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CONTOURS OF CHILD-PARENT CONFLICT AMONG SOUTH ASIAN AMERICAN AND
CHINESE AMERICAN YOUNG ADULTS

BY

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

An emphasis on family ties appears so entrenched in the South Asian American worldview that for distressed adults, clinical problems often present as family conflict (Almeida, 2005; Tewari, 2000), and scholars recommend conceptualizing individual client problems using family therapy models (Inman & Tewari, 2003). This pattern may be explained by a highly interdependent self-orientation combined with traditional virtues that emphasize cooperation and duty (i.e., filial piety) at the family level. Given that family conflict is of clinical concern for many other Asian American populations (e.g., Abe-Kim, Takeuchi & Hwang, 2002; Lee, Jung, Su, Tran & Bahrassa, 2009), I examine the broad shared and ethnic-specific factors of parent-child disagreement and its role in wellbeing for South Asian American young adults ($n = 150$), compared with Chinese American young adults ($n = 150$). Based on the shared cultural emphasis on collectivism, it was hypothesized that family interdependence would moderate the prediction of wellbeing by general family disharmony in both groups, and that complying and accommodating responses to a recent disagreement would be associated with more intense interdependent emotions. There was evidence that interdependence did play an important role in general wellbeing scores and in emotion intensity during a recent conflict, although differently for each ethnic group. Ethnic differences were also observed in responses to actual and hypothesized conflict. Findings are discussed in light of theorized distinctions between South Asian American and Chinese American family dynamics.

To Pappa and Ammi, and to my Sheraz.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The central role of family as a source of support, conflict, and identity for South Asian American adults has led scholars (e.g., Inman & Tewari, 2003; Pettys & Balgopal, 1998) to suggest that clinicians consider the broader family context even when an adult South Asian American client is seen for individual therapy. Indeed, the developmental experience of individuals of South Asian descent has been described as one that "typically de-emphasize[s] individuation from the family unit" (Segal, 1991, p. 99), with clinicians reporting South Asian immigrant family structures as frequently "enmeshed" (Inman & Tewari, 2003). Accordingly, clinicians note that high proportions of South Asian American adult clients presenting with clinical problems appear strongly connected to family conflict (e.g., Tewari, 2000, Almeida, 2005). Furthermore, data from a nationally representative sample of South Asian American adults showed that family-based concerns are highly associated with individual distress (Masood, Okazaki & Takeuchi, 2009). Although the cultural emphasis on family ties – known as familism in the mental health literature (Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín & Pérez-Stable, 1987) – is not unique to South Asian Americans, the above descriptions and findings suggest that family conflicts present a particularly intense challenge for this population, warranting further study.

In contrast with Latino familism, for which primarily positive dimensions of familism such as familial warmth, support and cohesion and its protective effects are typically explored (Campos et al., 2008; Sabogal et al., 1987), Asian American familism has remained largely undeveloped, being mostly limited to examining the potentially negative impact of family obligations and conflict (e.g., Fuligni, Tseng & Lam, 1999) and associated with an apparent

absence of warmth and support (e.g., Campos et al., 2008). Indeed, although a strong familial orientation has the potential to have both positive and negative consequences for an individual (i.e., support and warmth, and conflict and stress; Rodriguez, Mira, Paez, & Myers, 2007), a longstanding challenge for research within Asian American populations lies in examining the family unit's role in psychological distress and wellbeing while avoiding stigmatizing the cultural emphases thereof. For example, while the aforementioned patterns of family identification and interpersonal sensitivity among South Asian Americans are consistent with the description of traditional South Asian culture as interdependent and collectivistic (Verma & Triandis, 1999), these patterns may also appear pathological from a clinical perspective that conventionally emphasizes independence and autonomy (Fowers & Richardson, 1996; Inman & Tewari, 2003). Moreover, given that the very nature of interdependent functioning involves greater attention toward and sensitivity to relationships and any tensions therein, this makes more likely that the relationship between family conflict and individual wellbeing is mutually determined if not highly conflated among strongly interdependent individuals. These complexities provide a compelling rationale for further examining such factors of familialism and its connection to family conflict among highly interdependent cultural groups, and for identifying empirical and conceptual articulations that illuminate their cultural significance rather than associate deficits based on potentially inappropriate models. Indeed, articulating culturally-specific dynamics is likely key to intervention strategies that aim to be responsive to cultural groups' worldviews, and for South Asian Americans in particular may help avoid perpetuating negative stereotypes of their families as authoritarian and "oppressive" (Purkayastha, 2005).

The present study explores the role of interdependent functioning and collectivist moral motives as two dimensions of familialism that may be used to conceptualize the relationship of

family conflict to distress among South Asian American young adults as contrasted with their Chinese American peers. For both groups, the broad shared factor of a strong familially interdependent orientation likely socializes individuals to experience higher levels of distress in response to chronic parent-child disagreements and experience greater wellbeing through sustained family involvement and connection. However, in the immediate context of a conflict episode, responses to disagreement and its underlying motives may differ due to distinctions in the sociomoral mandates of filial piety and duty that are particular to each ethnic group, with these cultural distinctions in turn effecting differences in emotional responses. These shared and specific factors provide a conceptual framework for understanding how a moralized and interdependent familialism may be reinforced (or challenged) during parent-child conflict, given the particular cultural meanings that such disagreements index (Markus & Lin, 1999). Because research on South Asian American families is more limited – but what little research that exist suggest that the role of family conflict potentially is more salient – the cultural particularities for this group is highlighted to foreground a discussion of potential similarities with and distinctions from the experience of Chinese American families regarding family conflict.

Interdependence and Duty in South Asian Culture and South Asian American Families

Over a series of interviews and observations of Indian immigrant families in Chicago, Bacon (1996) noticed that a consistent pattern of heightened interpersonal awareness permeated throughout family and community interactions within this population. This awareness sensitized these immigrant parents and their U.S.-raised adult children to continually attend to and manage interpersonal tensions as they arose within their families and communities. Although she observed that the themes of these tensions and its negotiations differed between the two generations, its rhetoric typically revolved around concerns about socio-moral conduct (i.e., how

one should behave with others). For example, whereas concerns about selfishness and “ego problems” undermining the community predominated for the first generation, for the second generation public concerns revolved around problem-solving difficulties with their parents.

Consistent with this observation, by most accounts South Asian parenting encourages the development of a “we-self,” a socially-anchored sense of being that is interdependent with others (Derne, 1992; Mahalingam & Haritatos, 2006; Roland, 1988) with an emphasis on “correct action” (Brown, 1961, as cited in Rangaswamy, 2000). Socialized to become sociocentric, interdependent, and deferential towards hierarchies of authority within an extended family unit, the traditional South Asian goal of adulthood has been described as attaining competency in sharing family responsibilities (Ramanujam, 1979; Seymour, 1999). This interdependent orientation further includes strong moral overtones, often obliging the individual to engage in acts of duty and deference that privilege the group’s desires above one’s own (Coward, Hinnells & Williams, 2000; Miller, 1994). Roland (1988) suggested that this strong moral impulse to attend to and conform to the desires of others above one’s own did not necessarily suppress a sense of individual identity, but rather resulted in one that was highly guarded and private even when overtly deferential.

This collectivist ethical-moral imperative has been articulated more abstractly by scholars as *dharma*, which within most of South Asia’s indigenous religious and philosophical traditions mandates selfless conduct that flexibly varies with the social role of each person in any given social context (Flood, 1996; Kakar, 1978). In the context of parent-child relationships, this sense of duty typically implies that the child maintain propriety through acts of deference and respect toward the parent, whereas the parent maintains propriety by way of behaviors consistent with their role as nurturers, protectors and guides (Prathikanti, 1997; Sinha, 1984). It may be noted

that these individual roles and duties appear complementary or “reciprocal,” reflecting its very interdependent nature (Roland, 1988).

This cultural emphasis on interdependence and family duty appears to be general to most South Asian cultural and religious groups, and there is some evidence that it continues to be a socializing factor in South Asian American families (Ibrahim, Ohnishi & Sandhu, 1997). Rangaswamy (2000), in her sketch of traditional Indian values that shape the worldview of Chicago’s Indian immigrant community, identified that dharma-based duty—particularly to one’s family—served an existential purpose or main “calling,” under which other seemingly contradictory priorities lay subservient (p.34). Similarly, Gupta and Tracey (2005) found that scores on a preliminary measure of the South Asian conception of family duty explained differences in Indian- and European American young adults’ career exploration, with a stronger duty-bound perspective among Indian Americans being associated with career choices that were less congruent with personal interests. Similar anecdotal observations about the centrality of family and duty have also been made for South Asian Americans of other national origins (e.g., Almeida, 2005; Nath, 2005).

Although the scope and degree of influence has yet to be understood in the U.S. context, there is also speculation that deference and duty remains a basis for interpersonal functioning throughout adult life, particularly for women (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004; Dasgupta, 1998; Mahalingam & Haritatos, 2006). Furthermore, it is also likely that the process of migration and adaptation of South Asian immigrant families within the racial and socioeconomic structure of the U.S. has also intensified this cultural value in particular domains, transforming it anew in the U.S. context (Bacon, 1996; Deepak, 2005; Inman, Howard, Beaumon & Walker, 2007). For example, immigrant parents’ negative experiences with acculturative adjustment and

economic mobility may have created more inflexible parental expectations about educational achievement and sexual propriety to which their children must conform (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004; Inman et al., 2007).

Conflict and Alienation in South Asian American Families

Similar to intergenerational conflicts that occur in other immigrant families (c.f. Hwang, 2006; Szapocznik, Santisteban, Kurtines, Perez-Vidal, & Hervis, 1984), disagreements that occur between adolescent and young adult South Asian Americans and their immigrant parents are viewed as exacerbated by existing differences in cultural standpoints and values between U.S.-raised children and their immigrant parents. Farver, Bhadha and Narang (2002) had examined the acculturation styles of U.S. Indian immigrant parents and their children and found that greater family conflict was reported when there was a parent-child acculturation style mismatch. In particular, they found that both parents and their adolescent children reported greater family conflict when parents endorsed unintegrated (separated or marginalized) acculturation styles. Similarly, Inman (2006) found that greater intergenerational conflicts occurred when South Asian American adult women and their parents disagreed on certain cultural values, particularly in the areas of dating and sexuality. These value discrepancies were also associated with anxiety and cultural adjustment difficulties among these women.

Yet in addition to such pressures to conform to certain traditional values and role expectations raising the likelihood of conflict, the very experience of intergenerational conflict itself may be particularly intense and painful for South Asian Americans. This may be due to especially strong emotional ties that traditionally place greater emphasis on intergenerational connections, and failure to conform as a potential indication of family disloyalty (Baptiste, 2005; Nath & Craig, 1999; Sandhu & Madathil, 2008). A small interview study by Dugsin (2001) with

six second-generation Indian Americans participants (3 females, ages ranging between 24 and 36) offers some insight into the emotional dynamics of connection, approval, and loyalty that may underlie such conflicts. Framed in largely American-versus-Indian culture-clash terms, all six participants attributed the conflict to their disagreement with their parents' and extended families' expectations to observe traditional Indian values around education, career, gender roles, dating and marriage. Dugsin further noted an ambivalence around the duty-bound quality of their family ties: their feeling "stifle[d]" when their individual desires ran contrary to family expectations, but which resulted from otherwise close and supportive involvement of family members that they indeed appreciated. She observed that while most desired acceptance from their families as independent individuals, they ultimately aligned themselves with the values of the group in which they felt most "accepted." In the case of one female participant, her family's open communication and emotional support in most areas facilitated her "total acceptance" of and conformity to Indian values after some initial period of identity conflict, while some others turned to peer groups and "rebelled" against these same values.

This observed connection or conflation of values-endorsement with group acceptance and approval from this study suggests that for adult children, the absence of desired emotional support and connectedness within their families may exacerbate feelings of family pressure and conflict among South Asian American adults. In other words, the most salient underlying conflict fueling the emotional dissonance may be between the threats of family distancing and alienation and the loss of personal autonomy and self-determination. In fact, the decision to choose their family's desires over their own may reinforce their membership in and moral commitment to family (i.e., filial piety) even as it serves as the basis of family conflicts that arise. It should also be noted, however, that the study found that when parents used

communications strategies that felt “controlling” or “oppressive” to their adult children, this only served to further alienate them and discourage willful compliance despite their general sense of duty and filial piety. This sensitivity to coercion and selfishness appears consistent with both Western (i.e., autonomy-seeking) and Indian socializing patterns (i.e., disobeying aggressive or selfish authority; see Kakar, 1971). Nonetheless, the creation of such intense emotional distance that simultaneously threatens both their sense of familial belonging and personal agency establishes conflict and disagreement as a significant personal threat to their relational selves in a way that may be unique to this cultural group.

Shared and Specific Cultural Factors: General Comparison with Chinese American Families

In comparison, Chinese American family culture and experience with family conflict appear substantially similar to South Asian Americans’ in several ways. Similar to South Asian Americans, Chinese Americans are raised within interdependent and collectivist oriented parenting traditions that place a strong emphasis on displaying respect and deference to parents (Greenberger & Chen, 1996; Juang, Syed & Tagaki, 2007). Inculcating a sense of filial piety, in particular, is widely characteristic of Chinese immigrant parenting, stressing reverence and obedience to parents and other elders as well as an internalized desire to achieve things that bring honor to one’s family (Ho, 1986; Lieber, Nihira & Mink, 2004). Likewise, a higher rate of family conflict among Chinese American young adults when compared with European Americans (Greenberger & Chen, 1996) is another shared pattern (c.f., Farver et al., 2002). Although no family factors have been shown to account for this higher conflict rate, Greenberger and Chen (1996) suggested that a delay in Chinese American parents granting their adult children autonomy and independence as compared with European American parents may explain this rate difference. A third apparent similarity with South Asian Americans is the implication

that the strong cultural emphasis on family (i.e., filial piety and obedience) among Chinese American young adults may intensify the effects of family conflict on wellbeing. This has also led some researchers to explore cultural factors that may predict psychological distress, which has suggested both positive and negative effects for Chinese American young adults: Whereas in one study, endorsing a greater sense of family obligation has been shown to be potentially protective against depressive symptoms (Juang & Cookston, 2009), lower levels of reported parental warmth and acceptance in another study explained higher rates of depressive symptoms among this group when compared with European American peers (Greenberger & Chen, 1996).

Distinct cultural emphases on the importance of family – i.e., ethnic-specific conceptualizations of familialism – between South Asian Americans and Chinese Americans may also suggest contrasting experiences of family conflict and wellbeing. However, the absence of ethnic-specific conceptualizations of familialism – whether across countries or within the U.S. – makes it difficult to speculate which seemingly diverging factors of familial culture may find empirical support. One possible distinction, suggested by Rao, McHale and Pearson's (2003) study comparing Indian and Chinese parenting goals, is the traditional Chinese emphasis on “training” children – once they reach an age of “understanding” (Ho, 1986) – to be obedient and loyal to one's elders that is commonly accompanied by explicit verbalization and discouragement of emotional expression (Lieber, Nihira & Mink, 2004). Rao and colleagues had noted that although obedience is also valued by Indian parents, they are also accepting of greater emotional display and individual differences in personality. Moreover, Indian parenting goals vary based on age and gender, with a slightly more developmentally elaborate conceptualization of parenting that includes a “carefree” period in childhood marked by parental indulgence, followed by a period where parents are to guide, support, and charge adolescent and young adult

children in the practical task of becoming good students and eventual breadwinners for their own dependents (i.e., families; Prathikanti, 1997).

Furthermore, where a traditional South Asian view of filial piety may differ from a traditional Chinese one is in its flexibility regarding traditions about obedience and parental authority. In fact, literature about authority and parent-child relationships from the Indian subcontinent suggests a more dynamic role-relationship than simply obedience and submission. Kakar's (1971) thematic analysis of authority figures in children's moral stories suggested that children are encouraged to defer to authority figures based on their responsible role as nurturant protectors and guides, but to rebel against them when their requests demonstrate selfishness via aggression. This suggests that parental obedience may be contingent on reciprocity, similar to what Sonpar (2005) had noted when she theorized that South Asian family problems tended to occur when "obedience, respect and deference are [not] met with protection, guidance and 'looking after'" by parents (p. 309). Similarly, Kapadia and Miller's (2005) study of adolescent and young adult children and their parents in India found that when parent-child disagreements occurred, both parents and children reported a preference for accommodating or collaborative strategies (i.e., over self-assertion or compliance) as idealized methods to resolve the conflicts. Although the filial piety prescribed in Confucianism also conceptualizes reciprocity in the roles between parents and children (Yeh, 2003), this reciprocity does not appear to be a pre-condition for deference as indicated by Kakar's above analysis.

These descriptions of contingent obedience and a desire for mutual accommodation and reciprocity of children among South Asians also appear consistent with Bacon's (1996) observation of Indian immigrants and their U.S. born children in Chicago, who each displayed a continual need to track and negotiate interpersonal tensions between each other. Thus, what may

underlie a South Asian sense of duty and deference towards one's parents, in practice, is a tension-tracking tendency that attunes children to anticipating and attempting to fulfill parents' desires, while both parent and child negotiate to uphold the parent's own duty-bound role as nurturant and unselfish guide. In fact, this particular relational style may help explain why South Asian American families are often described as "enmeshed" in family structure (Inman & Tewari, 2003). In contrast, a qualitative study of Chinese immigrant parents in the U.S. by Lieber and colleagues (2004) suggested that parents saw compromising and negotiating with their children sometimes as the only solution to what they viewed as their Americanized children's resistance to "being filial" (i.e., obedient; p. 338).

Shared and Specific Factors: Response Type and Family Disharmony

One diverging pattern between South Asian American and Chinese American young adults during conflicts may be the greater use of accommodating responses for the former. Given the interdependent and collectivistic orientation of both groups, it may be argued that this difference reflects ethnic-specific goals toward achieving family interdependence among the groups. For example, whereas mutual accommodation appears to reinforce the contingent, socioemotional duty-bound role of each party (i.e., parent and child) in South Asian American families, compliance may better reflect the collectivist nature of filial piety in Chinese American families vis-à-vis their realization of closeness and interdependence in their respective families. In other words, both strategies (i.e., accommodation and compliance) reinforce differential notions of how to achieve relatedness and closeness in the family climate because for each group these strategies have different meanings. A study by Phinney, Kim-Jo, Osorio and Vilhjalmsdottir (2005) had suggested such a distinction, finding that whereas compliance among European American adolescents reflected an acceptance of parental authority, for other ethnic

groups, feelings of relatedness and closeness were referenced in their justifications of compliance during parent-child conflicts.

As a corollary to the shared factor of interdependence, the experience of family conflict in particular as alienating and threatening one's sense of connectedness with family is likely common to both ethnic groups. This reflects a disharmony model, where conflict is conceptualized as a disturbance in the relationship between individuals, rather than negative events that simply interrupt individuals' goals that can be resolved through problem-solving (Markus & Lin, 1999). Experiencing distance and disconnection from one's family due to divergent cultural expectations and communication patterns has been theorized as a tension that is exacerbated in acculturating ethnic minority families (Hwang, 2006). Similarly, Dugsin's (2001) study with Indian American adults had suggested that concerns of rejection and disapproval affected their ability to re-connect with their families during conflicts, while Qin's (2006) ethnography of two Chinese American families illuminated factors that had contributed to a growing sense of alienation between immigrant parents and their U.S. born children.

Furthermore, if the goal of achieving connection is the "primary task" among interdependent individuals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 236), the absence of this during sustained conflict may lead to heightened distress for these populations. Masood and colleagues (2009) found that for South Asian American adults, feeling greater discordance from one's family's goals were related to higher levels of distress, further suggesting the significance of connection, involvement and engagement for this group. Thus, reflecting an unrealized state of closeness and connection with one's family that is often a repercussion of conflict (Moné & Biringen, 2006), strongly interdependent individuals that feel alienated and uninvolved from family members may be particularly vulnerable to distress.

Taken together, both behavioral (e.g., accommodation and compliance) and affective (e.g., emotional display and closeness) dimensions of parent-child disagreement may lend meaningful insight into the nature of familialism for both cultural groups. Moreover, highlighting emphases that are meaningful to interdependent and relational selves would provide an important contrast to existing family conflict frameworks that otherwise rely on the dominant narratives of individuation, autonomy and independence (Ito & Maramba, 2002; Ying, Coombs & Lee, 1999). Indeed, as bicultural individuals, collectivistic values may continue to anchor self-development and interpersonal functioning for both South Asian American and Chinese American young adults. And given that these values are cultural and moralistic in nature (Kwan, 2009), examining conflict in these populations may suggest directions in research and treatment that emphasize the psychological significance of reconnecting with others.

CHAPTER 2

HYPOTHESES

The purpose of this study is to explore and contrast the emotional and sociomoral climate of family disharmony and disagreement among South Asian American and Chinese American young adults within an interdependent relational framework. Familial interdependence and collectivist motives during hypothesized parent-child conflict will be used as key indicators of familialism relevant to conflict and its association with wellbeing in both groups. A group-comparison design will be employed to examine and highlight both shared and specific cultural patterns. Because both groups share a broad collectivistic and interdependent orientation, group differences may be attributed to ethnic-specific variants of familialism that differentially interpret the meaning of conflict and therefore would multiply affect how parent-child conflict is experienced and managed. The relationship between family variables and individual wellbeing will be examined in two ways. First, a general model will be tested, using individual differences measures of family characteristics and wellbeing:

1. Is there evidence that family interdependence moderates the prediction of distress due to general family disharmony? Given that Asian American families report higher rates of chronic family conflict compared with other ethnic groups, might a familial interdependent orientation account for these higher rates of disagreement? It is hypothesized that family interdependence will moderate the relationship between family disharmony and individual distress for both groups. In other words, those who value family interdependence more highly will report greater wellbeing, but only when their experience of conflict intensity is low (see Figure 1). This particular pattern of relationship reflects an interdependent relational style that seeks closeness and connection to maintain one's sense of self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Second, through the use of vignettes of hypothetical parent-child disagreement as well as a participant-generated recent conflict episode with their parents, relationship between family disharmony (as assessed by nature of conflict with parents and the participants' strategies to deal with parental disagreement) and affective reaction will be examined in the following ways:

2. Is there a difference in how both groups would respond to hypothetical parent-child disagreements? Do different patterns of motivation and moral reasoning underlie these choices? Based on differing models of family conflict management idealized in cultural traditions (i.e., dharma and filial piety), it is hypothesized that whereas South Asian Americans will report greater use of accommodation responses to parent-child disagreement, Chinese Americans will report greater use of compliance. The extent to which these choices reflect ethnic-specific notions of how to achieve both emotional closeness and pietistic concerns with respecting and accepting the role-relationship of their parents will also be examined qualitatively.

3. Do South Asian American and Chinese American young adults differ in their general affective responses to an incidence of family conflict? Given the greater acceptance of emotional display in traditional South Asian parenting compared with traditional Chinese parenting practices, it is hypothesized that South Asian Americans will report more intense general negative affect during a recent experience of conflict with a parent.

4. Do South Asian American and Chinese American young adults differ in their experience of "interdependent emotions" in family conflict, which are emotional states that reinforce or emphasize their relational selves (Markus & Kitayama, 1991)? In contrast with hypothesized group differences on general negative affect during family conflict (which reflect independence-reinforcing emotions; Kitayama, Mesquita & Karasawa, 2006), it is hypothesized that there will be no group difference in the intensity of experiencing positive or negative

interdependent emotions (e.g., sympathy, indebtedness) during a recent family conflict. This is due to a shared interdependent and collectivistic emphasis in both groups, and the rationale that both positive and negative emotion may play a role in reinforcing one's connection with or disengagement from family ties in the midst of conflict.

5. Given the hypothesized group differences and similarities in the experience of emotions during conflict, does the type of disagreement response (e.g., compliance, accommodation, assertion) moderate the relationship between seriousness of a recent conflict episode and reported negative emotional responses to it? Past research has suggested that compliance is associated with a desire for connectedness and assertion is associated with desire for autonomy in adult child-parent conflicts (Harter et al, 1997). Thus, it is hypothesized that disagreement responses will moderate the relationship between conflict seriousness and both positive and negative interdependent emotions in that those reporting use of compliance will report higher positive and negative interdependent emotions than those using self-assertion. Potential ethnic group differences in these two moderation tests will be also be examined.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Participants

Data from 152 South Asian American and 149 Chinese American college students attending a large Midwestern university were collected through online survey methods. About 59% of the participants ($n = 177$) were recruited through a psychology department subject pool. The remainder were solicited via online and campus-based recruitment methods such as campus bulletin boards, and e-mail listservs of South Asian- and Chinese American based ethnic, religious, and cultural/community organizations. In addition, potential participants were contacted directly via email, whose email addresses were obtained from the university directory based on their last name. A list of the most common last names for each ethnic group were identified from published and internet sources (Lauderdale & Kestenbaum, 2000; “List of most common surnames in Asia,” 2010). Participants recruited through the Psychology Subject Pool were granted 1-credit hour for completing the online survey, and those recruited through other means were offered a cash incentive to participate (a raffle for a \$75 gift voucher). The age, gender and ethnic distributions between these two sources of recruitment were comparable to each other. The only significant difference was that subject pool participants were almost a year younger on average than those recruited throughout campus ($t(300) = 5.85, p < .001$).

Age, gender, parental education level and household income level distributions for the two ethnic groups are listed in Table 1. The average age was similar in both groups, and the gender ratio, $\chi^2(1, n = 302) = 0.01, p = ns$, and nativity distributions, $\chi^2(1, n = 302) = 0.44, p = ns$, were similar as well. The proportion of foreign-born respondents appeared for each ethnic group was also similar to census data for Illinois (73-74%; U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Reported

household income for the South Asian American sample appeared skewed to the higher end (i.e., 41.5% came from a household income of \$100,000 and above, versus only 8.8% at or below \$40,000), whereas the distribution for the Chinese American sample was slightly bimodal (31.4% at \$100,000 or above, and 26.4% at or below \$40,000). A somewhat similar pattern of skewed and bimodal distributions was reflected in both group's parental educational achievement; although the parental educational achievement of both groups tended to be high, there was also substantial representation of those with low levels of education among the Chinese American sample (24.3% - 30.5% at high school level or below) versus the South Asian American sample (9.2% - 13.8% at high school level or below). In both groups, father's education level was higher than the mother's.

Sub-ethnic and religious affiliations for the two samples are reported in Table 2. The distributions for national ethnic origin appear similar to Illinois census data for all groups, except Taiwanese Americans who appeared comparatively overrepresented (24.2% of the sample compared with 4.5% according to census data; U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). This may be because Taiwanese American participation was proportionately higher across both all recruitment methods, particularly the online and campus methods, compared to other Chinese Americans. A series of *t*-tests showed that the Taiwanese Americans and non-Taiwanese Chinese Americans did not differ on any of the measures used in the study (including conflict response types). A small number of participants (3%) from both groups reported ethnic-national origins from more than one South Asian or East and Southeast Asian country, while others (about 2%) also reported heritage from non-Asian ethnic/racial backgrounds. A diversity of faith traditions was observed in participants' religious affiliations, showing wide representation from many religious communities.

Finally, data were also collected on family size (i.e., number of siblings), current living situation, and frequency of contact with parents. There were no significant differences between the two groups in number of siblings, $\chi^2 (6, n = 302) = 7.84, p = \text{ns}$, or the likelihood of living with or separate from parents, $\chi^2 (2, n = 302) = 0.53, p = \text{ns}$. However, the South Asian American sample was more likely to either frequently meet, $\chi^2 (4, n = 295) = 28.60, p < .01$, or speak on the phone with their parents than the Chinese American sample, $\chi^2 (4, n = 294) = 103.39, p < .01$. For example, 28% of South Asian American participants ($n = 42$) met their parents at least weekly or twice-monthly compared with 12% of Chinese American participants ($n = 18$). Similarly, 80% of South Asian American participants ($n = 120$) reported speaking on the phone with their parents at least a couple of times per week compared with 34% of their Chinese American peers ($n = 49$).

To further describe the two ethnic group sample, participants were also assessed on their level of acculturation to both their ethnic (“heritage”) and mainstream American cultures using the Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA; Ryder, Alden & Paulhus, 2000). This 20 item measure uses a 9-point Likert scale to indicate the extent to which participants endorse values and traditions (e.g., “I believe in mainstream American values”), social relationships (e.g., “I am comfortable working with people of the same heritage culture as myself”), and behaviors (e.g., “I often behave in ways that are typically mainstream American”) associated with each culture. The VIA has demonstrated good reliability in diverse U.S. ethnic samples, including Asian American populations (Ahrold & Meston, 2010; Hwang & Ting, 2008). Alpha coefficients for both the heritage ($\alpha = .880$, Chinese American; $\alpha = .924$, South Asian American; $\alpha = .906$, combined) and mainstream acculturation subscales ($\alpha = .864$, Chinese American; $\alpha = .812$, South Asian American; $\alpha = .840$, combined) were good. There were no group

differences in the level of participants' enculturation to their heritage culture (VIA-Heritage, $t(300) = 0.93, p = ns$). However, South Asian American participants had slightly higher mainstream American acculturation scores on average compared with their Chinese American counterparts (VIA-Mainstream, $t(300) = 2.10, p < .05$).

Procedures

Participants were given a web link that provided access to the survey online. All participants were first screened for eligibility based on their full or partial ethnic origin (Chinese/Taiwanese American or South Asian American), their status as an undergraduate student, and their immigration status (U.S. born or in the U.S. since at least age 12) before being allowed to participate further. After indicating informed consent to participate, participants were then administered the demographic questionnaire and the quantitative measures. After completing these portions, participants were asked to respond to the two disagreement vignettes before being asked to write about one that they had recently experienced. The survey took between 20 to 45 minutes to complete, and those recruited outside subject pool (i.e., through online and campus methods) were presented with a lottery entry for the \$75 upon completion. Of the 137 participation attempts by eligible lottery participants, thirteen responses consisting of mostly South Asian Americans ($n = 11$) were deleted due to data being too incomplete for analyses (i.e., less than 50% completion). The total completion rate for responses retained across all recruitment methods was 84% ($n = 256$).

Measures for General Model

Demographic questionnaire (Appendix A). A 20-item questionnaire assessing various demographic variables (age, gender, ethnic and religious affiliation, generational status) and

family background (family income, educational achievement, frequency of family contact) was administered at the beginning of the session.

Family Disharmony measures (see Appendix B). To reflect how family conflict is experienced among Asian Americans (Markus & Lin, 1999), family disharmony was estimated as a latent construct using measures of family conflict and family alienation-involvement. Family conflict was measured using the Asian American Family Conflict Scale (FCS; Lee, Choe, Kim & No, 2000), which is a 10-stem self-report questionnaire that assesses the frequency and seriousness of intergenerational conflict. Participants used a 5-point scale to rate items that reflected a range of conflicts that may be experienced in Asian American families (e.g., “Your parents tell you what to do with your life, but you want to make your own decisions”) based on how likely and serious conflicts about these topics become. Previous studies have demonstrated its reliability and validity across ethnic groups, including European American and South Asian American participants (Lee & Liu, 2001; Lee, Su & Yoshida, 2005). The alpha coefficients for both the frequency and seriousness subscales for the individual and combined samples showed good reliability (for frequency, $\alpha = .875$ for Chinese American, $\alpha = .878$ for South Asian American, and $\alpha = .878$ combined; for seriousness, $\alpha = .903$ for Chinese American, $\alpha = .889$ for South Asian American, and $\alpha = .896$ combined.)

The family alienation-involvement scale measured the extent to which an individual feels estranged and disconnected from – or involved and identified with – the family unit. This measure is a partial adaptation of items from the Family Cultural Conflict scale (Cervantes, Padilla & Salgado de Snyder, 1991), which has demonstrated predictive validity for distress among South Asian American adults (Masood, Okazaki & Takeuchi, 2009). Wording from the original five items were revised to reduce overlap with family conflict items, and were

supplemented with additional items based on a review of other scales in the broader literature measuring an individual's alienation from and involvement with a social unit (e.g., Armsden & Greenberg, 1987; Lang, 1985; Slater, 2003.) The preliminary measure consisted of 12 items that represented a range of feelings and behaviors that reflect a state of being involved with (e.g., "I feel the need to be in touch with my family often") or feeling estranged from family members (e.g., "Sometimes it feels like I have almost nothing in common with my family"). Participants were asked to respond with how much they agree or disagree with each statement using a 5-point Likert scale. Ten of the twelve items were retained using a maximum likelihood factor analysis (see Results section) based on its fit to a two-factor model. The final measure demonstrated good internal consistency ($\alpha = .839$, Chinese American; $\alpha = .878$, South Asian American; and, $\alpha = .861$, combined.)

Item Selection and Factor Structure for Alienation-Involvement Scale. Scores from the twelve items of the preliminary alienation-involvement measure were examined to identify their potential factor loadings and a consistent factor structure prior to its use in modeling family disharmony. Data from the entire sample were randomly split in half ($n = 150$ and 151), and a maximum likelihood extraction method followed by an oblimin (non-orthogonal) rotation was used to compare factor loadings, interpretability and goodness-of-fit indices between 1-, 2-, and 3-factor solutions on the 12 items. An analysis of the items showed that only one of them violated assumption of univariate normality, and a logarithmic transformation was used to correct its skewness and kurtosis. The randomly split samples did not show any difference in age, gender or ethnicity; however, the first split sample had a higher proportion of native-born versus foreign-born participants.

Based on a non-significant goodness-of-fit measure, $\chi^2 (33, n = 150) = 44.71, p < .10$, and weak loadings on one of the factors (only two items loaded above .25), a 3-factor solution was eliminated. Both the 1-factor and 2-factor solutions demonstrated significant goodness-of-fit, (respectively, $\chi^2 [54, n = 150] = 228.124, p < .01$, and $\chi^2 [43, n = 150] = 104.966, p < .01$) and multiple strong rotated factor loadings. Since the second factor accounted for an additional 13.8% of the total common variance—totaling 54.3%—and the item loadings approximated an interpretable solution that corresponded to the original two components of alienation and involvement they were originally generated from, with no cross-loadings (*i.e.* .4 or higher), a 2-factor solution was retained. A final 2-factor solution was obtained by two items that had demonstrated low extracted communality ($h^2 < .30$) the 2-factor 12-item analysis. This resulted in two five-item factors with a slightly higher variance accounted for (59.1%) that maintained model significance, $\chi^2 (26, n = 150) = 42.05, p < .05$. The two factors showed a moderate level of correlation ($r = .48$).

A confirmatory factor analysis of 2-factor model with the ten retained items was conducted using data from the second split subsample ($n = 151$). Although the 2-factor model showed inadequate fit ($\chi^2 [34, n = 151] = 112.23, p < .01$; CFI = .883; RMSEA 90% CI [.01, .15]), the 1-factor model indicated significantly worse fit ($\Delta\chi^2 = 24.49, \Delta df = 1, p < .001$) and poorer fit values (CFI = .847; RMSEA 90% CI [.01, .15]). In the 2-factor model, items loaded well onto their respective factors (loadings ranged from .59 to .86), and the estimated correlation between the two factors for the subsample was high ($r = .71$). For the overall sample, coefficient alphas for the two subscales suggested good reliability ($\alpha = .814$ for Family alienation, $\alpha = .833$ for Family involvement).

Family Interdependence. The extent to which participants value close, interdependent family relationships was measured using the family interdependence scale (Phinney et al., 2005). This scale consisted of eight items (e.g., “How important is it for me to spend time with my family?”) that were rated using a 5-point scale. This scale was used in Phinney and colleagues (2005) vignette-based study of parent-child disagreements, and had demonstrated good reliability across participating ethnic groups. Likewise, for the current study the measure demonstrated good reliability for the combined sample ($\alpha = .854$) and each ethnic group ($\alpha = .827$, Chinese American; $\alpha = .865$, South Asian American).

Well-being measures (see Appendix C). Well-being was estimated as a latent construct using measures of life satisfaction and psychological distress. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985) assesses an individual’s evaluation of global life satisfaction. It consists of 5 items that evaluates how closely the respondent cognitively agrees, using a 7-point scale, with statements such as, “If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing,” and, “In most ways my life is close to my ideal.” The SWLS has demonstrated good reliability in diverse U.S. and cross-cultural samples, including an Asian American sample (Diener et al., 1985; Yoo & Lee, 2005). Internal consistency measures for the current study showed good reliability across combined and sub-samples ($\alpha = .891$, Chinese American; $\alpha = .853$, South Asian American; $\alpha = .873$, combined).

Participants’ distress was assessed using the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977). Used widely as a measure of general distress in research, the CES-D consists of 20 items that assesses how frequently respondents experience symptoms of distress in the previous week, using a 4-point scale. Sample items include, “I felt that everything I did was an effort,” “I felt bothered by things that usually don’t bother me.” The

CES-D has been reported to have good reliability, with alphas ranging from .85 to .90 (Radloff, 1977), with similar results for the present study ($\alpha = .875$, Chinese American; $\alpha = .926$, South Asian American; $\alpha = .873$, combined).

Measures for Episodic Model

Disagreement vignettes (see Appendix E). Participants were asked to respond to two vignettes that depicted a hypothetical disagreement between the participant and their parents over two different issues (choice of college major and dinner plans.) These were adapted from vignettes that Phinney and colleagues (2005) used in their study on responses to parent-child conflict and its underlying responses across ethnic groups. The vignettes were worded to emphasize a conflict in preferred choice (i.e., stating the different parties' positions) using neutral wording (i.e., not stating whether or how these different positions are expressed). Because Phinney and her colleagues observed that some vignettes elicited higher compliance from some ethnic groups because they reflected situations that "carry strong cultural meaning" (p. 35), two situations that avoid demonstrated culturally-loaded significance that may be ethnic specific (such as those around dating and sexuality norms for South Asian Americans; Inman, 2006) were chosen. Similarly, because the present study focused on concerns, values and goals that could be involved in family conflict, the vignette situations were chosen based on their potential to evoke a variety of concerns when in conflict with family members (e.g., a perceived need to conform, a desire to be physically or emotionally close to family).

For each vignette, participants were asked to state how they would most likely respond to the disagreement outlined in the vignette ("As a person in this situation, what would you do? What actions would you take to address this situation?"), and what motive or reason would underlie this projected action ("State your reasoning for why you would choose this action.").

Participants were also asked to identify the most potentially stressful disagreement scenario for them.

Open-ended responses to the disagreement vignettes were coded for response type (e.g., accommodating, compliance) using four main coding categories for response type (see Table 3) derived from prior research on adolescent and young-adult parent disagreements across ethnic groups (Phinney et al, 2005; Kapadia, 2008; Kapadia & Miller, 2005). These mutually-exclusive response types were further classified on the basis of underlying dimensions (e.g., focus on maintaining harmony versus problem solving) derived from cross-cultural literature on interpersonal conflicts (Kapadia & Miller, 2005; Harter et al., 1997; Hwang, 1998; Markus & Lin, 1999; see Figure 2). For some responses, one of three additional codes (i.e., agreement, deceit, and coercion) was used when none of the four main codes applied, as outlined by Phinney et al (2005). Hypotheses were tested using only responses coded from one of the four main codes, with the exception of the dinner vignette which had also included a large number of responses coded as “agreement” ($n = 47$). Unlike for the academic major vignette, a large number of respondents did not perceive a conflict with their parents (i.e., they agreed with the viewpoint attributed in the vignette to the parents) in the dinner vignette, and these were included in the chi-square analyses as its own category, ordinally closest to the “compliance” coding category due to their outward similarity and coding proximity. Because responses to the academic major vignette were less ambiguous and elicited greater explication by respondents than the dinner vignette, only academic major vignette responses were analyzed thematically for motivational themes (see Analysis section).

Two independent raters coded the responses, overlapping on one-third of the responses ($n = 98$) to obtain estimates of inter-rater reliability. There was an adequate level of inter-rater

concordance in coding for the two vignettes (77.9% and 77.4% agreement for the major and dinner vignette, respectively). Estimates for Krippendorff's alpha reliability measure for ordinal data suggested that coding discrepancies for the academic major vignette differed only slightly between coders ($\alpha = .785$), whereas coding discrepancies were slightly larger but still acceptable for the dinner vignette ($\alpha = .754$). Codes were more likely to diverge widely for the dinner vignette due to greater ambiguity in responses that made it difficult to discern whether, for example, the respondent would choose to attend stay for the family dinner out of deference to (i.e., compliance) or in agreement with the parent (i.e., agreement). Inter-rater disagreement in codes was reconciled through discussion and consensus coding, or, if unsuccessful, by consulting each respondents' own categorization.

Hypothetical vignette ratings. Seriousness of the episode of disagreement that participants report was assessed using items from the Stress Appraisal Measure (SAM; Peacock & Wong, 1990), which measures global appraisals of stress. Five items from the Threat and Centrality subscales of the SAM were used to indicate to what extent the reported disagreement was perceived to be of serious impact and consequence during the disagreement. The wording was adjusted slightly to adapt the items for use with a specific situation, and three items that indicated affective responses (e.g., feeling "anxious" and "helpless") were omitted to reduce overlap with other measures used in the present study. Sample items included "This situation impacts me greatly," and, "This situation has serious implications for my life," and were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale. The alpha coefficients for the combined ($\alpha = .854$) and two samples ($\alpha = .819$, Chinese American; $\alpha = .872$, South Asian American) indicated good reliability.

Personal disagreement vignette (see Appendix F). Participants were also asked to generate their own recent example of a stressful disagreement in their family. After identifying an episode of disagreement that occurred with one of their parents within the past year (“State what each of you had disagreed with”), similar to the vignettes respondents were asked to report their response to the disagreement episode (“What actions did you take to address the situation?”) and its underlying motivations (“State your reasoning for why you chose these actions.”) Participants were asked to narrate the disagreement in further detail, including a description of how the disagreement arose, reached its “most stressful point,” and was resolved. These responses to conflict were coded with the same coding categories and criteria used for the vignettes, focusing on the respondent’s action just after the height of the conflict. Because some of the reported recent conflicts were either unclear in their description of what the conflict was about, or the conflict was described solely as an escalation of emotional tension without reporting a disagreement of choice with clearly differentiated positions, some responses were left uncoded ($n = 11$). Responses left uncoded or coded with one of the three alternative coding categories were omitted from moderation analyses (Hypothesis 5).

The inter-rater concordance rate was fair (70.8% agreement), and the good Krippendorff alpha coefficient for ordinal data ($\alpha = .758$) suggested that ratings between coders diverged only slightly. That the concordance rate for the actual conflict was slightly lower than for either vignette is likely due to wide-ranging interpretability resulting from longer and more complex conflict narratives compared with those from the vignettes. As a result, coders differed more in identifying which information was most salient for coding purposes, in addition to interpretation variance.

Personal vignette ratings. To understand how stressful disagreements or conflicts are organized emotionally, participants were asked to rate affective responses to this disagreement at its “most stressful point.” Their affective responses were rated using items from the Negative Affect subscale of the Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS-NA; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The PANAS-NA subscale consists of 10-item mood scales that measure negative affect (e.g., “ashamed,” “hostile”) on a 5-point scale, and has been shown to have good reliability and demonstrate convergent validity with psychological distress measures (Clark & Watson, 1991; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The alpha coefficient for this subscale showed good reliability for the Chinese American ($\alpha = .853$), South Asian American ($\alpha = .906$), and combined samples ($\alpha = .889$).

Participants were similarly asked to endorse additional affective responses that have been theorized or shown to reflect emotional qualities salient among collectivistic groups (Kitayama, Mesquita & Karasawa, 2006). These additions consist of fourteen unique (i.e., non-overlapping) moods that include what Kitayama and colleagues identified as positive and negative “engaging” emotions (e.g., “respectful,” “troublesome,” “indebted”). The reliability coefficients of these measures for the Chinese American, South Asian American and combined samples ranged from fair (positive engaging: $\alpha = .724$, $\alpha = .774$, and $\alpha = .758$, respectively) to good (Negative Engaging: $\alpha = .879$, $\alpha = .866$, and $\alpha = .874$).

Data Analysis Strategy

The majority of quantitative analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 18 software, and the structural equation modeling analyses (SEM) were conducted using IBM SPSS Amos 18 and its Multiple Group Analysis feature. To examine moderation in SEM (Hypothesis 1), a latent interaction term was created from cross-products of sub-scale scores from the two

exogenous latent variables (Family Disharmony and Family Interdependence; see Figure 3). Values from these cross-products were first orthogonalized to reduce multicollinearity and improve model stability and fit (Burrill, 1997). Even though the univariate distribution for all indicators used in the model were within acceptable ranges for skewness and kurtosis (Kline, 2005), to further improve model fit the distributions for some of the indicators for the endogenous latent variable (Somatic, Interpersonal, and Depressed Affect subscales of the CES-D) were corrected for right-skewness using logarithmic transformation. In light of significantly high Mahalanobis d-squared values ($p < .10$) for a large number of outlier cases in both ethnic groups that were retained ($n = 20$ for the Chinese American sample; $n = 26$ for the South Asian American sample), the Bollen-Stine bootstrapping method was used within the Amos software to obtain more reliable model significance values and coefficient estimates. This is due to the violation of multivariate normality assumption required for unbiased maximum likelihood estimation, from which chi-square values and standard errors for significance test statistics may not be robust and more likely to result in higher null rejection rates (i.e., higher Type II error; Bollen, 1989).

Similar to Hypothesis 1, moderation for the recent conflict data (Hypothesis 5) was also tested by creating an interaction term between the two independent variables, resulting in three-way interaction regression analyses. A grouping variable, main effects, and all interaction terms were included in a single linear regression procedure for each dependent measure to simultaneously test the moderation hypotheses and group differences in regression coefficients. A test for an equivalence of group means (Hypothesis 4) required a test against the null hypothesis of group mean difference. Because it was unclear what that score difference should be in variable units under the null, I opted to test in effect size units against a small but nontrivial

effect size of .2 (Cohen's d ; Cohen, 1988). Equivalence is established if the observed d falls between -.2 and .2 (Cribbie, Gruman & Arpin-Cribbie, 2004).

ATLAS.ti 6.2 (Scientific Software Development, 2011) was used to segment and iteratively code responses to the academic major vignette using a Values Coding framework (Gable & Wolf, 1993, as cited in Saldana, 2009). Different values, attitudes and beliefs cited by participants in their response to the vignette were identified, and codes were developed based on their potential to indicate personal and relational motivations during the hypothetical conflict that were flexible enough to be used across response type. These coded units were further refined for coherence and distinction and were then aggregated based on larger conceptual themes (e.g., autonomy, communication, interdependence), and their relative frequency across response type and ethnic group were examined to infer sociomoral similarities and distinctions in parent-child conflict. As with the coding procedure for recent conflict and vignette response types, all coding and code clustering was conducted blind to ethnic group and coded response type.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Results for the general conflict model are presented first, followed by an examination of conflict style differences between the two ethnic groups for hypothetical and recent personal episodes of parent-child conflict. Table 4 displays group-based correlations between all measures used in the analyses. The direction of coefficients was similar across groups, and correlation strength was also comparable. Most of the differences in strength between the groups involved weak to moderate correlations, and the only significantly different pair of correlations based on a non-directional *r*-to-*Z* test was the correlation between the two family conflict subscales, Likelihood and Seriousness, across the two groups ($z = 4.29, p < .001$). Thus, the variables under study appear to interrelate (i.e., function) similarly across ethnic group.

Generally, family conflict and alienation/involvement measures correlated moderately or strongly with each other, and weakly to moderately with well-being measures; family interdependence consistently correlated significantly only with the alienation/involvement measures. For the recent conflict measures, conflict seriousness showed moderate to strong relationships with all negative affect measures. These patterns of interrelationship provide a strong basis for the multivariate analyses that follow.

Some group differences on mean scores for these measures were also observed (see Table 4). The South Asian American sample had significantly higher scores than the Chinese American sample on both general (Conflict Likelihood, $t(300) = 2.37, p < .05$, and Conflict Seriousness, $t(300) = 2.10, p < .05$) and specific conflict measures (Recent Conflict Seriousness, $t(254) = 2.72, p < .01$), indicating that they experienced more frequent conflict with their parents and that these conflicts were more serious in nature. South Asian Americans participants also

felt more involved with their families than their Chinese American counterparts, $t(300) = -2.88, p < .01$, and were also more likely to value close, interdependent relationships with their family members, $t(299) = 3.40, p < .01$. However, there were no significant group differences on the extent to which participants felt alienated or disconnected from their families, nor on their level of psychological distress and life satisfaction. The observed group differences on recent conflict affect scores are discussed further below concerning Hypotheses 3 and 4.

General Conflict Model

Testing the moderating role of Family Interdependence in combined sample

The first hypothesis examined the extent to which a familially interdependent orientation may be implicated in the relationship between family disharmony and individual wellbeing. A moderation test was conducted for the pooled dataset by reviewing goodness-of-fit indices between nested models and examining significant path loadings from the interaction latent construct (Schumacker, 2002; Schumacker and Marcoulides, 1998). Table 5 shows the goodness-of-fit statistics for the model before and after removing the interaction regression path (i.e., constraining the path coefficient to zero) in the pooled sample. Using nested model analysis, omitting the interaction term resulted in significantly worse fit ($\Delta\chi^2 = 7.89, \Delta df = 1, p < .01$) though only slightly poorer fit values ($\Delta CFI = -.00; \Delta RMSEA = .00$). However, the unstandardized path loading from the interaction latent variable was significant ($b = -.00, p < .01$, 90% CI $[-.00, -.00]$). Furthermore, the interaction model explained a greater amount of variation in wellbeing than the one without the interaction pathway ($R^2 = .24$ versus $R^2 = .18$, respectively), although their overlapping confidence intervals suggested that these estimates were not significantly different from each other (R^2 90% CIs $[.10, .36]$ and $[.08, .30]$,

respectively). This further provides support for the importance of interdependence in the relationship between family disharmony and wellbeing.

Figure 4 displays the interaction plot for different levels of the moderator value. As hypothesized, for individuals reporting higher family interdependence scores, high family disharmony was more strongly associated with poorer wellbeing ($\beta = -.61$) compared with those having lower scores on family interdependence ($\beta = -.25$). Figure 5 displays all standardized factor and path loadings for the interaction model in the pooled sample, which explained a modest amount of variation in wellbeing scores ($R^2 = .24$). Almost all subscales significantly loaded onto their factors in expected directions, with the exception of one of the interaction indicators whose standardized loading only approached significance (Family Conflict-Seriousness x Family Interdependence; $\beta = .56, p < .10$). In sum, these results lend strong support to the hypothesis that interdependence moderates the relationship between family disharmony and wellbeing in the combined sample (Hypothesis 1), although it is possible that this moderation may not be supported equally in both groups.

Testing the moderating role of Family Interdependence for each group

Group differences in the interaction model were tested using a multi-group procedure that fit the model separately for each group simultaneously. In this framework, parameters may be constrained to be equal within and across both groups to test for group equivalence (*i.e.*, invariance) at the measurement (*e.g.*, factor loadings, indicator intercepts) and structural (*e.g.*, path loadings, factor means and intercepts) levels by comparing fit indices between nested models. However, prior to testing for differences in structural parameters, various levels of measurement invariance must first be demonstrated through non-significant differences in model fit between increasingly constrained models (Bollen, 1989), although there is some debate about

how stringent the tests of measurement invariance need to be prior to subsequent structural invariance tests (see for example, Byrne, 2001) and whether partial invariance may be a sufficient and more realistic condition (Byrne, Shavelson, & Muthén, 1989; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). Establishing measurement invariance prior to testing structural invariance ensures that the choice and configuration of indicators estimating all latent factors have demonstrably similar utility for both groups prior to examining the similarity of the factors' interrelationships for both groups. Table 5 displays results from a series of models, each subsequent model with increasing but nested sets of parameters constrained compared with the baseline (fully unconstrained) model, each representing hierarchical tests of measurement and structural invariance.

As the baseline model, the fully unconstrained interaction model used in the Hypothesis 1 test for pooled moderation showed good fit in the multiple groups framework (CFI = .97; RMSEA 90% CI [.03, .05]; Bollen-Stine p -value = .19). Metric invariance was established when equalized corresponding factor loadings across groups showed no significant reduction in fit ($\Delta\chi^2 = 16.49$, $\Delta df = 10$, $p < .10$), although there was a trend toward significance. Full scalar invariance was not demonstrated when equalizing the corresponding indicator intercepts across groups resulted in significantly poorer fit ($\Delta\chi^2 = 32.98$, $\Delta df = 13$, $p < .01$). However, since the other fit indices and the Bollen-Stine p -value indicated that the metric invariant model still fit the data well without much reduction in value ($\Delta CFI = .01$; $\Delta RMSEA = .00$; Bollen-Stine p -value = .11), the chi-square difference may be disregarded as an oversensitive indicator of misfit (See Cheung & Rensvold, 2002; Perreira, Deeb-Sossa, Harris & Bollen, 2005). Moreover, partial measurement invariance may be established with as few as two invariant indicator loadings and intercepts (Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998) as an adequate basis for further tests of structural

invariance (Byrne, Shavelson, & Muthén, 1989). Accordingly, partial measurement invariance was established ($\Delta\chi^2 = 14.09$, $\Delta df = 9$, $p = ns$; $\Delta CFI = .00$; $\Delta RMSEA = .00$) by constraining the loadings and intercepts of the first two indicators of each latent term, and subsequent testing of equated corresponding path loadings across groups showed no further significant drop in fit ($\Delta\chi^2 = 4.67$, $\Delta df = 3$, $p = ns$; $\Delta CFI = .00$; $\Delta RMSEA = .00$). This means that the direction and strength of the interrelationship between the latent factors were equivalent across group (i.e., structurally invariant).

That structural invariance was established in the model suggests that from a model fit perspective, there is no strong evidence against group similarity in the meaning of family disharmony, interdependence, and wellbeing, nor the interacting nature of its interrelationship. (Note that this was even the case after *all* measurement paths were constrained; see Table 5.) Figure 6 displays all standardized estimated loadings for both groups for the fully unconstrained model. The majority of factor and path loadings were similar in direction and strength, which is consistent with the (partial) measurement and structural invariance established earlier. This means that the factors (e.g., Family Disharmony and Wellbeing) and how they are derived or estimated (i.e., by their indicators) have the same meaning and interrelationship across groups. However, the path loading for the interaction term was significant for the South Asian American group but was not significant for the Chinese American sample.

An interaction plot of the simple slopes for the multi-group interaction model parameter estimates (see Figure 7) showed that the relationship between family disharmony and wellbeing for different levels of family interdependence for South Asian Americans was similar to the plot from the pooled model. That is, in support of Hypothesis 1, for South Asian Americans reporting higher family interdependence scores, high family disharmony was very strongly

associated with poor wellbeing ($\beta = -.70$), whereas for those with lower scores on family interdependence, high family disharmony was only slightly related to poor wellbeing ($\beta = -.16$). This was not the case for Chinese American participants for whom, regardless of family interdependence scores, high family disharmony was only moderately associated with poorer wellbeing (β s = $-.34$ and $-.31$). That the given model also explained less variation in Chinese American wellbeing scores ($R^2 = .12$) than South Asian Americans' ($R^2 = .26$) reinforces the notion that the model is less applicable for Chinese Americans. Therefore, it appears that family interdependence was only important to the Family Disharmony-Wellbeing model for South Asian Americans. That this model was unimportant for one group (Chinese Americans) may explain why the structural paths demonstrated statistical invariance for the overall multiple groups model, yet had estimated a significant interaction term for the other group (South Asian American sample).

Responses to Conflict: Vignettes

Group differences in Conflict Style

Responses to the academic major and family dinner vignettes were examined and coded based on conflict response type, and are presented in Table 6. Generally in both groups, assertion was the most popular response type in the academic major vignette (43.1% for South Asian Americans and 50.7% for Chinese Americans), followed by negotiation (33.3% and 35.4%, respectively). There was no consistency across groups for the family dinner vignette; whereas negotiation was the most dominant response for South Asian Americans (53.5%), the Chinese American participants were evenly split between agreement and assertion as the most popular response (22.2% each).

For the choosing major vignette, there was a significant difference between the groups in the coded responses such that the South Asian American sample was slightly more likely to choose compliant or accommodating responses over assertion compared with Chinese Americans, linear-by-linear $\chi^2 (1, n = 288) = 4.31, p < .05$. However, the opposite pattern appeared to hold for the dinner vignette as Chinese Americans were slightly more likely to agree or comply versus accommodate and negotiate compared with South Asian Americans, linear-by-linear $\chi^2 (1, n = 288) = 3.89, p < .05$, although comparatively more Chinese American respondents also opted for assertion. Thus, there was no clear support for the hypothesis that Chinese Americans were generally more likely to comply and South Asian Americans were more likely to accommodate (Hypothesis 2). It should be noted that the majority of both ethnic groups (89.2% of South Asian Americans, 84.9% of Chinese Americans) identified the academic major vignette as the more stressful of the two. This may explain why both groups tended to comply (and agree) less in the academic major vignette than the dinner vignette.

Thematic analysis of response rationale in academic major vignette

To understand the motivations underlying responses to conflict, open-ended responses to the academic major vignette were thematically analyzed for possible relational (e.g., respect, closeness, approval) and personal (e.g., autonomy, happiness) needs and motives. In total, 38 unique but interrelated codes were generated from all responses ($n = 294$; see Table 7). These codes were further clustered into categories to aid in substantive interpretation based on their relational importance (Autonomy/Independence and Filial/Interdependence), their interpersonal process qualities (Communication and Harmony), and their individual- and relationship-based factors (Self-Oriented and Positive Relationship Quality). Some of the most cited codes across the sample involved implementing and asserting one's autonomy (Choosing autonomy, $n = 168$;

Self-expression, $n = 75$; Asserting Autonomy, $n = 62$), which is consistent with assertion as the most popular response type for this vignette. Similarly, other oft-cited motives involved working with parents to partially secure their personal preferences through discussion and argument (Desiring parental acceptance, $n = 89$; Collaborative discussion, $n = 66$) and reconciling the divergent preferences (Harmonizing/Resolving, $n = 64$), an unsurprising result given that negotiation was the second most popular conflict response.

To get a clearer picture of motives underlying responses – and potential similarities and distinctions between ethnic groups – the individual codes were summed by conceptual category and disaggregated by ethnic group into one of the four main response types. Table 8 displays the observed frequency of codes and an averaged value to take into account the differing numbers of participants in each column. A series of rank-sum, non-parametric two independent samples tests (Mann–Whitney U test) were conducted to examine potential group differences. Significant differences were observed between the two ethnic groups on Autonomy/Independent, Filial/Interdependence, and Communication coding categories, such that Chinese Americans more frequently endorsed autonomy and independent codes than South Asian Americans, who in turn more frequently endorsed filial/interdependence codes and communication codes. After accounting for a family-wise error rate of $p < .05/6$, none of these observed differences remained significant.

Two-by-four ANOVA analyses on rank-summed data for each code category (*i.e.*, an ethnic group-by-response type two-way version of the Kruskal-Wallis test; Zar, 1984) were also conducted, and these showed that ethnic group was not a significant factor after taking response type into account, and that response type significantly predicted variation in code category frequencies. That is, there were significant differences between response type for each of the six

code categories. Examining code category averages across response type (see Table 8) suggests that autonomy-and independence-associated codes were cited with increasing frequency in order from accommodation to assertion categories, whereas filial and interdependence codes (e.g., gratitude, deference) were observed with increasing frequency in order from assertion to compliance responses. This is consistent with Harter et al.'s (1997) findings that compliance is associated with connectedness needs and assertion is associated with autonomy needs. Self-oriented codes (e.g., personal happiness, enthusiasm) appeared to occur with increased frequency among negotiators and assertors, and communication and harmony codes (e.g., self-expression, harmonizing) were most concentrated among accommodators and negotiators. Finally, codes associated with positive aspects of one's relationship with their parents (e.g., trusting and relying on parents) were cited with some consistency across accommodation, negotiation and assertion codes.

Comparative analyses. Although group differences on code categories could not be fully established, I examined the open-ended responses to help provide greater context for the nature of family conflict across ethnic group. I reviewed vignette responses and their associated individual codes for South Asian American and Chinese American accommodators and assertors. When comparing South Asian American accommodating responses with Chinese American accommodating responses, both sets of responses appeared very similar in heavily emphasizing the role of parents in decision-making. However, one important difference was a subtle undercurrent of emotional dissonance in South Asian American accommodators' responses. For many, there appeared to be a fundamental uneasiness about being in disagreement that put the relationship under contention. In other words, having competing views subtly implied a possible rupture in the relationship that needed repair through parental involvement, approval or

expressions of gratitude. For example, one respondent mentioned compromise as the likely response to the disagreement, explaining, “so we could all get what we wanted....my parents are very important to me and I would try to do everything to make them and myself happy because they have already given so much for me.” Similarly, another respondent supported his/her projected decision entirely with: “My parents have my best interest at heart. They love me and only want the best for me. They would not purposely try to make me unhappy. Whatever they are suggesting would be to make me happier in the end.”

On the other hand, among Chinese American accommodators the “problem” produced by the disagreement appeared less interpersonal and emotive in nature, and often the focus was on arriving at a reasonable and practical mutually-acceptable solution that relied on discussion, communication, and cooperation. The emotional tone in these accommodating responses appeared calm and trusting, and parental involvement was typically justified based on their perceived wisdom, support and a desire to please them. For example, one respondent explained, “I highly respect and trust my parent's opinions, so I will highly consider what they have to say before making a final decision. This way, both parties are satisfied a little.”

Some of these themes persisted when I contrasted South Asian asserting responses with Chinese American asserting responses. Chinese American participants’ responses on the whole appeared more self-assured and even-handed in their consideration of different aspects of the disagreement (e.g., balancing autonomy needs with the need to be respectful of parents). Almost as though feeling reassured about the likely cooperation of their parents, most of their responses were quite expressive about their autonomy needs in a manner that was non-defensive. For example, one respondent wrote:

I would choose the major I want as well as the classes. Over time, I would do so and try and convince my parents that I want to live my life the way I want to. I am pretty independent as a person. However it would be difficult, since I respect my family's opinion. I know my parents love me enough such that over time, they will understand why I made the decisions I did.

For South Asian American assertors, on the other hand, their responses generally suggested less concern with relational reconciliation compared with South Asian American accommodators. Yet, for these assertors there still seemed to be an undercurrent of needing to justify their autonomy needs by being more expressive about their personal and emotional reasons for asserting their choice (e.g., needing to be happy, realizing their passions in their academic major). For example, one respondent wrote:

I would decide to choose the major I wanted because, in the end, it is my life. I would tell my parents that I am not interested in that major or career, even if they were upset with my decision. I do not want to be miserable in college learning something I am not interested in, and then I would be stuck with a job that I do not enjoy for the rest of my life simply to please my parents. I would be ruining my potential to do something I love just for them. They would eventually accept my decision, and would be happy for me when they see me enjoying my studies/job.

For assertors of both groups, filial and interdependence considerations were less primary than for the accommodators. However, being respectful of parents and being able to rely on the support of and trust in the goodwill of parents was still an important basis for the projected assertion of many from either group.

Responses to Conflict: Emotions and Most Stressful Recent Conflict

Participants' descriptions of the most stressful conflict with their parents in the previous year were also examined for potential group differences in reported affect. These descriptions were coded in a manner similar to the vignettes (see Table 9), and there was a non-significant trend of group effect on response type, such that compared with the Chinese American sample, South Asian Americans were more likely to report conflicts that involved less assertive and more compliant or accommodating responses, linear-by-linear $\chi^2(1, n = 229) = 3.73, p < .06$. The topics of conflict provided by respondents are also displayed in Table 9. Disagreements over respondents' academic decisions, career choices and campus living arrangements were the most common topic of conflict and occurred in similar frequency between groups. Conflicts over dating in general or one's choice of romantic partner, along with disagreements about one's choice of friends and how to spend one's leisure time were the next most common topic, slightly more so for the South Asian American group. The only substantial ethnic difference in conflict topic was over poor academic performance in college, which was observed more frequently in the South Asian American sample ($n = 10$, versus $n = 1$ in the Chinese American sample).

Group Differences in Affective Response to Recent Conflict

Ethnic differences in the intensity of general and interdependent emotions during a recent parent-child conflict were examined. The observed group differences in general (non-specific) negative affect (PANAS-NA), and Positive and Negative Interdependent Emotion mean scores (refer to Table 3), suggested that as hypothesized, South Asian American participants reported experiencing significantly greater general negative affect during the conflict than their Chinese American peers, $t(254) = 3.29, p < .01$ (Hypothesis 3). In the test for the equivalence of positive and negative interdependent affect scores across ethnic group (Hypothesis 4; see Data Analysis

Strategy), the observed difference effect sizes were observed to be nontrivial for both tests ($d = .215$ and $.353$, respectively) suggesting nonequivalence. Thus, South Asian Americans experienced negative general affect emotions more intensely than Chinese Americans, as hypothesized. However, the hypothesis that the groups would be similar on positive and negative interdependent emotions was not supported.

Moderation by Conflict Response on Independent and Interdependent Negative Emotions

Regression models were fitted to predict the above emotion scores to examine whether conflict responses play a moderating role in the relationship between nonspecific and interdependent emotions and conflict seriousness. Alternatively stated, the models were used to examine whether conflict response type was associated with each of the three different emotions after taking conflict seriousness into account. The coded responses to recent conflict were used as an ordinal-level variable in the analyses, and for each affect score a single regression model was fitted to simultaneously test for both moderation and group difference. There was partial support for the hypothesis that disagreement response would moderate the relationship between conflict seriousness and negative affect scores; conflict response significantly moderated the relationship between conflict seriousness and both interdependent and non-specific negative affect but only for the Chinese American sample (see Table 10). Thus, for South Asian Americans, only conflict seriousness was associated with more intense general and interdependent negative emotions, and conflict response was inconsequential.

Figure 8 shows separate interaction plots for predicting these emotion scores for each group based on levels of conflict seriousness and coded responses. For the South Asian American group, more serious conflicts were consistently associated with increased nonspecific and interdependent negative emotions, regardless of the type of response attributed to the

conflict. On the other hand, consistent with Hypothesis 5, Chinese American compliers and accommodators reported higher negative interdependent and nonspecific emotions than those assertors, but this was only true for less serious conflicts. During more serious conflicts, the conflict response appeared to have little impact on the intensity of negative emotions for Chinese Americans. Contrary to hypothesis, conflict response was not a significant moderator for predicting positive interdependent affect from conflict seriousness in either group.

Summary of Results

In sum, the results show support for the importance of interdependence in family conflict for both groups at a chronic and episodic level. In the test of a general model, Family Interdependence was found to moderate the relationship between Family Disharmony and Wellbeing, such that those who strongly valued being interconnected with family had better wellbeing in the case of low family conflict, but poorer wellbeing if they experienced chronic and intense family conflict (Hypothesis 1). However, when this model was tested for Chinese Americans and South Asian Americans separately, this finding was only supported for the South Asian American group.

Next, I examined responses to hypothetical conflicts and found some ethnic group differences in their complying and asserting response patterns to the conflict, but these were not consistent across vignettes as hypothesized (Hypothesis 2).

Finally, I examined participants' affective reactions to a recent conflict episode they reported. Results suggested that South Asian Americans experienced more intense general negative emotions during the conflict than Chinese Americans (Hypothesis 3), but there was no evidence that the groups were similar in their intensity of positive and negative interdependent emotions (Hypothesis 4). Further examination (Hypothesis 5) showed that for South Asian

Americans, neither compliance nor assertion was associated with more intense negative emotions during conflict, after taking the seriousness level of the conflict into account. For Chinese Americans, however, compliance was associated with more intense negative general and interdependent emotions, and conversely, assertion was associated with less intense emotionality. This specific finding was consistent with hypothesis, but it was only supported for Chinese American participants that were reporting less serious conflict.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The current study addresses a gap in understanding the nature of parent-child conflict among Asian American young adults, and for South Asian Americans and Chinese Americans in particular. Despite the extent of research that suggests these groups have higher rates of family conflict compared with other ethnic groups (Farver et al., 2002; Greenberger & Chen, 1996) and that both groups have strong cultural emphases on interdependence, to date this is the one of the first studies that has explicitly examined the interrelationship of these concepts. This is important because, given the theorized emphases of traditional familial interdependent values such as filial piety and duty, it is possible that inevitable parent-child conflicts may result in greater stress and reduction in wellbeing. Comparing and contrasting findings across these two ethnic groups allowed for shared and ethnic-specific factors to emerge with the potential to contribute to research on family conflict, emotionality, and familialism among Asian Americans.

This study examined the potential role of interdependence and interdependent emotional responses in the context of parent-child conflict. Conflict was examined at the general (i.e., family disharmony) and episodic (i.e., recent conflict) levels, and responses to hypothetical disagreements were also codified and explored to provide further context to the response to parent-child conflict. Interdependence was also examined at the general (i.e., family interdependence) and specific (i.e., interdependent emotions; relational motivations) level. Results showed partial support for most hypotheses, and some unexpected group differences emerged. The hypothesis that interdependence plays a role in moderating the effects of family disharmony on wellbeing was supported, but this was only true for the South Asian American group. South Asian American participants who strongly valued being interdependent within the

family unit reported poorer wellbeing when their family disharmony scores were high compared with those who valued it less, as hypothesized. Contrary to hypothesis, however, for Chinese Americans, greater family disharmony predicted poorer wellbeing irrespective of their level of family interdependence.

South Asian Americans and Chinese Americans also differed in their responses to the vignettes depicting two hypothetical parent-child disagreement scenarios. The group differences that emerged were inconsistent across the vignettes and were not limited to simple group differences in compliance and accommodation unlike had been originally hypothesized. Furthermore, when recalling affect experienced during a recent conflict, South Asian Americans reported more intense nonspecific negative affect during a recent conflict compared with Chinese Americans, as hypothesized. The two groups were shown to be not similar in their reports of negative and positive interdependent emotions, indicating possible differences.

Finally, there was partial support for the hypothesis that response type would differentially moderate the relationship between conflict seriousness and independent and interdependent negative affect. The moderator relationship was only supported for Chinese Americans, and only for negative interdependent emotions for a subsample of the group; compliance was associated with higher negative interdependent emotions, as originally hypothesized, but this was true only among participants experiencing *less* serious conflict. These observed group differences and departures from hypothesis highlight the importance of exploring potential ethnic differences, and of examining what is culturally salient in multiple ways that may tangibly capture its differing expressions across groups.

Similarities in conflict

In examining general parent-child conflict, this study modeled conflict as a disruption in relationships as suggested by the literature on conflict in strongly interdependent cultures (Markus & Lin, 1999), using alienation from the family unit as an additional factor to frequency and intensity of parent-child conflict. The demonstrated fit for this model for both ethnic groups provide empirical support to literature that documented alienation as a prominent quality within conflicted or disconnected families (Dugsin, 2001; Qin, 2006). Otherwise, because of the comparative nature of the analyses and the multiple significant group differences found across results, it was difficult to identify the similarities between South Asian and Chinese American participants.

One clear similarity is that both groups strongly valued autonomy and independence in their response to the academic major vignette. Furthermore, both groups reported a greater likelihood of complying (and agreeing) with their parents' views in the family dinner vignette, suggesting a strong valuing of family connectedness in lower-stakes conflicts. On the other hand, many tangible group differences were observed that suggest potential themes that can be explored and built upon in future work. I now discuss patterns from the observed group differences between South Asian American and Chinese American young adults in their experiences and perceptions of parent-child conflict.

Perceptions and experience of conflict among South Asian Americans

One set of findings is that, compared with Chinese American participants, South Asian Americans were likely to report experiencing more intense negative emotions during a recent conflict, and that they were also more likely to perceive the conflict as having serious consequences. They also reported that on a general level, conflict with parents occurred with

higher frequency and tended to be of a more serious nature than their Chinese American counterparts. Taken together, this suggests that South Asian Americans experience comparatively more frequent conflicts and more intense and possibly distressing emotionality during disagreements in their families. Indeed, in a recent conflict, the more seriously they perceived the conflict, the more intensely they reported experiencing negative general and interdependent emotions and its height.

This sensitivity about and sensitivity during conflicts is consistent with Bacon's (1996) observation about a pervasive and constant tracking of possible interpersonal tension among second-generation Indian American young adults and their immigrant parents. Bacon had described this as part of a broader South Asian worldview she had observed that emphasized an individual's constant awareness of one's social role contingent upon one's immediate social environment. The more frequent experience and higher intensity of conflicts may also help explain the literature emphasizing the salience of family conflict in South Asian American mental health (Almeida, 2005; Masood, Okazaki & Takeuchi, 2009), and also seems consistent with folk models of depression that are viewed as partly sociocentric in origin (Karasz, 2005). Nonetheless, and it is not clear how much this comparatively greater perception of intensity and frequency of chronic conflict results in poorer wellbeing; indeed, despite more frequent and more intense levels of general parent-child conflict compared with Chinese Americans, South Asian Americans' general distress scores (CES-D) were no different.

The current study is one of the first studies examining emotionality among South Asian Americans, which makes it difficult to speculate about its significance for South Asian American young adults. The comparatively higher affect scores among South Asian Americans in this study appears consistent with the Rao study that observed Indian mothers allow for greater

emotional expression compared with Chinese parents (2003), although the study had not specified any particular type of emotions (i.e., positive, negative, independent or interdependent). Although their comparatively higher scores on positive and negative interdependent emotion could not be determined as statistically similar or different from Chinese American participants', their higher scores across general and interdependent emotions could indicate that, from a general cultural perspective (Kitayama, Mesquita & Karasawa, 2006; Markus & Kitayama, 1991), both their relational selves and their independence and individuality are being reinforced or emphasized during conflict.

A heightened emotionality or dissonance was also observed in my review of both accommodation and assertion responses to the academic major vignette. Whether justified assertors or reconciling accommodators, their responses reflected a pervasive sense of internal or interpersonal disturbance resulting from being out of sync with one's parents' preferences. These feelings then appeared to result in heightened expressivity about one's personal needs or to arrive at consensus. This interpretation of conflict as a relational disruption or disharmony is consistent with Markus and Lin's (1999) theorized model of conflict among interdependent individuals. The observation also appears consistent with Dugsin's (2001) observation of a need among Indian American adult interview participants to find alignment or affinity with family members. As such, this heightened emotionality may be a consistent feature of interpersonal tensions among many South Asian Americans that seeks to reinstate a particular type of connection.

Perceptions and experience of conflict among Chinese Americans

As previously mentioned, the comparatively lower intensity of affect scores among Chinese Americans is consistent with the with the Rao et al (2003) study on Chinese mothers discouraging the expression of affect more strongly than Indian mothers. Because this is the first

study to compare South Asian Americans with Chinese Americans on emotion-related phenomena, it is unclear how this finding compares with the extant literature on Chinese Americans and East Asian Americans and the comparative moderation of emotion (e.g., Matsumoto, 1993; Soto, Levenson & Ebling, 2005). However, for both ethnic groups, their being from interdependent and collectivistic ethnic heritage cultures suggests that intense emotional reactivity may occur for *both* groups in primarily “relationally embedded” situations (Chentsova-Dutton & Tsai, 2010) such as their reported recent conflict. Therefore, despite the Rao et al (2003) study on discouraged affect, that Chinese Americans’ affect was significantly lower warrants further examination.

Chinese Americans’ comparatively lower reports of affect intensity may also be related to their comparatively lower reports of conflict seriousness. The main effect of conflict seriousness on affect intensity was not demonstrated in the regression analyses possibly due to the inclusion of (and moderation by) conflict response type. Thus, given the literature identifying conflict avoidance as a major conflict management strategy in East Asian cultures (Leung, Koch & Lu, 2002) with face-maintenance as a possible underlying motive (Ting-Toomey et al., 1991), it is possible that conflict avoidance is a confounding factor that must be accounted for when examining interdependent emotions. Neither conflict avoidance nor face-maintenance has been examined among or attributed to those from South Asian backgrounds, so this may be a distinctive phenomenon for Chinese Americans.

Nonetheless, the significance of the moderator term in the recent conflict regression model for Chinese Americans does compel further exploration of what may be distinctive about low conflict seriousness for this group. For those reporting more serious conflicts, there was no difference in the intensity of negative nonspecific or interdependent affect among compliers and

assertors. However, among those reporting *less* serious conflicts, compliance was associated with higher negative affect scores and assertion was associated with less negative affect. That is, this association occurs in the expected direction (*i.e.*, higher negative affect with compliance and accommodation), yet this only occurs in the context of less serious disagreements. Since above-average conflict was perceived to be more emotionally intense regardless of response type, it appears that assertors in less serious disagreements experienced less intense affect than those who had complied. This suggests that unlike for South Asian Americans, some Chinese Americans experience less emotional dissonance during less serious conflict, and I speculate again that this may be connected to some form of emotion moderation, conflict avoidance – or, simply, comparatively greater permission to assert, be emotionally independent from and emotionally resilient to family conflict.

Finally, a particular emphasis on autonomy and independence needs was apparent in responses to the academic major vignette. Whereas this is less consistent with the traditional importance of obedience, filial piety, and family obligations observed among Chinese American adolescents (Juang & Cookston, 2009), the finding may instead be a reflection of shifting parenting styles that are responding to the greater demands of children's autonomy and independence in the U.S. context (see Lieber, Nihira & Mink, 2004). It should be noted that Chinese Americans' conflict responses were observed to be quite inconsistent between vignettes; there was a substantially higher compliance rate in the family dinner vignette so even the emphasis on autonomy may not be absolute but more highly contingent on the circumstances of the disagreement. Future research on Chinese Americans and family conflict should examine important distinctions that may exist among different types of conflict areas for this group.

Interdependence within the family

Interdependence within the family unit was found to be important to both groups. An examination of the personal and relational motivations underlying response types for the academic major vignette showed that consistent with Harter et al.'s study (1997), for both groups accommodation and compliance were associated with aspects of connectedness to one's parents. That the compliance (and agreement) rates were much higher among both groups in the dinner vignettes suggests that in some situations, maintaining connection and solidarity with one's parents may be a strongly preferred option.

Indeed, even among many assertors of both ethnic groups in the academic major vignette, gaining parental acceptance, displaying respect, and listening to parents' views were valued. Maintaining an awareness of one's relationship in the family while asserting was also observed among some ethnic minority adolescents and young adults in a similar family conflict vignette study by Phinney and colleagues (2005). Clearly, relatedness and interdependence with one's family is an important value that is not limited to Asian Americans or pathological family structures. It is important to note that while interdependence was examined from a neutral perspective, for South Asian Americans it was associated with both the highest and lowest wellbeing scores. Nonetheless, contrary to stereotype of Asian American families as harsh and authoritarian (e.g., Purkayastha, 2005), parents having a strong and potentially coercive influence on participants' decision making was one of the *least* frequently endorsed of the 38 individual codes, and this should be distinguished from valuing or volunteering to defer to one's parents' preferences.

Compared to Chinese Americans, South Asian Americans seemed to have a style of relating to their parents that was comparatively more emotionally interdependent and involved in

nature. Part of this may be due to their perceptions and experience of conflicts as consistently more intense than their Chinese American counterparts. But this appeared to be part of a more general pattern of strong and close emotional ties with the family. Compared to the Chinese American participants, they reported a comparatively higher rate of involvement with their families (as assessed by Involve subscale), more highly valued an interdependent role within the family unit (as assessed by Family Involvement scale), and had more frequent in-person and phone parental contact. They had reported more intense general negative emotions during conflict, and my analyses of individual responses to the academic major vignette suggested a pervasive perception of emotional dissonance resulting from parent-child incongruence. These factors combine to create the impression of a fairly tightly-knit relationship with their parents that can be highly dynamic, sociocentric, and emotionally involved. Although this description may also correspond with an “enmeshed” family style (Inman & Tewari, 2003) and one that is conflict sensitive (Bacon, 1996), this is also consistent with a general decision-making style that is primarily family-based (Bhattacharya, 2002) and where, presumably, all involved family members must non-selfishly enact their duty of “correct action” in the process (Brown, 1961, as cited in Rangaswamy, 2000; Prathikanti, 1997; Sinha, 1984).

For Chinese Americans, there were clearly strong autonomy needs but also a sense of deference and desire for connectedness that became more salient in the family dinner vignette. As mentioned previously, there appeared to be a small number of Chinese American participants (the less-serious conflict assertors) that averaged lower affect scores than others at the height of the conflict, which implies that for these individuals the conflict elicited few interdependent tensions. This may be attributed to shifting family socialization goals in response to unique parenting demands in the U.S. context that accede greater autonomy to their children in a wider

range of circumstances compared with traditional Chinese parenting practices (Lieber, Nihira & Mink, 2004). Alternatively, this may also be a simple reflection of lower family involvement, lower family interdependence, and lower conflict intensity among some Chinese American respondents. Moreover, this may be related to the finding that for Chinese Americans, family interdependence was *not* an important factor in their family disharmony-wellbeing path model. As such, it appears that the Chinese American concept of family interdependence may have a comparatively greater emphasis on autonomy and independence, which perhaps relies more on an implicit basis of parental cooperation and support versus overt parental involvement (such as for South Asian Americans). Clearly, there are few firmly-supported explanations, and much more research on family interdependence among Chinese Americans is needed to theorize about the particular nature of Chinese American familialism.

Theorizing South Asian American and Chinese American Familialism

Considered more broadly, the way that individuals manage and react to conflict may reflect different ways of “doing family,” with group patterns of emotional and behavioral dynamics highlighting what may be important in family relationships. For example, considering that South Asian American participants reported comparatively more frequent, and intense parent-child conflict – even though their psychological wellbeing and topics of conflict were comparatively no different from their Chinese American counterparts – appears consistent with a strong narrative of parent-child communication problem-solving that Bacon had observed Chicagoland Indian American youth identify with (Bacon, 1996). As such, managing conflict may be a fundamental part of family life for South Asian Americans, being reflective of a joint-decision making style, mutual accountability, high family involvement and a strongly emotive and emotionally interdependent existence. In fact, in contrast with Markus and Lin’s (1999)

portrayal of conflict as inherently relationally disruptive, engaging in the throes of conflict may be an important way to maintain harmony in and connectedness to the family in the long term for South Asian American young adults.

That parent-child conflict was comparatively less frequent and less emotionally intense for Chinese American young adults and they reported being comparatively less involved and interdependent with their families are important distinctions to consider when theorizing Chinese American family dynamics. This suggests a profile of parent-child conflict and family life that is generally less emotive and more predicated on individual identities subsumed within the family unit. Moreover, in contrast with their South Asian American counterparts and consistent with Markus and Lin (1999), for Chinese Americans overt conflict may be something to avoid because it represents a fundamental disruption of harmony and connectedness in the family. Instead, it appears that family connectedness may be achieved through selective behaviors (such as family dinners) that directly foster harmony, calmness, closeness and loyalty. While this emphasis on behaviors – or, perhaps, de-emphasis of emotionality – may be a reflection of selective enactment of filial piety, it may also be due to intergenerational communication difficulties resulting from a language gap that make it difficult to express or understand one another emotionally (c.f., Qin, 2006). For both groups, a fuller picture of family dynamics is warranted that goes well beyond the emotional and behavioral particularities of intergenerational conflict.

While the literature on family conflicts in Asian American families places an emphasis on cultural dilemmas of traditionalism and familial obligation, these findings highlight a desire for closeness and interdependence during conflict that are part of the normative family functioning for many South Asian American and Chinese American young adults. Furthermore,

using family dynamics typologies from the family systems literature (from where the concept of enmeshment originates; Olson, 2000) to create tentative group profiles, responses from the South Asian American participants about conflict generally suggested family dynamics that are flexible and enmeshed and those of Chinese American respondents as structured and connected. Neither of these are considered pathological family systems types, match the media stereotypes of familial coercion or quiet deference, or strictly correspond with traditional notions of filial piety. Instead, responses suggest a wide range of ways to express love and display care, respect and closeness while maintaining integrity, reciprocity or independence.

Implications, Limitations and Future Directions

Although the findings in this study are comparative – anchored only to the groups compared, a limitation inherent to all comparative studies – it provides useful distinctions to build upon in future research for either group. This is one of the first studies to examine South Asian American emotionality (albeit in the context of conflict), and the group's distinction from Chinese American emotionality suggests that further research is needed for this group which is now the third largest Asian American subgroup. The intensity with which South Asian American participants reported experiencing the conflict and their emotions is of particular theoretical and clinical significance, especially in light of family conflict's strong implication in distress for this group (Masood, Okazaki & Takeuchi, 2009). Furthermore, the significance of family interdependence to their wellbeing (and lack thereof) provides further support for Inman and Tewari's (2003) contention that family models be used when conceptualizing even individual-level clinical interventions for individuals from this group. This also means that it is important to provide support to South Asian American families in stressful periods, and that family interdependence not be summarily discouraged in the effort to improve their wellbeing.

Because Chinese Americans participants' conflict levels, intensity, and emotions were lower in comparison, it is more difficult to identify specific clinical or theoretical implications. With a slightly stronger emphasis on autonomy, and with family interdependence not factoring into their wellbeing, it is clear that alternative models for Chinese American wellbeing need to be developed that are meaningful for this population. It is also possible that this portrays a growing intergenerational disconnection as a result of adapting Chinese parenting traditions in the U.S. (see, e.g., Qin, 2006, 2007). However, family alienation was not significantly higher for this group, neither did my review of selected vignette responses indicate pervasive dismissal of or indifference to parental ties. Despite the existing literature on Chinese Americans and family dynamics, much more research is needed to bear out the particularities of family life for this group that go beyond family conflict and obligations.

For both groups this study provides evidence that as bicultural individuals, they strongly experience both autonomy and filial tendencies which has implications for clinical practice. This means that when working with individuals from these backgrounds, possible ambivalences and competing desires regarding personal and familial demands should be drawn out and equally validated to empower clients to process family conflicts with fuller awareness. That is, given the emphasis of autonomy and independence in family models (Fowers & Richardson, 1996; Inman & Tewari, 2003), it is crucial that interdependence needs also have a chance to be fully articulated, validated and considered.

A strength of this study was the comparison of culturally and demographically similar ethnic groups with similar family acculturation concerns, and the use of cultural variables to help explain group differences. This comparison process allowed more subtle and nuanced differences to emerge with less potential to reinforce racial stereotypes that sometimes emerge

from more stark ethnic-racial group comparisons. However, the lack of existing comparative data and theoretical comparisons between these two groups made some group contrasts difficult to interpret resulting in greater speculation.

Additional features of the current study may also limit applicability of findings. Participation was limited to a mostly Midwestern sample. Although this made for more culturally homogenous samples that were demonstrated to be demographically representative of ethnic groups in the region, it potentially reduces its applicability for South Asian Americans and Chinese Americans in other parts of the country with different immigration trends and demographics. It should also be noted that traditional Midwestern culture may be especially strongly family-oriented, so results from this study may not be equally salient to individuals from other regions of the U.S.

Other limitations include the study's conceptualization of wellbeing that drew largely (but not exclusively) from a widely-used measure of psychological distress. There was a scarcity of comprehensive wellbeing measures that were more than simply an absence of distress yet did not presume centrality of the very values being examined in this study—in particular, autonomy and independence. As such, future research need conceptualize and develop ways of assessing wellbeing that are demonstrated to be valid for bicultural individuals, and Asian American groups in particular. Another limitation is that directionality was assumed in all predictive models and bidirectionality (e.g., of conflict with wellbeing) was not examined. Furthermore, the study was correlational in design and retrospective in nature, from which causality or causal pathways may not be determined. Finally, the violation of multivariate normality for the SEM model made some findings difficult to ascertain; although available alternative procedures were used to compensate for this, it may imply poor model replicability in future studies.

The frequent observation of group differences in this study raises concerns about applying findings that use composite Asian American samples from different Asian American ethnic groups. It is important for studies to first examine the validity of aggregating ethnic groups into larger groups (e.g., Asian Americans) and whether any group differences warrant separate analyses instead. This is especially important for South Asian Americans, for whom the cultural or experiential proximity to predominant Asian American groups such as Chinese Americans and Filipino Americans has yet to be demonstrated.

One unique contribution is the use of a model of family disharmony to conceptualize the experience of family conflict within strongly interdependent family cultures. I measured this in the current study using a preliminary measure of family alienation – a concept that had a basis in the literature for both groups and found support in the model. However, future research may consider alternative conceptual models. The current study also used different measures and ways of capturing conflict (general, episodic, hypothetical) and interdependence (family interdependence, interdependent emotions, conflict response and underlying relational motivations) that could be examined for potential utility in both groups.

To sum, this study examined parent-child conflict and decision-making among South Asian American and Chinese American young adults from an interdependence-oriented theoretical framework. Participants' emotional, sociomoral, and behavioral actual and projected responses variously reflected both groups of Asian American participants' experiences as autonomy-seeking, interdependent-valuing individuals that were emotionally connected to their families. Results supported the portrayal of South Asian Americans as having dynamically interconnected parent-child relationships, whereas an emergent model of autonomy and connectedness to family was apparent for Chinese American participants. These findings were

only partially consistent with the existing literature on South Asian American and Chinese American families, despite a relatively longstanding research emphasis on intergenerational conflict for both groups. The present findings suggest more nuanced differences between Chinese American and South Asian American immigrant families, as well as differences within each ethnic community, in the complex intergenerational dynamics. The findings further underscore the need for alternative, non-pathologizing frameworks to be adapted in ethnic minority research.

TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 1. Hypothesized Moderating Effects of Interdependence on Wellbeing and Family

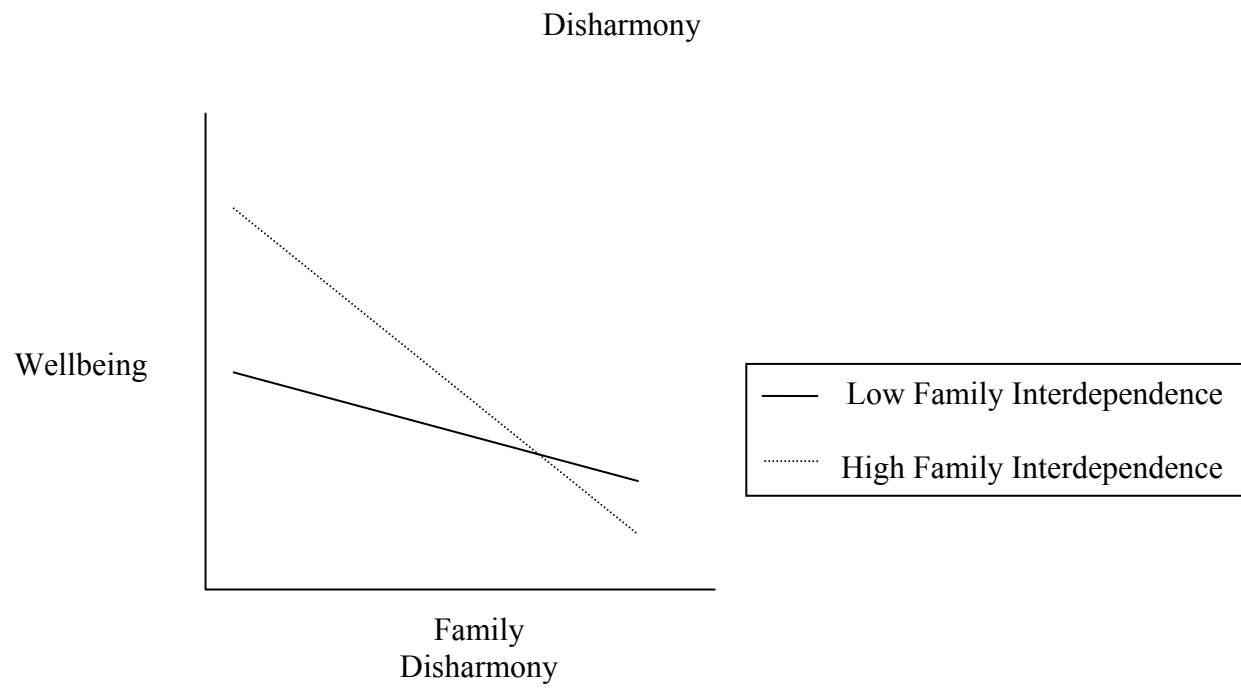


Figure 2. Dimensions of disagreement responses

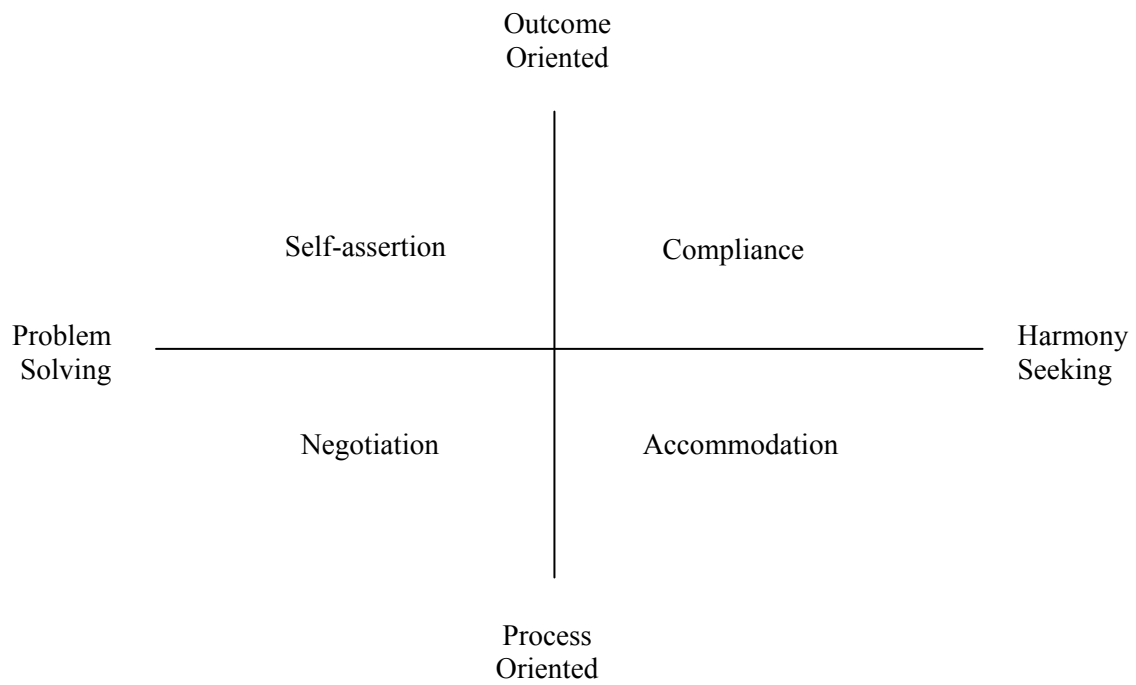


Figure 3. Hypothesized path model for moderating effects of family interdependence on the relation between family disharmony and wellbeing

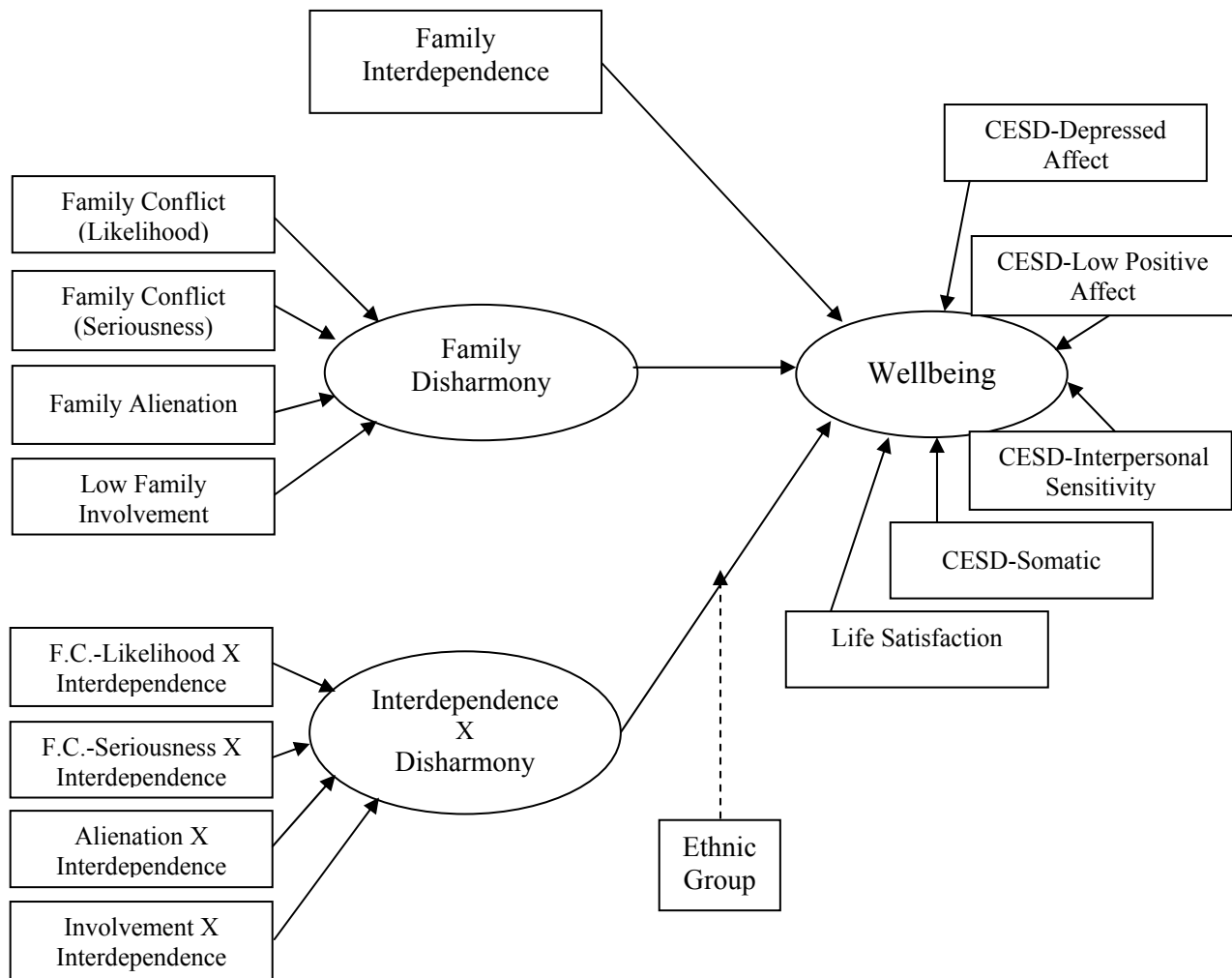
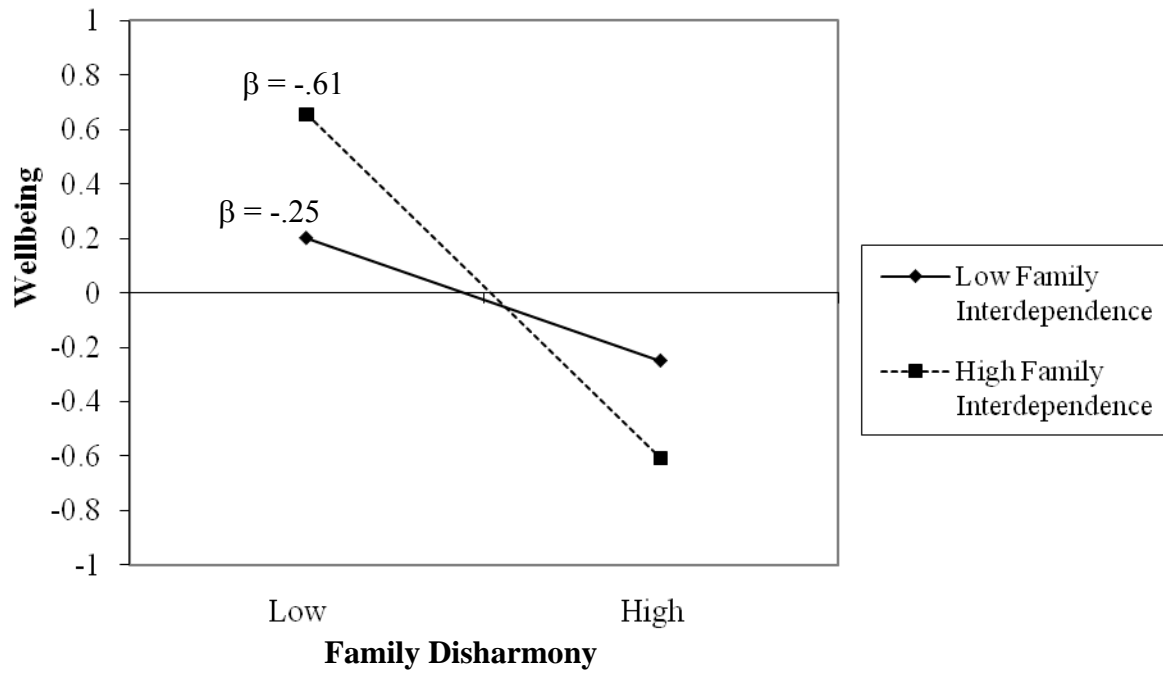
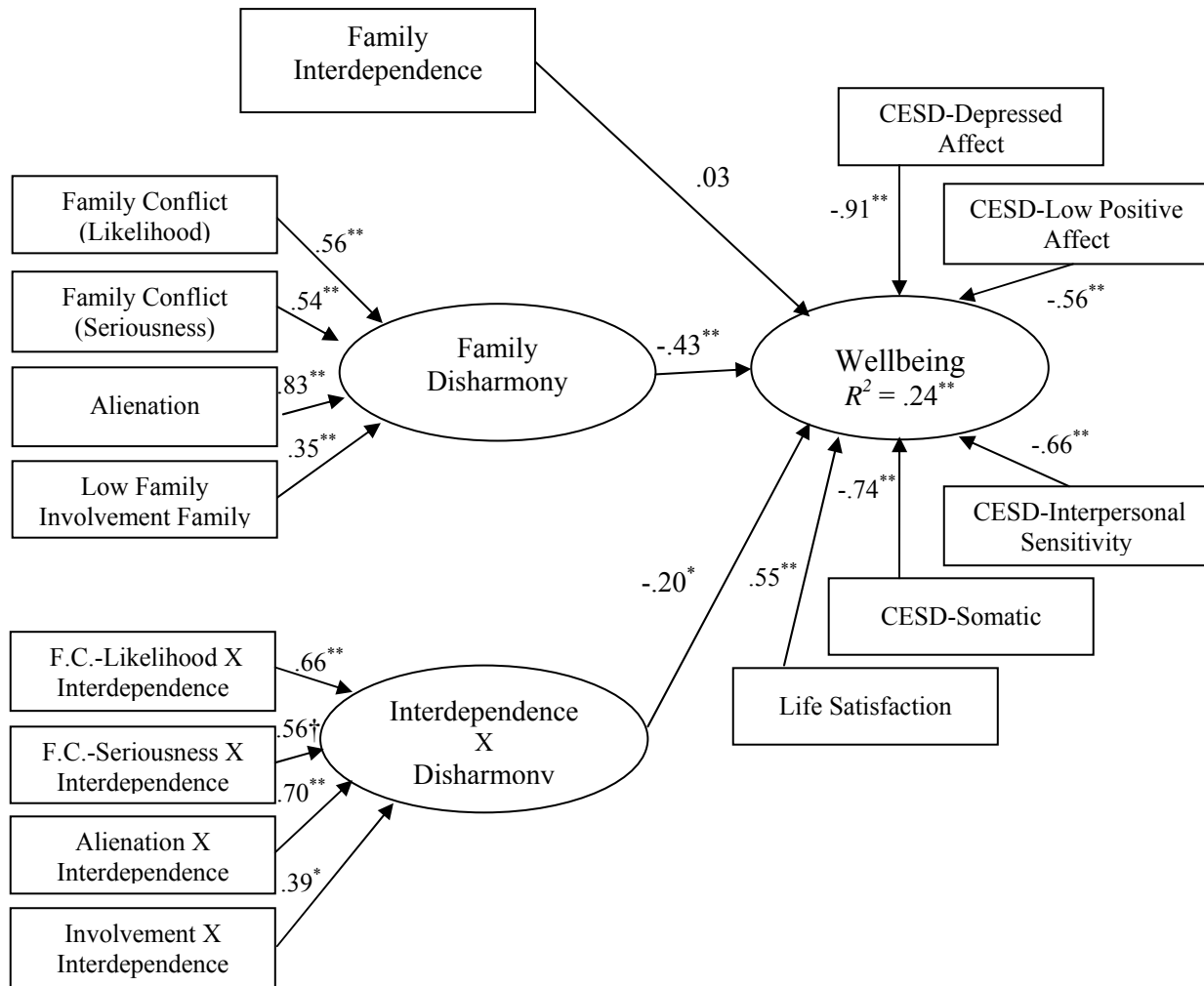


Figure 4. Family interdependence X family disharmony predicting wellbeing for the pooled sample ($n = 301$)



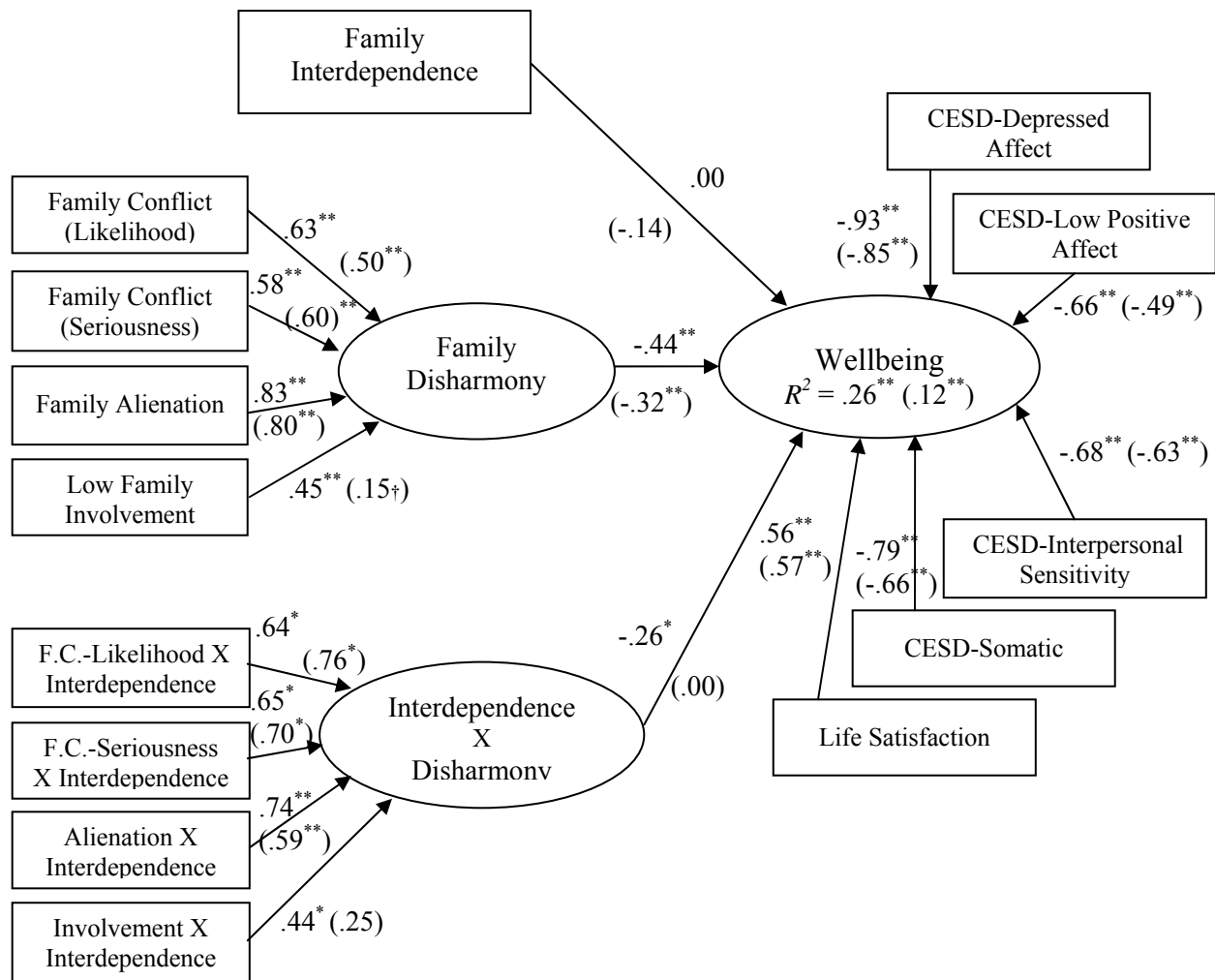
Note. Standardized regression values based on maximum likelihood estimates.

Figure 5. Structural Equation Model for pooled sample ($n = 301$)



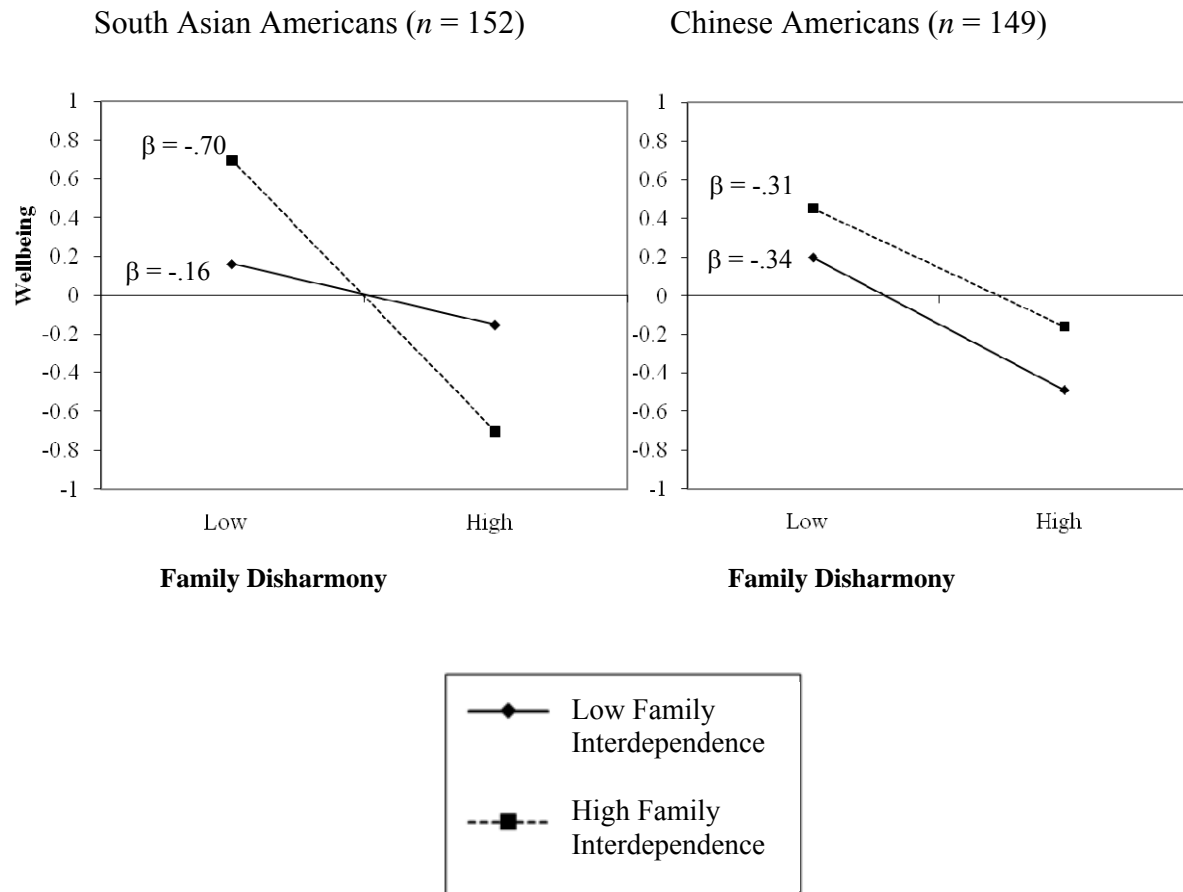
$^{\dagger} p < .10$. $^* p < .05$. $^{***} p < .001$. Note. Standardized regression loadings. All significance levels are based on bias-corrected percentile method estimates derived from 2000 bootstrap samples.

Figure 6. Multiple Groups Structural Equation Model for South Asian Americans ($n = 152$) and Chinese Americans (in parenthesis; $n = 149$)



$^{\dagger} p < .10$. $^* p < .05$. $^{**} p < .01$. Note. Fully unconstrained model. Standardized regression loadings. All significance levels are based on bias-corrected percentile method estimates derived from 2000 bootstrap samples.

Figure 7. Family interdependence X family disharmony predicting wellbeing for multiple groups analysis structural equation model



Note. Standardized regression values based on maximum likelihood estimates.

Figure 8. Conflict seriousness x conflict response predicting general and interdependent negative affect

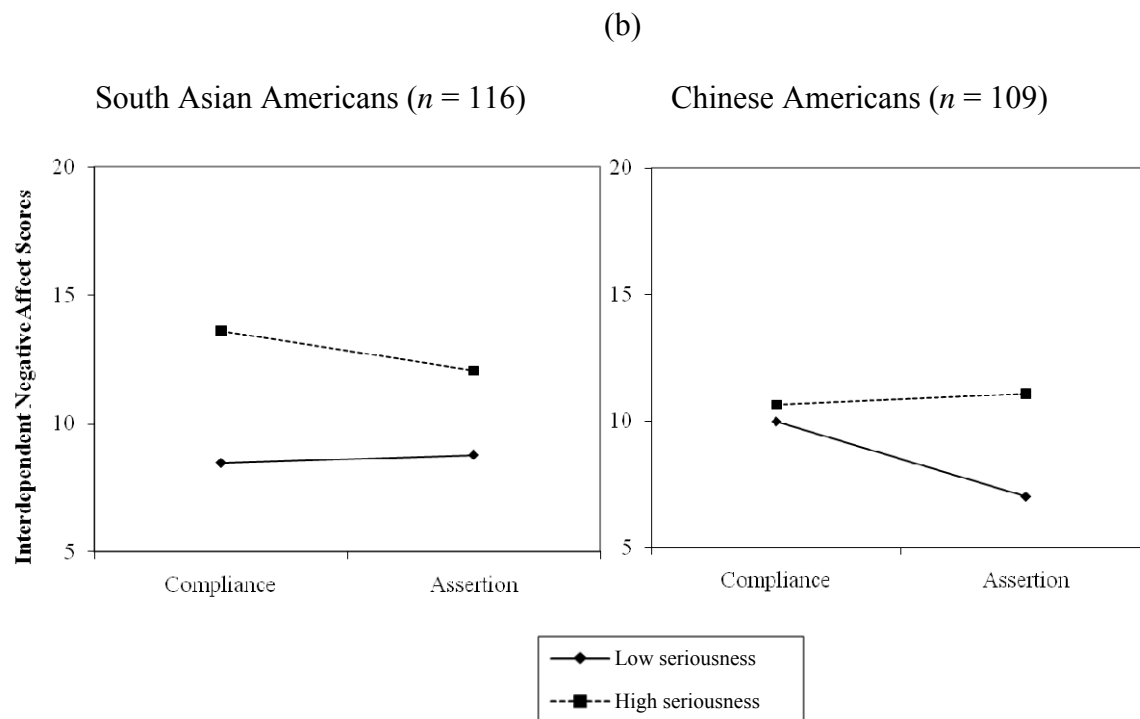
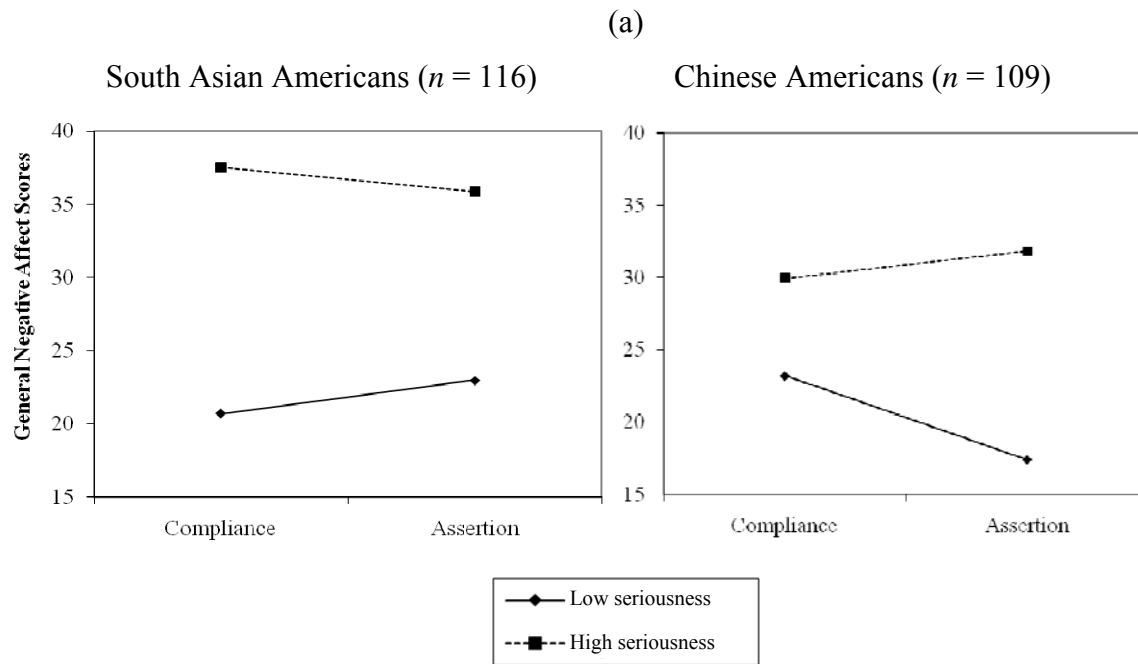


Table 1. Distributions of age, gender, nativity, household income and parental education

<i>Variable</i>	South Asian American (<i>n</i> = 153)		Chinese American (<i>n</i> = 149)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Age – <i>M</i> (<i>SE</i>)	153	19.5 (1.27)	149	19.7 (1.34)
Gender				
Female	84	54.9%	81	54.4%
Male	69	45.1%	68	45.6%
Nativity				
North American born	115	75.2%	107	71.8%
Foreign born	38	24.8%	42	28.2%
Household income				
Under \$40,000	13	8.8%	44	26.4%
\$40,000 to \$74,999	38	25.9%	25	17.8%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	35	23.8%	27	19.3%
\$100,000 and above	61	41.5%	44	31.4%
Mother's education				
High school or less	21	13.8%	45	30.5%
Some college	27	17.6%	18	12.2%
Bachelors	58	37.9%	36	24.5%
Postgraduate	47	30.7%	48	32.7%
Father's education				
High school or less	14	9.2%	36	24.3%
Some college	19	12.4%	12	8.1%
Bachelors	44	28.8%	24	16.2%
Postgraduate	76	49.7%	76	51.4%

Table 2. Participant ethnic and religious affiliation

<i>Variable</i>	South Asian American (<i>n</i> = 153)		Chinese American (<i>n</i> = 149)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Ethnicity				
Bangladeshi American	3	2.0%		
Chinese American			107	71.8%
Indian American	121	80.1%		
Pakistani American	19	12.6%		
Taiwanese American			36	24.2%
Multi-ethnic Asian Am.	5	3.3%	4	2.7%
Multiracial	3	2.0%	2	1.3%
Religion				
Agnostic, Atheist or none	12	7.2%	84	55.7%
Buddhist	2	1.3%	16	10.7%
Christian	15	9.8%	43	28.9%
Jain	6	3.9%		
Hindu	67	43.8%		
Muslim	27	17.6%		
Sikh	5	3.3%		
Other	1	0.7%	1	0.7%

Table 3. General coding categories for vignettes and recent disagreement episode

<i>Response Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Defers to parent's wishes or views without question.
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engages in a solicitous or joint decision-making style that prioritizes the parent's viewpoint. ▪ Goal is to achieve an adapted, shared understanding and minimize relational disruption from the disagreement.
Negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Asks, argues or negotiates to get own way or work out a compromise. ▪ Goal is to partially achieve one's wishes via direct compromise.
Self-assertion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Openly follows own wishes.

Table 4. Bivariate correlations and descriptive for all scale measures for South Asian American sample (below diagonal) and Chinese American sample (above diagonal)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<i>General Level Measures</i>												
1. Family Conflict (Likelihood)	--	.90***	.43***	.14	-.07	.15	-.22**					
2. Family Conflict (Seriousness)	.75***	--	.49***	.14	-.07	.17*	-.20*					
3. Alienation from Family	.52***	.45***	--	.48***	-.39***	.28**	-.25**					
4. Low Family Involvement	.27***	.32***	.56***	--	-.76***	.20**	-.36***					
5. Family Interdependence	.04	-.06	-.37***	-.75***	--	-.10	.26**					
6. Psychological Distress (CESD)	.26**	.30***	.37***	.10	.10	--	-.61***					
7. Satisfaction with Life	-.20*	-.26**	-.32***	-.30***	.13	-.52***	--					
<i>Recent Conflict Measures</i>												
8. Recent Conflict Seriousness (SAM)								--	-.08	.63***	.36***	.00
9. Recent Conflict Response (low = compliance)								-.14	--	-.10	-.14	-.14
10. PANAS-Negative Affect								.68***	-.08	--	.69***	-.03
11. Interdependent Negative Affect								.44***	-.13	.79***	--	.15
12. Interdependent Positive Affect								-.21*	-.16	-.11	.11	--
<i>South Asian American</i>												
<i>M</i>	26.1*	21.7*	11.4	10.5**	30.4**	35.1	23.9	14.6**	--	29.6**	10.9**	11.2†
<i>SD</i>	9.62	8.70	4.68	4.07	5.94	11.20	6.14	5.86	--	10.27	4.27	4.65
<i>n</i>	153	153	153	153	152	153	153	130	--	130	130	130
<i>Chinese American</i>												
<i>M</i>	23.5*	19.7*	11.5	11.8**	28.2**	35.1	22.97	12.7**	--	25.7**	9.5**	10.2†
<i>SD</i>	9.07	8.38	3.98	3.69	5.44	8.97	6.70	4.92	--	8.62	3.78	4.53
<i>n</i>	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	126	--	126	126	126

† $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. For correlation coefficients (significant difference from zero) and group means (significant mean difference between groups)

Table 5. Fit statistics for pooled and multiple groups model

	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	CFI	RMSEA (CI)	B-S p -value
<i>Pooled Model – Moderation Analysis</i>							
Interaction Model	89.51	61	--	--	.98	(.02, .06)	.29
No Interaction Path	97.40	62	7.89**	1	.98	(.03, .06)	.23
<i>Multiple Groups Model – Measurement and Structural Invariance Analyses</i>							
All Paths Unconstrained	186.00	122	--	--	.97	(.03, .05)	.19
..Factor Loadings (FL)	202.49	132	16.49 [†]	10	.97	(.03, .05)	.21
..FL + Intercepts (I)	235.47	145	32.98**	13	.96	(.04, .06)	.11
..FL + I + Structural Paths	237.84	148	2.37	3	.96	(.03, .06)	.12
All Paths Unconstrained	186.00	122	--	--	.97	(.03, .05)	.19
..Part Constrained FL & I	200.09	131	14.09	9	.97	(.03, .05)	.15
..PC FL&I; Structural Paths	204.76	134	4.67	3	.96	(.03, .05)	.15

[†] $p < .10$. ** $p < .01$. Note. $\Delta\chi^2$ = difference in chi-square between subsequent models; Δdf = difference in number of degrees of freedom between subsequent models; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA (CI) = 90% confidence interval for root mean square error of approximation; B-S p -value = significance level of Bollen-Stine bootstrapping hypothesis test (H_0 : model is correct; based on 2000 bootstrap samples).

Table 6. Coded responses to vignettes by ethnic group

	<i>South Asian American</i>		<i>Chinese American</i>	
<i>Response Type</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Major Vignette				
Compliance	6	4.2%	2	1.4%
Accommodation	28	19.4%	18	12.5%
Negotiation	48	33.3%	51	35.4%
Assertion	62	43.1%	73	50.7%
Total	144	100.0%	144	100.0%
Family Dinner Vignette				
Agreement	15	10.4%	32	22.2%
Compliance	21	14.6%	27	18.8%
Accommodation	11	7.6%	6	4.2%
Negotiation	77	53.5%	47	11.8%
Assertion	20	13.9%	32	22.2%
Total	144	100.0%	144	100.0%

Table 7. Thematic codes, coding clusters and code frequency (in parenthesis) for all responses
(n = 294)

Autonomy/Independence (Total = 363)

Choosing autonomy – I will probably/eventually do what I want. (168)

Asserting autonomy – It's my life. It's my career/decision. (62)

Personal control/responsibility – I am ultimately in charge/control of the decision. It is my responsibility. (48)

Independence – I live my life for me. I need to take care of my own needs. (36)

Self-advocacy – My parents need to be supportive of me/my decision. (32)

Authoritativeness – I know what's best for me. (17)

Filial/Interdependence (Total = 201)

Desiring parental acceptance – My parents' approval is important. I will convince them about/try to make them understand what I want to do. (89)

Choosing deference – I will/might defer to my parents' preferences, completely or partially. (35)

Displaying respect – I need to be respectful of my parents. I don't want to outwardly rebel. (21)

Sensitivity to parent concern – I know my parents just want me to have a secure future. I want to reassure them of their worries about my success. (17)

Indebtedness to parents – I am grateful to my parents. My parents have done/sacrificed a lot for me. (16)

Valuing parents' happiness – I want to make my parents happy if possible. (15)

Parental authority – My parents tend to have a strong influence on my decisions. (8)

Communication (Total = 226)

Self-expression – I will explain how I see things. I want my parents to understand me and that this is what I truly love. (75)

Collaborative discussion – I would sit down with my parents and try talking it out. It is important to communicate with them. (66)

Listening to parents – I'll hear out my parents' views. I value their opinions/advice. (50)

Honest confrontation – I will tell them about my decision before/after I've done it. (35)

Harmony (Total = 86)

Harmonizing/Resolving – We will try to come to a consensus. I'd try to reconcile our differing views. We'll find a way to compromise. (64)

Mutual satisfaction – I want both of us to be happy with the decision. Both of us should be a little satisfied. (15)

Affinity – My parents and I have a similar outlook. We are in sync about my career plans. (7)

Table 7 (continued)

Self-Oriented (Total = 212)

Enthusiasm – I want to choose what I’m interested in. I want to be happy with my decision. (53)

Subjectivity/Passion – The decision is meaningful/personal. It’s about what I’m passionate about. (48)

Avoiding misery – I don’t want to be miserable the rest of my life. I don’t want to feel stuck. (43)

Personal impact – This is something that primarily/deeply affects me. It’s what I’ll be doing for the rest of my life. (35)

Happiness – I want to be happy. (33)

Positive Relationship Quality (Total = 137)

Relying on parents – My parents are/will be very understanding/supportive of me. (55)

Trusting parents – I know my parents only want my happiness/care about me. They have my best interests at heart. (44)

Parental trust – My parents respect my opinion and that this is my decision. They trust me and encourage my independence. (24)

Involving parents – I want my parents to participate/feel involved in my decisions. (7)

Valuing parents – My parents are important to me. I love my parents. (7)

Miscellaneous (Total = 169)

Decision pragmatics – It should depend on what I can be successful at. I am considering the practical benefits of this major/career. (47)

Careful decision-making – I’m open to all ideas that help me with a well-informed choice. I’d do my research to make sure I’m making the right choice. (46)

Avoiding unpleasantness with parents – I want to avoid arguing a lot about it. I don’t want to make my parents angry with me. (18)

Parental irrelevance – Parents don’t always know best. My parents don’t really care. They might hinder me. (16)

Parental wisdom – My parents know better than me. They are more experienced and wiser about the world. (13)

Fairness – It is unfair/selfish to expect me to follow someone else’s dreams for me. (12)

Dishonesty/Indirectness with parents – I’ll lie about my major choice until it’s too late to change it. I’ll fail at what my parents want so there’s no choice left but mine. (11)

Parental relent – My parents will probably come to accept my decision later. (6)

Note: Statements are explanatory composites representing a range of possible phrases accepted for each code. Most coded segments only included one or two ideas listed under each code.

Table 8. Thematic coding results by ethnic group and response type ($n = 288$)

Coding Category	Compliance		Accommodation		Negotiation		Assertion		SAA Totals	CA Totals
	SAA x (M)	CA x (M)	SAA x (M)	CA x (M)	SAA x (M)	CA x (M)	SAA x (M)	CA x (M)		
Autonomy/Independence	0	1 (0.5)	9 (0.3)	9 (0.5)	34 (0.7)	40 (0.8)	108 (1.7)	151 (2.1)	151 [†]	201 [†]
Filial/Interdependence	11 (1.8)	4 (2.0)	28 (1.0)	13 (0.7)	54 (1.1)	43 (0.8)	25 (0.4)	19 (0.3)	118 [†]	79 [†]
Communication	0	0	30 (1.1)	18 (1.0)	51 (1.1)	45 (0.9)	46 (0.7)	35 (0.5)	127 [†]	98 [†]
Harmony	0	0	20 (0.7)	12 (0.7)	28 (0.6)	24 (0.5)	0	2 (0.0)	48	36
Self-Oriented	2 (0.3)	0	10 (0.4)	2 (0.1)	32 (0.7)	38 (0.8)	75 (1.2)	49 (0.7)	119	89
Positive Relationship Quality	1 (0.2)	0	14 (0.5)	4 (0.2)	30 (0.6)	39 (0.8)	29 (0.5)	25 (0.3)	74	68
Total Sample ($n = 288$)	6	2	28	18	48	51	62	73		

[†] $p < .15/6$. Note: SAA = South Asian American sample ($n = 144$); CA = Chinese American sample ($n = 144$). x = observed frequency of codes; $M = x/n$ = averaged frequency. Coding frequencies generated by sum of codes present for individual codes in each category. See Table 7 for constituent codes.

Table 9. Group differences on recent conflict responses and topics

<i>Conflict Response/Topic</i>	South Asian American		Chinese American	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Response Type				
Compliance	21	17.8%	13	11.7%
Accommodation	18	15.3%	14	12.6%
Negotiation	54	45.8%	49	44.1%
Assertion	25	21.2%	35	31.5%
Total	118		111	
Conflict Topic				
No Recent Conflict	3	2.3%	8	6.3%
Academic/Career plans	24	18.5%	26	20.3%
College Choice	12	9.2%	11	8.6%
Curfew/Household rules	6	4.6%	8	6.3%
Dating/Romantic choices	16	12.3%	8	6.3%
Friends/Extra-curricular activity	12	9.2%	6	4.7%
Family relationships/decisions	9	6.9%	12	9.4%
Housing/living arrangements	8	6.2%	6	4.7%
Propriety (manners/drinking)	7	5.4%	4	3.1%
Poor academic performance	10	7.7%	1	0.7%
Lifestyle/political choices	4	3.1%	5	3.9%
Misc. decisions (job, purchases)	7	5.4%	12	9.4%
Misc. interpersonal tensions	5	3.8%	10	7.8%
Vacation/summer plans	7	5.4%	11	8.6%
Total	130		128	

Table 10. Group differences on regression coefficients predicting interdependent, independent and nonspecific negative affect scores

	South Asian American (<i>n</i> = 116)		Chinese American (<i>n</i> = 109)		
<i>Variable</i>	<i>B</i>	(<i>SEB</i>)	<i>B</i>	(<i>SEB</i>)	<i>Difference t</i>
<i>Predicting General Negative Affect (PANAS-NA)</i>					
Conflict Seriousness (SAM)	1.74 ^{***}	(0.36)	-0.13	(0.41)	-3.34 ^{**}
Conflict Response	2.61	(1.87)	-6.21 ^{**}	(1.99)	-3.16 ^{**}
Seriousness x Response	-0.17	(0.20)	0.41 ^{**}	(0.13)	3.15 ^{**}
<i>Predicting Interdependent Negative Affect</i>					
Conflict Seriousness (SAM)	0.58 ^{**}	(0.18)	-0.29	(0.22)	-3.06 ^{**}
Conflict Response	0.85	(0.92)	-2.93 ^{**}	(1.06)	-2.67 ^{**}
Seriousness x Response	-0.08	(0.06)	0.18 [*]	(0.07)	2.74 ^{**}
<i>Predicting Interdependent Positive Affect</i>					
Conflict Seriousness	-0.12	(0.21)	-0.27	(0.28)	-0.42
Conflict Response	-0.53	(1.09)	-1.90	(1.36)	-0.79
Seriousness x Response	-0.03	(0.07)	0.09	(0.09)	1.00

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. Note. Regression equations are collapsed from three-way interaction tables that included group interaction predictors. For each equation, difference *t* values reflect magnitude of group differences for each predictor. These are the *t* values associated with (in order): SAM x Ethnic group; Conflict Response x Ethnic group; and, Seriousness x Response x Ethnic group.

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

Background Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions for information about your background.

1. How old are you? _____
2. What is your gender/sex? _____
3. Which U.S. city did you grow up in? _____
4. Which country were you born in? _____
5. If you were not born in the U.S., how old were you when you arrived? _____
6. What is your ethnic or racial background? _____
 - ☐ Indian American
 - ☐ Chinese American
 - ☐ Multi-ethnic (please specify, e.g., Indian and Pakistani American) : _____
 - ☐ Multi-racial (please specify, e.g., Chinese and European American) : _____
 - ☐ Other (please specify): _____
7. What is your current religious affiliation? _____
8. What was your religious upbringing in childhood? _____
9. What is your father's occupation?
 - ☐ Administrative/Management (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Computer/Engineering (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Education/Social service (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Health/Medical (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Sales/Clerical support (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Self-employed (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Other: _____
 - ☐ Unemployed
10. What is your mother's occupation? _____
 - ☐ Administrative/Management (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Computer/Engineering (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Education/Social service (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Health/Medical (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Sales/Clerical support (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Self-employed (specify job title) _____
 - ☐ Other: _____
 - ☐ Unemployed

11. What is your father's level of education?
- ☐ some high school
 - ☐ high school graduate
 - ☐ some college
 - ☐ college graduate
 - ☐ professional/ graduate degree (e.g., masters)
 - ☐ other: _____
12. What is your mother's level of education?
- ☐ some high school
 - ☐ high school graduate
 - ☐ some college
 - ☐ college graduate
 - ☐ professional/ graduate degree (e.g., masters).
 - ☐ other: _____
13. What is your parents' combined income?
- ☐ \$0-9,999 yearly (or under \$833 monthly)
 - ☐ \$10,000- 19,000 yearly (or \$833-1583 monthly)
 - ☐ \$20,000-29,000 yearly (or \$1666-2,415 monthly)
 - ☐ \$30,000-39,000 yearly (or \$2,000- 3,250 monthly)
 - ☐ \$40,000-49,000 yearly (or \$3,333-4,083 monthly)
 - ☐ \$50,000 -74,000 yearly (or \$4,083 – \$6166 monthly)
 - ☐ \$75,000 – 100,000 yearly (or \$6250 – \$8333 monthly)
 - ☐ \$101,000 or above (\$8417 monthly or above)
14. Where do you live now?
- ☐ Dorm
 - ☐ Apartment/house
 - ☐ At home with parents
 - ☐ Other: _____
15. If you do NOT live with your parents...
- ...How often do you see them?
- ☐ At least once per week
 - ☐ A couple of times per month
 - ☐ About once per month
 - ☐ Every couple of months
- ...How often do you speak with them on the phone?
- ☐ Every day
 - ☐ At least 2-3 times per week
 - ☐ Once per week
 - ☐ A couple of times per month
 - ☐ Every couple of months

...List other ways that you communicate with your parents (e.g., online, text message), and how often you communicate with each method (e.g., daily, 2-3 times per week):

16. How many brothers and sisters do you have?

of brothers: _____ # of sisters: _____

17. How many times have you visited relatives outside North America? _____

18. With how many relatives did you meet, on average, at least once a month, while growing up?

19. Give five adjectives or phrases that describe your relationship with your family:

Family and Conflict Measures

Family Conflict Scale (FCS) Family Situations

The following statements are parent-child situations that may occur in families. Consider how likely each situation occurs in your present relationship with your parents and how serious these conflicts are. Read each situation and answer the following questions using the following rating scales:

<u>Likelihood:</u> How likely is this type of situation to occur in your family?				
<i>Almost Never</i>	<i>Once in a while</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Frequently or Often</i>	<i>Almost Always</i>
1	2	3	4	5

<u>Seriousness:</u> How serious a problem is this situation in your family?				
<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Slightly</i>	<i>Moderately</i>	<i>Very Much</i>	<i>Extremely</i>
1	2	3	4	5

1. Your parents tell you what to do with your life, but you want to make your own decisions.

	<i>Almost Never</i>		<i>Sometimes</i>		<i>Almost Always</i>
<u>Likelihood:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Seriousness:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Not at all</i>		<i>Moderately</i>		<i>Extremely</i>

2. Your parents tell you that a social life is not important at this age, but you think that it is.

	<i>Almost Never</i>		<i>Sometimes</i>		<i>Almost Always</i>
<u>Likelihood:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Seriousness:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Not at all</i>		<i>Moderately</i>		<i>Extremely</i>

3. You have done well in school, but your parents' academic expectations always exceed your performance.

	<i>Almost Never</i>		<i>Sometimes</i>		<i>Almost Always</i>
<u>Likelihood:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Seriousness:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Not at all</i>		<i>Moderately</i>		<i>Extremely</i>

4. Your parents want you to sacrifice personal interests for the sake of the family, but you feel this is unfair.

	<i>Almost Never</i>		<i>Sometimes</i>		<i>Almost Always</i>
--	---------------------	--	------------------	--	----------------------

<u>Likelihood:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Seriousness:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Not at all</i>		<i>Moderately</i>		<i>Extremely</i>

5. Your parents always compare you to others, but you want them to accept you for being yourself.

	<i>Almost Never</i>		<i>Sometimes</i>		<i>Almost Always</i>
<u>Likelihood:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Seriousness:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Not at all</i>		<i>Moderately</i>		<i>Extremely</i>

6. Your parents argue that they show you love by housing, feeding, and educating you, but you wish they would show more physical and verbal signs of affection.

	<i>Almost Never</i>		<i>Sometimes</i>		<i>Almost Always</i>
<u>Likelihood:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Seriousness:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Not at all</i>		<i>Moderately</i>		<i>Extremely</i>

7. Your parents don't want you to bring shame upon the family, but you feel that your parents are too concerned with saving face.

	<i>Almost Never</i>		<i>Sometimes</i>		<i>Almost Always</i>
<u>Likelihood:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Seriousness:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Not at all</i>		<i>Moderately</i>		<i>Extremely</i>

8. Your parents expect you to behave like a proper Asian male or female, but you feel your parents are being too traditional.

	<i>Almost Never</i>		<i>Sometimes</i>		<i>Almost Always</i>
<u>Likelihood:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Seriousness:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Not at all</i>		<i>Moderately</i>		<i>Extremely</i>

9. You want to state your opinion, but your parents consider it disrespectful to talk back.

	<i>Almost Never</i>		<i>Sometimes</i>		<i>Almost Always</i>
<u>Likelihood:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Seriousness:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Not at all</i>		<i>Moderately</i>		<i>Extremely</i>

10. Your parents demand that you always show respect for elders, but you believe in only showing respect if they deserve it.

	<i>Almost Never</i>		<i>Sometimes</i>		<i>Almost Always</i>
<u>Likelihood:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Seriousness:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Not at all</i>		<i>Moderately</i>		<i>Extremely</i>

Family involvement and alienation

<i>Strongly Disagree</i>				<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1	2	3	4	5

Use the scale above to indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

1. Being too close to my family has interfered with my own goals.
2. Having diverging views on traditions has created significant problems for me in my family.
3. I feel alone and apart when I am with my family.
4. Family relationships are becoming less and less important to me.
5. My personal goals closely match those of my family's.
6. My family cares about me as a person.
7. The prevailing values in my family are the same as my own.
8. I deeply treasure the time I spend with my family, even if it's not a lot.
9. I prefer to involve my family in most of my important decisions.
10. I feel the need to be in touch with my family often.
11. Sometimes it feels like I have almost nothing in common with my family.
12. I try to stay involved in whatever is happening with my family.

Recent Disagreement Seriousness

<i>Not at all</i>	<i>A little</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Quite a bit</i>	<i>A great amount</i>
1	2	3	4	5

Use the scale above to indicate how much each of the following statements represents what you thought when you encountered this disagreement:

1. This situation impacts me greatly.
2. The outcome of this situation is negative.
3. This situation has serious implications for my life.
4. This situation has a negative impact on me.
5. There are some long-term consequences as a result of this situation.

Family Interdependence

<i>Not at all important</i>					<i>Very important</i>
1	2	3	4	5	

Using the scale above, ask yourself:

“How important is it for me...”

1. ...To satisfy my family's needs even when my own needs are different?
2. ...To be available to family members when they need help?
3. ...To spend time with my family?
4. ...To consult with my parents before making decisions?
5. ...To put my family's needs before my own?
6. ...To live at home with my parents until I am married?
7. ...To spend time with my parents after I no longer live with them?
8. ...To have my parents live with me when they get older?

Wellbeing & Distress Measures

Satisfaction with Life Scale

Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

7 = Strongly agree
6 = Agree
5 = Slightly agree
4 = Neither agree nor disagree
3 = Slightly disagree
2 = Disagree
1 = Strongly disagree

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.

Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale

Here is a list of ways that you might have felt or behaved during the past week. Please read each statement, and then use the choices below to indicate how often you felt or behaved this way during the past week, including today.

Use this scale when answering:

1 = rarely or none of the time (< 1 day)
2 = some or a little of the time (1 – 2 days)
3 = occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3 – 4 days)
4 = most or all of the time (5 – 7 days)

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.
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.

9. I thought my life had been a failure.
10. I felt fearful.
11. My sleep was restless.
12. I was happy.
13. I talked less than usual.
14. I felt lonely.
15. People were unfriendly.
16. I enjoyed life.
17. I had crying spells.
18. I felt sad.
19. I felt that people dislike me.
20. I could not get “going”.

Acculturation Measure

Vancouver Index of Acculturation

Directions

Please answer each question as carefully as possible by clicking on **ONE** of the number for each question to indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement.

Many of these questions will refer to your **HERITAGE CULTURE**, meaning the culture that has influenced you the most (other than mainstream American culture). This may be the culture of your birth, the culture in which you have been raised, or another culture that forms part of your background. If there are several such cultures, pick the one that has influenced you the **MOST** (e.g., Irish, Chinese, Mexican, Black). If you do not feel that you have been influenced by any other culture, please try to identify a culture that may have had an impact on previous generations of your family.

Please write your HERITAGE CULTURE: _____-

Use this scale to rate your answers below

Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Depends/ Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. I often participate in my heritage cultural traditions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
2. I often participate in mainstream American cultural traditions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
3. I would be willing to date a person from my heritage culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
4. I would be willing to date a mainstream American.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
5. I enjoy social activities with people from the same heritage culture as myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
6. I enjoy social activities with typical mainstream Americans.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
7. I am comfortable working with people of the same heritage culture as myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
8. I am comfortable working with typical mainstream Americans.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
9. I enjoy entertainment (e.g., movies, music) from my heritage culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
10. I enjoy mainstream American entertainment (e.g., movies, music).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
11. I often behave in ways that are typical of my heritage culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
12. I often behave in ways that are typically mainstream American.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 9

13. It is important for me to maintain or develop the practices of my heritage culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
14. It is important for me to maintain or develop mainstream American cultural practices.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15. I believe in the values of my heritage culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
16. I believe in mainstream American values.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
17. I enjoy the jokes and the humor of my heritage culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
18. I enjoy typical American jokes and humor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
19. I am interested in having friends from my heritage culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
20. I am interested in having mainstream American friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Vignettes & Recent Conflict Questions

Family Scenarios

For each of the three scenarios written below, imagine being in the situation described. Then, briefly answer the questions that follow.

1. *Major.* Your parents have very strong ideas about what major and career you should choose. However, your own career interests are different than what your parents want. Now you need to make a choice about what courses to take.

As a person in this situation, what would you do? What actions would you take to address this situation?

State your reasoning for why you would choose this action.

Which **one** of the following most closely matches what you would do in this situation?

- ☐ Do as requested by my parents
- ☐ Be flexible about my ideas to arrive at a decision jointly
- ☐ Discuss a compromise that achieves part of what I want
- ☐ Do what I want
- ☐ None of the above

2. *Big family dinner.* A monthly family get-together with some nearby relatives is planned for the coming Friday night at your parents' house. Your family has been having these dinners for years, though these were more frequent when you and your cousins were younger. On Tuesday, some old friends of yours invite you to a party that they are having on Friday. When you tell your parents about this, they say that it is important for the whole family to be together for the Friday dinner.

As a person in this situation, what would you do? What actions would you take to address this situation?

State your reasoning for why you would choose this action.

Which **one** of the following most closely matches what you would do in this situation?

- ☐ Do as requested by my parents
- ☐ Be flexible about my ideas to arrive at a decision jointly
- ☐ Discuss a compromise that achieves part of what I want
- ☐ Do what I want
- ☐ None of the above

For the scenarios just described, please identify how stressed you would probably feel being in each situation, at its most stressful point:

		Not at all Stressed				Extremely Stressed
		<hr/>				
		<hr/>				
1.	Major	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Big family dinner	1	2	3	4	5

Choose the situation that you had indicated would probably be most stressful for you.

- ☐ Major – *Deciding which courses to take.*
- ☐ Big family dinner – *Deciding which Friday night plans to make.*

What might be stressful about this situation? List 3 – 5 three major things that make this situation potentially stressful for you.

Description of a Recent Disagreement

Now, please think back to the biggest, most stressful disagreement you experienced with your mother or father within the past year:

What was the disagreement was about? Briefly explain **what each of you** had disagreed with.

What did you do? What actions did you take to address the situation?

State your reasoning for why you chose these actions:

Overall, which **one** of the following most closely matches your actions in this situation?

- ☐ Did as requested by my parents
- ☐ Was flexible about my ideas so that we would arrive at a decision jointly
- ☐ Discussed a compromise that achieved part of what I wanted
- ☐ Did what I want
- ☐ None of the above

How did this disagreement unfold? Describe in as much detail as possible about your experience of this stressful disagreement. Write a half-page journal-like account that describes this experience including:

- How it started
- What happened next
- When it reached its most stressful point

Be sure to include the different thoughts and feelings you remember experiencing throughout the process.

At the height of this disagreement, how much did you feel:

	<u>Not at all</u>				<u>Extremely</u>
Distressed	1	2	3	4	5
Upset	1	2	3	4	5
Guilty	1	2	3	4	5
Scared	1	2	3	4	5
Hostile	1	2	3	4	5
Irritable/angry	1	2	3	4	5
Ashamed	1	2	3	4	5
Nervous	1	2	3	4	5
Jittery	1	2	3	4	5
Afraid/fearful	1	2	3	4	5
Respectful	1	2	3	4	5
Sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5
Connected	1	2	3	4	5
Agreeable/friendly	1	2	3	4	5
Familiar/Intimate	1	2	3	4	5
Troublesome/difficult	1	2	3	4	5
Embarrassed	1	2	3	4	5
Indebted	1	2	3	4	5
Sulky	1	2	3	4	5
Frustrated	1	2	3	4	5
Resentful/bitter	1	2	3	4	5
Sad	1	2	3	4	5
Hopeless	1	2	3	4	5
Alone	1	2	3	4	5

What happened in the end? Describe in as much detail as possible how the disagreement reached its end point (if still ongoing, describe the current state). Include what thoughts, feelings and motivations you experienced at this end point.

How would you rate the final outcome of the disagreement? How much did the end-point of the disagreement reflect a compromise by you and a compromise by your parent?

	Completely gave in				Didn't give in at all
	1	2	3	4	5
_____	Me				
_____	Parent				

How satisfied were you with the final outcome of the disagreement?

	Very Dissatisfied				Very Satisfied
	1	2	3	4	5
_____	Level of satisfaction				

Briefly list the things that you found satisfying and dissatisfying about the final outcome of the disagreement.

During this disagreement, what reasons or incentives would have motivated you to **give in, completely**, to your parent?

Now think about the opposite. During this disagreement, what reasons or incentives would have motivated you to **not compromise at all**?

What reasons or incentives would have motivated you to **offer** or **agree to compromise**?