Previous acculturation literature has regarded intergenerational cultural discrepancies as important factors in understanding immigrant families' psychological well-being (Juang, Syed, & Takagi, 2007). These discrepancies can be among the most stressful factors with the families, particularly for children, because they highlight challenging conflicts between themselves and their immigrant parents (Uba, 1994).

While prior research has documented that Asian-Americans tend to have fewer psychological problems than other ethnic groups (Bui & Takeuchi, 1992; Matsuoka, Breaux, & Ryujin, 1997), more recent studies have suggested that Asian-Americans do suffer from psychological problems related to adjustment (Mui & Kang, 2006; Takeuchi et al., 2007). In particular, Asian-American immigrant children have reported acculturative stress, stemming from the acculturation process as well as from their individual developmental transitions (Choi et al., 2002). Specific stressors include language problems, incompatibilities in different cultures, perceived discrimination, and intergenerational conflicts with their parents (Guarnaccia & Lopez, 1998). Common psychological problems among these immigrant children also include depression (Choi et al., 2002; Cho & Bae, 2005), anxiety (Farver et al., 2002; Talkovsky & Norton, 2015; Cho & Bae, 2005), low self-esteem (Choi et al., 2006), and low life satisfaction (Phinney & Ong, 2002).

For example, Indian-American children who had intergenerational discrepancies with their parents reported lower self-esteem, higher anxiety, and more family conflicts, compared to those from families where there was no intergenerational discrepancy (Farver et al., 2002). In addition, Ying and Han's (2007) longitudinal study examined the role of intergenerational

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discrepancies in the relationships among acculturation, subsequent conflicts, and mental health among Southeast Asian-American adolescents. The results showed that intergenerational discrepancies in acculturation during early adolescence predicted intergenerational conflicts during later adolescence, which increased depressive symptoms.

Furthermore, Song and colleagues (2011) found that various acculturation-related factors had associations with adolescents' depression. Asian-American adolescents had a higher tendency of having depressed moods than European-American adolescents, particularly foreign-born Asian-American adolescents (Song, Ziegler, Arsenault, Fried, & Hacker, 2011). Being foreign-born was one of the Asian-specific risk factors for depression, and the authors suggested that this might be related to the issues of intergenerational discrepancies or acculturation, which might be in turn linked to psychological distress among adolescents. Moreover, Asian-American children who had lower acculturation levels and high parent–child conflict were at a higher risk for suicidality than those who had higher acculturation levels (Lau et al., 2002). In addition, Phinney and Ong (2002) investigated the relations between parent–adolescent discrepancies in family obligation and adolescents' life satisfaction among Vietnamese-American families. Larger parent–adolescent discrepancies were associated with adolescents' lower life satisfaction. However, this relationship was significant only for the US-born Vietnamese adolescents, while foreign-born Vietnamese adolescents and European-American adolescents were not significantly affected.

There have been a few studies on this topic focusing on Korean-American children/families. For instance, Korean-American adolescents who had higher levels of ethnic identity showed fewer behavior problems, while those who perceived higher racial

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discrimination showed more behavior problems (Cho & Bae, 2005; Shrake, 1996). Also, Korean-American adolescents had a higher prevalence of depression than other Asian-Americans such as Chinese-, Filipino-, and Japanese-Americans (Kim & Chun, 1993). Korean-American children also showed high levels of distress, especially when they had family conflicts which were related to immigration (Choi et al., 2002). Similarly, Lee and Cynn (1991) found out that a key reason for Korean-American adolescents' psychological problems was stress, mainly arising from the intergenerational cultural conflicts with their immigrant parents. Kim et al. (1997) pointed out that Korean-American adolescents often experienced unique stressful situations because of their cultural characteristics, such as parents' pressure to get higher grades in all their courses so they could enter prestigious universities. These conflicts and stress are likely to increase the risk for depression among Korean-American children (Kim et al., 1997), and the intergenerational and cultural conflicts between Korean-American children and their parents predicted depression, anxiety, somatic symptoms, and even suicide (Cho & Bae, 2005).

In the next section, I will review previous findings regarding parent–child relationships and parenting behaviors, and also review and summarize previous findings regarding the concepts of *mattering* and *mattering to parents*, which might be related to the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and the children's psychological adjustment.

PARENT–CHILD RELATIONSHIPS AND PARENTING BEHAVIORS

Having a good relationship with one's parents is one of the most important factors in child development (Kuczynski, 2003) as parent–child relationships influence children's lives more significantly than any other interpersonal relationships (Fite, Colder, Lochman, & Wells,

2006). Positive relationships between parents and adolescents (Hair et al., 2005; Padilla-Walker, Nelson, Madsen, & Barry, 2008; Steinberg, 2001) and positive parenting behaviors (Smetana, Crean, & Daddis, 2002) are associated with better adjustment among adolescents. Specifically, good parent–adolescent relationships predicted fewer adolescents' behavior problems (Padilla-Walker et al., 2008; Steinberg, 2001), better parent–adolescent relationships functioned as a protective factor against adolescents' delinquent behaviors (Hair et al., 2005), and supportive parenting behaviors and the associated parent–adolescent relationships reduced adolescents' risky behaviors (Padilla-Walker et al., 2008).

PARENTAL WARMTH AND PARENTAL CONTROL

Over the last 50 years many scholars in the field of child development have researched parenting styles, since parents' roles in a family are so important to the parent–child relationship as well as to their children's development. Overall, the results have been quite consistent, and suggest that parenting has two broad dimensions: demandingness (also known as "control") and responsiveness (also known as "warmth" or "support") (Amato, 1990; Becker, 1964; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Schaefer, 1959). *Parental demandingness* refers to the degree to which parents set the rules in terms of their children's behavior and expect that their children obey those rules; this dimension also involves parents' monitoring and firm and consistent discipline. On the other hand, *parental responsiveness* refers to the degree to which parents express love, affective warmth, attachment and bonding, unconditional acceptance, sensitive attunement, cognitive responsiveness, and concern for their children (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Although the specific terms for each dimension vary slightly from scholar to scholar, previous work consistently refers to the levels of *parental warmth* and *parental control* for children, and a consensus has arisen

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that parenting behaviors can be explained under this two-dimensional model.

The most widely used conception of parenting style has been Baumrind's (1966, 1968, 1971, 1991a, 1991b) theory. She identified four distinct prototypes of parental behavior: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and disengaged parenting styles. *Authoritative* parenting is high in demandingness and high in responsiveness. In other words, these parents are warm, demanding, responsive, and supportive, but not restrictive. They set clear rules and expect that their children will follow them, but they are willing to explain the reasons for the rules and discuss issues of discipline with their children, which sometimes leads to negotiation or compromise between them. Such parents also assume that their children have rights and encourage their children to develop autonomy. In contrast, *authoritarian* parenting is high in demandingness but low in responsiveness. The parents who exhibit this style tend to be neither warm nor responsive; instead, they are strict, relatively less warm, and assertive about their children's misbehaviors. They tend to try to control their children's behavior, expect obedience from the children, expect their commands to be followed without any verbal debates, and punish disobedience without compromise.

Permissive parenting is low in demandingness but high in responsiveness. In other words, permissive parents rarely discipline their children and show little control over their children's behavior, but they emphasize the children's responsiveness. These parents believe that all the children need is just unconditional love, so they try to give their children unconditional warmth and more freedom with fewer demands and less control. Finally, *disengaged* parenting is low in demandingness and low in responsiveness. This parenting style is similar to permissive parenting but without an intentional or purposeful plan underlying the parenting strategies. That

is, the parents who exhibit this style rarely try to correct their children's behavior and show little affection toward or concern for their children. It may seem that they try to minimize the time and energy they devote to interacting with their children (Baumrind, 1966, 1968, 1971, 1991a, 1991b).

Overall, authoritative parents may be better for adolescents for several reasons (Steinberg, 2001). Adolescents raised in authoritative families tended to show more optimism (Jackson, Pratt, Hunsberger, & Pancer, 2005) and higher self-regulation (Purdie, Carroll, & Roche, 2004) than other adolescents. Likewise, they showed less depression, anxiety, and antisocial behavior such as delinquency and drug use; they also showed more self-esteem, competence, and psychological well-being. Steinberg (2001) also explained why authoritative parenting works. According to him, parental involvement in authoritative homes makes the children more effectively receptive to parental influence. More specifically, the supportive and well-structured parenting promotes children's self-regulation abilities, which makes the children more responsible and competent, while the verbal parent–child conversations improve children's cognitive and social competence, so that they can function as competent individuals outside the home. By contrast, authoritarian, permissive, and disengaged parenting styles are all associated with negative developmental outcomes. Specifically, adolescents raised in authoritarian families tended to be more dependent, passive, less socially adept, and less self-assured; those raised in permissive families tended to be irresponsible and immature; and those in disengaged homes tended to be impulsive and more likely to exhibit externalizing behavior problems with delinquency, sex, and drug use (Arnett, 2013).

PARENTAL ACCEPTANCE-REJECTION THEORY (PARTheory)

Another well-known and widely used conception of parenting styles is Rohner's (2004) *parental acceptance-rejection theory* (PARTheory). It is an evidence-based theory of lifespan development related to parental acceptance and rejection worldwide. *Parental acceptance* refers to parents' engagement in enhancing the quality of parent–child emotional relationships, including parents' physical and verbal behaviors as well as their emotional expressions. This parental acceptance ultimately leads to parental warmth, affection, concern, support, or love toward their children. *Parental rejection*, on the other hand, refers to the absence of parental warmth or to the presence of hurtful behaviors or affects (Rohner, 2004).

Rohner (2005a) defined *warmth* as "the emotional (vs. behavioral) experience of caring, nurturance, concern, or simply love of one person (e.g., a parent) for another (e.g., a child)" (p. 16). According to the warmth dimension of parenting (Rohner, 2005a), warmth and affection are included in the parental acceptance category (vs. parental rejection) and can be shown by behavioral (i.e., kissing, hugging, cuddling) or/and verbal affection (i.e., praising, complimenting, saying nice things to or about a child). On the other hand, parental rejection has four subcategories including being cold/unaffectionate, hostility/aggression, indifference/neglect, and undifferentiated rejection. These four classes respectively feature a lack of warmth or affection, hitting or kicking, cursing or saying thoughtless things, paying no attention to the needs of the child, and making the child feel unloved (Rohner, 2005a). Children who perceived themselves to be rejected by their parents were more likely to be anxious and unsecured, and tended to have distorted mental representations of themselves, their partners, and the world around them (Rohner, 1986; Rohner & Rohner, 1980). In contrast, children who received parental warmth and high levels of support showed fewer behavior problems (Chen, Liu, & Li, 2000; Deater-Deckard, Ivy, & Petrill, 2006; Waller et al., 2014) and more favorable emotional,

social, and intellectual development (Walters & Stinnett, 1971).

Supportive parenting behaviors, including parental responsiveness and parental warmth, have been identified as being significantly related to adolescents' psychological adjustment and mental health, including Asian-American adolescents (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2005). For example, low levels of both maternal and paternal warmth are positively correlated with adolescents' poorer overall psychological adjustment, including more hostility/aggression; lower levels of self-esteem, self-adequacy, emotional responsiveness, and emotional stability; and a negative worldview (Rohner et al., 2005). In addition, high levels of perceived parental warmth were negatively related to Korean-American adolescents' depressive symptoms (Kim & Cain, 2008) and behavior problems (Shrake, 1996). Furthermore, in Wu and Chao's (2005) study, more intergenerational cultural discrepancies were related to more internalizing and externalizing behavior problems for Chinese-American adolescents. However, when the adolescents perceived that their parents were warmer than they desired, this excessive warmth positively affected their psychological adjustment, so it finally decreased both their internalizing and externalizing behavior problems (Wu & Chao, 2005).

MATTERING TO PARENTS

One important aspect of parent–child relationships is how much children perceive that they are significant to their parents (Schenck et al., 2009). This was first conceptualized as *mattering* by Rosenberg and McCullough (1981), who defined it as an important aspect of social connection's prospective power. In later works, Elliott, Kao, and Grant (2004; p. 339) defined it as "the perception that, to some degree and in any of a variety of ways, we are a significant part of the world around us"; Lee et al. (2021) similarly defined it as "a perception that one is

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important to others." In other words, this perceived mattering is the psychological tendency of individuals to feel that they are important to others (Marshall, 2001).

Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) noted that mattering has three components: attention, importance, and dependence. *Attention* is the feeling that one's actions can be recognized by other people. *Importance* is the belief that one's actions are related to other people, so others care about what one does, wants, or thinks. *Dependence* is the belief that other people rely on one and one matters to other people when they need one. Later, Rosenberg (1985) introduced two additional components regarding the concept of mattering: *ego-extension* and *the feeling of being missed*. *Ego-extension* is one's perception that he or she is an extension of or a part of someone else's life, which is distinct from the component of importance. Next, Schlossberg (1989) introduced one more component to mattering: *appreciation*, which is the feeling of one's effort being valued or appreciated when he or she spends his or her time on other people. Elliott et al. (2004), on the other hand, adopted Rosenberg and McCullough's (1981) original conceptualization of mattering for their research and kept using the concept of *importance*, but they substituted *awareness* for *attention* and *reliance* for *dependence.* In their work, *importance* is the conception that one is an object of others' concern, *awareness* is the perception that one is the object of others' attention, and *reliance* is the perception that others look to or choose one.

While Rosenberg's (1985) book chapter focused on mattering as just a brief part of a general chapter on adolescents' self-concept, it still conveyed very meaningful points. Specifically, Rosenberg (1985) emphasized that mattering is subjective, not objective, because this concept is based on one's "perception" of being significant or insignificant to others. He also stressed that mattering is a very important factor in human well-being, especially for adolescents,

because children who highly matter to their parents tend to have fuller, richer, and more satisfying lives. Marshall (2001) also pointed out that mattering is a part of self-concept, shaped within a social context, and that perceived mattering to others can be formed through the attention that the one receives from others and the subjective interpretation of this attention.

Based on this development of the concept of *mattering*, *mattering to parents* has been defined as children's perception of how they feel that they are significant or important to their parents (Lee et al., 2021; Suh et al., 2016; Vélez, Braver, Cookston, Fabricius, & Parke, 2020). This parental mattering is related to but distinct from affect-driven parenting behaviors (Vélez et al., 2020), such as parental acceptance or rejection, that express parental warmth or love in the relationship between parents and children (Rohner, 2004). Mattering is less likely to be affect-driven because mattering accesses children's perceptions of their significance toward their parents without direct evaluation of their parental behaviors. Thus, it is possible that each child can interpret the same parental behaviors in a different way; for example, a child may regard his/her mom's long work-hours as an indifferent parental behavior, but another child may think of it as an effort to support the family (Vélez et al., 2020).

Mattering to parents is likewise similar to but distinct from attachment to parents. Bowlby's (1982) attachment theory emphasized the quality of early experiences in the relationships between infants and caregivers as well as infants' experiences of separation and loss in the secured relationships with caregivers, both of which ultimately shape the self and the quality of their later relationships. Based on this approach, Bowlby (1982) contended that infants tend to seek proximity to a protective adult in order to feel safe and secure. Vélez et al. (2020) also addressed the distinction of mattering from attachment in their recent paper. According to

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the authors, mattering to parents tends to mainly focus on children's feelings of significance to parents, while attachment to parents tends to focus on all three primary aspects of attachment theory: proximity-seeking, use of a parent as a secure base, and use of a parent as a safe place. In other words, an infant (or a child) may be able to feel that he/she is an important presence to their parents without seeking physical closeness to parents or wanting a comfort place from a parent.

To form a deeper understanding of the concept of mattering, we must consider how people come to feel that they matter to others or what kind of behaviors make them feel like they matter. Flett (2018) summarized a list of specific ways of conveying a sense of mattering in his recently published book (p. 35): asking often about what you want or think; investing time and efforts into your well-being; showing a belief in your capabilities; being interested in what you hope, fear, interest, and value; acknowledging your efforts, achievements, and accomplishments; letting you know you are needed and relied upon; encouraging your steps to enhance your well-being; showing gratitude as a form of appreciation; and sharing your personal and life events, whether positive or negative.

Mattering has been reported to be empirically related to children's adjustment and people's well-being. In particular, adolescents' greater mattering to their parents was associated with their higher levels of self-esteem and lower levels of depression and anxiety. In addition, while adolescents with weaker feelings of mattering showed more hostility, resentment, irritability, and alienation (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981), those with stronger feelings of mattering showed higher self-esteem (Elliot, Cunningham, Colangelo, & Gelles, 2011; Marshall, 2001; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981), a larger sense of efficacy (Wu & Kim, 2009), greater self-concept (Marshall, 2004), and fewer antisocial behaviors (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981).

Lower parental mattering was also associated with more aggressive behaviors such as delinquency or vandalism (Marshall, 2004; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981) and more antisocial misconduct such as buying/selling stolen goods (Marshall, 2004). Similarly, higher levels of mattering to others predicted greater overall positive mental health, including leisure, love, self-direction, friendship, schoolwork, and spirituality (Dixon Rayle & Myers, 2004), and mattering was also positively associated with one's environmental mastery, i.e. one's feeling that he/she can control his/her own life (Marcus, 1991).

Furthermore, links between mattering and depressive symptomatology have also been established. Greater mattering was associated with lower levels of depression, and it was also related to a decreased risk of depressive symptoms, even when other personal conditions such as interpersonal dependency and mastery/personal control were controlled (Taylor & Turner, 2001). This study also examined whether mattering to others would predict depression over time and whether the changes in mattering would predict changes in depression over time, using multivariate analyses of two waves from a longitudinal study. Perceived mattering to others at Time 1 predicted depression at Time 2, after controlling for depression at Time 1, and the changes in mattering at Time 1 predicted changes in depression at Time 2.

SUMMARY

Throughout this chapter, I reviewed the existing literature on parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and the factors related to that concept, including acculturation, 1.5- or second-generation children's psychological adjustment, parent–child relationships and parenting behaviors, and mattering to parents. In summary, the experience of both mainstream and heritage cultures among 1.5- or second-generation children differs from

that of their first-generation parents, which may lead to intergenerational cultural discrepancies between the children and their parents (Giguere et al., 2010). This may be because immigrant parents tend to maintain the cultural values from their country of origin, while their children's values tend to be influenced by the dominant culture (Chao, 1994; Lee et al., 2000; Uba, 1994).

There have been several conceptualizations in the existing literature on intergenerational cultural discrepancies (Hwang, 2006). The main theories posited that these discrepancies would occur as a result of cultural differences and different acculturation levels between parents and children (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001), as well as of malfunctioning parent–child communication (Huang, 2006). A good parent–child relationship is one of the most important interpersonal relationships to children (Kuczynski, 2003), and one important aspect of that relationship is how much children perceive that they are significant to their parents (Schenck et al., 2009), which is termed *mattering* (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). This has been reported to be empirically related to children's adjustment and well-being, including depression and self-esteem (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981).

THE CURRENT STUDY

Although considerable research has investigated the relationships among acculturation, parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies, and children's psychological adjustment, their work is limited by certain target populations and methodological choices. Scholars have also paid little attention to children's perceptions of the relationship with their parents and to Korean-American young adults' psychological adjustment.

First, previous studies of Asian-American families have disproportionally analyzed data from Chinese-American samples. Although many studies on Asian-American children have

focused on the relationship between intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's mental health, most such studies have focused on the Chinese-American population—the largest subgroup of Asian-Americans in the United States (Choi et al., 2002; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019b)—while relatively few studies have examined these topics among the Korean-American population. As of 2019, Korean-Americans are one of the fastest growing racial subgroups, representing 0.4% of the total population of the U.S. (Kim, Kim, & Rue, 1997; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019b). Like children in other ethnic groups, many Korean-American children who were born in or immigrated to the U.S. have also reported a lot of challenges relating to acculturation, particularly acculturative stress, conflicts with their parents, and identity confusion (Aronowitz, 1984; Berry, 2006; Choi et al., 2002). These intergenerational cultural discrepancies can be very stressful for these children (Uba, 1994). Previous studies have documented that Korean-American children showed high levels of distress when they had family discrepancies related to immigration (Choi et al., 2002); these discrepancies between Korean-American children and their parents predicted children's depression, anxiety, somatic symptoms, and even suicide (Cho & Bae, 2005). Thus, investigating the relationships between intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's mental health among Korean-American population is urgently needed.

Another limitation of previous research is the participants' age group. While most studies on this topic have focused on early adolescents who may be experiencing a critical developmental transition from childhood to adulthood (Berk, 2000; Johnson, 1997), not much research has focused on late adolescents, college students, or young adults. Transitioning to college, emerging adulthood, or young adulthood gives children new experiences unlike any they have had before. For example, college students may experience another critical period by

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negotiating their cultural identities and re-forming relationships with their parents as they meet and get to know new friends in college who are from different backgrounds (Azmitia, Syed, & Radmacher, 2013; Lui, 2018). Furthermore, as this transition period brings more autonomy and independence (Lui, 2018), college students are also more likely to experience psychological distress (Conley, Kirsch, Dickson, & Bryant, 2014) and behavior problems (Schwartz et al., 2011). This transition may particularly and negatively impact Asian-Americans due to their experiences associated with acculturative stress (Aronowitz, 1984; Berry, 2006; Choi et al., 2002; Lui, 2018).

As children reach adolescence, in addition, they tend to perceive more discrepancies between their immigrant parents' parenting and what that they have been exposed to by the larger society (Hyman, Vu, & Beiser, 2001). In addition, a recent meta-analytic study has shown that the relationships among acculturation mismatch, intergenerational cultural conflicts, and children's mental health were stronger for the young adult groups than the adolescent groups in immigrant families (Lui, 2015). Considering that immigrant children tend to acclimate to American society faster than their parents do (Portes, 1997; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Szapocznik, Scopetta, Kurtines, & Arnalde, 1978; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993), those children's intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their immigrant parents may increase while they are transitioning to emerging adulthood or as they complete their college educations. Thus, including college students and young adults (those between ages 18 and 35) in this topic is needed as an extension of the previous research on adolescents.

Second, the previous literature has gaps in terms of children's perceptions or interpretations of parenting behaviors and the corresponding parent–child relationships. Although

researchers have long been interested in the relationship between parents and children in regard to acculturative stress or discrepancies, children's perceptions of how they feel they are significant to their parents have been understudied in this context. The concept of *parental mattering* or *mattering to parents* has recently been regarded as an important aspect in parent–child relationships, focusing on children's perceptions of their parents' behaviors or the relationships with their parents. Each person may want attention from others and to be a significant person to others. This "feeling" of mattering to others may thus be broadly meaningful because it reflects how people interpret others' behaviors or the relationships with others, not just "seeing" them. Thus, investigating how mattering to parents plays a role in the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's psychological well-being in immigrant families can be helpful to understand how 1.5- or second-generation children perceive their relationship with their parents and how it affects their mental health.

Furthermore, although one's cultural schema is usually initiated from the values that his/her family pursues, it is finally filtered and reformed by his/her own interpretation of the family's cultural values and parental behaviors (Wu & Chao, 2005). In other words, the way that 1.5- or second-generation children interpret their parents' cultural values is greatly affected by dominant cultural values (Kim, 2001). Specifically, family culture for children in immigrant families is basically characterized by the values of their parents' culture of origin, but as the children get exposed to the dominant culture more and more, they become Americanized toward dominant cultural values through media, peers, and schools. Such forces heavily influence how children perceive their family culture and how they ultimately shape their cultural schema. This is why we need to pay attention to the perceptions of children toward their cultural values,

parents' parenting behaviors, and their relationships with their parents.

Third, youths' and young adults' psychological adjustment, especially their depressive symptoms, is a very important factor for Korean-Americans in terms of adapting to American mainstream culture and should be better understood. Youths and young adults often experience unstable emotional states due to physiological and psychological changes during the critical developmental transition from childhood to adulthood (Berk, 2000; Johnson, 1997). Depression is one of the most common problems among adolescents (Arnett, 2013) and tends to increase throughout the periods of adolescence and adulthood (Merikangas et al., 2010). Depression can occur at any stage of life, however, and it has been linked to a variety of factors (Hudson et al., 2000; Stark et al., 2008; Wang, Chan, Lin, & Li, 2015).

One reason to take Asian-American children's depression seriously is that depression has historically been a significant risk factor for suicide (Arnett, 2013), and previous studies have indicated that depression is the most important mental health issue among Asian-American children (Juang et al., 2007; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). According to a recent government report, the *National Vital Statistics Reports - Deaths: Leading Causes for 2017* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2019), in 2017 suicide accounted for 32.3% of all total deaths among Asian-American or Pacific Islander adolescents (aged 15 to 19) in the U.S., making it the most common cause of death in this population. For youths (aged 20 to 24), suicide similarly accounted for 33.1% of all total deaths, again the top cause of death. For young adults aged 25 to 34, suicide accounted for 19.9% of all total deaths, ranking second only to accidents/unintentional injuries (28.9%) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2019). Furthermore, Cho and Bae's (2005) study showed that parent–child conflict in Korean-American

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families predicted children's psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, anger, and suicide. Thus, understanding the relations among intergenerational cultural discrepancies and depressive symptoms among Korean-American children's is needed to increase their psychological well-being, as well as to avoid their possible suicidal behaviors.

Along similar lines, while many studies on this topic have focused on children's mental health and behavior problems, not much research has focused on specific aspects of their psychological well-being. As mentioned previously, depressive symptoms are a very important factor to understand in immigrants' children's adjustment, but including other factors will help clarify their experiences. Some previous research conducted among other ethnic groups addressed the importance of examining children's life satisfaction. For instance, greater parent–child discrepancies were associated with lower life satisfaction among Vietnamese-American families (Phinney & Ong, 2002), and among Norwegian children, an acculturation type of integration was positively associated with life satisfaction (Sam, 2000). With this in mind, examining the relationships between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and the children's life satisfaction among Korean-American families may provide an ample explanation in terms of understanding their adaptation to American mainstream culture.

Last, previous research on this topic lacks a diverse research methodology. Previous research models based on the Acculturation Gap-Distress Theory tended to be too simple, so several expanded research models have been suggested (Juang et al., 2007; Lui, 2015). Specifically, the theory generally shows that greater acculturation discrepancies predict children's poorer mental health via greater intergenerational cultural conflicts, but a partial mediation model has been suggested as being more realistic than a full mediation model. This is

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because the variance in children's mental health could be explained by both acculturation mismatches and intergenerational cultural discrepancies at the same time (Juang et al., 2007). In addition, some expanded models including mediators or moderators have also been suggested (Juang et al., 2007; Lui, 2015), because those models could be more helpful to guide empirical efforts to understand the range of contexts in this mechanism (Telzer, 2010). Thus, a new expanded model, which can provide additional explanations of the mechanism by which intergenerational cultural discrepancies affect children's psychological well-being, seems to be needed.

To summarize, I am interested in the factors that contribute to Korean-American young adult children's psychological well-being and the paths to it through family relationships in the U.S., by which parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies affect children's psychological adjustment. This study is guided by the following three aims: (a) to investigate whether the framework of the Acculturation Gap-Distress Theory can be applied to Korean-American families, particularly those who have young adult children between ages 18 and 35, (b) to investigate how parent–child communication quality, children's perceived mattering to parents, and parental autonomy support affect children's psychological adjustment, and (c) to investigate whether that communication, feelings of mattering, and parental support mediate relations between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's psychological adjustment, particularly depressive symptoms and life satisfaction.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS, HYPOTHESES, AND RATIONALES

This study will fill a gap in the research by investigating the relationships between Korean-American young adults' perceived intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their

immigrant parents and their psychological adjustment. Specifically, the main purpose of this study is to examine the mediating effects of parent–child communication quality, mattering to parents, and parental autonomy support within that relationship. I address the following research questions, hypotheses, and rationales to develop two separate models. This study analyzes both quantitative data (Research Questions 1 and 2) and qualitative data (Research Question 3).

Research Question 1. How do parent–child communication quality and children's perceived mattering to parents affect the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's depressive symptoms? Also, how did these relationships affect the children's depressive symptoms during their adolescence and how do they do so in the present?
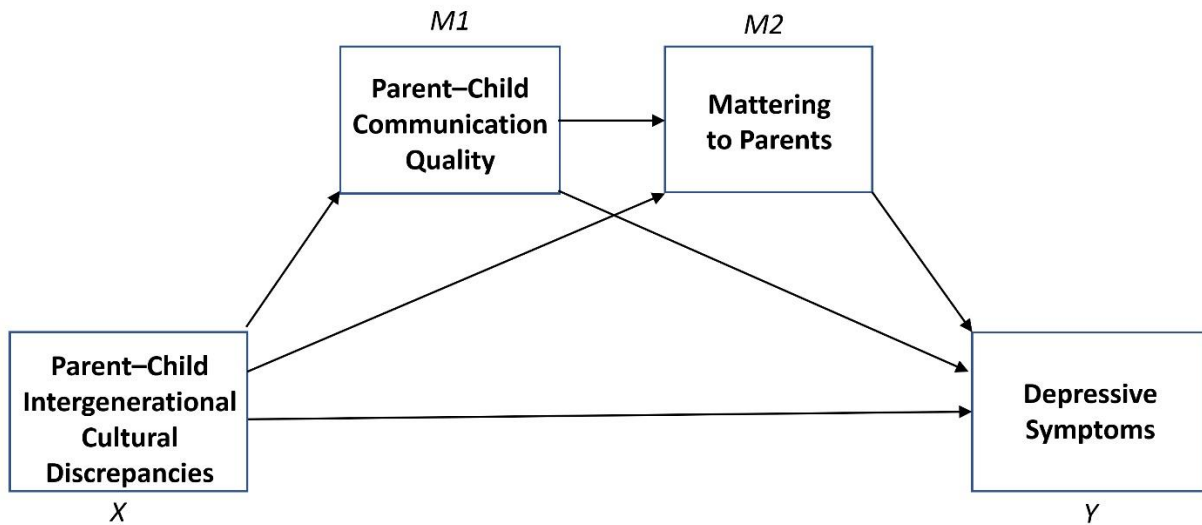
Figure 2. Model 1's conceptual diagram for Hypothesis 1d: The serial multiple mediator model of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (*X*) on children's depressive symptoms (*Y*) through parent–child communication quality (*M1*) and children's mattering to parents (*M2*) as mediators. *X*: Independent variable. *M1*: Mediator 1. *M2*: Mediator 2. *Y*: Dependent variable.

Hypothesis 1a. There will be a direct effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (*X*) on children's depressive symptoms (*Y*).

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Hypothesis 1b. There will be an indirect effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (*X*) on children's depressive symptoms (*Y*) through parent–child communication quality (*M1*).

Hypothesis 1c. There will be an indirect effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (*X*) on children's depressive symptoms (*Y*) through children's perceived mattering to parents (*M2*).

Hypothesis 1d. There will be an indirect effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (*X*) on children's depressive symptoms (*Y*) through both parent–child communication quality (*M1*) and children's perceived mattering to parents (*M2*), in serial. In other words, greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (*X*) will predict lower parent–child communication quality (*M1*), this lower communication quality (*M1*) will subsequently predict lower mattering to parents (*M2*), and this lower mattering will subsequently predict higher levels of children's depressive symptoms (*Y*).

I also expect that these hypotheses will be applied to the young adults' depressive symptoms for both time periods, i.e. their adolescence and the present.

Similarly, the next model investigates the relationships among parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies, parent–child communication quality, parental autonomy support, and young adults' life satisfaction.

Research Question 2. How do parent–child communication quality and parental autonomy support affect the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural
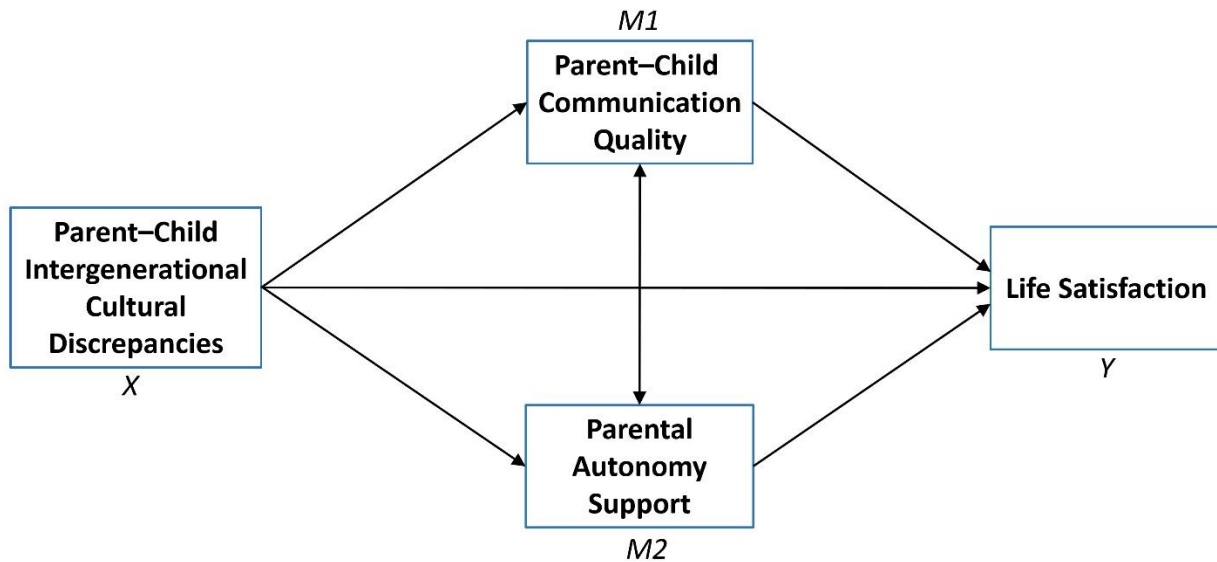
Figure 3. Model 2's conceptual diagram for Hypothesis 2d: The parallel multiple mediator model of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (*X*) on children's life satisfaction (*Y*) through parent–child communication quality (*M1*) and parental autonomy support (*M2*) as mediators. *X*: Independent variable. *M1*: Mediator 1. *M2*: Mediator 2. *Y*: Dependent variable.

Hypothesis 2a. There will be a direct effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (*X*) on children's life satisfaction (*Y*).

Hypothesis 2b. There will be an indirect effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (*X*) on children's life satisfaction (*Y*) through parent–child communication quality (*M1*).

Hypothesis 2c. There will be an indirect effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (*X*) on children's life satisfaction (*Y*) through parental autonomy support (*M2*).

Hypothesis 2d. There will be two simultaneous indirect effects of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (*X*) on children's life satisfaction (*Y*): one

through parent–child communication quality (*M1*) and one through parental autonomy support (*M2*).

Finally, to elicit a rich description of specific results from Models 1 and 2, and to establish possible reasons for those results, the qualitative interview analysis engages an additional research question.

Research Question 3. How do Korean-American young adults talk about their experiences in terms of their intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their parents and their psychological well-being? Do their descriptions of their experiences shed light on the quantitative findings?

Rationales. First, as previously discussed, the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's depressive symptoms has been widely studied as a characteristic of what immigrant families experience (Cho & Bae, 2005; Kim & Chun, 1993; Song et al., 2011; Ying & Han, 2007). The *Acculturation Gap-Distress Theory* (Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993) has supported this association, addressing how the differences in cultural values, self-identities, and acculturation preferences between foreign-born immigrant parents and their children lead to children's mental health problems and maladjustment (Portes, & Rumbaut, 2006; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993). Based on the *Dissonant Acculturation Theory* (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001; Portes, 1997; Szapocznik et al., 1978; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993), in addition, it is supposed that these parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies may increase as the duration of the family's residence in the U.S. increases. Although previous literature has focused on early adolescents and their relationships with their immigrant parents, this association can presumably be applied to late adolescents or emerging adults based on those

theories and previous research. Results for Hypotheses 1a and 2a, thus, are expected to show that greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies will predict higher levels of children's depressive symptoms (Hypothesis 1a) and lower life satisfaction (Hypothesis 2a) (see Figures 2 and 3).

Second, effective communication between parents and children has been regarded as an essential skill for families' proper development and growth across cultures (Hwang, 2006). Open parent–child communication refers to the feature that parents and children can talk to each other about diverse topics, including both general interests and more sensitive issues such as sex or substance use (Carver, Elliott, Kennedy, & Hanley, 2017; Markham et al., 2010; Ryan, Jorm, & Lubman, 2010). Communication in immigrant families is critical as it keeps the family members' emotional bond strong (Kim & Park, 2011), and a lack of parent–child open communication among immigrant families is likely to increase feelings of alienation toward each other (Qin, 2006).

The Acculturative Family Distancing Theory by Hwang (2006) emphasizes the importance of parent–child communication in immigrant families, particularly Asian-American families. According to this theory, acculturative family distancing usually occurs through difficulties in communication and disagreement in cultural values between the immigrant parents and their children. As parents and children acculturate at different speeds, loss of a common language between them is likely to increase misunderstanding, which may lead to decreased family cohesion, frequent family conflict, and decreased emotional bonds.

There has also been evidence that some Asian-American children had difficulties communicating with their immigrant parents, which subsequently led to decreased family

cohesion (Tseng & Fuligni, 2000), as well as increased family dysfunction (Usita & Blieszner, 2002) and individual psychological maladjustment (Lee & Chen, 2000; Rhee, Chang, & Rhee, 2003). Asian-American children had more difficulties discussing problems with their parents compared to European-American children; these Asian-Americans also showed lower self-esteem than European-Americans (Rhee et al., 2003). Likewise, there has been growing concern about family problems among immigrant families, and parent–child communication problems have been regarded as one of the major reasons for the issue. Thus, the quality of parent–child communication seems very important to resolve the problems, which stem from families' intergenerational cultural discrepancies and impact children's psychological well-being, particularly children's depressive symptoms and life satisfaction.

In Hypotheses 1b and 2b, the mediator of parent–child communication quality is added to each model in Hypotheses 1a and 2a. Results are expected to show that greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies will predict higher levels of children's depressive symptoms (Hypothesis 1b) and lower life satisfaction (Hypothesis 2b) through lower parent–child communication quality in the family. In other words, lower parent–child communication quality will mediate the relationship between greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and higher levels of children's depressive symptoms (Hypothesis 1b) and lower life satisfaction (Hypothesis 2b) (see Figures 2 and 3).

Third, as children reach adolescence, they tend to perceive more discrepancies between their immigrant parents' parenting and what they have been exposed to by the larger society (Hyman et al., 2001). In a study of perceived parenting attitudes and depression among Korean-American children, students who perceived their parents as highly "traditional" (i.e.,

emphasizing ethnic Korean values) reported more depression than those who perceived their parents to be "modern" (i.e., emphasizing mainstream American values) (Aldwin & Greenberger, 1987). *Mattering to parents* refers to children's perceptions of how they feel they are important to their parents (Lee et al., 2020; Suh et al., 2016; Vélez et al., 2020). Children's perceived mattering to parents has been demonstrated to be empirically related to their psychological adjustment and depression. Greater mattering to their parents was associated with children's lower levels of depression (Elliott, Colangelo, & Gelles, 2005; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981; Taylor & Turner, 2001), and higher levels of mattering to others predicted greater overall positive psychological well-being, including love, self-direction, leisure, friendship, and spirituality (Dixon Rayle & Myers, 2004). Although the concept of mattering is distinct from parenting behaviors or attachment (Vélez et al., 2020), as discussed in the previous section, this perceived mattering to parents stems from how children "interpret" those parenting behaviors (Lee et al., 2020), so it is also an important aspect of parent–child relationships and is strongly related to parenting behaviors.

In Hypothesis 1c, the mediator of mattering to parents is added to the model in Hypothesis 1a. Results are expected to show that greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies will predict higher levels of children's depressive symptoms through their lower perceived mattering to parents. In other words, lower children's perceived mattering to parents will mediate the relationship between greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and higher levels of children's depressive symptoms (see Figure 2).

Fourth, parent–child communication quality is one approach to parenting behaviors that parents take to understand and to form better relationships with their children. This parent–child

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communication includes talking to each other about diverse issues, including both general interests and more sensitive topics (Carver et al., 2017; Markham et al., 2010; Ryan et al., 2010). On the other hand, as discussed previously, mattering to parents reflects how children interpret their parents' parenting behaviors, which ultimately leads to good parent–child relationships (Lee et al., 2020). According to the theoretical model of the formation and maintenance of perceived mattering (Mak & Marshall, 2004), the way people tend to evaluate themselves as significant arises from their interpretation of others' behaviors (Marshall, 2001), and those people would recognize whether they were important to the others or not by using those behavioral signals (Mak & Marshall, 2004). This implies that parent–child communication quality can be a predictor of mattering to parents, which is ultimately related to children's adjustment.

Putting this idea together with Hypotheses 1a through 1c, here in Hypothesis 1d, results are expected to show that a longer pathway exists among parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies, parent–child communication quality, children's mattering to parents, and children's depressive symptoms. Specifically, lower parent–child communication quality and lower children's perceived mattering to parents will mediate the relationship between greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and higher levels of children's depressive symptoms in serial. In other words, greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies will predict lower parent–child communication quality, this lower communication quality will predict lower children's perceived mattering to parents, and finally this lower mattering will subsequently predict higher levels of children's depressive symptoms (see Figure 2). It is also expected that all these steps for Hypotheses 1a through 1d will have similar effects on depressive symptoms in adolescence and on depressive symptoms in the present.

Fifth, parental emotional autonomy support and responsiveness is another facet of parenting behaviors through which parents can affect their children's mental health. As stated previously, supportive parenting behaviors such as parental warmth or parental responsiveness have been identified as being significantly related to children's psychological well-being (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2005). Specifically, Sam (2000), who evaluated the relationships between children's acculturation types and their mental health, suggested that a cordial relationship between parents and adolescents in immigrant families might be the key point for the children to maintain greater life satisfaction. In Hypothesis 2c, thus, the role of parental autonomy support is added to the model in Hypothesis 2a. Results are expected to show that greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies will predict lower children's life satisfaction through lower parental autonomy support. In other words, lower parental autonomy support will mediate the relationship between greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and lower children's life satisfaction (see Figure 3).

Last, in Hypothesis 2d, two mediators— parent–child communication quality and parental autonomy support— are simultaneously added to the model in Hypothesis 2a, to see if they mediate the relationship between intergenerational cultural discrepancies and life satisfaction. Unlike the Hypothesis 1 model where two mediators are hypothesized to work in serial, the two mediators in the Hypothesis 2 model are both expected to affect life satisfaction, maintaining their correlational relationship in the model. Results are expected to show that there will be two simultaneous indirect effects of greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on lower children's life satisfaction, one through lower parent–child communication quality and one through less parental autonomy support (see Figure 3).

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

For this study, I recruited 310 Korean-American young adults who were living in the U.S. at the time of the study. To define an age range for young adulthood, I follow precedents by Stevens-Long and Commons (1992) and Erikson (1953, 1958). In Stevens-Long and Commons' book (1992), young adulthood is defined as the period from age 20 to approximately age 40. Similarly, Erikson's theory of psychosocial development defines young adulthood as between approximately 18 and 40. Individuals in this span are in Erickson's 6th stage of development, which focuses on intimacy versus isolation. Based on these theories, I set my target age range for young adulthood between 18 and 35 years old.

Each participant met the following participation criteria: (a) each participant must be between age 18 and 35, (b) each participant must have either been born and raised in the U.S. (second-generation immigrant) or have been born in Korea but moved to the U.S. at or before age 18 (1.5 generation immigrant), (c) each participant must have lived in the U.S. for at least five years and/or completed his/her high school diploma in the U.S., and (d) both of the participant's parents must have been born in Korea and moved to the U.S. as adults (at or after age 18). The participant's citizenship status (e.g., U.S. citizen, permanent resident, in the U.S. on a visa, or utilizing Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)) did not matter as long as all the criteria above were met. Likewise, the participant's family type (e.g., intact family, divorced family) and their biological relationship with the people they consider their parents did not matter as long as the other criteria were met.

To determine the target sample size, power analyses using M*plus* (Version 7.4; Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2015) were conducted to test each hypothesis. Muthén and Muthén (2002) provided some guidelines for deciding on a sample size based on a Monte Carlo study, estimating the target number of samples by simulating hypothetical models. They recommended the following criteria: (a) Parameter and Standard Error (SE) biases ≤ 10% for any parameter in the model, (b) SE bias for the parameter for which power is being assessed ≤ 5%, and (c) 95% confidence interval coverage between 0.91 and 0.98. When all three conditions are satisfied, the sample size is chosen to achieve a power close to 0.80 ($a = 0.05$). For the purposes of this simulation, all the estimated parameters matter. The formula used to calculate parameter and SE biases is:

$$\% \text{ bias} = \frac{estimate - true}{true} \text{ x } 100$$

I followed this approach to power analysis for this study, continually adjusting my sample size upwards until I got bias and coverage that were both acceptable. Power analyses suggested that at least 118 participants would be needed to power the research questions for a multiple regression analysis with four variables (the most complex model used in this study). Since about 10% of the initial participants generally drop out of a study (Suresh & Chandrashekara, 2015), my target sample size for recruiting was set to at least 130 participants, which was 10% more than the minimum sample size recommended by the power analysis. This ensured sufficient power to conduct statistical tests for my research questions.

Overall, 310 young adults signed up the study and received the online survey link. Among that group, 222 tried to participate in the survey, but 39 of them failed to pass the pre-screening test. Thus, 183 people completed the entire main survey. Twenty-two of the 183 were

excluded in the analysis because they failed to pass the validity questions inserted in several places in the questionnaire or their answers turned out to be invalid. Thus, a total of 161 young adults aged between 18 and 34 (*M* age = 23.14), with an average length of U.S. residence of 17.52 years, were included in the final analysis for the survey study, and 10 of the 161 participated in the follow-up interview study.

MATERIALS AND PROCEDURE

To utilize a mixed methods research approach for this study, I used an *explanatory sequential design* with two separate parts: a survey study for the quantitative analysis and a follow-up interview study for the qualitative analysis. I started by collecting and analyzing the survey data, and then gathered and analyzed interview data in a second phase, as a follow-up to the survey results.

Participants were recruited through Korean-American churches, through Korean-American Student Associations at several U.S. universities, through several major online Korean communities that are popular among Korean-Americans, and through social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. The online research survey software Qualtrics was used to gather survey responses for this study, and the entire process followed the appropriate consent procedures. All data collection was done before the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) started in the U.S., so none of the procedures or variables (e.g., living in the U.S as Korean-Americans, depressive symptoms, life satisfaction) were affected by the pandemic. Approval from the Institutional Research Board (IRB) at the host university was obtained to protect participants from potential harm, to protect their privacy, and to maintain data confidentiality. This study was supported by a grant from the College of Education Graduate Student Research Award at The University of

Texas at Austin, which was used to compensate the participants for their time and participation in the study.

Quantitative Procedures. To begin with, a recruitment flyer was posted on relevant websites. Some college students or young adults who I personally know were also invited to participate in the survey and asked to spread the word through their personal networks or connections. The recruitment flyer included a link to a short survey so potential participants could register their interest. To do so, the participant entered his or her name and email address; once this contact information was submitted, a link to the full survey was emailed to the participant. The first page of instructions for the survey included a brief description of the study and provided the necessary details for informed consent, including how participants' confidentiality would be maintained. Informed consent was then obtained directly from the participant.

Once participants agreed to participate by clicking the "next" button, they were directed to the start of the pre-screening test. If they passed all the pre-screening questions and met the qualifications for the study, they were directed to the start of the main survey. All participants filled out questionnaires measuring intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their parents, family communication quality, perceived mattering to parents, parental autonomy support, their own depressive symptoms, and life satisfaction. They also answered several demographic questions, providing data on their birthplace, gender, age, parents' educational levels, linguistic proficiency in Korean and English, the state where they mainly grew up, and their duration of stay in the U.S. They were able to complete the survey anytime and anywhere they wanted.

To increase the response rate and the participants' motivation to participate in the study,

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each participant was compensated with a $10 electronic gift card from Amazon after completing the questionnaires. At the end of the survey, they were asked if they were interested in participating in an optional video interview for a follow-up study. If they clicked the "No" button, the survey ended immediately. However, if they clicked the "Yes" button, details on the follow-up study were emailed to them so they could decide whether they wanted to participate or not. The survey then ended.

Qualitative Procedures. Once the number of completed survey responses reached the minimum target sample size, 130, I briefly analyzed the survey data collected to that point to grasp the overall trends, but also kept gathering more survey responses. As I identified significant questions that the survey data could not answer, I expanded the interview questions to address the quantitative results that called for further exploration.

For the qualitative analysis, I used interviews. For the interview session, each participant was asked at the end of the survey to indicate if they were interested in a follow-up interview study. An invitation email was sent to the participants who indicated their interest in participating in a short video interview for a follow-up study. They were informed that the conversation would be audio-recorded and transcribed for later analysis, and that the confidentiality described in the survey consent form would apply to the interview data as well. They were also informed that if any of the interview questions made them feel uncomfortable, they could refuse to answer. For those who agreed to participate, a one-on-one video conference call was scheduled through Zoom. Each interview lasted between 45 minutes and an hour. During the interview, the interviewees used English, Korean, or both, as they preferred. They were asked to share stories about their specific experiences growing up as a Korean-American, particularly in terms of their

relationships with their parents. All interview participants received an additional $20 electronic gift card from Amazon.

MEASURES

Several questionnaires utilizing participants' self-reports were used in the study, measuring intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their parents, family communication quality, perceived mattering to parents, parental autonomy support, their own depressive symptoms, and life satisfaction. Several demographic questions were also added at the end of the survey. Since this study represents a fairly new approach to this topic among Korean-American populations, its main purpose is to identify overall trends. Thus, I collected data for each measure on the participants' mothers and fathers separately. I used the same questionnaire for each parent, but only the average scores were used to yield the "parents" score. These scores were used for parent-child intergenerational cultural discrepancies, parent-child family communication quality, perceived mattering to parents, and parental autonomy support.

Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies. The East Asian American Family Conflicts Scale (FCS; Lee et al., 2000) was used to measure the young adults' perceived intergenerational cultural discrepancies that specifically tap into acculturation differences between parents and themselves. The FCS contains two 10-item subscales, but only the *FCS-Likelihood* subscale was used for this study. Previous studies have recommended using the *FCS-Likelihood* scores since they have shown better criterion-related validity than the *FCS-Seriousness* scores (Lee et al., 2000; Lui & Rollock, 2018). Construct validity of the FCS-Likelihood subscale was also tested by the authors of the original version of the scale (Lee et al., 2000), and it was validated as a reliable measure to assess parent-child intergenerational cultural

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conflicts/discrepancies among Asian-American young adults. The *FCS-Likelihood* subscale assesses the likelihood of 10 instances of discrepancies/conflicts occurring between the person and his or her parents, using a 5-point scale that ranges from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*almost always*). This subscale of the FCS has a response range from 10 to 50, with higher scores indicating a greater likelihood of discrepancy/conflict. Each participant was asked to assess intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their mothers and with their fathers separately, using the same questionnaire for each parent. The mean scores from each version (mothers vs. fathers) were summed and then divided by 2 to yield an average score of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies. Sample items included "Your (mom/dad) wants you to sacrifice personal interests for the sake of the family, but you feel this is unfair" and "Your (mom/dad) tells you what to do with your life, but you want to make your own decisions" (see Appendix A). Cronbach's alpha was .917.

Parent– Child Family Communication Quality. The Parent–Adolescent Communication Scale (Barnes & Olson, 1982, 1985) was used to measure the participants' perceived family communication quality between Korean-American young adults and their parents. This scale consists of two 10-item subscales of *the open family communication scale* (which measures the degree of openness in family communication) and *the problems in family communication scale* (which assesses the extent of problems in family communication). The summed mean score of both subscales was used for the Hypothesis 1 model and a subscale of the *problems in family communication scale* was used for the Hypothesis 2 model. This scale has been validated as a reliable measure to assess parent–child communication quality among Asian-American college students and Korean immigrant families by the previous literature (Boutakidis, Chao, & Rodriguez, 2011; Cheung & Park, 2010; Shen, Kim, Wang, & Chao, 2014). Each

participant was asked to assess communication with their mothers and with their fathers separately, using the same questionnaire for each parent. The mean scores from each version (mothers vs. fathers) were summed and then divided by 2 to yield an average score of parent–child family communication quality. Sample items include "I can discuss my beliefs with my (mom/dad) without feeling restrained or embarrassed" and "I am sometimes afraid to ask my (mom/dad) for what I want." Each of the items included a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) and some of the items were reverse-coded, with higher scores indicating a better quality of family communication (see Appendix B). Cronbach's alpha was .928. For the problems in family communication scale only, it was .858.

Perceived Mattering to Parents. The Mattering scale (Suh et al., 2016; Velez et al., 2019) adapted from Rosenberg and McCullough's study (1981) was used to measure Korean-American young adults' perceived mattering to parents. Participants reported their perceived level of mattering to parents using a 7-item scale of mattering. They were asked to assess mattering to their mothers and to their fathers separately, using the same questionnaire for each parent. Sample items included "I'm not that important to my (mom/dad)" and "I believe I really matter to my (mom/dad)." Each of the items included a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), and appropriate items were reverse-coded (see Appendix C). The mean scores from each version (mothers vs. fathers) were summed and then divided by 2 to yield an average score of mattering to parents. Higher scores reflect higher perceived levels of mattering to one's parent(s). Cronbach's alpha was .880.

Parental Autonomy Support. The Parental Academic Socialization Questionnaire (PASQ; Suizzo & Soon, 2006) was used to measure Korean-American young adults' perceived

parental autonomy support. The PASQ contains four subscales with 50 items, but only the 15-item *Emotional Autonomy Support and Responsiveness* subscale was used for this study. Participants were asked to indicate how true a given statement was for them during their adolescence, using the same questionnaire for each parent. Sample items included "If things went badly for me, my (mom/dad) tried to comfort and encourage me" and "My (mom/dad) encouraged me to find out what I loved to do and pursue it." Each of the items included a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*) (see Appendix D). The mean scores from each version (mothers vs. fathers) were summed and then divided by 2 to yield an average score for parental autonomy support. Higher scores reflect higher perceived parental autonomy support. Cronbach's alpha was .911.

Depressive Symptoms. The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977, 1991) was used to assess Korean-American young adults' depressive symptoms. This scale covers four subscales: depressed affect, happiness, somatic and retardation, and interpersonal difficulty. Each participant completed a 20-item scale to measure their depressive symptoms in each of two different time periods, i.e. their adolescence and the present. This instrument assessed the frequency of depressive symptomatology during the past seven days. For the adolescence version, participants were asked to look back on their adolescence and answer how often they felt a given depressive symptom in a typical week. Each item was scored on a 4-point Likert scale that ranged from 0 (*rarely or none of the time/less than 1 day*) to 3 (*most or all of the time/5-7 days*), and some of the items were reverse-coded. Sample items included "During the past week, I felt depressed" and "During the past week, I talked less than usual" (see Appendix E). Higher scores reflect more depressive symptoms, weighted by frequency of occurrence during the past week. A total score of 16 (out of 60) or higher was

suggested as a cut-off score for the purpose of a screening criterion for depressive symptoms. The reliability and validity of this scale have been demonstrated to be strong (Weissman, Sholomskas, Pottenger, Prusoff, & Locke, 1977). This scale has also been validated as a reliable measure to assess depressive symptoms among Korean-American population by the previous literatures (Kim & Cain, 2008; Shin, 1993; Shin & Haworth Continuing Features Submission, 1994). Cronbach's alphas were .930 (adolescence) and .919 (the present), respectively.

Life Satisfaction. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985) was used to measure young adults' life satisfaction. This scale has also been validated as a reliable measure to assess depressive symptoms among Korean-American populations by the previous literature (Yoon, 2010; Han & Lee, 2004). The SWLS contains five items, measuring global life satisfaction using a 7-point Likert scale. For this study, however, this scale was modified to a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), to match other measurements in this study. Sample items included "In most ways, my life is close to my ideal" and "So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life" (see Appendix F). Higher scores reflect higher levels of life satisfaction. Cronbach's alpha was .859.

Demographic Questionnaire. This questionnaire was used to elicit demographic information about the Korean-American young adults, including the participant's age, gender, preferred language at home, family type (e.g., intact, divorced), place of birth, current state of

residence, age of arrival in the United States if foreign-born, duration of stay in the U.S., Korean and English language proficiencies, GPA, parents' education level, family's socio-economic status, and other similar demographic characteristics (see Appendix G).

Interview Questions. Several questions related to the young adults' overall life as 1.5-

or second-generation Korean-American in the U.S., focusing on how their relationship with their parents changed from their adolescence through the present, their perceived love from/mattering to their parents, and the relationships between their parents' parenting behaviors and their psychological well-being. Sample questions included "Have you had any intergenerational cultural discrepancies with your parents? Can you give me an example?" and "During your adolescence, when did you feel most sure that your parents love you? Can you give me an example?" (see Appendix H).

DATA ANALYSIS

I used a mixed methods design, a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a single study, to understand and investigate three research questions: (1) How do parent–child communication quality and children's perceived mattering to parents affect the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and Korean-American children's depressive symptoms? (2) How do parent–child communication quality and parental autonomy support affect Korean-American children's life satisfaction? (3) How do Korean-American young adult children talk about their experiences in terms of their intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their parents and their psychological well-being? Do their descriptions of their experiences shed light on the quantitative findings? The quantitative analysis provides several statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, while the qualitative analysis provides more detailed information on issues that the quantitative analysis cannot adequately address (Creswell, 2008; 2012).

Descriptive Analysis. The descriptive analysis provides information on the participants' demographic data and their responses to each survey item. To begin with, I analyzed the

participants' overall demographics, such as their age, gender, place of birth, duration of stay in the U.S., language proficiency, citizenship status, socio-economic status (SES), and parents' education levels. Several steps were needed to understand the score distributions for the study's main variables, as well as to determine whether the data were normally distributed for each measure. To quantify the participants' relative standing on each of the measures, means and standard deviations were calculated, along with bivariate correlations among all the study variables. This analysis also described linear relationships among all the measured variables.

Quantitative Analysis. The quantitative investigation focuses on the direct and indirect effects of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's psychological adjustment. M*plus* (Version 7.4; Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2015) was used to test all the models in this study. In particular, the mediation models were tested using path analysis in M*plus* with 1,000 bootstrap samples and a 95% confidence interval. Maximum Likelihood (ML) was used as a parameter estimation method (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2015).

Model 1. Model 1 consists of two similar but separate models measuring depressive symptoms in each of two different time periods, i.e. the young adult participant's adolescence (Model 1-1) and the present (Model 1-2). Each model was tested in four steps based on the hypotheses. A simple linear regression was used in Step 1 to test Hypothesis 1a, while a simple mediation was used in Steps 2 and 3 to test Hypotheses 1b and 1c, respectively.

In the final model in Step 4, a two-mediator serial mediation analysis was performed to test Hypothesis 1d independently from Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c, regardless of their results. The primary goal of a serial mediation model is to examine the direct and indirect effects of X (independent variable) on Y (dependent variable) where X causes $M1$ (mediator 1), which

subsequently causes *M2* (mediator 2), and finally *M2* causes *Y* (Hayes, 2013). In other words,

this model contains four pathways of how *X* affects *Y*: (a) direct effect of *X* on *Y* without passing

through either *M1* or *M2*, (b) an indirect effect of *X* on *Y* through *M1* only, (c) an indirect effect

of *X* on *Y* through *M2* only, and (d) an indirect effect of *X* on *Y* through both *M1* and *M2* in serial,

with *M1* affecting *M2*. Thus, the sum of the three indirect effects is the total indirect effect of *X*

on *Y*, and the direct and indirect effects sum to the total effect of *X* on *Y*. A conceptual diagram of

a serial mediation model is depicted in Figure 2 (Hypothesis 1d) and a statistical diagram is

depicted in Figure 4.

- Direct effect of *X* on *Y* = c'
- Indirect effect of *X* on *Y* through *M1* only = $a_1 b_1$
- Indirect effect of *X* on *Y* through *M2* only = $a_2 b_2$
- Indirect effect of *X* on *Y* through both *M1* and *M2* in serial = $a_1 d_{21} b_2$
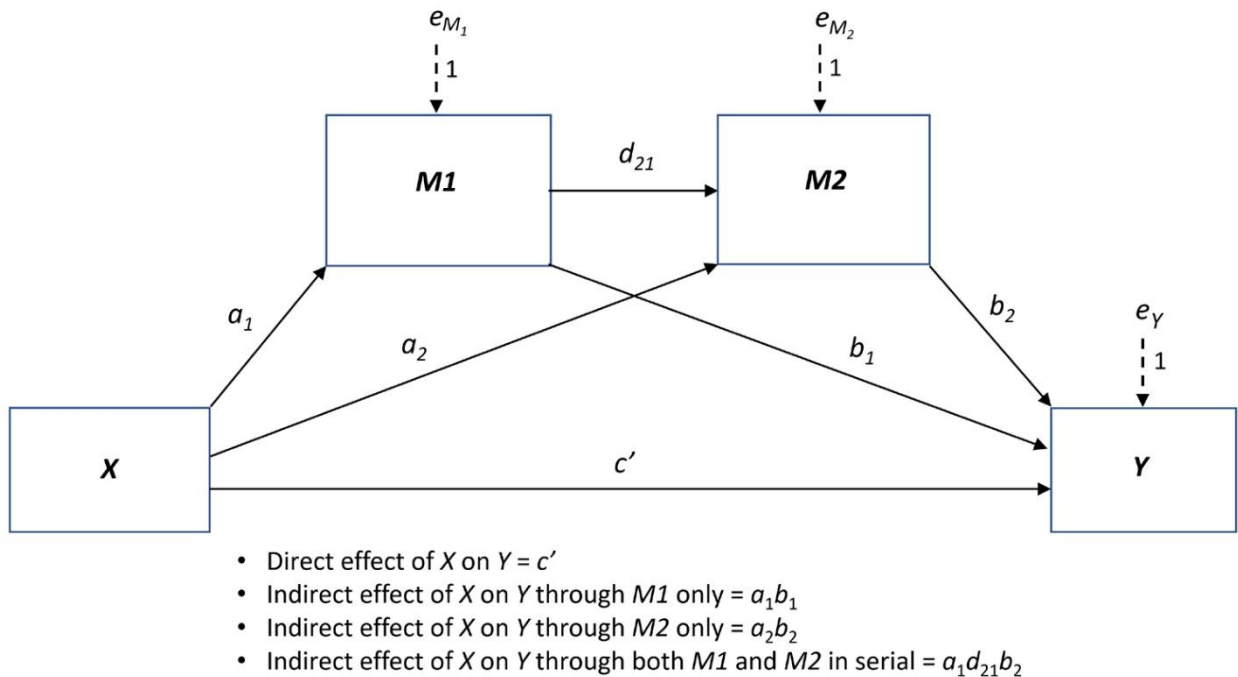
Figure 4. Model 1's statistical diagram for Hypothesis 1d: A serial mediation model of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's depressive symptoms with parent–child communication quality and children's perceived mattering to parents as mediators. *X*: Parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (independent variable). M_1: Parent–child communication quality (mediator 1). M_2: Children's mattering to parents (mediator 2). *Y*: Children's depressive symptoms (dependent variable).

Model 2. Like Model 1, Model 2 was also tested in four steps based on the hypotheses. A

simple linear regression was used in Step 1 to test Hypothesis 2a, while a simple mediation was

used in Steps 2 and 3 to test Hypotheses 2b and 2c, respectively.

In the final model in Step 4, a two-mediator parallel mediation was performed to test Hypothesis 2d, independently from Hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c, regardless of their results. Unlike the serial mediation analysis, this method effectively assumes that no mediator causally influences another in the model. However, this does not necessarily assume that the mediators are independent. Instead, the mediators are likely to be correlated in most circumstances (Hayes, 2013). Thus, the goal of a two-mediator parallel mediation is to examine the direct and indirect effects of X (independent variable) on Y (dependent variable) where $M1$ (mediator 1) and $M2$ (mediator 2) do not have any causal relationships. A model with two mediators has two indirect effects, one through $M1$ ($X \rightarrow M1 \rightarrow Y$) and one through $M2$ ($X \rightarrow M2 \rightarrow Y$). In other words, this model contains four pathways of how X affects Y: (a) a direct effect of X on Y without passing through either $M1$ or $M2$, (b) an indirect effect of X on Y through $M1$, (c) an indirect effect of X on Y through $M2$, and (d) an indirect effect of X on Y through both $M1$ and $M2$ simultaneously, without a causal relationship between $M1$ and $M2$. A conceptual diagram of a parallel multiple mediation model is depicted in Figure 3 (Hypothesis 2d) and a statistical diagram is depicted in Figure 5.
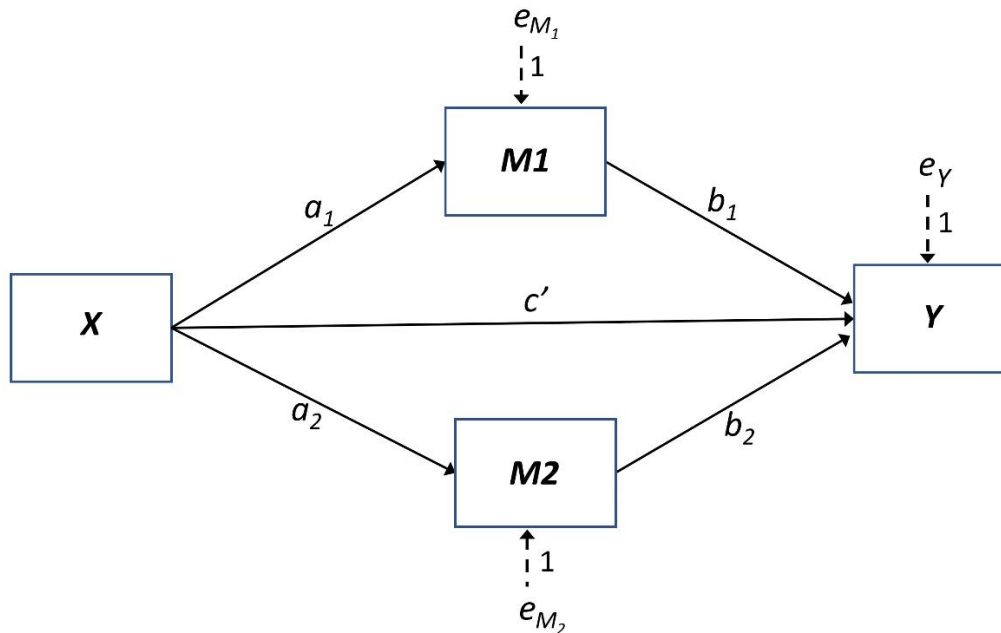
- Direct effect of *X* on *Y* = *c'*
- Indirect effect of *X* on *Y* through *M1* only = $a_1 b_1$
- Indirect effect of *X* on *Y* through *M2* only = $a_2 b_2$
- Indirect effect of *X* on *Y* through both *M1* and *M2* simultaneously = $a_1 b_1 + a_2 b_2$

Figure 5. Model 2's statistical diagram for Hypothesis 2d: A parallel mediation model of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's life satisfaction with parent–child communication quality and parental autonomy support as mediators. *X*: Parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies (independent variable). *M₁*: Parent–child communication quality (mediator 1). *M₂*: Parental autonomy support (mediator 2). *Y*: Young adult children's life satisfaction (dependent variable).

Qualitative Analysis. The qualitative investigation seeks to provide a richer,

multidimensional, and more dynamic understanding of the quantitative findings. To analyze the

interview data, I used *ethnography* as a basic analytic method, as ethnography studies a

particular social or cultural group with the purpose of better understanding of it. This method

allows researchers to gain an insider's perspective on the group and to collect descriptive

accounts from the participants, which can be useful for understanding complex cultural

phenomena in depth (Handwerker, 2004; Spradley & McCurdy, 1994). Since understanding the

gaps between first-generation immigrant parents' culture of origin (heritage culture) and their

children's mainstream culture (host culture) is one of the key aspects in understanding Korean-American children's adjustment, the ethnographic analysis was able to provide possible interpretations of the responses to complex cultural phenomena from both cultures.

Specifically, I adopted the basic analytic method that LeCompte suggested (2000), which includes tidying up the answers, finding items, and creating stable sets of items. Since this qualitative analysis is neither independent nor separate from the quantitative analysis, instead providing additional comments that the quantitative analysis could not adequately capture, I coded these statements broadly rather than going line by line in each statement. I transcribed all the audio-recorded conversations of the interviews, organized the answers into groups or categories by sifting and sorting them based on the interview questions (which arose from the research questions), and labeled each group or category according to its theme and contents. As a result, this analysis was able to provide more details about the quantitative results, including specific examples of the respondents' intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their parents, the moments they felt their parents' love and its impact on their psychological well-being, differences between their adolescence and the present in terms of their parents' autonomy support, retrospective messages to the parents of their adolescent selves, as well as advice for current Korean-American adolescents.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

In this chapter, I summarize the results of both the quantitative and qualitative analyses. The quantitative analysis utilizes several statistical analyses including descriptive statistics, while the qualitative analysis provides several details that the quantitative analysis could not adequately capture.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Sample Demographics. Descriptive statistics for the participants' demographic data were analyzed. Data from a total of 161 young adults were included in the analysis. Thirty-two percent of them were males and the other 68% were females. Their ages ranged between 18 and 34, with an average age of 23. Forty-five percent of the young adults were born in the U.S. (second-generation immigrants), while 54% were born in Korea and immigrated to the U.S. with their parents at or before age 18 (1.5-generation immigrants). Participants were also asked to choose up to two states where they mainly grew up during their childhood and/or adolescence in the U.S. Twenty-six total states were mentioned, most frequently Texas (70 responses), California (40), New Jersey (10), New York (9), and Illinois (8). Seventy-four percent of the participants were U.S. citizens, 21% were Korean citizens with a U.S. permanent resident card or a U.S. visa, and 4% had dual citizenship. The participants resided in 19 different states in the U.S. at the time of the study, including Texas (n=74), California (n=37), and New York (n=10). Participants' approximate average duration of stay in the U.S. was 17 years and 6 months. The average age of the participants' mothers was 52 and that of their fathers was 56. Forty-nine percent of the participants considered their family's socioeconomic status to be middle class, while 24% identified as working class, 26% as upper middle class, and 1% as upper class. They

also indicated which subjective socioeconomic status (SES) which would best reflect their

situation, and the average score was 6.24 out of 10 points (higher scores reflect higher subjective

SES). Other demographic information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Young Adults' Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic	n	Percent
Gender		
Male	51	31.9%
Female	109	68.1%
Place of birth		
U.S.A.	73	45.3%
Korea	87	54%
Citizenship		
U.S. Citizen	119	73.9%
U.S. green card holder (permanent resident)	25	15.5%
In the U.S. on a visa	9	5.6%
Dual Citizenship	6	3.7%
Undocumented/DACA	2	1.2%
Occupation		
Undergrad student	90	55.9%
Grad student	21	13%
Post-bac	4	2.5%
Non-student	46	28.6%
Financial independence		
Yes	53	32.9%
No	107	66.5%
GPA		
Below 2.5	3	2.3%
2.5 – 2.9	10	7.6%
3.0 – 3.4	47	35.6%
3.5 – 4.0	72	54.5%
Family type		
Intact family	145	90.1%
Divorced family	15	9.3%
Number of siblings		
0 (Only child)	15	9.4%
1	110	68.8%
2	29	18.1%
3	6	3.8%
Mother's education level		
Did not complete high school	3	1.9%
High school diploma or GED	29	18%
Some college	18	11.2%
Associate's or 2-year degree	13	8.1%
Bachelor's or 4-year degree	73	45.3%
Graduate degree	25	15.5%

Note. Missing data was not included in this table.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Young Adults' Demographic Characteristics (cont.)

Characteristic	n	Percent
Father's education level		
Did not complete high school	2	1.2%
High school diploma or GED	10	6.2%
Some college	20	12.4%
Associate's or 2-year degree	8	5%
Bachelor's or 4-year degree	57	35.4%
Graduate degree	64	39.8%
Working class	38	23.9%
Middle class	79	49.7%
Upper middle class	41	25.8%
Upper class	1	0.6%
Marital status		
Single	138	87.3%
Married	20	12.7%
Language proficiency (English)		
Moderately	4	2.5%
Well	31	19.3%
Very well	126	78.3%
Language proficiency (Korean)		
Not at all	1	0.6%
Very poorly	4	2.5%
Moderately	37	23%
Well	51	31.7%
Very well	68	42.2%
Language preference (with mother)		
English	3	1.9%
Korean	118	73.3%
Half English/Half Korean	40	24.8%
Language preference (with father)		
English	12	7.5%
Korean	114	70.8%
Half English/Half Korean	34	21.1%
Living situation		
Alone or w/ a roommate	103	64%
W/ spouse/significant other	22	13.7%
W/ parents but not grandparent(s)	35	21.7%
W/ parents and grandparent(s)	1	0.6%

Note. Missing data was not included in this table.

Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, Skewness, and Kurtosis. Means, standard deviations, and correlations were computed for the variables used in the study and are presented in Table 2. All variables of interest were statistically and significantly associated with each other, except for the relationship between mattering to parents and children's current depressive symptoms. Skewness and kurtosis tests were also conducted to see if the study variables met the assumption for normality. According to Schmider, Danay, Beyer, and Buhner (2010), the recommended values of skewness and kurtosis are less than |2| and |9|, respectively. Based on these standards, none of the variables violated the test of normality.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for All Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Parent–Child intergenerational cultural discrepancies	1							
2. Parent–Child family communication quality	-.614***	1						
3. Parent–Child problems in family communication	-.618***	.911***	1					
4. Parental autonomy support	-.320***	.533***	.413***	1				
5. Perceived mattering to parents	-.381***	.471***	.375***	.454***	1			
6. Depressive symptoms (adolescence)	.268**	-.451***	-.417***	-.285***	-.276**	1		
7. Depressive symptoms (the present)	.221**	-.333***	-.367***	-.251**	-.107	.494***	1	
8. Life satisfaction	-.175*	.404***	.400***	.401***	.218**	-.375***	-.602***	1
N	160	160	160	160	154	150	161	161
Mean	2.45	3.25	3.00	4.51	3.75	2.02	1.84	3.19
SD	.84	.63	.65	.55	.61	.63	.59	.94
Skewness	.243	-.169	.121	-.392	-1.472	.547	1.032	-.095
Kurtosis	-.324	-.047	-.002	-.455	2.004	-.563	.758	-.409

$^*p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$, $^{***}p < .001$.

***T*-test for Dependent Variables by Gender.** An independent *t*-test was conducted to

identify any gender differences in the dependent variables, which are depressive symptoms

during adolescence, depressive symptoms in the present, and life satisfaction. Females showed

more depressive symptoms in both time periods (*M* = 2.10, *SD* = .66 for adolescence, *M* = 1.93,

SD = .64 for the present) than males (*M* = 1.85, *SD* = .53 for adolescence, *M* = 1.65, *SD* = .41 for

the present). The independent *t*-tests for these two periods of depressive symptoms showed that

the difference between males and females was statistically significant (*t*(107) = -2.451, *p* = .016,

95% CI [-.45, -.05] for adolescence; *t*(143) = -3.346, *p* = .001, 95% CI [-.44, -.11] for the

present). However, there was no significant difference in life satisfaction (*t*(158) = -1.141, *p*

= .255, 95% CI [-.13, .49]) between males (*M* = 3.31, *SD* = .84) and females (*M* = 3.13, *SD*

= .97). Based on these results, I used gender as a control variable for Model 1-1 and Model 1-2,

which used depressive symptoms as a dependent variable.

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Model 1-1: Direct and Indirect Effects of Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural

Discrepancies on Children's Depressive Symptoms during Adolescence

In Step 1, I conducted a simple linear regression to test Hypothesis 1a, to see whether

parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies would predict children's depressive

symptoms during adolescence. Hypothesis 1a in Model 1-1 was supported, indicating that more

parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies significantly predicted more depressive

symptoms during the children's adolescence (*b* = .198, *p* = .001) (see Table 3).

In Step 2, I conducted a simple mediation to test Hypothesis 1b, to see whether there was an indirect effect of parent–child communication quality on the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's depressive symptoms during adolescence. Hypothesis 1b in Model 1-1 was supported. Parent–child communication quality fully mediated the effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's depressive symptoms during adolescence after controlling for gender ($b = .191$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.139, .375]), meaning that the direct effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's depressive symptoms was no longer statistically significant ($b = .005$, $p = .943$). Gender, included in this model as a control variable on depressive symptoms, was not significant ($b = .124$, $p = .215$) (see Figure 6 and Tables 3 and 4).

In Step 3, similarly, a simple mediation was used to test Hypothesis 1c, to see if there was an indirect effect of mattering to parents on the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's depressive symptoms during adolescence. Hypothesis 1c in Model 1-1 was supported. Mattering to parents fully mediated the effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's depressive symptoms during adolescence after controlling for gender ($b = .067$, $p = .046$, 95% CI [.008, .140]), meaning that the direct effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's depressive symptoms was no longer statistically significant ($b = .129$, $p = .052$). Gender, included in this model as a control variable on depressive symptoms, was significant ($b = .252$, $p = .008$) (see Figure 6 and Tables 3 and 4).
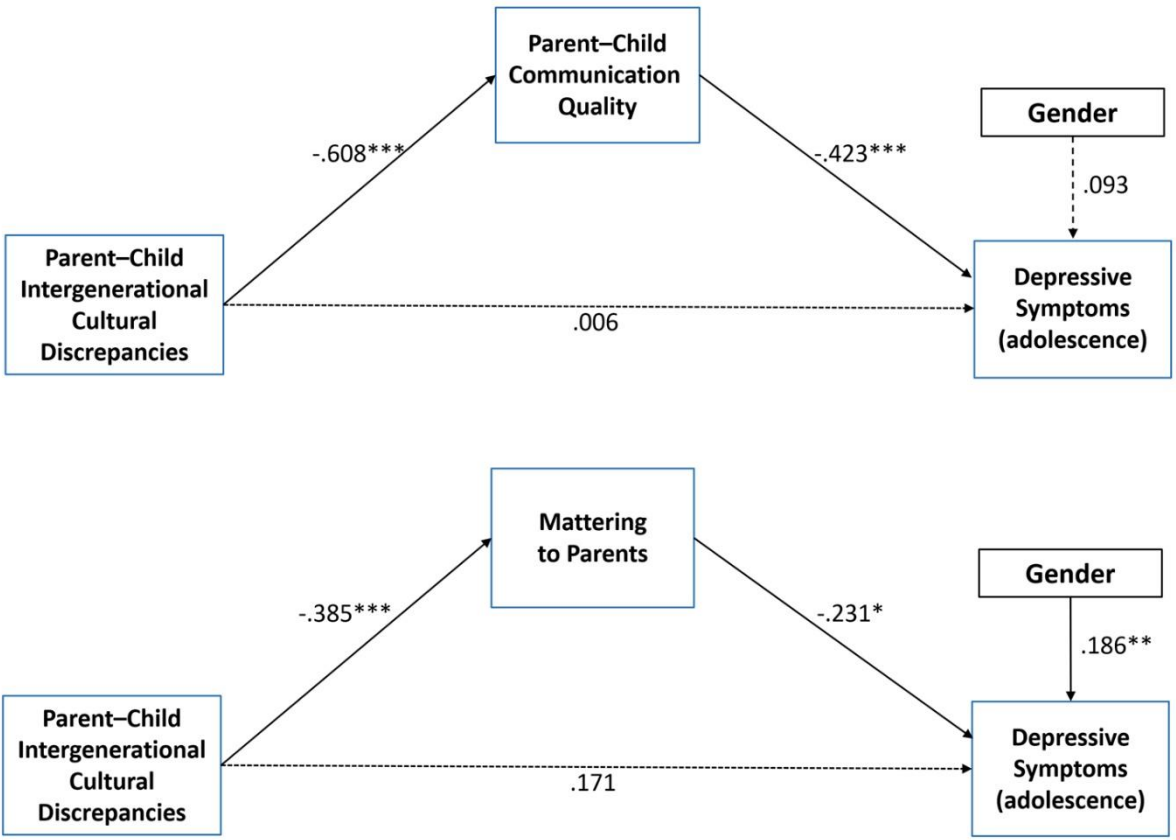
Figure 6. Model 1-1: Direct effects in Step 2 and Step 3 of the children's depressive symptoms during adolescence model. It is a simple mediation model, with paths labeled with standardized coefficients. Solid lines indicate the statistically significant paths. Dotted lines indicate the statistically non-significant paths. Gender is a control variable. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

In Step 4, as stated in the Data Analysis section, a two-mediator serial mediation analysis was performed to test Hypothesis 1d independently from Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c, and regardless of their results. This model contains four pathways for how X may affect Y. Overall, the results partially supported Hypothesis 1d. First, parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies did not directly predict children's depressive symptoms during adolescence ($b = -.007$, $p = .916$). However, when parent–child communication quality was added to this simple regression model as a mediator, the simple mediation model was statistically significant after controlling for gender ($b = .189$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.100, .283]). That is, more parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies predicted lower communication quality, and this lower

communication quality subsequently predicted higher levels of children's depressive symptoms during adolescence. But when mattering to parents was added as a mediator to the simple regression model, the simple mediation model was not statistically significant, after controlling for gender ($b = .033$, $p = .304$, 95% CI [-.024, .104]).

Lastly, a two-mediator serial mediation model, the final model, was not significant (Hypothesis 1d) after controlling for gender ($b = .020$, $p = .337$, 95% CI [-014, .068]). Specifically, more parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies predicted lower parent–child communication quality, and this communication subsequently predicted lower mattering to parents, but this lower mattering did not predict depressive symptoms during adolescence. The results of the direct effects are presented in Figure 7 and Table 3 and the indirect effects are in Table 4. Gender, included in this model as a control variable on depressive symptoms, was not significant ($b = .147$, $p = .126$).
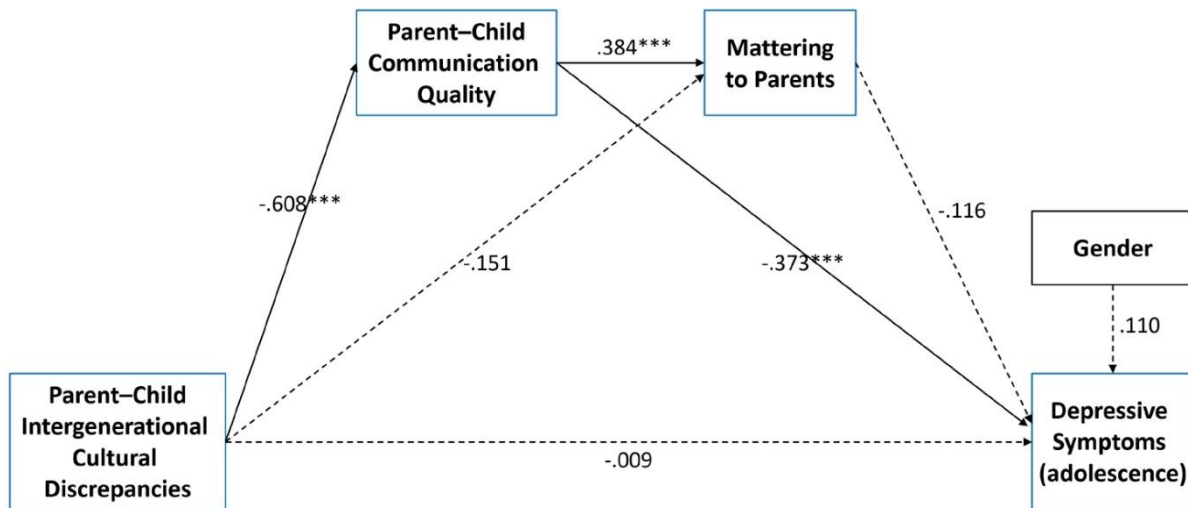
Figure 7. Model 1-1: Direct effects in Step 4 of the children's depressive symptoms during adolescence model. It is a two-mediator serial mediation model, with paths labeled with standardized coefficients. Solid lines indicate the statistically significant paths. Dotted lines indicate the statistically non-significant paths. Gender is a control variable. ***$p < .001$.

Table 3

Model 1-1: Direct Effects from the Decomposition Paths of the Children's Depressive Symptoms during Adolescence Model

Path	Direct Effect		S.E.	*p*	95% CI
	Unstand ardized	Standardized			
Step 1					
P–Y ICD → DPRS1	.198	.258	.061	.001	[.079, .317]
Step 2					
P–Y ICD → DPRS1	.005	.006	.064	.943	[-.130, .125]
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM	-.452	-.608	.053	< .001	[-.551, -.348]
P–Y COMM → DPRS1	-.423	-.423	.084	< .001	[-.580, -.254]
Gender → DPRS1	.124	.093	.100	.215	[-.069, .306]
Step 3					
P–Y ICD → DPRS1	.129	.171	.066	.052	[-.005, .251]
P–Y ICD → MTR	-.254	-.385	.049	< .001	[-.347, -.157]
MTR → DPRS1	-.263	.101	.111	.018	[-.465, -.035]
Gender → DPRS1	.252	.186	.095	.008	[.056, .428]
Step 4					
P–Y ICD → DPRS1	-.007	-.009	.065	.916	[-.140, .117]
P–Y COMM → DPRS1	-.374	-.373	.094	< .001	[-.543, -.179]
MTR → DPRS1	.130	-.116	.118	.268	[-.351, .110]
Gender → DPRS1	.147	.110	.096	.126	[-.044, .328]
P–Y ICD → MTR	-.100	-.151	.059	.090	[-.208, .023]
P–Y COMM → MTR	.342	.384	.090	< .001	[.173, .527]
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM	-.452	-.608	.053	< .001	[-.551, -.348]

Note. P–Y ICD = Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies. DPRS1 = Depressive Symptoms (adolescence). P–Y Comm = Parent–Child Communication Quality. MTR = Mattering to Parents.

Table 4

Model 1-1: Indirect Effects from the Decomposition Paths of the Children's Depressive Symptoms during Adolescence Model

Path	Indirect Effect		S.E.	*p*	95% CI
	Unstandardized	Standardized			
Step 2					
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM → DPRS1	.191	.257	.047	< .001	[.139, .375]
Step 3					
P–Y ICD → MTR → DPRS1	.067	.089	.033	.046	[.008, .140]
Step 4					
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM → DPRS1	.189	.254	.047	< .001	[.100, .283]
P–Y ICD → MTR → DPRS1	.033	.045	.032	.304	[-.024, .104]
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM → MTR	-.154	-.233	.048	.001	[-.260, -.071]
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM → MTR → DPRS1	.020	.027	.021	.337	[-014, .068]

Note. P–Y ICD = Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies. P–Y COMM = Parent–Child Communication Quality. MTR = Mattering to Parents. DPRS1 = Depressive Symptoms (adolescence).

Model 1-2: Direct and Indirect Effects of Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies on Children's Depressive Symptoms in the Present

The model of children's depressive symptoms in the present was analyzed using the same analytic method as for their depressive symptoms during adolescence. The overall serial mediation model partially supported Hypotheses 1a to 1d.

In Step 1, I conducted a simple linear regression to test Hypothesis 1a, to see whether parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies would predict children's depressive symptoms in the present. Hypothesis 1a in Model 1-2 was supported, indicating that more parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies significantly predicted more depressive symptoms in the present ($b = .149$, $p = .006$) (see Table 5).

In Step 2, I conducted a simple mediation to test Hypothesis 1b, to see whether there was an indirect effect of parent–child communication quality on the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's depressive symptoms in the present. Hypothesis 1b in Model 1-2 was supported. Parent–child communication quality fully mediated the effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's depressive symptoms in the present, after controlling for gender ($b = .110$, $p = .020$, 95% CI [.029, .212]), meaning that the direct effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's present depressive symptoms was no longer statistically significant ($b = .030$, $p = .681$). Gender, included in this model as a control variable on depressive symptoms, was significant ($b = .197$, $p = .020$) (see Figure 8 and Tables 5 and 6).

Similarly, in Step 3 I conducted another simple mediation to test Hypothesis 1c, to see if there was an indirect effect of mattering to parents on the relationship between parent–child

intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's depressive symptoms in the present.

Hypothesis 1c in Model 1-2 was not supported. Specifically, mattering to parents did not mediate the effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's depressive symptoms in the present, after controlling for gender ($b = .013$, $p = .659$, 95% CI [-.042, .074]). Gender, included in this model as a control variable on depressive symptoms, was significant ($b = .258$, $p = .002$) (see Figure 8 and Tables 5 and 6).
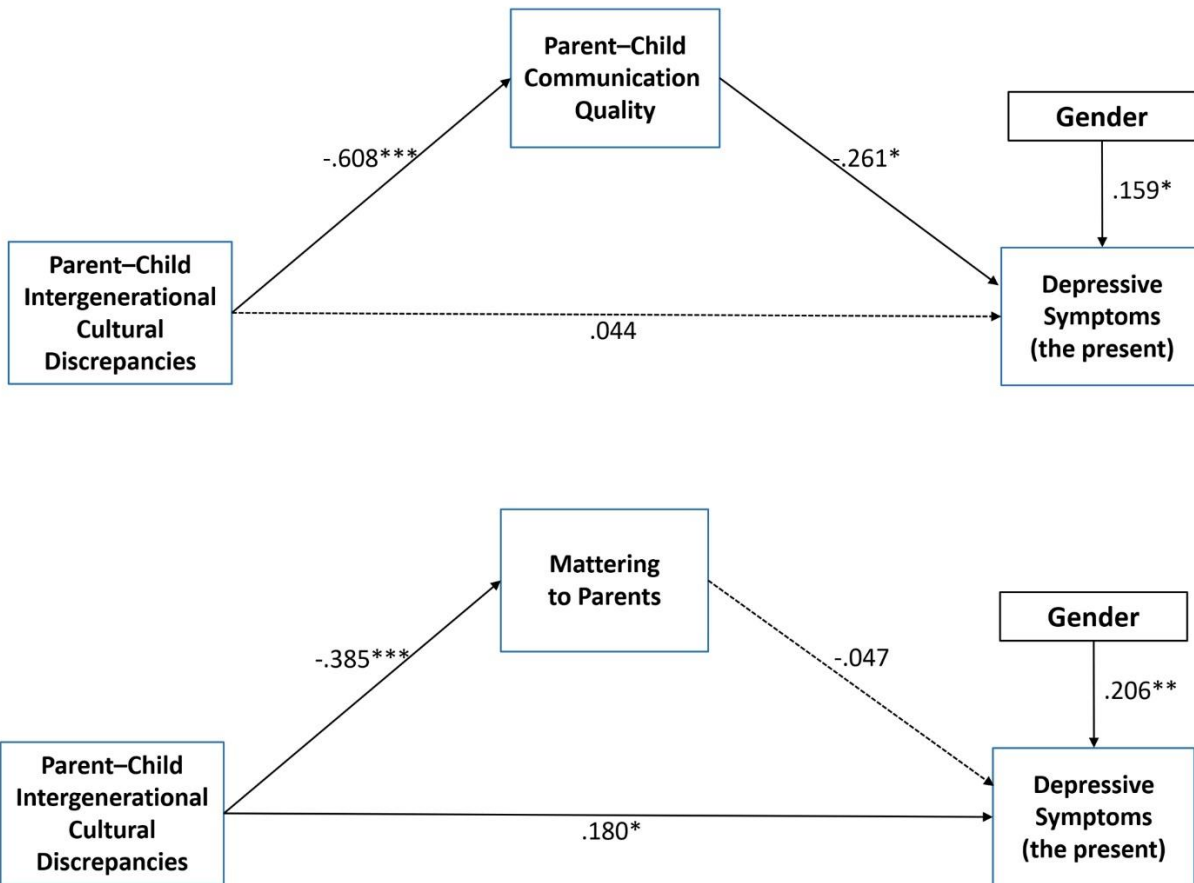
Figure 8. Model 1-2: Direct effects in Step 2 and Step 3 of the children's present depressive symptoms model. It is a simple mediation model, with paths labeled with standardized coefficients. Solid lines indicate the statistically significant paths. Dotted lines indicate the statistically non-significant paths. Gender is a control variable. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

In Step 4, as stated previously, a two-mediator serial mediation analysis was performed to test Hypothesis 1d independently from Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c, and regardless of their results. This model contains four pathways of how X (independent variable) may affect Y (dependent variable). Overall, the results partially supported Hypothesis 1d. First, parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies did not directly predict children's depressive symptoms in the present (b = -.033, p = .650). However, when parent–child communication quality was added to this simple regression model as a mediator, the simple mediation model was statistically significant after controlling for gender (b = .110, p = .021, 95% CI [.028, .212]). That is, more parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies predicted lower communication quality, and this lower quality of communication subsequently predicted more depressive symptoms in the present. On the other hand, when mattering to parents was added as a mediator to the simple regression model, the simple mediation model was not statistically significant, after controlling for gender (b = -.009, p = .777, 95% CI [.074, .055]). Lastly, the two-mediator serial mediation model, which is the final model, was also not significant (Hypothesis 1d) after controlling for gender (b = -.006, p = .790, 95% CI [-.048, .037]). Specifically, more parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies predicted lower parent–child communication quality, and this lower quality of communication subsequently predicted lower mattering to parents, but this lower mattering did not predict more depressive symptoms in the present. The results of the direct effects are presented in Figure 9 and Table 5 and the indirect effects are in Table 6. Gender, included in this model as a control variable on depressive symptoms, was significant (b = .191, p = .033).
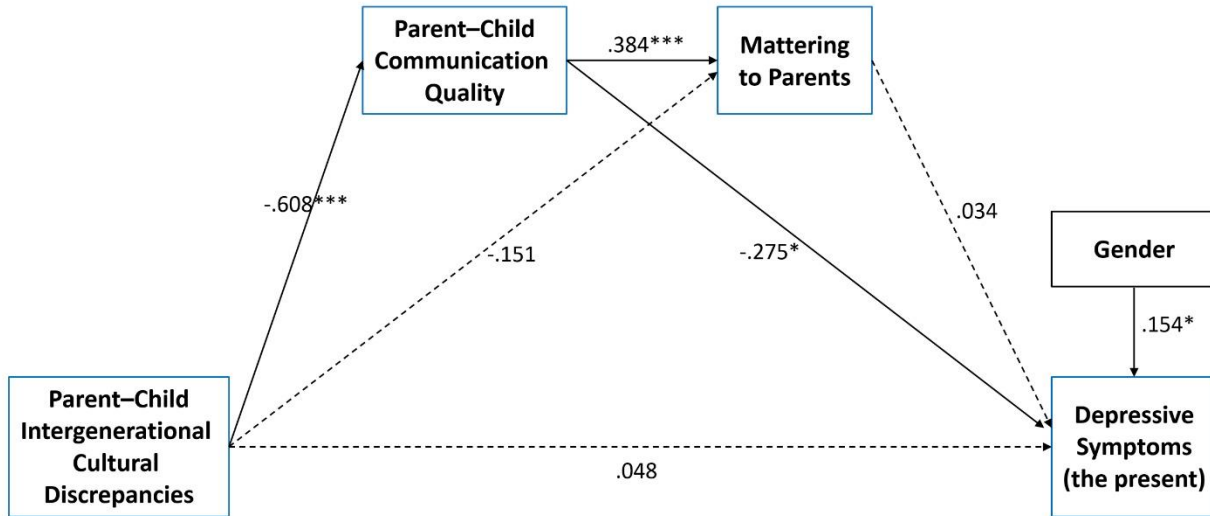
Figure 9. Model 1-2: Direct effects in Step 4 of the children's present depressive symptoms model. It is a two-mediator serial mediation model, with paths labeled with standardized coefficients. Solid lines indicate the statistically significant paths. Dotted lines indicate the statistically non-significant paths. Gender is a control variable. *$p < .05$. ***$p < .001$.

Table 5

Model 1-2: Direct Effects from the Decomposition Paths of the Children's Present Depressive Symptoms Model

Path	Direct Effect		S.E.	*p*	95% CI
	Unstandardized	Standardized			
Step 1					
P–Y ICD → DPRS2	.149	.213	.054	.006	[.043, .255]
Step 2					
P–Y ICD → DPRS2	.030	.044	.074	.681	[-.118, .169]
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM	-.452	-.608	.053	< .001	[-.551, -.348]
P–Y COMM → DPRS2	-.243	-.261	.095	.010	[-.442, -.071]
Gender → DPRS2	.197	.159	.085	.020	[.033, .359]
Step 3					
P–Y ICD → DPRS2	.126	.180	.061	.040	[.009, .249]
P–Y ICD → MTR	-.254	-.385	.049	< .001	[-.347, -.157]
MTR → DPRS2	-.050	-.047	-.448	.654	[-.272, .162]
Gender → DPRS2	.258	.206	.084	.002	[.088, .410]
Step 4					
P–Y ICD → DPRS2	.033	.048	.074	.650	[-.113, .171]
P–Y COMM → DPRS2	-.257	-.275	.110	.019	[-.471, -.042]
MTR → DPRS2	.036	.034	.127	.777	[-.224, .283]
Gender → DPRS2	.191	.154	.090	.033	[.010, .368]
P–Y ICD → MTR	-.100	-.151	.059	.090	[-.208, .023]
P–Y COMM → MTR	.342	.384	.090	< .001	[.173, .527]
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM	-.452	-.608	.053	< .001	[-.551, -.348]

Note. P–Y ICD = Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies. DPRS2 = Depressive Symptoms (in the present). P–Y Comm = Parent–Child Communication Quality. MTR = Mattering to Parents.

Table 6

Model 1-2: Indirect Effects from the Decomposition Paths of the Children's Present Depressive Symptoms Model

Path	Indirect Effect		S.E.	*p*	95% CI
	Unstandardized	Standardized			
Step 2					
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM → DPRS2	.110	.158	.047	.020	[.029, .212]
Step 3					
P–Y ICD → MTR → DPRS2	.013	.018	.029	.659	[-.042, .074]
Step 4					
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM → DPRS2	.110	.159	.048	.021	[.028, .212]
P–Y ICD → MTR → DPRS2	-.009	-.013	.032	.777	[-.074, .055]
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM → MTR	-.154	-.233	.048	.001	[-.260, -.071]
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM → MTR → DPRS2	-.006	-.008	.021	.790	[-.048, .037]

Note. P–Y ICD = Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies. P–Y COMM = Parent–Child Communication Quality. MTR = Mattering to Parents. DPRS2 = Depressive Symptoms (in the present).

Model 2: Direct and Indirect Effects of Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies on Young Adult Children's Life Satisfaction

In Step 1, I conducted a simple linear regression to test Hypothesis 2a, to see whether parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies would predict children's life satisfaction. Hypothesis 2a in Model 2 was supported, indicating that greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies significantly predicted lower levels of children's life satisfaction ($b = -.183, p = .036$) (see Table 7).

In Step 2, I conducted a simple mediation to test Hypothesis 2b, to see whether there was an indirect effect of parent–child communication quality on the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's life satisfaction. Hypothesis 2b in Model 2 was supported. Parent–child communication quality fully mediated the effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's life satisfaction ($b = -.322, p < .001$), meaning that the direct effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's life satisfaction was no longer statistically significant ($b = .138, p = .119$) (see Figure 10 and Tables 7 and 8).

In Step 3, similarly, I conducted a simple mediation to test Hypothesis 2c, to see if there was an indirect effect of parental autonomy support on the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's life satisfaction. Hypothesis 2c in Model 2 was supported. Parental autonomy support fully mediated the effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's life satisfaction ($b = -.150, p = .003$), meaning that the direct effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on

children's life satisfaction was no longer statistically significant (b = -.033, p = .670) (see Figure 10 and Tables 5 and 6).

Figure 10. Model 2: Direct effects in Step 2 and Step 3 of the children's life satisfaction model. It is a simple mediation model, with paths labeled with standardized coefficients. Solid lines indicate the statistically significant paths. Dotted lines indicate the statistically non-significant paths. ***p < .001.

In Step 4, as stated in the Data Analysis section, a two-mediator parallel mediation analysis was performed to test Hypothesis 2d independently from Hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c, regardless of their results. This model contains four pathways for how X (parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies) may affect Y (life satisfaction). One important change from the hypothesis model is removing the direct path from X (parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies) to Y (life satisfaction) in this step. This is because the results from Step 2

and Step 3 proved that there was no direct effect of X on Y, as both mediators (i.e., parent–child communication quality, parental autonomy support) fully mediated the X–Y relationship. Thus, the final model in Step 4 was combined with the two full mediation models without a direct path from X to Y (see Figure 11). This final model now contains three pathways for how X affects Y.

Overall, the results fully supported Hypothesis 2d. First, there was an indirect effect of parent–child communication quality on the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's life satisfaction (b = -.322, p < .001, 95% CI [-.451, -.201]). That is, greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies predicted lower communication quality, and this lower quality of communication subsequently predicted lower levels of children's life satisfaction. In addition, there was another indirect effect of parental autonomy support on the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's life satisfaction (b = -.150, p = .003, 95% CI [-.270, -.064]), indicating that greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies predicted less parental autonomy support and this lower support subsequently predicted lower levels of children's life satisfaction. Lastly, the two-mediator parallel mediation model, which is the final model, was statistically significant (Hypothesis 2d) (b = -.184, p = .001, 95% CI [-.293, -.080]) for the parent–child communication quality model; b = -.110, p = .008, 95% CI [-.204, -.042]) for the parental autonomy support model) (see Table 8). In other words, when the two mediators (i.e., parent–child communication quality, parental autonomy support) were added to the path from X (parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies) to Y (life satisfaction) simultaneously, greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies predicted both lower parent–child communication quality and less parental autonomy support at the same time, which in turn predicted lower levels of children's life satisfaction.
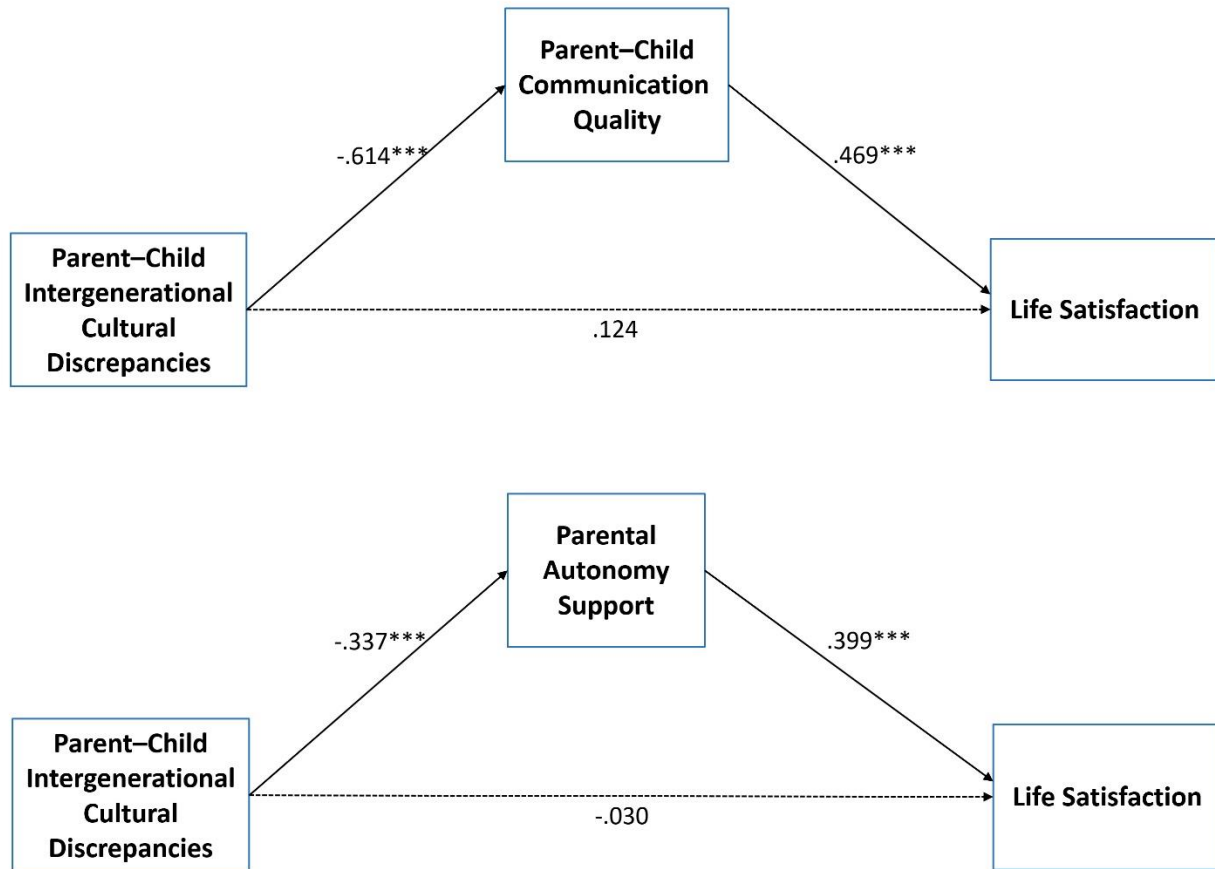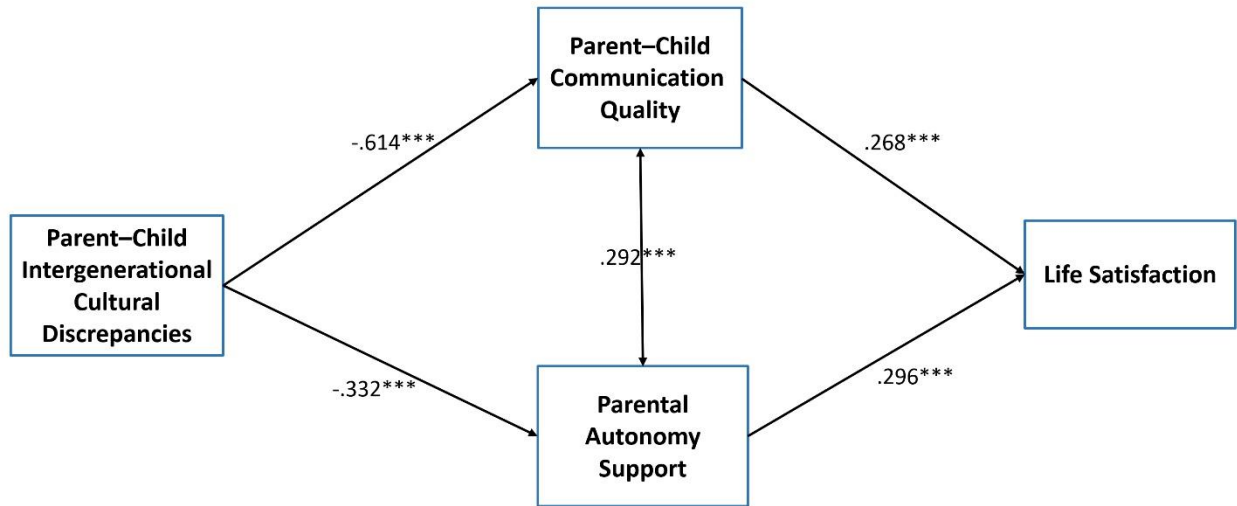
Figure 11. Model 2: Direct effects in Step 4 of the children's life satisfaction model. It is a two-mediator parallel mediation model, with paths labeled with standardized coefficients. Solid lines indicate the statistically significant paths. ***$p < .001$.

Table 7

Model 2: Direct Effects from the Decomposition Paths of the Children's Life Satisfaction Model

Path	Direct Effect		S.E.	*p*	95% CI
	Unstand ardized	Standardized			
Step 1					
P–Y ICD → LIFSAT	-.183	-.164	.087	.036	[-.355, -.012]
Step 2					
P–Y ICD → LIFSAT	.138	.124	.089	.119	[-.038, .311]
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM	-.480	-.614	.050	< .001	[-.580, -.388]
P–Y COMM → LIFSAT	.670	.469	.121	< .001	[.414, .923]
Step 3					
P–Y ICD → LIFSAT	-.033	-.030	.078	.670	[-.189, .116]
P–Y ICD → AUTSUPT	-.247	-.337	.063	< .001	[-.369, -.122]
AUTSUPT → LIFSAT	.609	.399	.117	< .001	[.376, .824]
Step 4					
P–Y COMM → LIFSAT	.383	.268	.109	< .001	[.170, .584]
AUTSUPT → LIFSAT	-.453	.296	.123	< .001	[.119, .692]
P–Y ICD → AUTSUPT	-.242	-.332	.063	< .001	[-.364, -.117]
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM	-.480	-.614	.050	< .001	[-.580, -.388]

Note. P–Y ICD = Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies. LIFSAT = Life Satisfaction. P–Y Comm = Parent–Child Communication Quality. AUTSUPT = Parental Autonomy Support.

Table 8

Model 2: Indirect Effects from the Decomposition Paths of the Children's Life Satisfaction Model

Path	Indirect Effect		S.E.	*p*	95% CI
	Unstandardized	Standardized			
Step 2					
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM → LIFSAT	-.322	-.288	.064	< .001	[-.451, -.201]
Step 3					
P–Y ICD → AUTSUPT → LIFSAT	-.150	-.134	.051	.003	[-.270, -.064]
Step 4					
P–Y ICD → P–Y COMM → LIFSAT	-.184	-.165	.054	.001	[-.293, -.080]
P–Y ICD → AUTSUPT → LIFSAT	-.110	-.098	.042	.008	[-.204, -.042]

*Note. P–Y ICD = Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies. P–Y COMM = Parent–Child Communication Quality. AUTSUPT = Parental Autonomy Support. LIFSAT = Life Satisfaction.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

For the qualitative study, 10 of the 161 respondents who took part in the survey participated in follow-up interview sessions. I analyzed several details that the quantitative analysis could not adequately capture, such as specific examples of the participants' intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their parents, the moments they felt their parents' love and its impact on their psychological well-being, and differences between their adolescence and the present in terms of their relationship with their parents. The participants also provided retrospective messages to the parents of their adolescent selves, as well as advice for current Korean-American adolescents. These last two questions were asked to identify possible factors that could ultimately and positively affect the young adults' psychological well-being. The participants' demographic information is described in Table 9 while Table 10 includes brief notes about each of the interviewees.

Table 9

Demographic Summary of Participants in the Interview Study

Name	Age	Gender	Place of Birth	Age of Arrival in the U.S.[1]	Years of Stay in the U.S.	Current Place of Residence	Citizenship Status	Occupation	Language Preference	Financially Independent from Parents?	State(s) Raised In
Soojin	19	Female	Korea	11	7	CA	U.S. Citizen	Freshman	Korean	No	AZ, CA
Nari	21	Female	Korea	10	11	MD	U.S. Permanent Resident	Junior	English	No	TX
Hyori	25	Female	Korea	13	11	TX	U.S. Visa	Accountant	Korean	Yes	TX
Dayeon	21	Female	USA	0	21	MD	U.S. Citizen	Senior	English	No	MD
Yura	31	Female	USA	0	29	NY	U.S. Citizen	Chief of Staff	English	Yes	NY
Minho	31	Male	USA	0	31	NY	U.S. Citizen	Filmmaker	English	Yes	IL, NJ
Gayeon	30	Female	Korea	14	16	NJ	U.S. Permanent Resident	Grad Student	Korean	No	NJ
Boram	22	Female	Korea	4	18	TX	U.S. Citizen	Senior	English	No	TX
Woojoo	19	Male	Korea	12	6	TX	U.S. Permanent Resident	Freshman	Korean	No	TX
Jihye	19	Female	USA	0	19	TX	U.S. Citizen	Sophomore	English	No	PA, TX

Note. Names are pseudonyms. [1]0 indicates being born in the U.S.

Table 10
Brief Notes about Participants

Name	Brief Notes
Soojin	Soojin immigrated to the U.S. seven years ago, when she was 11 years old, along with her parents and her younger sister. They emigrated through her aunt's family invitation for green card sponsorship. Soojin said her personality was very outgoing and bubbly, which made her mom think she would do better in the U.S. She struggled with her studies a bit when she first got here, but after middle school she was able to catch up and overall she was successful in high school. Both of her parents graduated from college in Korea, and her mom works for a microblading shop while her dad works as a pool man. She considers her family's socioeconomic status (SES) to be middle class. She thinks her family was lucky because they have gotten a lot of help from her aunt's family since they moved to the U.S.
Nari	Nari immigrated to the U.S. at age 10, along with her parents and her sister. She is a student majoring in arts. Both of her parents earned a bachelor's degree in Korea. Her mom is a saleswoman and her dad is a nurse. She considers her family's SES to be middle class.
Hyori	Hyori immigrated to the U.S. at age 13, with her parents and her sister. She and her sister did not know they were moving to another country until a month before they left Korea, while their parents were preparing for the move. So, it was kind of a sudden change for her. She is currently working as an accountant/CPA. Both of her parents earned a bachelor's degree in Korea. Her mom works at a store and her dad works as a nurse. She considers her family's SES to be working class.
Dayeon	Dayeon was born in the U.S. and is currently a senior studying international studies, sociology, and women's and gender studies. She is looking for a job, focusing on immigration specialist jobs, and is thinking about going to law school within a few years. For most of her life, she lived in a predominantly white neighborhood so she never had a large Asian community. Her mom received a high school diploma and is currently working as bookkeeper. Her dad earned a graduate degree and is working as an IT specialist. She considers her family's SES to be upper middle class.

Table 10

Brief Notes about Participants (cont.)

Name	Brief Notes
Yura	Yura was born in the U.S. and earned a master's degree in public and non-profit management and policy. She has worked at several Asian community centers, including a policy non-profit that served all Asians and a non-profit Korean community service center. She is currently home full-time, taking care of her newborn baby, but she is planning to go back to work soon. Her mom graduated from college and is currently running a small business, while her dad earned a bachelor's degree in the U.S. and is working as an electrical technician. She considers her family's SES to be middle class.
Minho	Minho was born in the U.S. and majored in computer visual effects/animation. He has been working two very different jobs: one as a video filmmaker and another as a social worker at a Korean social service non-profit organization. He is now preparing for a switch into a career in city government. Both of his parents received graduate degrees; his mom is a concert pianist and his dad is a reverend. His dad also used to work as a social worker for a Korean community. He considers his family's SES to be middle class.
Gayeon	Gayeon was born in Korea and immigrated to the U.S. at age 14, with her parents and her brother. She had to delay her college education for 3-4 years after high school, because her parents did not have enough money to send her and her brother to college at the same time. She is currently a graduate student majoring in global affairs and wants to get a government job or NGO position after graduation. Both of her parents graduated from college. Her mom works as a nail artist and her dad as a pastor. She considers her family's SES to be working class.

Table 10

Brief Notes about Participants (cont.)

Name	Brief Notes
Boram	Boram was born in Korea and immigrated to the U.S. with her family when she was four. She has younger twin siblings. She is a college senior studying broadcast journalism. When she came to the U.S. at the first time, her family traveled around a lot, including stints in Oklahoma and Illinois, and then finally settled in Texas. Although she left Korea when she was very young, she is very fluent in both Korean and English. Her mom earned a bachelor's degree and currently works as a nursing home's Korean activities director, and her dad earned a graduate degree and works as a pastor. She considers her family's SES to be middle class.
Woojoo	Woojoo was born in Korea and immigrated to the U.S. with his family when he was 12. Since he moved here quite late, he had a lot of trouble speaking English, which made it hard for him to make new friends. However, he adjusted okay by taking ESL (English as a Second Language) classes and experiencing Science Olympiad, where he had some opportunities to make friends. He is a freshman majoring in computer science. His mom earned a bachelor's degree and is currently a housewife, while his dad earned a graduate degree and is working as a geologist. He considers his family's SES to be middle class.
Jihye	Jihye was born in the U.S. and is currently a sophomore majoring in neuroscience. She was born in Texas but moved to Pennsylvania, then moved back to Texas again. She has twin brothers who are 7 years younger than her. Her mom earned a bachelor's degree and is currently working as a CT technician, while her dad earned a graduate degree and is working as an engineer. She considers her family's SES to be upper middle class.

Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies with Parents

      Specific experiences of intergenerational cultural discrepancies

      Participants recalled many moments when they felt intergenerational cultural gaps with

their parents.

      Less autonomy. Commonly mentioned situations include the parents telling their

children what to do with their lives when the children want to make their own decisions.

> I think for me, it was very much like, why can't I sleep over? Why can't I go out with
> my friends? Why? I'm 21 right now, but last year, they really wouldn't let me do things
> that were just fine. (Dayeon)

> I keep switching my job. My mom doesn't care so much, but my dad is more the
> type who thinks you need to be with the company for more than 30 years, then you
> retire, and that's your life. You can enjoy your life after you are stable. It's all about
> being stable compared to doing what you want. I think it's just very different from the
> second generation, depending on who you're talking to. (Minho)

      Pressure to keep Korean values. These situations also included the parents expecting

their children to behave like proper Asians and keep Korean values (including Korean history

and perceptions of beauty) which their children feel are too traditional or conservative. Yura

stated that even though her mom was an American citizen, she often told Yura, "You are Korean.

Don't forget that. We are Korean." Some parents also pushed their children to have a Korean

spouse. Minho said, "My dad wants me to marry a Korean, but I really don't think it matters at

this point. As long as you can understand each other, it's fine." Other participants addressed a

wide range of issues:

> It comes down to what I think is my perception of beauty and their perception of
> beauty, if that makes sense. I really want to get tatted up, but my parents are like nope!
> (Nari)

> When it came to clothing, when I was pregnant, I used to wear clothes that would
> expose my belly button because there's nothing to be ashamed of in pregnancy. But
> my mom would always tell me to wear clothes that covered me up and to not wear

anything tight. (Gayeon)

I understand my mom to an extent because she's lived in Korea for her whole life, and even now she only hangs out with other Korean ladies. But every time I act even just a little bit American, she always emphasizes the fact that I am Korean. (Woojoo)

I think one issue is the history between Korea and Japan. A lot went on between those countries. I understand it's a very divisive topic. I was so sad when my parents were telling me about how Japan did all this bad stuff to Korea, so I was kind of crying for Korea? My parents don't buy any food from Japan because they're scared of radiation and they don't like Japanese culture. My dad doesn't make racist remarks, but he just doesn't like Japan. But I can see the difference between a nation's history and their people. I don't judge someone for where they come from. You can't control the country's history. (Jihye)

My sister is a cartoonist. So, she draws animations but in a very Japanese style. I remember when I was young, my father hated that because of the whole Japanese imperialism of South Korea and the whole comfort woman thing. So, my dad hated my sister, but we loved Japanese anime growing up and stuff like Pokémon. (Yura)

They [my parents] would like for me to end up with someone who's Korean so we have a shared culture. But I think I'm someone who would be okay if I didn't end up with someone who had like the same culture, whether that's Korean culture or Asian culture. (Dayeon).

Shorter residence in the U.S. While many participants stated that they had a lot of intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their parents, Hyori, who lived in Korea for 13 years before coming to America, reported that she has not experienced many gaps with her parents. She said her parents were pretty conservative and she was also the same way, which she attributed to living in Korea for long time before coming to the States. She added, "My younger sister probably for sure felt that more, but for me I didn't feel that gap so much. Middle school isn't all grown up, but it's grown enough."

Effects of intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's feelings

Frustration, anger, confusion, and resentment. Participants also shared the feelings or emotions they experienced when they perceive the intergenerational cultural discrepancies with

their parents. These included frustration, anger, confusion, or even resentment:

> It's very frustrating. Sometimes depending on what it is, I feel anger. Because you are trying to live your life the way that you think is right, but they're telling you it's wrong. They're saying it's because they know better than you, but when you reach a certain age, after college, and as you get married, then you feel like you're not a child anymore. So, it becomes a grudge. You start building grudges against them. Then, you just hold it against them because they wouldn't support you when you had a disagreement. (Minho)

> I remember during Lunar New Year and Chuseok [two Korean big holidays], my parents would make me go to school in the U.S. We don't have a school holiday for Lunar New Year, but it's so important in Korean tradition, so I remember feeling so confused. I thought, "Wait, we're Korean! I should stay home from school." (Yura)

Communication with Parents

Frequency and topics of communication

Participants were asked to describe their overall communication or conversation with their parents, including how often they talked with them and what topics they shared each other. About half of the participants reported that they communicate with their parents quite often. Conversation topics varied widely, from casual everyday topics to jokes, personal or emotional support, consultations, professional advice, and debates on politics and religion. However, the other half of participants said they did not talk that often, or only talked as long as necessary. For instance, Yura said, "Not that often. I mean, we live in the same city, but my parents only call me when they need something. I only call them when I need something." Other participants shared a range of communication experiences:

> I do speak to them often. I try to say what I'm really thinking because I grew up in America in most of my formative years, but I feel like overall I just try to get through the conversation peacefully. (…). I catch up with them whenever I call them once a week. (Woojoo)

I was much more open with them in high school, in the beginning or at least and in middle school, I was very open. I was more innocent in a sense back then. I would just tell them everything, and we didn't clash as much when I was younger. (Boram)

My mom, I talk to [her] every other day. (…). My dad, I talk to him through Kakao [KakaoTalk, a Korean messenger app] maybe once every two weeks, and we call each other maybe once a month? But it's always the same conversation, so there's really no point in having multiple phone calls. (Minho)

I feel like, honestly, not that much. I think with my parents for school specifically, there was a certain point where they, besides my dad helping me with math, and everything else I knew - they couldn't really help me with just because they learned all of this in Korean in Korea. (…). And then for emotional stuff, also, I feel like it was kind of like a pretty typical Asian household when there wasn't really an emphasis put on deeper emotional well-being and talking things out and stuff. So, I feel like my communication with my parents was just kind of stuff that I needed. (Dayeon)

Some participants communicated with their mothers and fathers in very different manners. Conversation methods, maternal and paternal relationships, and each parent's English proficiency affected the participants' communication style and its frequency.

[When I'm going through a hard thing, like if I'm struggling with my grades or I'm wondering about what to be as an adult,] I do consult with them a lot. But I don't really listen to my mom as much whenever she gives me advice or tells me what to do. Because my mom is so conservative. My dad gives me much more realistic advice. She [my mom] just wanted me to go to a nicer school. (…). My dad was just like, you do whatever you want to do, whatever you think you will enjoy the most. (Woojoo)

I tend to spill to my dad a lot, because my dad doesn't interrupt me or scrutinize me while I'm talking and just listens. My heart feels better after letting it all out. But with my mom, I can't do that with her. (…). My mom is trying to give me advice but what I'm wanting isn't judgement or advice. I just want her to listen. (…). So, naturally I would only tell my dad my inner thoughts and how I really feel and wouldn't tell anything to my mom. (Gayeon)

I did a fair amount [of communication with my parents], more with my mom. We can have more of a conversation. We would joke around and talk about stuff. (…). We mainly just text because I don't see them physically that often. (…). When I was

growing up, I didn't really talk to my dad, it was more him talking to me. (…). He never really listens to what I say at all, so I feel like we've never had a full dialogue. (Jihye)

My parents and I don't really have conversations. I think my dad and I are very close, but I think that's because he speaks English better. (…). We've had conversations my whole life: debates about religion, debates about business and the economy, debates about whatever, family values. But my mom and I, my mom's English isn't that great. (Yura)

Effects of communication with parents on children's lives

Participants also described the advantages of communicating with their parents and how their communication with their parents affected their life or psychological adjustment.

Advice. Some people stated that when they have difficulties and shared them with their parents, they could get some advice which helped them make decisions.

It was helpful in life, like life and financial advice. Especially when I was younger. Especially when I was working at that Korean non-profit, dealing with old people. (…). I think I got closer to my dad while I was doing that because my dad was doing something like that for twenty something years. (…). He also worked in a Korean community, so since we did similar work at the time. (…). If it's something I need actual advice in, then it does help. (Minho)

Recently, I went back home, and I was telling my mom that I feel like I'm not interested in anything anymore. She said that it sounded like I was kind of depressed. But then, I was like I don't know what to do because my fun stuff wasn't fun anymore. She said why don't you try something that isn't just for you, and I started looking into different things and that's definitely helped. (Jihye)

Emotional support. Woojoo said he felt more calm around his parents because he knew they could understand what he was trying to say. Boram said that she felt like she was growing up and that she did not have a lot of anxiety. On the other hand, participants whose communication quality with their parents was not that smooth experienced some negative emotions or tended to stop open conversation with them.

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It [a piercing on my cartilage] is something that I still haven't told them about and it's actually been quite a while since I got it, but when it comes to those kinds of things I definitely can't just openly talk to them. (Nari)

I think emotionally, that is actually kind of negative, that there isn't any conversation saying this is mental health or what mental health is or like a kind of fostering, maybe a more emotionally healthier nurturing environment. Well, I found that when I got older, I very much had to seek out my own help, whether that's like really close friends or now that I'm in college I can access mental health services by myself without them having to be aware or knowing. (Dayeon)

Better parent–child relationships. Yura said that their communication seemed to make their relationships better, but interestingly, they were likely not to be honest each other just because they did not want to burden each other.

Yes, [I think more communication with my parents makes my relationship with them better] because I think I understand. Well, I don't know. It's a yes and no. I think what's hard is my parents aren't always honest with me. And I'm not always honest with them. It's not like we're lying to each other. It's because we don't want to burden each other. (Yura)

Improvement in Korean language proficiency. Woojoo said he noticed an improvement in his Korean language proficiency while he was talking with their parents.

I think my Korean definitely improves whenever I talk with them. I also went through a phase where I really talked to my parents a lot, I feel like during that time my Korean was really refined. It really helped me with my Korean skills. (…). I am able to express my emotions to them clearly, so that is nice. It's comfortable. (Woojoo)

Mattering to Parents

The moments of feeling parents' love

Participants were asked about the moments that they felt their parents love them or they perceived that they were significant to their parents–feeling that they mattered to their parents.

Food and feeding. The most common examples they gave were food-related, including times when their parents gave them food or asked whether they had eaten. Hyori said that her

parents apologize whenever they are unable to make her really yummy food during her visits. At the end of each visit, she reported, they always ask what she wants to eat next time she comes. Woojoo also pointed out, "They cooked a lot for me. Also, whenever I call them, they do always ask if I've eaten." Soojin shared, "Whenever I got home late, [my mother] had made me TteokBokKi [a Korean dish]! So, I remember really feeling her love through her food." Other participants also stated that they felt their parents' love in terms of food:

> I'm not sure about when I was young, but for sure, now I know my dad gets really happy whenever I go visit them. (…). [They know] I'm a terrible cook because I'm very lazy. Whenever it's time for me to go [back home], they pack the marinated meats, fried anchovies, and other dishes for me to take home. They really pack my fridge. (Hyori)

> When I got to high school, and with my mom especially, I felt loved when she would always pack my lunch, even if she was busy. I would only eat salads so she would always separate the string cheese into very thin layers every single day, so now that I think about it that's something that can only be done with love. (Nari)

> During high school, I would have to wake up at 5:45am to get ready for school. I would always see my mom also getting up this early to prepare food. I honestly wouldn't even really want to eat it, but she would scold me and say "You don't even eat well at school. What are you going to do if you can't even eat this?" Even now, whenever I have a phone call with my mom, the first thing she asks me is "You didn't eat yet?" Depending on when the phone call is, breakfast/lunch/dinner, she would ask, and if I send her a picture of what I'm eating at school, she would always say "Eat more." or "Eat more rice." (Soojin)

Explicit verbal or behavioral affection. Explicit verbal or behavioral affection also made the participants perceive that they mattered to their parents. When the participants heard verbal affection like "I love you" at the end of phone calls, or when their parents were physically affectionate by hugging, kissing, or patting them on the back, they recognized their parents' love for them. Similarly, they perceived mattering when their parents took their side in conflicts with others, when they felt they were protected by their parents, and when their parents tried to listen

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to and talk with them. Some participants also perceived their mattering to parents when they

were not pushed or pressured to study and instead given more autonomy.

> [My parents] both still come in, and usually they give me a kiss on my forehead or on my cheek. And the first place they go to when they come back from work is my room, usually to check on me. (Nari)

> My dad is the most protective figure in my life. Like if I'm about to touch something dangerous, he would tell me to get away or to stop, to protect me. I feel his love the most when he's trying to protect me like that. (Soojin)

> Whenever my brothers or I ever get physically injured, my dad would always get mad. I used to not get it and go, why does he always get mad? It's not my fault. But I realized he feels so bad that his children got hurt. I definitely think I'm significant to [my parents]. (Jihye)

> I've felt their love through them not being the stereotypical Asian parents. The stereotype that so many Asian parents have is about them putting pressure on their kids to be at the top of their class and needing to get good grades always. Even though I was like that and I graduated top of my class and did really well in school, they never pressured me to do any of those things. I just did them. (Boram)

Implicit verbal and behavioral affection. On the other hand, some participants stated

that they felt their parents love no matter how much or how little their parents explicitly said so,

because they always implicitly felt loved by how their parents treated them. Woojoo noted that

he actually didn't feel any particular emotions when he heard something he had heard so many

times, like asking if he had eaten a meal, but he felt like it did show that his parents love and care

about him. Nari also said she did not feel anything special at the moments her parents showed

their affection, because she was so used to it, which itself made her feel always loved by their

parents.

> I don't think we ever really said "I love you" except when I was really little. It was not that it was never anything super direct. Like it was never verbal. But it was always interesting in the ways they showed it. My mom was literally driving me everywhere, paying for my violin lessons, and cutting up fruit all the time. Stuff like that, acts of service rather than verbal affirmation. (Dayeon)

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He [my dad] never really listens to what I say at all. So, I feel like we've never had a full dialogue. But I can definitely go to him if I need advice. In my freshman year, I struggled a lot. My dad would drive to where I am at 11pm and pick me up and we'd go to IHOP together. We didn't talk too much, but I just felt...supported. (Jihye)

I always assumed I was an important person to my mom because that seems like the obvious thing. None of her actions ever made me feel like she didn't love me. My dad is like a solid tree in my life. (Gayeon)

It felt great when I felt their love because I didn't have a lot of instances where my parents actively showed me love. It was always passive. It's like, "I'm cooking for you," "I'm paying the bills," or "I bought a house where you can have your own room." That's their way of showing love. And for me, I was fine with that. But it was definitely those instances when they actively showed me love and I think it meant a lot. It was great. (Yura)

Parents' hard work. Participants also mentioned that when they saw their parents working very hard, they recognized their dedication to their children's future, and that their parents made a lot of sacrifices, especially for their children's education. These participants believed that the reason their parents did not mind working that hard was just because they love their children.

My mom worked so hard for us so we could have food to eat and have a roof over our heads. She's never hurt us verbally or physically. Through her actions, I was able to know she cared and loved us. (Gayeon)

Whenever I see my parents working hard. Because they are doing all of these things for us, like moving to America. (…). I think it's an obvious thing for a parent to love their child. (Hyori)

My dad's a pastor. Pastors don't get paid really well. So, he would always have to work side jobs. I think the biggest thing is that they never made us feel underprivileged, despite the circumstances we were often in. I think that is a real something that resonated in my life. I've never felt poor in my life, even though we aren't well off either. My dad has had to work night shifts at a gas station, or at Panera Bread factory as a cleaner, and he's had to work so many side jobs and they're often night shifts. So, he's always lacking sleep. During the day he's a pastor and at night he's something else. I think he was making sure we never felt like we

don't have enough, and never financially burdening us in anyway. I don't think he's ever talked to me about money before, even though I know we've struggled. I think that he's not burdening me with that. Even though I would've been happy to help and contribute to the house income by doing part time jobs in high school, he's never asked me for that. I think he just wanted me to focus on school. (Boram)

I was always like "Why is my dad always angry and always gone for business trips?" And my mom would see that I was upset. We would actually fight over this, but she would say that he does all of this for me and to make money for us. He brings back gifts, and his children are the most important thing to him, she would say. That helped me realize how important I am to them. (Jihye)

I know that having me and my sister meant a lot of sacrifices for [my parents] and that we're in the back of their minds. I know I was significant. (Dayeon)

Financial support. Some participants also said that their parents' financial support of their education or living costs, which helped them enjoy diverse extracurricular activities or purchase anything they needed, also made them feel loved by their parents.

I have a friend who had to take out student loans to go to school. But my parents, they're supporting me fully in my education, so I don't have that burden of worrying about money. (…) If I wanted to do a sport or do music, my parents always supported me in that. I feel like that showed their love and trust in me. Now, whenever I come home, they're really happy. They always ask if I need anything. (Woojoo)

I feel like growing up they [my parents] put the most effort in me. I can physically see it, by how they groomed me to be who and where I am today. I feel like they really invested a ton of time. (…). I grew up to be the most confident in myself. I know what I'm doing in my life, and very much with my personality and everything. They invested a lot of time in me to make that happen, so yes. I feel very significant to them. (Boram)

Effects of mattering to parents on children's feelings

Participants described their feelings when they felt loved by their parents or they perceived that they were significant to their parents.

Positive emotions. Many of them experienced positive emotions in this case, such as feeling cared for, nice, comfortable, touched, good, and thankful. For example, Dayeon said that

whenever her parents asked if she had eaten, she thought that was a sign of caring. Likewise, when their parents asked her, "How are you? Are you healthy? Are you doing well? Are you having a good time?" she thought they were making sure that she was doing more than just studying and not neglecting other aspects of her life. Such questions, Jihye noted, have "helped me ground and center myself on things that have changed in my life that I didn't realize had changed."

> I feel cared for. I think just being supported in general is really nice. I understand that it helps ground me because in college everyone's like I don't know what to do with my life. So, it helps to know that my family's got my back. Also, when I visit home, I get way more emotional. (Jihye)

> Reflecting back on it, I guess now I feel thankful. But at that exact moment I didn't feel anything special because I always felt loved by them. (Nari)

> I felt touched and thankful. I have so much to be thankful towards them for, when it comes to what they've done for me and how they've raised me. (…) I think it made me a grateful person. That's how it's affected me the most. (…) That's really instilled in my life to be thankful for everything and anything in my life and to not take anything for granted. (Boram)

> When they ask if I've eaten, I feel like I'm cared about. I feel good, I think. I'm always eating well. (…). Also, when they send me money, I feel thankful. (Woojoo)

Negative emotions. However, when they were pressured to do something or they felt they could not satisfy their parents, these children experienced negative emotions such as depression, anxiety, fear, sadness, or anger.

> They [my parents] would always say that they know I'm capable of doing something and they would want me to do it, but I was in middle and high school. I wanted to have fun. I cared about my grades, but I wasn't going to sit down and study 24 hours a day because I didn't want to. So, some things wouldn't go as planned and my dad would get really angry. I would feel really sad every time I went home. Looking back, I was a little depressed because I wanted to stop going to school, it was for a brief period, but it wasn't good between my dad and me. We're better now though. (Jihye)

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Emotional Autonomy Support

Academic pressure and emotional autonomy support

Academic pressure. Many of the participants recalled academic pressure from their parents when they were adolescents. They stated that Korean parents, especially moms, tended to be strict with grades and school performances, as well as to want their children to get into a good school with a high reputation. Woojoo said, "My mom is a typical Asian mom. She's very strict with grades, and in middle and high schools I was sent to a college prep course even though I didn't want to go." Along similar lines, Jihye said, "I remember my parents getting mad if I wasn't working all the time, which in this case right now is studying." Nari also stated that the only kind of pressure her parents expressed to her verbally was about grades.

Limited autonomy. In addition to the academic pressure, participants cited their limited autonomy, driven by their parents' rules on topics such as curfews, clothing, and make-up, as one reason that they got stressed out. Jihye put it this way:

> I remember my parents were very against sleepovers. To me, that didn't make any sense. Why can't I sleep at another person's house if their parents said it's okay? I know I would also have to tell my friend that she would have to ask her mom to invite me if she wants me to be able to sleep over, so my friends would have to do some extra work for me. They're still pretty strict when I come home. I have a curfew and they always need to know where I am. I dress pretty conservatively anyways but at parties I like to dress up a bit cute. My parents would not like that. It's strange though. They're conservative about clothing, they're not like that with heels. (Jihye)

Emotional autonomy support. On the other hand, several participants stated that their parents showed them emotional autonomy support so they could pursue whatever they wanted to do in school or their careers. They also mentioned that their parents trusted them. For example, Woojoo said, "My dad always says you do whatever you want to do, whatever you think, and whatever you will enjoy the most," and Nari said, "Overall, they just wish for me to be

passionate about the things that I do and not slack off." Hyori and Boram also mentioned how their parents believed in them.

> My parents were never like "You have to be a doctor." My dad has always put experiences first ever since we were young, so even if we missed school if it was with them, it was okay sometimes. (…). They never stressed me out over school. Dad would always say to do our best. Not giving us stress was the way they supported us. I didn't show any particular promise with my studies, so I just did my best. With my school or career, I just chose to do it because I didn't really have another choice for my next step. But they did believe in me a lot. (Hyori)

> I've never felt huge pressure. I've felt their love through them not being the stereotypical Asian parents. That stereotype that so many have about Asian parents is them putting pressure on their kids to be at the top of their class and needing to get good grades, always. Even though I was like that, I graduated top of my class and did really well in school, they never pressured me to do any of those things. I just did that. (Boram)

Negative emotions. Participants also shared their feelings of when they were academically pressured by their parents. Woojoo said he felt bad when he failed or did not do well on exams. Minho also said that when he realized he was not qualified for a university that he thought he could automatically get into with his grades, he felt very bad. He described that realization like this: "That's when I had an aha- moment, like oh my god, this is really bad. To be honest, I broke down emotionally because I was so afraid of my mom and my dad." He also mentioned how he got stressed out from his grades and academic pressure:

> In junior high, my grades started getting really bad, so there were a lot more punishments and fighting [with my parents] about my grades. I think when you're 12 years old and getting in trouble, you just think about stuff like "Oh, they're going to beat me to death and that's going to be the end of my life." (Minho)

Positive emotions. On the other hand, other participants felt that their parents believed in them and supported their autonomy. These participants stated that they felt proud, loved, and happy, and satisfied with their life. As Hyori put it, "I feel proud but also feel a responsibility.

I'm happy my parents aren't worried about me." Boram offered a more detailed answer:

> When they trusted me, in deciding in whatever I wanted to do with my life, I really felt that they loved me because in college they really left it up to me. You know how most parents always put in their opinions and what they want for you. I don't think we've ever had a conversation like that before ever. They told me I could do whatever I want. I think they trusted me in life, that showed me that they really loved me in that sense. (Boram)

Changes in Overall Parent–Child Relationships from Children's Adolescence to The Present

Participants also described how their overall relationships with their parents changed between their adolescence and the present, including intergenerational cultural discrepancies or conflicts, parenting behaviors, parent–child communication frequency and quality, and parental emotional autonomy support. Most of the participants said that their relationships had improved since adolescence, though some problems still remained.

More freedom and independence. They stated that as time went by, their immigrant parents were likely to try to give them more freedom and independence, push them less to keep Korean values, be less strict to them, trust them more, treat them as adults, and not try to fight or argue with them.

> I was like I am my own person. Why are you trying to control me? So, there was definitely an issue with independence. (…). And as time went by, when my parents came to America, they wanted me to have Korean values, but they knew I would have American ones as well. So, they became less strict then. They trust me more because I'm more grown now. (Jihye)

> My mom got me my first phone when I was a freshman in high school. So, I got my phone really late, but from freshman year to senior year after 10 pm she would have me give her the phone for the night. I had a lot of limitations. And I had to present my grades to her all the time. But now that I'm a college student, all of those things are gone. Overall, I feel way more relaxed. I feel like I have more freedom, and that they're leaving more things up to my decision. (Woojoo)

They [my parents] give me more independence [now]. There was a shift. I graduated and started college, they stepped back and said you know what's good for you. Whereas they would say back then, we know what's good for you, go do it. So, it's more freedom. When it comes to decisions about my own life, they told me to choose whatever I think is best for me. (…). I could sense they were trying to give me space. (Jihye)

I think now, there is less [arguing] for me and my parents. But when I was younger, my dad and I used to argue so bad that we would stop talking to each other for three months, living in the same house. (Minho)

Participants also described changes in how they perceived their parents' parenting behaviors or how they treated them during their college years.

More understanding of parents and their culture of origin. Most of the participants recalled that they did not notice how much their parents loved them when they were young, but as they got older, especially after they left home and went to college, they started to understand their parents better as they met more people in college or at work. This made the children realize why their parents pushed them so hard, as they came to understand how much hardship their parents had to go through in a new place, America—especially at the beginning of their immigration. Traveling to or visiting Korea also provided them with good opportunities to understand their parents and the family- and group-oriented Korean culture, in which their parents were born and grew up with their extended families. In addition, some participants who already had their own kids stated that they better understand their parents' perspectives based on their own parenting experiences.

I think when I was younger, I just didn't notice it as much. But now that I'm not really home, and I guess it's just because I'm living outside without my parents. Especially being at school and around people my age, and seeing how some of my friend's parents are open to certain things, that's when I began to notice, how come we had this gap. (Nari)

It's hard to see that when you're younger. But as you get older and get a job and

start doing your own thing, it makes a lot more sense. (Minho)

I think that helps when you have to rationalize why a lot of Asian parents are so strict on their kids. It's because they want you to not suffer the same way that they did. So, I feel like it helps to kind of know they're coming out of a place of survival. That is why they push you so hard, and they are showing that they love you by trying to make you be as good as you can be even though it's too much of the time and it was stressful. (Dayeon)

Yes, [my trip to Korea helped me understand Korean culture and my parents]. Again, everything was so group oriented. (…). Generally, everyone was much more respectful. It definitely clarified a lot of things for me, especially the family aspect. I didn't really understand before how important family was, and why my parents do the things they do. (Jihye)

Compared to the past, what's really cool is that the mom that I experienced in high school isn't the same as now. Now that I'm older, and I'm a mom myself with experience with society, I've begun to realize that my mom was saying those things to me for a reason. Our relationship is getting better slowly. When I was younger, I did have some angry feelings towards my mom, but now it's almost all gone. (Gayeon)

Korean-American Young Adults' Messages to the Parents of Their Adolescence

Toward the end of the interview session, the participants were asked what they would ask their parents to do for them if they could go back to their adolescence.

More communication. The most common messages toward their parents requested more communication. Soojin said, "It would've been nicer if you were able to communicate how you really felt to them at that time," Yura said, "I would love for them to be more communicative with me, in a recreational sense. I just wish that they kind of shared more of their experiences," and Hyori similarly said, "If we talked more it would be nice, although part of that is my fault."

Being accepted as Korean-American. Participants also asked their parents to accept that their children are Korean-American, not just Korean. They just wanted them to acknowledge their children as they are. Jihye's words are representative:

You may come from Korean culture, but your kids are not so they are going to

become different people. Understanding those differences, and how they respond to things doesn't mean they are a worse person or they aren't trying. They just have a different way of expressing things. It's like how there's different love languages, it's the same with parents and their kids. (Jihye)

More autonomy. They also requested their parents to be less strict, give them more autonomy, not push them to be a smart student, and not judge them based on the standards of Korean beauty and appearance. Boram said, "I would ask them to not be so strict in the movies or books I read. I think they could've let me handle those things," Nari advised, "Mom, dad, give up. I'm not going to be that child that brings you all As in AP or PreAP classes. Just understand that I don't have the book smart genes." Minho said, "I would say to stop annoying me about body image. Because of this whole Korean body image thing, I feel like it was very... I suffered from it heavily." Dayeon put it this way:

> I guess just not being so strict. I think I really developed a fear of authority. Like I really couldn't ask my teachers questions and look them in the eyeballs just because you have to be so deferential to adults and not really ask them anything or talk out of place. (…). Adults aren't these huge authority figures. You can just treat them like normal people. (Dayeon)

Korean-American Young Adults' Messages to Current Korean-American Adolescents

The last question in the interview session asked the participants what advice they would give to current Korean-American adolescents.

Understanding parents' culture of origin and their sacrifices. The most mentioned advice was to try to understand where their parents originally came from, and to acknowledge the sacrifices that they already have had to make for their children. Other advice included:

> I think understanding where in time our parents came from is super important. A lot of that shaped our parents' reactions, the way that they teach us, the way that they raise us where their priorities are. Because for them, opportunity is so different from the way that we define opportunity. For them it's survival, whereas for us it's privilege. (Yura)

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Try to understand where their parents are coming from. (…). Take a step back, and realize where their actions come from and where you're at are different places. So there will be conflict, but it's for good. (Jihye)

I would understand how they felt and want to give them comfort and motivation. (…). I believe the parents sacrificed the most to have them come here, so they need to be able to acknowledge that. I'm not saying live for your parents, but think of your parents and live your life to the fullest in this country because that is the best thing you could do. (Hyori)

If you're a child of immigrants, recognize that your parents came from a pretty different culture, and they just want you to be as successful as you can be for yourself. So, even though they might seem really unreasonable, unreasonably strict or hard, it's coming from a place of love and devotion. (Dayeon)

No matter how much you may not like some things, you're basically able to do everything you're able to do because they gave up so much by coming to the States for you. And you can do whatever you want after getting into a good school with lots of scholarships, because I think that's the best way you can repay them for all the things they've done for you. (Nari)

Keeping a Korean ethnic identity. Other advice included to keep their ethnic identity as Korean-Americans, to find a group which can connect you with Korean cultures, to spend time with your parents, and to try your best whatever you are doing.

The advice I would give is to not become white-washed. I think you need to embrace your culture. If your parents are first generation immigrants, and they're more comfortable with Korean, I think you need to try hard to retain and respect that because you are Korean. You can't deny that part of yourself. You need to love that part of yourself if anything, so my advice is to love your Korean culture and Koreanness, Korean appearance, and everything that is Korean about you. But also live out your American lifestyle, you don't have to reject one or the other. Just live out the best of both, and a lot of people like Korean culture anyways so it won't be difficult either. (Boram)

Don't forget who you are. No matter what we do, and this is a struggle I have every day and will have until the day I die, but I grew up here, I have a flag right there, but my skin is still yellow. Not white. Even if I go to Korea, and even if I can speak Korean fluently, Koreans will never accept me for who I am because I am not them. This creates a situation where we are kind of isolated. So, it's important for adolescents to understand that they are Korean-Americans. (Minho)

When there are a lot of Koreans, you don't think about it. But when there's no Koreans, you think about how you're the only Korean. So, finding a group you can connect with culturally thought. Food and music are very important. (Minho)

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I summarize the key findings for each research question and show how the results connect to existing literature theoretically and empirically. Next, I discuss implications of these results for family relationships and practice in parenting. The chapter concludes by acknowledging the study's limitations and suggesting future research directions.

Overall, this study analyzed the relationships between Korean-American young adults' intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their immigrant parents and their psychological adjustment. Specifically, the main purpose of this study is to examine the mediating effects of parent–child communication quality, mattering to parents, and parental autonomy support within that relationship. I used a mixed methods approach, providing a more multidimensional and dynamic understanding of the effects of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's psychological well-being. While the quantitative part of the study focuses on the direct and indirect effects of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's psychological adjustment, the qualitative part elicits a rich description of specific examples of these effects and possible reasons for the quantitative results, using participants' vivid reports about their perceptions of their parents' parenting behaviors and support for them. For this discussion section, I combine the results from both quantitative and qualitative analyses to provide a comprehensive understanding of the results and their implications.

Effects of Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies on Children's Depressive Symptoms, through Parent–Child Communication Quality and Mattering to Parents (Model 1)

For both time periods, i.e., the participants' adolescence and the present, the overall results showed almost the same trends, except for the effect of mattering to parents on their depressive symptoms in Step 3. First, the simple linear regression (Step 1) results showed that parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies directly affected children's depressive symptoms. These findings support Hypothesis 1a for both time periods and are consistent with previous studies proposing Acculturation Gap-Distress Theory (Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993). This theory postulates that the differences in self-identities, cultural values, and acculturation preferences between foreign-born immigrant parents and their 1.5- or second-generation native-born children lead to intergenerational cultural discrepancies, which ultimately lead to children's maladjustment or mental health problems (Portes & Rumbaut, 1990; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993). The findings of this study suggests that this theory can be also applied to Korean-American populations. Like children in other ethnic groups, Korean-American children reported a lot of challenges relating to acculturation and identity confusion, as well as conflicts with their parents. They also highlighted the fact that these discrepancies with their parents affected their depressive symptoms.

These quantitative results suggest the importance of narrowing the intergenerational cultural gaps in Korean immigrant families, in order to maintain and improve children's mental health. But when do Korean-American young adults feel intergenerational cultural discrepancies with their parents, and what do they feel when they experience those gaps? Participants in the qualitative sessions recalled several specific moments that they felt cultural gaps with their parents. They highlighted situations such as their parents forcing them to do something when they want to make their own decisions, pushing them to study hard to go to a good university despite their weak academic performance, and pressuring them to maintain "proper" Korean

values and behaviors that the young adults see as too conservative. When the young adults felt these gaps or conflicts with their parents, they experienced a lot of negative emotions such as frustration, anger, confusion, stress, and resentment.

Second, the simple mediation (Step 2; Figures 6 and 8) results showed that parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies directly affected children's depressive symptoms in Step 1, but when parent–child communication quality was added to this relationship as a mediator, the direct impact of those discrepancies on the depressive symptoms was no longer significant (full mediation). Instead, the role of parent–child communication quality in the relationship between the discrepancies and depressive symptoms became more important, implying that parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies affect parent–child communication quality and this communication quality subsequently affects children's depressive symptoms. These results were found in both the questions about the participants' adolescence and those about the present.

These findings from Step 2 support Hypothesis 1b for both time periods in my study, extending previous findings that communication is critical in immigrant families because it keeps the family members' emotional bond strong (Kim & Park, 2011). Similarly, these findings support earlier arguments that a lack of open communication between parents and children in immigrant families tends to increase feelings of parent–child detachment (Qin, 2006). The findings also demonstrate that Acculturative Family Distancing Theory (Hwang, 2006) can be applied to Korean-American populations. This theory refers to the distancing that occurs between first-generation immigrant parents and their 1.5- or second-generation children as a result of their cultural differences and different acculturation levels.

The qualitative analyses in the present study imply the importance of parent–child communication quality as well. According to the analyses, the Korean-American young adults who had open and rich communication with their parents had conversations on various topics, including everyday occurrences, work-related professional advice, and debates on politics and religion. These people tended to feel a sense of accomplishment, calm, safety, and maturity. They also got helpful advice on areas they were struggling with, improved their Korean language proficiency, and even improved their relationships with their parents. However, those who had one-way conversations with their parents were likely to experience some negative emotions or close their minds, so they did not express what they really felt or thought to their parents. Also, those who lacked conversation with their parents found it hard to get close to them, so they were not able to ask their parents for help when they needed it. This finally made their relationships disconnected or estranged.

Third, unlike the results in Step 2, another simple mediation in Step 3 showed slightly different results between the two time periods. In the depressive symptoms in adolescence model (Figure 6), parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies directly affected children's depressive symptoms in Step 1, but when mattering to parents was added to this relationship as a mediator, the direct impact of those discrepancies on depressive symptoms was no longer significant (full mediation). Instead, the role of mattering to parents in the relationship between the discrepancies and depressive symptoms became more important, implying that parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies affect mattering to parents and this mattering subsequently affects children's depressive symptoms. Thus, the findings from Step 3 for the adolescence model support Hypothesis 1c. In the present depressive symptoms model (Figure 8), on the other hand, the simple mediation (Step 3) was not statistically significant—parent–child

intergenerational cultural discrepancies affected children's perceived mattering to parents, but this mattering did not affect children's depressive symptoms in the present. Also, the direct effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's depressive symptoms was still significant. Thus, the findings from Step 3 for the present model do not support Hypothesis 1c.

Taking these results together with those from both time periods in Step 3, the main difference between adolescence and the present is whether the children's perceived mattering to parents significantly affects their depressive symptoms. Specifically, when the participants were adolescents, feeling important to their parents seemed to serve as a channel or a step in the overall process of intergenerational cultural discrepancies affecting their depressive symptoms, but now that they have reached emerging adulthood or young adulthood, this perceived mattering to parents doesn't seem to play as significant a role in their depressive symptoms.

While the survey data does not specifically explain why this relationship appears differently in participants' adolescence and the present, the qualitative data suggests some possible reasons for this difference. To elicit these reasons, participants in the interview session were asked about the specific moments when they perceived they felt loved by their parents or they mattered to their parents, as well as what exactly they felt at those moments. The Korean-American young adults most commonly associated mattering with times their parents asked them if they had eaten regularly or when their parents took time out of their busy schedules to cook for them, especially during middle and high school. Participants also felt they were important to their parents when their parents showed verbal or behavioral affection, such as saying "I love

you" or hugging or kissing them. These displays of affection are somewhat explicit or direct so people can notice them quite easily.

One unique theme in the responses, however, is how some of the participants also recognized their parents' love through implicit, unseen, or silent behaviors—or even through negative parenting behaviors such as losing their temper over nothing or pushing their children too strongly to study hard. Significantly, they rarely noticed these behaviors in the moment, especially during their adolescence. Most of them recalled not understanding (during adolescence) why their parents behaved in certain ways, why they got angry so easily, why they did not stay home during the day to take care of their children (as other parents did), why they worked so hard, why they spent little time interacting with their children, and why they pushed their children to study hard.

However, as they grew older, especially after they left home and got into college, the young adults began to understand these behaviors. According to the participants, this change emerged because having less in-person contact with their parents reduced conflicts with them, because working part-time showed them how difficult and draining it is to earn money, or because attending college showed them the importance of studying hard during middle school and high school. They may also have gotten to know people from diverse familial and cultural backgrounds, helping them realize how each person can be different. The participants who already had kids of their own tended to understand better what their parents felt when they were in their 30s, around the same age as the participants. This helps them empathize with the younger versions of their parents.

By combining the quantitative and qualitative analyses, we can speculate why the relationship between mattering to parents and depressive symptoms appears differently in participants' adolescence and the present. As Korean-American children reach adolescence, they are likely to have more intergenerational cultural discrepancies or conflicts with their parents, since they are exposed to the mainstream culture more often. However, as those children get older and transition to emerging adulthood and young adulthood, they broaden their knowledge and experience and see more of the world. Slowly and steadily, they start to understand their parents as immigrant parents, even though they were exposed to American culture more often and acclimated to the mainstream society faster than their parents did. Thus, during emerging adulthood and young adulthood participants may tend to perceive their parents' love toward them relatively more generously than when they were adolescents. This implies that their psychological well-being may be relatively less influenced in the present by their parents compared to when they were younger—because they now know that all those parenting behaviors came from their parents' love for them, regardless of how they expressed it.

The results of this study are consistent with some of the previous studies which address how as immigrant parents' children reach adolescence, they tend to perceive more discrepancies between their parents' parenting and what they have been exposed to by peers, at school, and in the larger society (Hyman, Vu, & Beiser, 2001). However, the present findings also contrast with earlier analyses showing that the relationships among acculturation mismatch, intergenerational cultural conflicts, and children's psychological well-being were stronger for the young adult groups than the adolescent groups in immigrant families (Lui, 2015). The current study also challenges the assumption of the earlier works that parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies in immigrant families may increase as the children transition to emerging

adulthood or as they complete their college educations, considering that immigrant children tend to acclimate to American society faster than their parents do (Portes, 1997; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Szapocznik et al., 1978; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993).

Last, in the final model in Step 4 (Tables 4 and 6), a two-mediator serial mediation analysis was not significant. The main indirect pathway in this mediation model is the longest one, from parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies to depressive symptoms through parent–child communication quality and mattering to parents in serial, but this path was not statistically significant. Specifically, parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies affected parent–child communication quality, and this communication quality subsequently affected mattering to parents, but this mattering did not affect depressive symptoms. These findings were present during adolescence and in the present.

As mentioned previously, this two-mediator serial mediation analysis was performed independently from the separate models of Steps 1 to 3, regardless of their results. This approach is based on a modern methodological approach that many scholars have adopted in the past ten years (Cerin & MacKinnon, 2009; Hayes, 2009; Rucker, Preacher, Tormala, & Petty, 2011). The two-mediator serial mediational pathway is regarded as its own model, which does not impose an association between the independent variable (*X)* and the dependent variable (*Y)* as a precondition for mediation analysis (Bollen, 1989; Hayes, 2013). Thus, the results from this model can be different from the ones in the separate models of Steps 1 to 3. That is why I added this final model, in order to see what the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and depressive symptoms would look like when both mediators (i.e.,

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parent–child communication quality and mattering to parents) are put into this path at the same time.

While the results in Step 3 show the difference between the two time periods of adolescence and the present, in terms of whether the children's perceived mattering to parents affects their depressive symptoms, the Step 4 results show that children's perceived mattering to parents does not affect their depressive symptoms in either time period. The direct effect of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on depressive symptoms is also not significant. Thus, these results do not support the hypothesized indirect effects of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies on children's depressive symptoms, through parent–child communication quality and mattering to parents in serial. This implies that greater parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies can lead to lower parent–child communication quality, and this lower communication quality subsequently affects mattering to parents; but like the results from Step 3 in the present model, this mattering to parents does not seem to significantly affect children's depressive symptoms, regardless of the time period or the children's ages.

These results are not consistent with many of the previous studies on immigrant families in other ethnic groups, which suggest that intergenerational cultural discrepancies among immigrant families promote their offspring's psychological well-being (Portes & Rumbaut, 1990; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993), and that mattering is related to children's adjustment and psychological well-being (Dixon Rayle & Myers, 2004; Elliot et al., 2011; Marcus, 1991; Marshall, 2001, 2004; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981; Wu & Kim, 2009).

This discrepancy may be related to Korean-specific culture, as I have discussed based on the qualitative data in Step 3. For example, as many participants in the interview session stated,

Korean parents tend to express their emotions or opinions, including love toward their children, implicitly. Rather than directly saying "I love you" or kissing their children, they are likely to show their affection very silently and implicitly, often through unnoticeable or indirect behaviors or verbal expressions. In addition, Korean-American young adults who frequently visit Korea and observe how Korean people live there may better understand their parents' lifestyles and parenting behaviors, including how they express love, based on what they learn of their parents' cultures of origin. The participants in the interview session who traveled to Korea better understood their parents' cultural behaviors and thoughts, and even their parenting behaviors. The more often they visited, the more likely they were to understand their parents. This can occur regardless of their age, particularly through observing their relatives or friends who live in Korea. Seeing contrasts between U.S. and Korean lifestyles and cultures helped them understand their parents' cultural backgrounds—as well as the difficulty of adapting to the U.S. as busy adults with young children. Most of the participants' parents immigrated about 20-30 years ago, when Korea's economy was much worse than it is today, so their situations were most likely challenging at best. If the children better understand their parents' culture of origin, they may have different views on their parents' parenting behaviors and how much they matter to their parents, and this perceived mattering is less likely to play a key role in their mental health.

Effects of Parent–Child Intergenerational Cultural Discrepancies on Young Adult Children's Life Satisfaction, through Parent–Child Communication Quality and Parental Autonomy Support (Model 2)

First, the simple linear regression (Step 1) results showed that parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies directly affected children's life satisfaction. Like the results of Model 1, these findings support Hypothesis 2a in my study, as well as being consistent

with previous models of Acculturation Gap-Distress Theory (Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993). In addition, while previous studies have considered children's mental health, not much research has focused on specific aspects of their mental health—and when they do, they typically focus on negative aspects like depressive symptoms. Instead, the current study adds data on life satisfaction, a specific and positive psychological aspect of mental health, to the previous research. This result is also consistent with similar studies that were conducted among other ethnic groups, such as Vietnamese-Americans (Phinney & Ong, 2002) and Norwegian children, where the acculturation type of integration was positively associated with life satisfaction (Sam, 2000).

Second, the simple mediation results (Step 2; Figure 10, Tables 7 and 8) showed that parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies directly affected children's life satisfaction in Step 1, but when parent–child communication quality was added to this relationship as a mediator, the direct impact of these discrepancies on life satisfaction was no longer significant (full mediation). Instead, parent–child communication quality became more important in the relationship between the discrepancies and life satisfaction, implying that parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies affect parent–child communication quality and this communication quality subsequently affects children's life satisfaction. These findings from Step 2 support Hypothesis 1b and are also consistent with previous research emphasizing the role of family communication in immigrant families (Kim & Park, 2011; Qin, 2006). Like the Step 2 results in Model 1, these findings also suggest that Acculturative Family Distancing Theory (Hwang, 2006) can be applied to Korean-American populations.

Third, another simple mediation (Step 3; Figure 10, Tables 7 and 8) showed similar results to Step 2. When parental autonomy support was added to the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's life satisfaction, the direct impact of the discrepancies on life satisfaction was no longer significant (full mediation). This implies that parental autonomy support serves to mediate that relationship, meaning that parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies affect parental autonomy support and this support subsequently affects children's life satisfaction. The effects of parental autonomy support on children's life satisfaction and psychological well-being were also supported by the qualitative analysis. Korean-American children whose autonomy was limited or who were academically pressured by their parents stated that they felt really bad, became angry, got stressed out, were afraid of their parents, or even broke down emotionally. On the other hand, those who felt they got enough emotional support from their parents felt proud of themselves and happy, and were satisfied with their lives.

Last, in the final model in Step 4 (Table 8), the two-mediator parallel mediation model was statistically significant, which supports Hypothesis 2d. Specifically, when parent–child communication quality and parental autonomy support were added to the path from parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies to life satisfaction simultaneously, parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies affected both parent–child communication quality and parental autonomy support at the same time, which in turn affected children's life satisfaction. The results of this final model demonstrate the importance of the indirect effects of communication quality and parental autonomy support, in terms of the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and life satisfaction.

How Would Korean-American Young Adults Improve Their Adjustment and Psychological Well-Being?

Throughout these results, we see that family plays a large role in how Korean-American children adjust to both Korean and American cultures, and in how they maintain their psychological well-being. Intergenerational and cultural discrepancies between immigrant parents and their 1.5- or second-generation children may be inevitable. For Korean-American immigrant families, the parents' culture of origin tends to characterize their family values. However, as the children get older and are exposed more to the mainstream American culture, they become more Americanized. Difficulties in communication, disagreements about cultural values, different speeds of acculturation, and the loss of a common language between parents and children are likely to increase misunderstandings (Hwang, 2006). These misunderstandings may decrease family cohesion and emotional bonds within the family while increasing conflict, ultimately estranging the family members from one another due to a lack of communication.

As many Korean-American young adult participants stated, open and high-quality family communication is one of the key factors that can help strengthen parent–child relationships and help children perceive that they are significant to their parents. Parents need to try to understand their children, and children need to do the same with their parents. If one person in a conversation only talks about themselves, the conversation can become difficult— and if there is no productive communication, any interaction can turn into a fight. Considering this study's quantitative and qualitative findings, it seems obvious that family communication quality among Korean-American families plays a role in the relationship between immigrant parents and their children. In order to form a familial environment that encourages all family

members to open up their minds, parents may need to express their emotions a bit more directly and try to listen to what their children think. Likewise, children also may need to accept that their parents grew up in a different culture and have been trying their best to improve their children's education and secure a better future.

In addition, although some of the quantitative study results in the current study did not support the hypothesis that mattering to parents would affect children's mental health, the interviewees' vivid statements showed that their perceptions of being significant to their parents led to positive emotions such as feeling cared for and comfortable. Furthermore, parents' emotional autonomy support also played a key role in the Korean-American young adults' psychological well-being, especially when combined with better family communication. All in all, we have learned that narrowing down the intergenerational cultural gaps, improving the quality of family communication between immigrant parents and their children, as well as increasing parental autonomy support and children's perceived mattering, are all important for children's mental health, especially among Korean-American adolescents and young adults.

To promote better adjustment and psychological well-being, the interviewed Korean-American young adults suggested several strategies and tips for their immigrant parents. To begin with, the Korean-American children are eager for more open and more frequent communication with their parents. They want to hear more about their parents' immigrant story, their life in Korea, and how their work is going. They want them to share more about themselves as well as to listen to stories about their children's lives. Especially during adolescence, children want their parents to carefully listen to what they think and want, while understanding the difficulty of adolescence and that adolescent children absolutely need their parents by their side.

They also want their parents to spend more time and do more activities with them, although they totally understand that their parents are busy supporting the household and their children's education. When they were young, most of the participants did not recognize why their parents were rarely at home, but they started to understand better as they got older, usually after leaving home for college. So, they advised parents to at least tell their children why they have to work so hard to make a living in America. This, they argued, will help the children perceive that they are important to their parents, as well as that their parents' hard work is mainly to give them a better future.

In addition, Korean-American young adults also want their parents to accept that their children are Korean-American, not just Korean. As reviewed in the previous chapters, children of immigrant parents have two sets of cultural norms. One set is from their heritage culture which can be naturally acquired within their family, and the other set is from their mainstream culture which can be acquired through larger society such as from peers or at school (Giguere et al., 2010; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993). First-generation immigrant parents need to understand that their 1.5- or second-generation immigrant children's experiences of both heritage and mainstream cultures differ from their own experiences, and that this may lead to conflicts or discrepancies between parents and children (Giguere et al., 2010). While immigrant parents are likely to maintain the cultural values from their country of origin, their children are likely to value and be influenced more by their mainstream culture. Likewise, Korean-American young adults want their parents to understand and accept the fact that their children may have different cultural values from them, and not to force them to follow heritage cultural values too strongly. Arguments like "you're Korean, so you should follow this and should not do this," for example,

are rarely helpful for both parties. Instead, parents should share the cultural values that they believe, then listen to what their children think about their values.

Furthermore, Korean-American young adults also want their parents to give them more autonomy and be less strict. As reviewed in the previous sections, Asian-American students have often been perceived as "model" students because their academic achievements are higher and risk-taking behavior levels are lower compared to other ethnic groups. However, academically smart Asian-American students have also reported high levels of psychological problems. Asian parents' high fervor for their children's education may contribute to both academic achievement and psychological stress. To improve this situation, the study's participants recommended that immigrant parents try to be less strict and demanding, monitor their children's activities less, not push them so much to attain high levels of academic achievement and career success (as measured by a high salary and position), and not exclusively value success in high-status extracurricular activities. Instead, parents should provide their children with more autonomy support and more room to develop, so they can build figurative muscles for their eventual independence.

In terms of improving parent–child relationships in immigrant families, we can find some hints in the advice Korean-American young adults provided for current Korean-American adolescents who may face similar pressures or experiences. While looking back on their adolescence, the participants felt regret at not being able to understand where their parents were originally from and what situation Korea was in at that time, and not being able to acknowledge that their sacrifices were for their children's better future and education. In order to form better family relationships, both parents and children need to exert mutual effort. Just as immigrant

parents need to understand that their children are Korean-Americans, those children also need to understand that their parents grew up in a totally different language and culture. This difference certainly created linguistic and cultural conflict when they first settled in the United States and may even extend to the present day. The participants also exhorted current adolescents to keep their ethnic identity as Korean-Americans. This may be one of the hardest challenges that all immigrant children have to deal with, often throughout their entire lives. Nevertheless, if they focus on their unique benefits (e.g., being bilingual, understanding at least two different cultures in this global age) and keep them proudly, without rejecting one side or the other, they will be less confused about their ethnic identity and will be able to use those skills usefully and enjoy the best of both cultures.

Implications for Theory and Research

The results of this study support and extend the findings of previous work linking parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies to children's psychological adjustment in immigrant families, as well as those linking parent–child communication, mattering to parents, and parental autonomy support. Although some important aspects of parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies have been studied in terms of how those gaps may influence 1.5- or second-generation immigrant children's psychological well-being, Korean-American populations have been understudied in these terms. The present research demonstrates these connections in a real-world family relationship setting and begins to show how family communication quality, parental autonomy support, and children's perceptions that they are significant to their parents may influence the relationship between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's psychological well-being.

This study also extends previous research in terms of research methodology and the application of background theories. Previous research models based on the Acculturation Gap-Distress Theory tended to be too simple, so several expanded research models which include mediators or moderators have been suggested (Juang et al., 2007; Lui, 2015). Since I utilize several mediational methodologies, including a simple mediation model, a two-mediator serial mediation model, and a two-mediator parallel mediation model, these models can be more helpful to guide empirical efforts to understand the range of contexts in this topic. They can thus provide additional explanations of the mechanism by which intergenerational cultural discrepancies affect children's psychological well-being. In addition, the findings of this study are consistent with previous studies proposing Acculturation Gap-Distress Theory (Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993) and also suggest that this theory can be applied to Korean-American populations. Furthermore, the results are also consistent with previous research emphasizing the role of family communication in immigrant families (Kim & Park, 2011; Qin, 2006) and suggest that Acculturative Family Distancing Theory (Hwang, 2006) and Dissonant Acculturation Theory can be also applied to Korean-American populations.

Furthermore, the current study used a mixed methods approach, a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a single study. This approach provides a richer, multidimensional, and more dynamic understanding of the relationships between parent–child intergenerational cultural discrepancies and children's psychological adjustment, with the quantitative analysis illustrating several statistical trends and the qualitative analysis providing more detailed information on issues that the quantitative analysis cannot adequately capture. As a result, the study provides very specific, rich, practical, and realistic advice for Korean-American families.

In addition, this study focuses on Korean-American children—a group including late adolescents, emerging adults, and young adults—while most of the previous studies on this topic have focused on early adolescents. Early adolescence is definitely a critical transitional period from childhood to adulthood, but transitioning to college, emerging adulthood, or young adulthood is also an important source of new beliefs and experiences. As this transition period also brings more independence and autonomy, investigating the role of parenting behaviors and the relationships between parents and young adult children on this topic meaningfully extends the range of previous research on this topic.

Limitations and Future Research

While this study offers several positive insights into how immigrant parents and their 1.5- or second-generation children narrow down the intergenerational cultural gaps between them, which ultimately contributes to better psychological well-being, it has also a few limitations. First, although the number of participants actually exceeds the minimum sample size generated the power analysis by 36%, more participants will be needed to analyze more complex models that include more demographic variables, particularly socioeconomic status (SES) and parents' education levels.

In addition, since the participants were randomly recruited and mainly recruited online, their residential background is uneven. For instance, many of them mainly grew up in or resided (at the time of the study) in either Texas or California, but these variables were not considered as control variables. Study results for those who grow up and reside in liberal areas may be different from those who are from conservative areas, and there may be similar differences between those who are from neighborhoods surrounded by many Asian- or Korean-American communities

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(e.g., Los Angeles) or ethnically diverse metropolitan areas (e.g., New York) and those who are from rural or predominantly white neighborhoods (e.g., Midwest areas). Future studies will need to consider these points as well.

Furthermore, some of the measures have not been used for Asian-Americans or Korean-American populations before, specifically the scales of mattering to parents and parental autonomy support. For future studies, it may be helpful to test their construct validity using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), to ensure that they effectively represent common characteristics among Korean-American populations. In addition, although this study uses self-report methods to gather children's perceptions of their parents' parenting and their relationships with their parents, adding parents' reports to the children's reports and evaluating their consistency may yield a deeper understanding of what both parties think and how they interpret each other's intentions and behaviors differently. This may be helpful for both immigrant parents and their children to understand and overcome each other's different stances.

Finally, although this study collected data for each measurement on the participants' mothers and fathers separately, using the same questionnaire for each parent, only the average scores were used to yield the "parents" scores. This is because this study represents a fairly new approach to this topic among Korean-American populations, so its main purpose was to identify overall trends. Future studies could investigate whether these relationships are different between mother–child and father–child dyads, or between same-sex parent–child and different-sex parent–child dyads. Also, future research might evaluate whether these results have any Korean-specific characteristics by comparing them with other Asian-, East Asian-, or even Mexican-, European-, or African-American young adult groups. Investigating what they have in common or

not will be also helpful for researchers to discover the uniqueness of Korean-Americans children and their families.

In spite of these limitations, this study has meaningful implications for families, particularly for Korean-American families who have 1.5- or second-generation immigrant children. Immigrant parents need to recognize how important their parenting behaviors are and how their parenting actions affect their children's adjustment. Their children also need to recognize how much their parents love them, even though their thoughts on cultural values are quite different each other. All in all, it is important to understand diverse family structures in light of recent global societal changes. Further analyses may show how more positive aspects of parenting behaviors and parent–child relationships predict better family relationships, as well as promoting healthier adjustment for immigrant children.

Appendices

List of Questionnaires

Appendix A: The East Asian American Family Conflicts Scale

Appendix B: Parent–Adolescent Communication Scale

Appendix C: Mattering Scale

Appendix D: Parental Academic Socialization Questionnaire (PASQ)

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Appendix H: Follow-up Interview Sample Questions

Appendix A

The East Asian American Family Conflicts Scale (FCS-Likelihood)

Table A1

Items of the East Asian American Family Conflicts Scale (FCS-Likelihood)

Item Number	Item Text
1	Your (mom/dad) tells you what to do with your life, but you want to make your own decisions.
2	Your (mom/dad) tells you that a social life is not important at this age, but you think that it is.
3	You have done well in school, but your (mom's/dad's) academic expectations always exceed your performance.
4	Your (mom/dad) wants you to sacrifice personal interests for the sake of the family, but you feel this is unfair.
5	Your (mom/dad) always compares you to others, but you want (her/him) to accept you for being yourself.
6	Your (mom/dad) argues that (she/he) shows you love by housing, feeding, and educating you, but you wish (she/he) would show more physical and verbal signs of affection.
7	Your (mom/dad) doesn't want you to bring shame upon the family, but you feel that your (mom/dad) is too concerned with saving face.
8	Your (mom/dad) expects you to behave like a proper Asian male or female, but you feel your (mom/dad) is being too traditional.
9	You want to state your opinion, but your (mom/dad) considers it to be disrespectful to talk back.
10	Your (mom/dad) demands that you always show respect for elders, but you believe in showing respect only if they deserve it.

Note. Instruction: *"How likely is this type of situation to occur in your family?"*

Table A2

Item Values of the East Asian American Family Conflicts Scale (FCS-Likelihood)

Answer	Value
Almost never	1
Once in a while	2
Sometimes	3
Often or frequently	4
Almost always	5

Appendix B

Parent–Adolescent Communication Scale

Table B1

Items of the Parent–Adolescent Communication Scale

Item Number	Item Text	Reverse Coded
The Open Family Communication Subscale		
1	I can discuss my beliefs with my (mom/dad) without feeling restrained or embarrassed.	
2	My (mom/dad) is always a good listener.	
3	My (mom/dad) can tell how I'm feeling without asking.	
4	I am very satisfied with how my (mom/dad) and I talk together.	
5	If I were in trouble, I could tell my (mom/dad).	
6	My (mom/dad) openly shows affection to me.	
7	When I ask questions, I get honest answers from my (mom/dad).	
8	My (mom/dad) tries to understand my point of view.	
9	I find it easy to discuss problems with my (mom/dad).	
10	It is very easy for me to express all my true feelings to my (mom/dad).	
The Problems in Family Communication Subscale		
1	Sometimes I have trouble believing everything my mom tells me.	R
2	I am sometimes afraid to ask my mom for what I want.	R
3	My mom has a tendency to say things to me that would be better left unsaid.	R
4	When we are having a problem, my mom often gives me the silent treatment.	R
5	I am careful about what I say to my mom.	R
6	When talking with my mom, she has a tendency to say things that would be better left unsaid.	R
7	There are topics I avoid discussing with my mom.	R
8	My mom nags/bothers me.	R
9	My mom insults me when she is angry with me.	R
10	I don't think I can tell my mom how I really feel about some things.	R

Note. Instruction: *"Below is a list of statements about your communication with your (mom/dad). Please check how much you agree or disagree with each one."*

Appendix B (cont.)

Parent–Adolescent Communication Scale

Table B2

Item Values of the Parent–Adolescent Communication Scale (Prior to Recode for Reverse Items)

Answer	Value
Strongly disagree	1
Moderately disagree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Moderately agree	4
Strongly agree	5

Mattering Scale

Table C1

Items of the Mattering Scale

Item Number	Item Text	Reverse Coded
1	My (mom/dad) really cares about me.	
2	I believe I really matter to my (mom/dad).	
3	I think my (mom/dad) cares about other people more than me.	R
4	I'm not that important to my (mom/dad).	R
5	There are a lot of things in my (mom's/dad's) life that matter more to (her/him) than I do.	R
6	I know my (mom/dad) loves me.	
7	I am one of the most important things in the world to my (mom/dad).	

Note. Instruction: *"Below is a list of statements about your relationship with your (mom/dad). Please check how much you agree or disagree with each one."*

Table C2

Item Values of the Mattering Scale (Prior to Recode for Reverse Items)

Answer	Value
Strongly disagree	1
Moderately disagree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Moderately agree	4
Strongly agree	5

Appendix D

Parental Academic Socialization Questionnaire
(PASQ-Emotional Autonomy Support and Responsiveness subscale)

Table D1
Items of the Items of the PASQ

Item Number	Item Text
1	My (mom/dad) expressed pride when I did well on a test or paper in school.
2	My (mom/dad) seemed happy when I learned to do something by myself.
3	My (mom/dad) was proud when I succeeded in something I had undertaken.
4	My (mom/dad) praised me for my schoolwork.
5	If things went badly for me, my (mom/dad) tried to comfort and encourage me.
6	If I had a difficult task in front of me, I felt support from my (mom/dad).
7	My (mom/dad) encouraged me to develop my unique strengths or qualities.
8	My (mom/dad) encouraged me to solve problems at school without their help.
9	My (mom/dad) encouraged me to figure out things for myself.
10	My (mom/dad) seemed interested in what I was learning in school.
11	My (mom/dad) encouraged me to find out what I loved to do and pursue it.
12	My (mom/dad) taught me that it is important to enjoy learning.
13	My (mom/dad) let me choose which elective courses to take in school.
14	My (mom/dad) decided for me what I should study in school.
15	My (mom/dad) listened to my opinions and ideas about what I was learning.

Note. Instruction: *"Please read each statement below about your relationship with your (mom/dad), and indicate how true it was for you during your adolescence."*

Table D2
Item Values of the PASQ

Answer	Value
Never	1
Rarely	2
Sometimes	3
Often	4
Always	5

Appendix E

The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D)

Table E1

Items of the CES-D

Item Number	Item Text	Reverse Coded
1	I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me.	
2	I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.	
3	I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with help from my family or friends.	
4	I felt that I was just as good as other people.	R
5	I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.	
6	I felt depressed.	
7	I felt that everything I did was an effort.	
8	I felt hopeful about the future.	R
9	I thought my life had been a failure.	
10	I felt fearful.	
11	My sleep was restless.	
12	I was happy.	R
13	I talked less than usual.	
14	I felt lonely.	
15	People were unfriendly.	
16	I enjoyed life.	R
17	I had crying spells.	
18	I felt sad.	
19	I felt that people dislike me.	
20	I could not get "going."	

Note. Instructions for Depressive Symptoms during Adolescence Questionnaire: *"Below is a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved. Please look back on your adolescence and tell me how often you have felt this way in a typical week."*

Instructions for Depressive Symptoms in the Present Questionnaire: *"Below is a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved. Please tell me how often you have felt this way during the past week."*

Appendix E (cont.)

The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D)

Table E2

Item Values of the CES-D (Prior to Recode for Reverse Items)

Answer	Value
Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)	0
Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)	1
Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)	2
Most or all of the time (5-7 days)	3

Appendix F

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

Table F1

Items of the SWLS

Item Number	Item Text
1	In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.
2	The conditions of my life are excellent.
3	I am satisfied with my life.
4	So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5	If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Note. Instruction: *"Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-5 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number of the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responses."*

Table F2

Item Values of the SWLS (Prior to Recode for Reverse Items)

Answer	Value
Strongly disagree	1
Moderately disagree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Moderately agree	4
Strongly agree	5

Appendix G

Demographic Questionnaire

1. **Age (select a number in the drop-down list):**
   (18~35)

2. **Gender:**
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Prefer to identify as (specify): _____
   d. Prefer not to answer

3. **Current place (state) of residence:**
   (list of 50 states)

4. **Place of birth:**
   a. U.S.A.
   b. Korea
   c. Another country

5. **Age of arrival in the U.S. (choose 0 if you were born here):**
   (0~18)

6. **Approximate duration of stay in the U.S. (in years):**
   (1~35yrs)

7. **How well do you speak English?**
   a. Not at all
   b. Very poorly
   c. Moderately
   d. Well
   e. Very well

8. **How well do you speak Korean?**
   a. Not at all
   b. Very poorly
   c. Moderately
   d. Well
   e. Very well

Appendix G (cont.)

Demographic Questionnaire

9. Which language do you mostly use when you talk with your _mother_?
   a. Korean
   b. English
   c. Half Korean/Half English
   d. Other (specify:)

10. Which language do you mostly use when you talk with your _father_?
   a. Korean
   b. English
   c. Half Korean/Half English
   d. Other (specify:)

11. What is your citizenship status?
   a. U.S. Citizen
   b. U.S. Green Card Holder (permanent resident)
   c. In the U.S. on a Visa
   d. Other (specify:)

12. How would you classify your family type?
   a. Intact Family (e.g., two married parents)
   b. Divorced Family
   c. Other (specify:)

13. What do you consider your family's socioeconomic status to be?
   a. Working class
   b. Middle class
   c. Upper middle class
   d. Upper class
   e. Other (specify:)

Demographic Questionnaire

14. <u>The highest number (10)</u> represents the people who are the best off: those who have the most money, most education, and best jobs. At <u>the bottom (1)</u> are the people who are the worst off: those who have the least money, least education, and worst jobs or no job.

<u>MOVE THE SLIDE BAR</u> **to the number that best reflects YOUR situation.**

Lowest   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

highest   (□ Prefer not to answer)

15. Are you a college/graduate student? If so, what is your current class standing?
   a. Freshman
   b. Sophomore
   c. Junior
   d. Senior
   e. Graduate student
   f. Other (specify:)
   g. I am not a student (specify your job:)

16. Which best describes your living situation?
   a. I live by myself or with a roommate
   b. I live with my spouse/significant other
   c. I live with my parents but not my grandparent(s)
   d. I live with my parents AND my grandparent(s)
   e. Other (specify:)

17. Are you currently financially independent from your parents?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Other (specify:)

18. If you are a current college student or a college graduate, what is/was your cumulative GPA?
   a. 2.4 or below
   b. 2.5-2.9
   c. 3.0-3.4
   d. 3.5-4.0
   e. N/A

Demographic Questionnaire

19. Do you have any siblings?
  a. No, I'm an only child
  b. Yes, I have; and I'm the oldest child
  c. Yes, I have; and I'm NOT the oldest child

  (if B or C) **19-2. How many siblings do you have?**
            (1~8, other)

20. What is your current marital status?
  a. Single
  b. Married
  c. Prefer not to answer

21. How old is your _mother_? (in years:)

22. How old is your _father_? (in years:)

23. What is your _mother's_ highest level of education completed?
  a. Did not complete high school
  b. High school diploma or GED
  c. Some college
  d. Associate's or 2-year degree
  e. Bachelor's or 4-year degree
  f. Graduate degree

24. What is your _father's_ highest level of education completed?
  a. Did not complete high school
  b. High school diploma or GED
  c. Some college
  d. Associate's or 2-year degree
  e. Bachelor's or 4-year degree
  f. Graduate degree

25. What is your _mother_'s occupation? _____

26. What is your _father_'s occupation? _____

Demographic Questionnaire

27. Approximately how many hours does your _mother_ work _weekly_ outside the home? (in hours)

28. Approximately how many hours does your _father_ work _weekly_ outside the home? (in hours)

Appendix H

Follow-up Interview Sample Questions

- How has your life as Korean-American?

- Have you had any intergenerational cultural discrepancies with your parents? Can you give me an example? What do think or feel when you have this kind of discrepancies?

- Do you see any differences between you and your parents about keeping Korean values? If you do, how do you and your parents decide about those issues?

- How often did you communicate with your parents when you were adolescents? Was it helpful? If so, for what?

- Do you think you are significant/important to your parents?

- During your adolescence, when did you feel most sure that your parents love you? Can you give me an example?

- When you perceived that your parents love you, what exactly did you feel? Was it important for you? How did it affect your life?

- During your college years or your 20s, what changed in terms of how your parents treat you or your relationship with them? What do you think caused those changes?

- Can you tell me about a specific experience that changed how you think about your parents, Korea, or Korean culture?

- Have you been to Korea? If so, how often? Did your trip help you understand Korean cultures and/or your parents' parenting behaviors and values?

- If you could go back to your adolescence, what would you like to ask your parents to do for you?

- What advice would you give to current Korean-American adolescents?

Glossary

Korean-Americans. Individuals who live in the U.S. and self-identify as being of Korean descent. American citizens, permanent residents, residents in the U.S. on a visa, and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) residents are included in this category for the current study, but Korean international students are excluded.

First-generation immigrant parents. Parents who were born outside of the U.S. and immigrated to the U.S. as adults (at or after age 18).

1.5-generation immigrant children. Children of first-generation immigrant parents who were born outside of the U.S. and immigrated to the U.S. before age 18.

Second-generation immigrant children. Children of first-generation immigrant parents who were born and grew up in the U.S.

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