

# Adolescents and Their Parents: A Review of Intergenerational Family Relations for Immigrant and Non-Immigrant Families

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## Key Words

Acculturation • Adolescents • Enculturation • Family relations •  
Immigration • Parents

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## Abstract

The present review seeks to ascertain how intergenerational relations between adolescents and their parents are experienced through their socialization when cultural values are shared and practised by two generations in a family context. Within the framework of three culture-related developmental issues, (1) the influence of culture on family socialization, (2) the continuity of cultural transmission across generations, and (3) the impact of sociocultural context on enculturation, this review examines an initial hypothesis that there will be more intergenerational disagreement and difficulty in immigrant families than non-immigrant families. The cultural distance between the culture of origin and that of the new society can threaten the harmony of immigrant family relations, but when the core cultural values of family embeddedness are supported by their own culture as well as their own ethnocultural social network, immigrant families are able to maintain healthy intergenerational relations. Immigrant adolescents from collectivistic societies sustain these positive family relations in part by delaying their pursuit of autonomy. As with non-immigrant families, socioeconomic hardship in immigrant families necessitates collaboration by family mem-

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bers; yet, unlike the former, collaboration and participation by family members in the latter are encouraged by their own ethnic culture as well. Consequently, experiences of hardship do not result in overly adverse effects on intergenerational relations within the immigrant family. It is important to point out, however, that studies currently available in the literature are limited to immigrant groups which have settled in a small number of Western individualistic countries. Considering that migration movements are increasing under globalization, more effort needs to be put into examining the characteristics of the many other migrating groups and their receiving societies.

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Researchers in developmental studies have been slow to include comparative or cross-cultural aspects in their studies of family relations [Feldman & Rosenthal, 1994; Guerra & Jagers, 1998]. Developmental researchers have concentrated on explaining how adolescents develop their self-concept and how their awareness of self affects their relationships with others, particularly family members. Studies of parenting practices, on the other hand, have attempted to understand how and to what extent parents who grant autonomy to their children facilitate a child's self-development and improve the parent-child intergenerational relationship [e.g., Feiring & Taska, 1996; Smollar & Youniss, 1985]. Only very recently have some studies begun to address the influence of cultures on adolescent development and intergenerational family relations in cross-cultural contexts.

A family in the literature has traditionally been studied as a unit of social organization, and parent-child relations have been investigated as an aspect of social interaction [e.g., Bengtson & Schrader, 1982]. As sociocultural changes affect family functions and even the family structure, researchers have begun to pay more attention to those conditions which lead to alterations in family relations [e.g., Georgas, Christakopoulou, Poortinga, Angleitner, Goodwin, & Charalambous, 1997; Kagitçibasi, 1996]. One important area where the impact of sociocultural change upon family relations has been most readily observed is immigration. As more recent research has focussed on the influence of the immigration process on family relations, particularly intergenerational relations within immigrant families in comparison with non-immigrant families [Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999; Kwak & Berry, 2001; Phinney, Ong, & Madden, 2000], the present review further expands its scope to point out areas of consensus on intergenerational socialization in family relations within a national sociocultural context as well as across cross-cultural comparative contexts.

The present review seeks to ascertain how intergenerational relations between adolescents and their parents are experienced though their socialization when cultural values are shared and practised by the two generations in a family context. Relevant research findings are discussed according to three issues of developmental perspectives which arise in comparisons between immigrant and non-immigrant families: (1) the influence of culture on important aspects of family socialization, (2) the continuity of cultural transmission between generations, and (3) the impact of sociocultural context on enculturation. Within the framework of these three culture-related issues, the present review concentrates on current findings from cross-cultural comparisons which extend our understanding of intergenerational family

relations. The first half of the paper explores evidential grounds which substantiate and elaborate the above theoretical framework; the second half presents research findings which explore the following general hypothesis: immigrant families experience more intergenerational disagreement and difficulty than non-immigrant families.

### Developmental Issues in Intergenerational Relations

The influence of culture can be broken down into two important aspects of family relations: individual development, and group or collective goals. The first aspect involves a particular culture and its role in family socialization, but this is complicated by the fact that *culture* is constantly being transformed as individuals negotiate common meanings through social interactions; there is thus a great deal of variability in how individuals negotiate common cultural values and meanings [Raeff, 1997b, p. 256]. The second aspect is to set desirable goals involving certain core cultural values; these core values serve as guiding principles in people's lives [Schwartz, 1994, p. 88] and thus stand beyond any individual variations in a culture. Such cultural values are built into the institutions of the society and are passed on through socialization. Throughout the process of an individual's enculturation, these values are made into priorities, and the individual members of a society are socialized to internalize these values, which in turn will lead the members to fulfil the requirements of the culture as these are reinforced by specific cultural priorities [Schwartz, 1994]. When a family immigrates to a new country for the purpose of long-term settlement, its members live in two cultures: their ethnic-heritage culture prior to migration, and the new culture of the society in which they currently reside. Recent immigrant families typically consist of both foreign-born parents and children who, even as they acquire new cultural values, continue to retain many of the cultural values of their original, or *ethnic heritage*, culture. As the length of residence increases, immigrant parents are more likely to have children born in the new society of settlement; these second-generation children will acquire their ethnic heritage through their parents and relatives in a familial context and to a varying degree through their own ethnocultural network but no longer through the larger society. Because the role of the enculturation history in a particular sociocultural context is emphasized in the account of individual development, it is essential to find how values of a culture become the developmental goals for intergenerational socialization in the family [Greenfield, 1994]. In the research of family relations, however, there is still a great need to understand how cultural values are given priority and coordinated through social orientations among family members [Killen, 1997]. Thus, a comparison of intergenerational family relations between immigrant and non-immigrant adolescents and their parents will allow us to shed light on how cultural values are prioritized in the next generation, which in turn will establish the relative importance of ethnic heritage values and the larger societal values for the immigrant groups.

Hofstede's ground-breaking work, *Culture's Consequences* [1980], inaugurated extensive research into the dimension of individualism versus collectivism; this concept in turn has been used to explain the differentiation of cultures by ascribing the characteristics of a nation. However, in the ongoing debates spawned

by this dimensional division of cultures, critics have argued that pursuit of such a bipolar understanding of culture leads to undesirable consequences. Kagitçibasi [1994] suggests that the characterization of cultures by this bipolar dimension is usually presented by matching the dimension of modernization of cultures, and she further argues that universals should be measured across cultures without evaluative implications. Killen [1997] also argues that some universal developmental patterns should be used to explain both intracultural diversity within a sociocultural context and intercultural variations across different national contexts without leading to the operationalization of cultural stereotypes.

In line with the above issues, Schwartz [1992, 1994] proposed a universal dimension of autonomy-embeddedness. Based on his analyses of multinational data, he ascertained that the dimension of autonomy-embeddedness addresses cultural differences at both individual and cultural-group levels in conjunction with the degree of individualism and collectivism. In response to the same issues of the individualism-collectivism dimension, Hofstede [2001, ch. 5] explains that a specific relationship between the individual and the collective prevails in any given society; thus, a national culture can be characterized by the dimension without perpetrating cultural stereotypes. He also elaborates how people interact with each other in the context of self-development, family relations and group contacts, given that their values and behavior are exercised and socialized according to the societal norms of the nation.

In the present review, the dimensions of individualism-collectivism and autonomy-embeddedness will be utilized together in order to highlight the domain of intergenerational relations, that is, relations between adolescents and their parents; by this method, all three levels of the interactional contexts – self, family and society – should be adequately addressed. Because the construct of self has traditionally been explained by two main components, namely autonomous entity and interrelational entity with others [e.g., Feiring & Taska, 1996; Grotevant & Cooper, 1985, 1986; Raeff, 1997a; Smollar & Youniss, 1985], a cultural account of self-development must include an analysis of cultural forms of autonomy as well as a structure of embeddedness or interpersonal relationships [Raeff, 1997a]. Raeff further argues that this dichotomous dimension of self-development should be understood as a continuum which exists in the value systems of all cultures. Researchers have recently begun to examine how cultural value orientations of self-development integrate independent and interdependent psychological functioning, by which, in turn, the various aspects of self can be identified with different cultural systems, including families in their sociocultural contexts.

Adolescence is the period of life when an individual establishes a significant proportion of their self-concept. Identity status theory [Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966] suggests that adolescents establish their identity as a part of a cohesive and integrative self to the degree that they are willing to explore and establish interpersonal commitments. More recent explanations of the process of transformation of the self have been proposed [e.g., Kagitçibasi, 2002; Meeus, Iedema, Helsen, & Vollebergh, 1999]. These more recent explanations can be applied to the difference in adolescents' adaptation from immigrant and non-immigrant families. For instance, according to the life course theory [Kagitçibasi, 2002], the impact of sociocultural changes on the developmental adaptation of immigrant adolescents can be profound, particularly when compared to their peers from non-immigrant fami-

lies. While the progressive development of self-identity during adolescence leads to a psychological sense of well-being, adolescence can also be a period of crisis when adolescents perceive their social environment, including home and school, as an impediment to the achievement of their developmental goals [Meeus et al., 1999]. For these immigrant adolescents, the new society into which they have moved can leave them in an unfavorable position for further personal development. Rather than experience progression as they acculturate into a new sociocultural context, they may instead experience regression as well as intergenerational disagreement and difficulties at home. Consequently, the progressive nature of the relationship between identity development and psychological well-being is potentially more difficult for adolescents from immigrant rather than non-immigrant families.

A family shares values which place the highest priority on the achievement of familial goals, thereby ensuring the continuity of cultural transmission [Feiring & Taska, 1996]. For immigrant adolescents, once they find themselves in the new society of settlement, the enculturation process is interrupted and takes a different course; it now includes an acculturation process as well. Since the original heritage culture and the new culture may not endorse identical cultural values and may not allow adolescents to pursue the same behavioral patterns, immigrant families experience more active negotiations in order to achieve a more positive intergenerational family socialization than non-immigrant families in the same society. By focusing on the parent-adolescent relations, the socialization of family requires that the two functional yet complementary processes be pursued by adolescents: how they experience individuality by establishing autonomy, as well as how they accept the embeddedness of family relations by seeking validation from parents [Grotevant & Cooper, 1985, 1986; Smollar & Youniss, 1985]. The compatibility or coexistence of these two processes establishes the matrix for the adolescent's enculturation. It also establishes the matrix for parental efforts to ensure transmission of cultural priorities.

However, social orientation varies across ethnocultural groups as well as among individuals in the society according to the specific domains of their socialization patterns, and these domains are based on their collective effort and cultural emphasis [Dalgety-Gaitan, 1994; Raeff, 1997a; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993]. In the same vein, Greenfield [1994] argues that since the parent-adolescent relation is a form of social interaction in which cultural values of the particular culture are embedded and transmitted, idealized developmental values from the culture are selected by both the ethnic group and by the larger society in order to keep a balance between autonomy and embeddedness. Parents select their priorities for cultural norms and reinforce the supporting cultural constructions of development for the next generation. These parental efforts to maintain cultural transmission, however, face many challenges. Among immigrant families, intergenerational differences can be substantial as adolescents and their parents internalize the original heritage culture. Furthermore, after migration, the degree to which family members carry on cultural continuity in the new society can vary substantially; continuity is based upon distinct domains of the cultural emphases pursued by each ethnic group as well as each member's path for their own acculturation [Kwak & Berry, 2001].

On the issue of cultural transmission, the literature has followed the theory of continuity and discontinuity. One particular area which researchers have pointed

out is the importance of self-development during adolescence and its relation to the relevant sociocultural context. While most aspects of the preadolescents' self-concept involved compliance with parental requests, those aspects of the adolescents' self-concept become more differentiated across relational contexts, since a developmental discontinuity in the structure of the self-concept occurs during the period of adolescence [Smollar & Youniss, 1985]. Adolescents modify the characteristics of their relationship with their parents as they incorporate parental roles such as authority, assistance and security into their construction of self. Thus, the issue of continuity versus discontinuity arises when the adolescent perceives a discrepancy between their current relations with their parents and their earlier relations during the period of preadolescence.

In addition to the effect of age, the issue of continuity or discontinuity can also explain the effectiveness of intergenerational cultural transmission as the immigrant family and its ethnocultural group respond to the larger society's cultural influence. For instance, Szapocznik and Kurtines [1993] point out the necessity for the contextual paradigm in investigations of different ethnic groups in the larger society; each ethnic group possesses particular core characteristics and values which impact family interactions. The pertinent issues involved here are twofold: how the culture of the larger society influences the family socialization and cultural practices of the ethnic groups, and how different ethnic groups attempt to maintain their core cultural values amidst the dominant culture of the larger society [Chao, 2000; Dalgety-Gaitan, 1994]. Following this line of thought, it is feasible to postulate that the adaptation of immigrant families depends on the extent of contact with others, both from the own-ethnocultural group and the dominant group in the new society. With a close kinship network [Dalgety-Gaitan, 1994], an extended ethnic community in the larger society and a social support system [Beiser, 1999; Phinney, Ong, & Madden, 2000], family socialization of the immigrant families can be facilitated and harmonious. Still, for adolescents and their parents from recent immigrant families, the cultural discontinuities of social knowledge can be the main source of their disagreement [e.g., Chung & Okazaki, 1991; Kurian, 1986; Matsuoka, 1990; Nguyen & Williams, 1989; Rosenthal, Ranieri, & Klimidis, 1996]. On the one hand, according to the cultural niche theory, parents choose certain niche components from their ethnic culture and organize activities to ensure that these core cultural values are learned by the next generation [e.g., Chao, 2000]. On the other hand, despite such parenting strategies, cultural losses are widely observed in immigrant families due to the discontinuity imposed by the dominant culture of the larger society upon their ethnocultural practices [Dalgety-Gaitan, 1994]. Therefore, cultural continuity and discontinuity in the intergenerational family relations are to be studied in terms of the persistence of family cohesion, that is, the degree to which autonomy and embeddedness are practised by both adolescents and parents in their socialization at home.

Furthermore, *enculturation*, the influence of culture on the developmental process within a particular cultural context, is stronger during adolescence than earlier childhood as adolescents' lifestyles broaden beyond their family contexts [Kagitçibasi, 2002]. The influence of mediating conditions should also be taken into account for a more nuanced understanding of the complex and multifaceted nature of the family relations [Feiring & Taska, 1996]. With regards to the sociocultural context, two aspects of research findings are noteworthy for the present

review. One aspect is the variations between the national societies which lead to cross-cultural differences in the family's cultural expectation and coping strategies [Bower, Flanagan, & Taylor, 2001; Walper & Silbereisen, 1994]. At the same time, some evidence indicates an inclination toward intra-societal change which subsequently leads to a modification of the cultural values for family relations in a national society [Feldman & Rosenthal, 1994]. The second aspect is the effects of socioeconomic status (SES) on parenting practices and adolescent self-development [Brody, Stoneman, Flor, McCrary, Hastings, & Conyers, 1994; McLoyd, 1990; McLoyd, Jayaratne, Ceballo, & Borquez, 1994; Taylor, 1997; Taylor, Jacobson, Rodriguez, Dominguez, Cantic, Doney, Boccuti, Alejandro, & Tobon, 2000; Taylor & Roberts, 1995]. The SES of a family either allows family members to enjoy social prestige or to become disadvantaged through economic hardship and a lack of educational attainment [McLoyd, 1997]. The negative effect of low SES (which was found among non-immigrant minority ethnic groups studied mostly in the US) can be applied to immigrant families in general, considering the recent immigrant families' experience in downward SES and economical difficulties as a result of migration in the immigrant receiving countries [Reitz, 2001].

Based on the theoretical views and relevant literature discussed above, most broadly it is possible to postulate three general findings to be observed in the review of intergenerational family relations between adolescents and their parents. Firstly, while immigrant adolescents, as part of the process of self-development for autonomy, more easily accept new cultural values and practices than do their parents [Portes, 1997], immigrant families may experience more difficult intergenerational relations than do non-immigrant families due to the greater difficulties and disagreements in family socialization. Secondly, after migration, adolescents and their parents undergo an extensive negotiation process in terms of the cultural transmission of their ethnic heritage culture; the transmission of core cultural values to the younger generation of the ethnocultural groups is encouraged by parents [Chao, 2000; Dalgety-Gaitan, 1994; Kwak & Berry, 2001]. A good example of these mediating conditions is the SES of the family and the availability of own ethnic networking in the larger society. Thirdly, since construction of self is built from one's enculturation context, immigrant adolescents may have a delayed or less consolidated self-concept, either by the time of migration or throughout the acculturation process. Their simultaneous experience of enculturation and acculturation may not be fully supported by parents, either psychologically or culturally. In turn, their attempts to explore new and uncertain social contexts or to commit to further roles in family relations can be withdrawn [Meeus et al., 1999], resulting in a weakening of intergenerational socialization at home. These general directions of predictions point toward more intergenerational disagreements and potential difficulties of socialization in immigrant families than in non-immigrant families. Consequently, this review seeks to establish some specifics of intergenerational family relations in relation to the adolescents' autonomous self-development and their parents' desire for embeddedness in the family with regards to the transmission of cultural values for both immigrant and non-immigrant families.

## Universals for Family Relations

So far, researchers have found some important universals in family relations across cultures and ethnic groups. In terms of psychological ties and functional interactions among the family members, the socialization process within a nuclear family has been found to be very similar across cultures [Georgas et al., 2001]. In collectivistic societies family cohesion is highly valued; that is, in these societies higher levels of interdependence and obligation are expected within the family [Georgas et al., 1997; Meredith, Abbott, Tsai, Ming, & Meredith, 1994]. In terms of the family kinship network, cultural differences in family relations were observed within the extended family network across all societies, but not within the nuclear family. In both individualistic and collectivistic cultures parents and adolescents also hold very similar expectations about the role of family members. They also hold very similar expectations about those family values which affect intergenerational family relations. Family piety, cohesion, obligation, and gender equality are some examples of the desirable characteristics and values encouraged by family members working together to sustain the family as a unit and to maintain solid and positive socialization patterns among its members.

Parents and adolescents share similar beliefs regarding family values, even when the related values endorsed by the larger society vary widely across cultures. Regardless of the policies aimed at reducing inequity in the broader national society, family socialization patterns in relation to the gender role and division of labor in the home turn out to be quite comparable. Across five socioeconomically advanced individualistic societies of the Western nations, Baxter [1997] found that, overall, women consistently did the majority of the housework. Women in Sweden and Norway, when compared to their counterparts in the US, Canada and Australia, enjoyed greater levels of equality for participation rates in the labor force, a narrower wage gap, and lower economic dependency rates. However, in terms of levels of participation in housework, the gender division of labor in the home was not closely tied to the value of gender equality endorsed at the broader societal level. Likewise, the views and practices of gender roles reported by the adolescents from the collectivistic societies also agreed with the discrepancy in gender roles reported by adults from the individualistic societies. For example, when considered apart from the socioeconomic and educational levels of their parents, Turkish adolescents perceived their father as the discipliner and monetary provider and their mother as homemaker and caretaker of children, regardless of the mother's employment outside the home [Telsiz, 1998].

Although adolescents and their parents share similarities in family values and role expectations in the home, they do differ from each other on the issues of autonomy and parental authority. In their pursuit of psychological and behavioral independence, adolescents start to seek their own self-concept and an autonomous identity. This universal developmental aspect in family dynamics is a source of intergenerational disagreements and conflicts [e.g., Dekovic, 1999; Feldman & Rosenthal, 1994]. However, since the degree to which cultures encourage the autonomy of individuals does vary, intergenerational family relations are affected differently across cultures and ethnocultural groups in terms of the onset and intensity of adolescents' desire for own autonomy. With regards to the dimension of individualism and collectivism, Hofstede [2001, pp. 225–231] explains that higher interdependence in



family relations and loyalty to family are expected from family members in collectivistic cultures, more so than in individualistic cultures. For example, in collectivistic societies, the rate of cohabitation in the same household with parents is much higher, and resources are more frequently shared among extended family members. In a collectivistic culture, one family member's pride or shame, loss or saving of face, is shared by all family members. Thus, psychological and behavioral standards, as culturally driven societal norms, are being built at the cultural group level.

Therefore, based on the universals in family socialization patterns across cultures discussed above, we may argue that a desirable family structure and corresponding socialization pattern are universals affirmed consistently by both parents and adolescents as well as families from both individualistic and collectivistic societies.

### **Autonomy versus Embeddedness in the Family**

On the whole, the literature of family relations offers two main reasons for intergenerational differences: independence/autonomy sought by adolescents and interdependence/embeddedness expected by their parents. The current debate is about whether the intergenerational disagreement is adaptive or maladaptive for adolescents, and if so, whether it is possible to differentiate the effects of intergenerational disagreements or conflicts between adolescents and their parents. Studies have suggested that stressful negative tension can be maladaptive for the adolescents' short-term adaptation, but family disagreements can also be a healthy aspect of their long-term development [e.g., Ohannessian, Lerner, Lerner, & van Eye, 2000]. Parents are more influenced by the existence of intergenerational disagreements, whereas adolescents are more affected by the overall negative quality of the relationship with parents. Adolescents are more affected, for example, by a lack of parental understanding [e.g., Dekovic, 1999].

This negative quality of intergenerational relationship as perceived by adolescents from Western societies may be linked to their perception of their own autonomy as both individuals and as members in the family. In an attempt to understand the impact of culture on adolescent development and family socialization, Feldman and Rosenthal [1994] examined age differences in expectations of autonomy and observed a distinctive cultural difference: Australian and American adolescents pursued autonomy earlier than did Chinese adolescents. This outcome also showed that expectations of early autonomy were associated with negative adolescent behavior both at home and at school. Among the three groups in the study, Hong Kong adolescents had later expectations for autonomy, higher values given to family embeddedness and lower values to individualism than did their Australian and American counterparts. Surprisingly, however, in Chinese families, while adolescents emphasized autonomy less and endorsed family cohesion more strongly, this did not lead to a higher degree of family socialization or more interactions between adolescents and their parents. In turn, the primary contributor to the cultural difference was found in favor of the Australian and American families whose family members carried out closer activities. In spite of this favorable socialization pattern of more active family interactions, the American adolescents expressed a more restricted and controlled family context; for American adolescents this preference

was linked to a more salient autonomy imposed on them through demands on their behavior than it was for their Chinese counterparts.

In the case of immigrant families who are confronted with adaptation to another culture and are provided with more diverse cross-cultural experiences, adolescents adjust more quickly than do parents who are reluctant to accept changes from their culture of origin. As a consequence, parents and their children undergo differential rates of acculturation, or in Portes' terms, *dissonant acculturation* [1997]. It is this differential rate of acculturation which accounts for significant sources of intergenerational differences [e.g., Chung & Okazaki, 1991; Kurian, 1986; Matsuo, 1990; Nguyen & Williams, 1989; Rosenthal, Ranieri, & Klimidis, 1996; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993]. For example, the acculturation attitudes of adolescents favor integration, while those of their parents favor separation [Berry & Sam, 1997], resulting in a differential rate of acculturation.

Kwak and Berry [2001] showed that while intergenerational differences were found in all families, certain issues of family values were more important to some ethnocultural groups than to others. A very closely shared view of children's obligations at home was found between adolescents and their parents in all families. Regardless of their ethnocultural background and immigrant status, large differences were found between parental authority and children's rights. Although the degree of the intergenerational difference was similar across the four ethnocultural groups, there were still clear differences of cultural values among the groups in terms of three areas of family socialization: as compared to their counterparts from the Anglo-Celtic group, both generations from the three Asian groups (East-Indian, Korean, and Vietnamese) agreed with greater parental authority and more children's obligations but agreed much less about children's rights. On the other hand, the three Asian groups also differed significantly from one another and these differences reflected each group's varying emphases on what they considered their core cultural values. This difference in emphasis on core cultural values further necessitates an examination of an ethnocultural group's acculturation process as it is influenced by the reason of migration and prior contact history with the new society of settlement. For the three Asian immigrant groups which settled in Canada [Kwak & Berry, 2001], the general acculturation path preferred by each group was different in relation to their reason given for migration and prior history of cultural contact with Canada. The Vietnamese, a refugee group without any prior contact with Canadian culture, showed great willingness to accept this new culture. The other two groups were voluntary immigrants. The Koreans, very recent and highly-educated immigrants with no prior history of contact, showed a strong tendency to maintain their own culture, while the East-Indians, long-time residents evincing cultural and linguistic confidence, showed more selective domain-specific paths of acculturation.

It has also been found that immigrant groups which are undergoing a differentiating rate of acculturation depend on the cultural distance between the cultures of origin and of settlement, as well as the availability of own-cultural networks in the new society. For this reason, it is necessary to tackle both the impact of the sociocultural context where immigrant families have settled and the extent to which the practice of their own culture is possible [Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993]. In their investigation of a sociocultural paradigm for family relations from both immigrant and non-immigrant ethnocultural groups, Phinney, Ong, and Madden [2000] found

that the intergenerational differences varied along with the availability and the extent of the ethnocultural network in the society of settlement. In Southern California, where an extended cultural network is available, Mexican adolescents could develop their sense of family obligations not only within the family but also through activities carried out within their own ethnic community. However, this positive influence of the ethnocultural network on family relations and retention of own-ethnic culture was not evident in the Vietnamese group. With few cultural resources and little network support, Vietnamese families in the same region experienced a higher level of intergenerational difference. Menjivar [1997] further elaborates this influence of own-cultural network in terms of the relative importance of family-based resources and kinship-based social networks for the Vietnamese adolescents who experience a greater cultural distance between the cultures of Vietnamese and American than do their Hispanic counterparts who can draw upon a more widely distributed cultural network in Northern California. As evinced by the Vietnamese cultural values of family piety and obligation, the family thus offers a vital resource throughout the period of migration and settlement; at the same time, it also imposes higher demands on the intergenerational relations which develop between adolescents and their parents.

At the international or cross-cultural level, researchers have attempted to explain the influence of broad societal characteristics and of cultural networks on the adaptation of family members across nations. For instance, the sociocultural network influences the psychological and behavioral adaptation of adolescents, as was found for Danish adolescents living in a society that was more closely knit than that of their American counterparts. The processes of their socialization are tighter and narrower, and their actions can have more reciprocal consequences, which in turn leads to a curbing of their maladaptive risk behavior [Arnett & Jensen, 1994]. Along with this explanation of the adolescents' adaptive behavior by the characteristics of the larger society, two other explanations have been proposed: the collective characteristics of the migrating group and the needs of the group members. For example, the adaptation of Vietnamese adolescents is influenced more by their group characteristic of being refugees than by the characteristics of the larger society in which they have settled. A study comparing two Vietnamese adolescent groups, one in Australia, the other in Canada, did not reveal any significant variations in psychological and behavioral adaptation, while Asian groups in general did reveal differences between the two national societies [Kwak, Leung, & Pe-Pua, 2001]. With the Vietnamese adults, on the other hand, cultural distance and familiarity with the culture of the settlement society seem to be more crucial to their adaptation to the new society. Compared to their counterparts in the US, the Vietnamese adults who had settled in Japan showed better and more positive progress in their psychological adaptation because they could benefit from a cultural network similar to their own in the Japanese society [Ebata & Miyake, 1989]. The contrast between the adults and adolescents from the Vietnamese group indicates that influences from the larger society affect the family members differently, and their different needs for adaptation in the settlement society may contribute to intergenerational disagreement. However, comparative research on the influences of cultural distance and networking on intergenerational family relations still needs to be expanded in order to address variations found at the international or cross-cultural level. Such comparative investigation needs to be combined with research

into the characteristics of the migrating groups in order to trace the extent to which their culture emphasizes the embeddedness of family relations.

Two keys to harmonious intergenerational family relations seem to be directly pertinent to the issues of autonomy and embeddedness in the family. Firstly, a family needs its adolescents to be willing to adhere to the family values established in the home, and it thus requires coping strategies to deal with discrepancies which arise between an adolescent's conduct both within and outside the home; secondly, parents require the ability to negotiate and embrace the adolescents' developmental changes and demands for autonomy. These two aspects of tasks faced by the adolescents and their parents in immigrant families are likely to lead to intergenerational disagreement and conflict. Conversely, in non-immigrant families, intergenerational differences can be relatively small precisely because parents do not impose such high expectations of family embeddedness on their children; the adolescents thus perceive no or only a small discrepancy in cultural values between those of the home and those of the larger society. However, such generalizations are not yet adequate or even feasible, due to the different weights given by the ethnocultural groups to the characteristics of the larger society as well as the individual family's interaction with these characteristics.

### Transmission of Culture within the Family

Throughout the enculturation process, adolescents learn to become functional in the society in which they have been raised by obtaining cultural competence and appropriateness in their socialization practices. At home, parents teach their children own-cultural expectations, but they also attempt to teach values which may be of secondary importance in their own culture. For instance, Meredith, Abbott, Tsai, Ming and Meredith [1994] found that Chinese adults insisted on the greater importance of family cohesion as a family value, more so than did American adults. At the same time, Xiao [1999] also demonstrated that in China parents placed more emphasis on their children's independence in order to foster desirable socialization characteristics, while American parents in the US emphasized children's obedience more. This tendency of parenting practices to emphasize weaker points of their own culture is possible because parents feel sufficiently secure in their own culture's ability to teach core values, so parents feel that they can afford to teach their children different values in their family relations. However, when the family migrates, parents cannot rely on the new society to assist in the cultural transmission of own-group values. Pertinent questions about the intergenerational differences in the immigrant families, compared with the non-immigrant families, are raised by the above contrast. As shown in the literature, of the two aspects, autonomy and embeddedness, which is more persistent in leading to disagreements and conflicts between parents and adolescents?

Although numerous studies measure intergenerational differences of family values and relations, most studies have based their analyses on the adolescents' perceptions of their parents' views in order to assess intergenerational disagreement; only a few have actually examined the views of both adolescents and their parents [e.g., Dekovic, 1999; Kwak & Berry, 2001; Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000; Phinney, Ong, & Madden, 2000]. If we take Asian groups as our examples,

Vietnamese-American adolescents reported participation in household chores at home and academic success at school as their highest stressors because these were subjects about which the adolescents felt the most pressure from their parents [Tran, Lee, & Khoi, 1996]. In a similar vein, Vietnamese-Australian adolescents reported high levels of parental control as a source of intergenerational disagreement [Herz & Gullone, 1999]. Kwak and Berry [2001] examined the views of both adolescents and their parents from three Asian immigrant groups and compared these intergenerational differences to those of the non-immigrant Anglo-Celtic group in Canada. As expected, Vietnamese, Korean and East-Indian adolescents valued parental authority much more highly and children's rights clearly less than did their Anglo-Celtic counterparts. In terms of children's obligations, on the other hand, the difference in views between the Asian and Anglo-Celtic groups, although still significant, was greatly reduced. However, the intergenerational differences on parental authority and children's rights, as measures of adolescents' autonomy, were greater among the immigrant groups than the non-immigrant group, whereas the parents and adolescents from the former agreed very closely with each other on children's obligations as a measure of embeddedness.

Institutional and cultural support from the larger society is crucial for immigrant families to sustain their core cultural components during the period of adaptation. When the own-cultural emphasis on family cohesion and embeddedness receives insufficient support from the larger society, ethnic-heritage cultural transmission within the immigrant families is limited, and the families face greater intergenerational disagreements. For those ethnocultural groups with strong family embeddedness but weak and delayed autonomy for adolescents [Feldman & Rosenthal, 1994], migration to an individualistic society can bring out greater intergenerational differences as the adolescents' pursuit of autonomy increases rapidly after migration, while family embeddedness remains strongly endorsed as a core cultural value in their own ethnic group. For example, as Phinney et al. [2000] found for family obligations, Vietnamese-American adolescents and their parents showed a smaller discrepancy than did those of other non-Asian immigrant families and non-immigrant majority families; however, a very rapid decline in family embeddedness was also shown among the Vietnamese families. While the first-generation Vietnamese adolescents agreed closely with their parents on the issue of family obligation, second-generation adolescents disagreed far more; the intergenerational discrepancy was much greater, even greater than that of non-immigrant families of European background.

Researchers in the field of family relations have also begun to explore how adolescents' adaptations within their family affect their adaptation outside the home in areas such as peer relations and school adjustment. The discrepancy found in the perception of family values between the Vietnamese adolescents and their parents in Australia was correlated with the frequency of conflict between adolescents and their parents over family, school and social activity [Rosenthal et al., 1996]. Regardless of ethnocultural group, high school students in Hong Kong committed more disciplinary violations when they had greater conflicts with their mother [Stewart et al., 1998]. However, if such frequent conflicts may adversely affect adolescents' adaptation beyond the family context, positive family relations do not seem to capitalize on the desirable effects of social or school adaptation. Even though adolescents' endorsement of family obligations were found to be asso-

ciated with positive relationships with family members in the US [Fuligni et al., 1999], and their psychological adaptation received benefits from adherence to family values and acceptance of parental authority in Finland [Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000], positive family cohesion and embeddedness did not extend their effects to the adolescent's peer relationship or school adaptation [Fuligni et al., 1999]. This tendency to dissociate the family environment from other contexts is consistent with the explanation of continuity and discontinuity of self-development in differential relational contexts [Smollar & Youniss, 1985; Phinney & Ong, 2001]. Still, the exact influences which shape the familial context within the extended socialization areas of adolescents remain unknown and would make very interesting topics for further research in intergenerational family relations.

### **Culture of Enculturation and Influences of Sociodemographic Factors**

A national society provides the ground, or general context for enculturation, for family socialization practices and for adolescent self-development. By contrasting two distinct blocs of society, Bower, Flanagan, and Taylor [2001] demonstrated that adolescents' participation in household work was related to the sociopolitical characteristics of their enculturation society. Adolescents from the former communist Eastern bloc showed a greater willingness to participate in household chores without payment than did their counterparts from capitalist societies. The adolescents from the former Eastern bloc considered children's work in the house to be a communal value, but those from capitalist societies believed it was the individual task which needed to be paid. In the US, the mother's higher education was linked to a stronger valuation of autonomy of their children, but in China gender and the education level of the parents showed no influence on child-rearing values, a finding which Xiao [1999] attributed to the communist societal values of gender equality. Crystal et al. [1994], by contrast, found that in China and Japan adolescents' perceptions of their parents' expectations and satisfaction on their school performance varied with gender, since boys acknowledged the burden of higher expectations placed upon them by their parents, while girls did not face such expectations; but in the US, no such gender differences were found among adolescents. The effects of societal values, however, are not fixed because the characteristics of a society itself are themselves changing through cultural contacts across ethnocultural groups within a nation as well as across nations. Over the years, researchers have noticed gradual changes in sociocultural values endorsed by national societies, and collectivistic nations in particular. For example, studies of Chinese families on family values and child-rearing practices have found noticeable changes toward the typical Western values of individuality and autonomy; the pattern of Chinese family relations is shifting away from their traditional values of family piety and cohesion [Feldman & Rosenthal, 1994].

Researchers have recently shown that changes in family socialization patterns are affected by low SES or economic hardship. A series of research findings [e.g., see McLoyd, 1990; Taylor et al., 2000] have consistently shown that parents tend to be less supportive of their children and to engage in negative parenting practices when the family experiences economic hardship. Under such circumstances of re-

duced financial resources, parenting diminishes, and adolescents tend to become psychologically distressed as well as to engage in problematic behavior. This stream of research has been examining minority groups in the US; so far, no differences by race or by ethnicity have been indicated [McLeod & Shanahan, 1993]. In terms of family structure and kinship relations, however, according to Blair, Blair, and Madamba [1999], a comparison between African-Americans and White-Americans showed that the presence of extended kin in a household was related to an improvement in the African-American students' school performance, but the opposite was the case for the White-American students. For the African-American families, this finding indicates a more cohesive family structure, whereas for the White-American families it suggests a poorer family or a weakened family structure.

International studies have also ascertained influences of the national society on socialization practices of the family. The overall economic characteristics of a nation were found to be related to the family relations in conjunction with the cultural expectation held by the family members, as well as the SES experienced by the family. For example, Walper and Silbereisen [1994] investigated the effects of economic deprivation on family cohesion and adolescent self-development. Comparing German families in West Berlin and Polish families in Warsaw, they have found that economic hardship played a significant role as a stressor for intergenerational family relations and adolescent developmental process for the former but not for the latter. Although a loss of income in families, combined with a lower level of parental education, led to findings of impaired family relations and adolescent self-development in both national groups, the researchers argued that the cross-national difference could be explained by the difference in cultural standards and expectations based on the previous economic experience of the families in each nation. Given the unstable state of the Polish economy, Polish families have long prepared psychologically for family hardships brought on by losses in income. In turn, the fundamental family structure and roles assigned to family members did not need to undergo dramatic negotiations to restore family cohesion. For German families on the other hand, the financial difficulty brought on by a sudden loss of income was an unexpected event and its impact on family relations was much greater. Thus, renegotiations between parents and adolescents required greater adjustment to the differences in conditions and consequences of income loss itself, and the families, lacking experience with this situation, lacked efficient coping strategies.

When examining immigrant families, researchers have widely adhered to the assumption that reduced SES of the immigrant families leads to a lower adaptability of immigrant adolescents and their families than that of their counterparts from non-immigrant families residing in the same national society [Reitz, 2001]. First of all, this assumption has proven to be inaccurate in school adaptation; several studies have revealed an incredible adaptability in immigrant children [e.g., Fuligni, 1998; Rumbaut, 1997, 2000]. Secondly, immigrant adolescents have been found to construct as healthy, and perhaps even healthier, course of self-development, psychological well-being, and behavioral patterns than their counterparts from the dominant groups in the larger national societies [e.g., Australia and Canada in Kwak, Leung, & Pe-Pua, 2001; Canada and Portugal in Kwak & Neto, 2001]. Thirdly, at home, with regard to family relations, immigrant families are considered to be at a disadvantage because the family members tend to be separated for many

reasons, including economic ones; migration alone is usually enough to lower the SES of the family. This aspect is continuously examined in the literature of family relations. Some pertinent evidence suggests that the intact family structure and the availability of extended family members facilitate immigrant family relations [Rumbaut, 2000], and the utilization of family support systems for assistance eases the immigrant parents' stress, which in turn makes for a more agreeable and supportive family environment [Taylor et al., 2000]. As mentioned in the above sections, immigrant groups attempt to maximize their use of the kinship network to better family relations in spite of their low or reduced SES [Dalgety-Gaitan, 1994]. For those groups known for their strong family ties, researchers point to the benefits that an extended own-ethnic network available in the larger society can offer in the maintenance of the group's core cultural value of family embeddedness. As we saw with the example of Mexican- and Vietnamese-American families in California, adolescents from the former receive reinforcement from the extended ethnic network in their efforts to maintain family cohesion, even at the expense of individual autonomy, but the adolescents from the latter did not receive as much support from their social network [Menjivar, 1997; Phinney et al., 2000].

Some other sociodemographic factors which have been studied repeatedly in the literature of family relations are: length of residence, education level of parents, gender, and SES of family. The family values of immigrant parents did not vary with length of residence, while adolescents' values did vary significantly [Nguyen & Williams, 1989], indicating some evidence for a dissonant acculturation process and adolescents' ongoing construct of self in relation to the embeddedness of family. In the same vein, immigrant families experienced more disagreements concerning family obligations with their second-generation US-born children than they did with first-generation foreign-born [Phinney et al., 2000]. In an American sample drawn from a semi-rural area of Pennsylvania, girls who perceived greater disagreement with parents showed lower self-confidence and more psychological problems, but boys did not show the same tendencies – at least as they perceived problems with their parents [Ohannessian et al., 2000]. This tendency toward gender differentiation seems to be related to the parents' level of education, their belief in parenting practices, and the SES of the family. Some inconsistencies remain, however, and they need to be addressed in research on intergenerational family relations. Dutch families showed no gender differences for intergenerational conflict [Dekovic, 1999]; the absence of gender differences was explained by the Dutch cultural emphasis on gender equality as well as the Dutch parents' tolerance and acceptance of an adolescent lifestyle. With a large number of adolescents from various ethnic groups from Northern California, Fuligni, Tseng, and Lam [1999] found only a very powerful group effect for family obligations signifying embeddedness, but no other effects of generation, gender, family composition or SES. Also, no mediating effects of gender or SES were detected in the relationship between intergenerational disagreements and life-satisfaction of adolescents in Southern California [Phinney & Ong, 2001]. For a better understanding of mediating factors on intergenerational family relations, further research is called for [see also Feiring & Taska, 1996; Feldman & Rosenthal, 1994]; however, one can tentatively point to the effects of enculturation culture on family relations and adolescent self-development. What has been greatly lacking in the field are systematic studies of non-immigrant and immigrant families from a national society to the extension to



international comparisons in order to find consistencies or to detect the differentiation of the mediating factors which will shed some light on the intricacy of family relations. As well, research of immigration has so far been limited to the phenomena of populations migrating to industrialized Western nations. With current globalization of people's contacts as well as regional migratory movements, a fresh set of perspectives and research focuses is recommended if we are to examine the impact of these untapped migration movements on intergenerational socialization within the family.

### Interpretation and Summary of the Findings

The present review examined the research findings on intergenerational family relations between adolescents and their parents with respect to three developmental issues: (1) development of autonomy of adolescent self versus consolidation of family embeddedness, (2) difficulties in cultural transmission between generations, and (3) discontinuities and inconsistencies in the processes of enculturation and acculturation within the family. The initial hypothesis of this review was that intergenerational relations of immigrant families would be less harmonious than those of non-immigrant families. Broadly speaking, we can say that the cultural distance between the cultures of origin and the new society can threaten the harmony of immigrant family relations, but when the core cultural values of family embeddedness are supported by their own culture as well as their own ethnocultural social network, immigrant families seem to maintain healthy intergenerational relations. These strong family ties are possible in part because adolescents from collectivistic societies pursue autonomy of self later than do their counterparts from non-immigrant groups. As with non-immigrant families, socioeconomic hardship in immigrant families necessitates collaboration by family members; yet, in contrast to non-immigrants, collaboration and participation by immigrant family members are encouraged by their own ethnic culture as well. Consequently, experiences of hardship do not result in overly adverse effects on intergenerational relations within the immigrant family.

For recent immigrant families, which particularly emphasize family cohesion, family members may be more adept at avoiding conflict, and further, may have learned to decrease the psychological impact of family problems. As Crystal and his colleagues [1994] point out, Asian adolescents in China and Japan did not consider their family to be a source of their depression but American adolescents did. Thus, the similar levels of disagreement experienced in the family by various ethnic groups might produce dissimilar interpretations and implications for individual psychological outcomes and for family relations. In the new society, immigrant families utilize their kinship and extended ethnocultural social networks effectively to maintain their family relations and to adapt to the new cultural context regardless of their reasons for migration. Compared to non-immigrant families, immigrant families may be more motivated to generate early positive outcomes by setting aside disagreements among family members while at the same time acknowledging the sacrifices made by parents and the contributions made by adolescents to the family as a whole.

Some caution should be exercised, however, since intergenerational relations between adolescent and parent are likely to have different implications and meanings for families from different ethnic groups, both within the same society and across different societies. The same family environment for African-Americans and White-Americans can lead to different outcomes for adolescent development as well as family relations, which imply differences in the meaning of the family structure [Blair, Blair, & Madamba, 1999]. Likewise, in the Netherlands, family is an important construal for the Turkish immigrant adolescents in their construction of identity and self-concept but is not for the Dutch adolescents [Verkuyten, 2001]. Further, the sociocultural values endorsed by the society also influence adolescent self-development and intergenerational relations by providing certain desirable values for adolescents to learn throughout their enculturation process [Bowes, Flanagan, & Taylor, 2001]. Some ethnic groups, particularly those of Asian and Latin descent, are known to retain strong family values of embeddedness after migration [e.g., Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999; Kwak & Berry, 2001]. Adolescents from these groups also develop their autonomy slowly, especially in the familial context [Feldman & Rosenthal, 1994]; in turn, intergenerational relations with their parents can be managed with fewer disagreements and conflicts beyond broad encouragement of the core cultural value of family cohesion. Consequently, if adolescents vary significantly across ethnocultural groups in their understanding of contributions to family embeddedness or of parental expectation of their participation for harmonious family relations, then our general interpretation of the intergenerational family relations should be able to encompass cross-cultural differences either within the society or between societies.

In conclusion, the reviewed literature of intergenerational differences in the context of family relations suggests that the ethnocultural background of the family and the social networks of the larger society should be considered together for a fuller understanding of the complex dynamics of intergenerational family relations. Disagreement between adolescents and parents resulted from adolescents insisting upon their autonomy as part of their developmental process, while their parents reinforce embeddedness by insisting upon the necessity of family cohesion and the obligations of their children. However, adolescents and parents may be influenced differently when they are confronted with disagreements and conflicts within the family. The reviewed literature further suggests that perceptions of adolescent-parent disagreement will likely have different implications for families from different cultures and ethnic groups. The studies examined in this review support the position that when issues stemming from family embeddedness arise, immigrant adolescents do not necessarily experience greater intergenerational disagreements and difficulties with their parents, but they do experience more conflict over the issue of autonomy. In terms of both the adolescent's delayed pursuit of autonomy and a stronger cultural emphasis on family piety and cohesion, intergenerational relations in immigrant families should remain harmonious, especially when the families come from collectivistic cultures. Although strong cultural values tend to weaken over generations, extensive social support from their own-ethnic network still helps to keep family relations closer. The effects of low SES and economic hardship on immigrant families can result in diminished family relations for immigrant and non-immigrant families alike; however, some evidence indicates that resilient immigrant families have adapted to the new society of settlement because

of their collective efforts to overcome the adverse conditions facing them once they migrate. Finally, it is important to point out that so far, studies have been limited to immigrant groups which have settled in a small number of Western countries. Considering that many more recent migration movements are occurring across wider regions of the world, more effort needs to be put into examining the characteristics of the many other migrating groups and their receiving societies. Because of the relatively large body of findings for the US, it was possible to make some systematic comparisons among immigrant groups, ethnic minority groups and non-immigrant groups for the American portion of the present review. In spite of discussion of numerous international studies, the present review's understanding of the adaptation of immigrant families in terms of the intergenerational family relations still remains based mainly on studies of Asian and Latin groups in American society, that is, based on families from collectivistic cultures which have migrated to individualistic cultures. So far, what has been documented and researched are either comparisons of some ethnocultural groups within a national society or evaluations of a few national groups in terms of a bipolar cultural dimension of individualism and collectivism. Thus, in order to achieve a better and fuller cross-cultural understanding, we must exercise caution and be careful not to over-generalize from our current knowledge. It is hoped that future studies will shed more light on the outcomes of migration on intergenerational relations from individualistic to collectivistic societies.

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