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**A Comparison of the Relation Between Autonomy Support and Independent Self-  
Construal Between Turkish and German Young Adults**

Master's Thesis

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### Abstract

Previous literature posited that basic psychological need support enhances the internalization of cultural values (Chirkov et al., 2005, 2011), yet the research detailing this is limited. In order to close the literature gap further and expand on the outcomes of maternal autonomy support, this study aimed to examine the relation between parental autonomy support and independent self-construal with nationality as a potential moderator. There were a total of 269 participants, 162 of which were Turkish (60.2%) and 107 of which were German (39.8%) with an age range of 18 to 25 ( $M_{\text{age}} = 21.67$  and  $SD_{\text{age}} = 2.05$ ). The study was conducted via an online survey tool. The results showed that parental autonomy support positively related to independent self-construal. Nationality was also related to independent self-construal ( $M_{\text{Turkish}} > M_{\text{German}}$ ) but was not a moderator, and there was no significant difference found between Turkish and German young adults' independent self-construal scores. Current findings of this study expand the literature by further confirming the link between autonomy support and independent self-construal, indicating that autonomy support amplifies the integration of independent cultural values into the self, notwithstanding nationality.

*Keywords:* Self-Determination Theory, autonomy-supportive parenting, independent self-construal, nationality

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) posits that autonomy support satisfies the three basic psychological needs, and it is considered indispensable and relevant across cultures (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Soenens et al., 2017). Parental autonomy support, which is parenting centered around supporting children's personal goals, interests, and choices (Hughes et al., 2018), has been linked to positive outcomes in children (Annear & Yates, 2010; Bernier et al., 2010; Iyengar & Lepper, 1999; Lekes et al., 2010; Vasquez et al., 2016). When autonomy support is present, cultural values can be internalized at a higher level (Chirkov et al., 2011). The cultural perception of the self in relation to others is called the self-construal. Common in "Western" and/or "individualistic" countries, independent self-construal represents the separate view of the self from others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) which simultaneously strives to be autonomous (Cross et al., 2011).

Investigating how autonomy-supportive parenting relates to independent self-construal in German and Turkish samples presents an opportunity where a potential similarity (i.e., how high independent self-construal scores are) could be illustrated despite the cultural differences. Although research demonstrates that there is a correlation between autonomy support and independent self-construal (Kong & Ho, 2016), current literature needs to be expanded by probing the relation more. A research gap is found concerning how nationality moderates the relation between parental autonomy support and independent self-construal, thus the aim of this study is to investigate this matter and contribute to existing research regarding outcomes of autonomy-supportive parenting and whether these outcomes could be generalized in two countries.

### **Parental Autonomy Support**

SDT, proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985), is a psychological theory that focuses on biological, social, and cultural elements that either strengthen or weaken people's innate capability regarding psychological growth, wellness, and engagement. When the social

conditions around an individual are supportive, one's self-regulation abilities and volition are increased (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Conversely, thwarted social conditions reduce one's capacity to self-regulate and have a sense of free will and agency.

*Basic psychological needs*, a universal concept within SDT, consist of three elements: the need for competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The *need for competence* refers to the basic need to feel mastery that stems from self-organized actions. The *need for relatedness* means that the individual needs to feel social connectedness. The *need for autonomy* refers to one's need to self-regulate and take actions of their own accord (self-governing). Autonomy is closely related to intrinsic motivation in the sense that it occurs when individuals engage in activities voluntarily, and not due to others' expectations/wants (Ryan & Deci, 2017). When children grow up in autonomy-supportive environments, their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness can all be satisfied (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Neubauer et al., 2021).

The term autonomy support means supporting the volitional functioning of another (Soenens et al., 2017). Utilizing an autonomy-supportive parenting style, as opposed to a controlling parenting style, involves providing children with sufficient choices, encouraging them to take initiative, and giving them relevant reasons when making requests rather than just expecting compliance (Grolnick et al., 1991; Joussemet et al., 2008). Autonomy support is universally important (Soenens et al., 2017), and a considerable number of studies have demonstrated the beneficial outcomes of autonomy-supportive parenting, particularly concerning children's optimal functioning (Annear & Yates, 2010; Joussemet et al., 2005; Lekes et al., 2010; Vasquez et al., 2016). For instance, employing early autonomy-supportive parenting was found to be related to better executive functioning performance at 18- and 26-months (Bernier et al., 2010). Furthermore, a meta-analysis has reported positive outcomes in

academic achievement, autonomous motivation, perceived competence, and psychological health in children with autonomy-supportive parents (Vasquez et al., 2016).

### **Self-Construal**

Self-construal is defined by how one perceives, understands, and interprets themselves in relation to others and it contains two dimensions: independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Based on self-construal, individual differences in behavior, cognition, and emotion can be understood partially (Han & Humphreys, 2016), and these differences are described in literature (Holland et al., 2004; Kühnen & Oyserman, 2002; Neumann et al., 2009). For example, Neumann et al. (2009) state that individuals that have an interdependent self-construal may feel more pride toward achievements of others. Contrarily, individuals with an independent self-construal may experience pride more pertaining to their own success.

### ***Independent Self-Construal vs. Interdependent Construal***

Individuals that have an independent self-construal emphasize their own attributes, abilities, goals, or characteristics when they think of themselves (Singelis, 1994). Mainly in Western and individualistic countries, uniqueness and being a distinct member of society is valued and deemed appropriate – this contributes to the development of the independent self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Conversely, individuals that possess an interdependent self-construal value especially their relationships with others and their role in society (e.g., feelings of belongingness and fitting in), and do not see the self and others as separate entities (Singelis, 1994). It is important to note that as Singelis (1994) proposed, each individual can have both an independent and interdependent self-construal, but typically, one type stands out more than the other.

Self-construal is how one internalizes and integrates cultural values into the self, and the basic psychological needs theory indicates that the support of basic needs is crucial to the

way social practices and values are internalized (Chirkov et al., 2011). Beyond culture, one's relationship with their family, as well as the environment they grow up in, also form their self-construal (Ross & Murdock, 2014). Consistent with this view, we can expect the self-construal of individuals to be shaped via autonomy support (i.e., in cultures that stress individualism, autonomy support commonly prompts independent self-construal and in collectivistic cultures, autonomy support commonly prompts interdependent self-construal; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

### **The Role of Nationality**

The collection of beliefs, behaviors, customs, and values that characterize a distinct group of people is called culture (Lansford, 2022). It is possible to observe diversity in parenting styles across cultures (Bornstein, 2012). Likewise, the way children interpret these practices can differ from culture to culture as well (Lansford, 2022). Additionally, different cultures provide different contexts that aid the way we experience the world around us and contribute to our sense of self (Coşkan et al., 2016). Regardless of culture, the need for autonomy remains relevant for everybody (Soenens et al., 2015, 2017), and to what extent autonomy support is endorsed can influence the incorporation of cultural values into the self as it supports the basic psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

### ***Turkey***

In Turkish culture, the emphasis on the family as a unit is substantial (Sunar & Fişek, 2005). While this suggests that Turkish culture, as defined by various sources (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Triandis, 2001), should be classified as a collectivistic culture, across literature Turkey is largely regarded as having neither an individualistic nor a collectivistic culture (Göregenli, 1995, 1997; Özdikmenli-Demir & Sayıl, 2009). This can be explained through the rapid transformation from traditional to modern in Turkish society. To substantiate, a study investigating the differences in Turkish family dynamics between 1975 and 2003 revealed that

families with higher socioeconomic status promoted autonomy in their children more compared to the previous three decades (Kagitcibasi & Ataca, 2005), which deviates from strictly interdependent practices (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2008).

Highly educated mothers favor autonomy and self-reliance, as these are viewed as a necessity in their social context (Kagitcibasi, 2007, as cited in Sen et al., 2013). Taking this into consideration, Nacak and colleagues (2011) found that Turkish mothers living in the big city differed in the way they expected and induced obedience: highly educated mothers were more permissive and less demanding, whereas low-educated mothers expected obedience more. As for the independent and interdependent self-construal in Turkey, the distribution among highschoolers seems to be divided almost equally, with independent self-construal being more prominent (Göker & Tekedere, 2022). Similarly, another study found that independent self-construal stood out more in Turkish female students than interdependent (Fischer et al., 2017).

### ***Germany***

German culture is characterized by its focus on individualistic values (Hofstede, 2001, as cited in Tōugu et al., 2017). As a matter of fact, socialization provided to children by many German parents includes autonomy and independent functioning (Döge & Keller, 2014; Keller & Lamm, 2005). Especially in urban middle-class families, instilling early independence, autonomy, and a sense of uniqueness in children is common (Keller et al., 2003, as cited in Sieben, 2021). Additionally, Keller et al. (2010) demonstrated that mothers from Berlin endorsed autonomous socialization goals more than relational socialization goals. Regarding self-construal, an earlier study found that German female university students have scored higher on independent self-construal than interdependent (Fischer et al., 2017).

As previously mentioned, cultures that stress individuality and autonomy (referred to as Western) foster primarily independent self-construal values (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Furthermore, autonomy support enhances the cultural values that are integrated into the self

(Chirkov et al., 2005, 2011). Turkish and German nationalities were chosen as the sample characteristics due to the variability in Turkish culture and the mostly individualistic values in German culture. In former literature, Fischer and colleagues (2017) have found that female university students in Turkey scored higher independent self-construal and lower interdependent self-construal than German students. Similarly, Turkish university students have reported significantly higher independent self-construal compared to German students in a study, regardless of gender (Özkarar-Gradwohl et al., 2020).

In line with this view, it can be expected that autonomy support encourages Turkish and German young adults to adopt more independent self-construal values, as research suggests that it is more salient among these populations. Prior work has implied that autonomy support and independent self-construal could have a relation. For example, Kong & Ho (2016) have reported significant correlations between autonomy support and independent self-construal. Additionally, Treger and Schmitt (2018) have reported a significant correlation between autonomy and independent self-construal, further supporting the association of these constructs.

### **The Present Study**

Numerous studies have compared Turkish and German culture in different contexts (such as Kiran & Demirçeviren, 2021; Söylemez et al., 2022; Turan et al., 2016), however this is not the case regarding the relation between autonomy support and independent self-construal. By comparing the two countries, effects of autonomy support on independent self-construal could be explored. Research is lacking in this aspect altogether, much less about the impact of different nationalities.

The aim of this study was to examine the relation between parental autonomy support and individuals' independent self-construal across two countries. There were two hypotheses: (a) Parental autonomy support is positively related to independent self-construal; (b) This relation is strengthened by Turkish and German nationalities with no significant difference



between independent self-construal scores. It is hypothesized that nationality plays a moderating role in the relation between autonomy support and independent self-construal by strengthening individuals' independent self-construal. In other words, people that report higher levels of parental autonomy support will also report higher independent sense of self, and this relation is influenced positively in both Turkish and German young adults. No remarkable difference is expected due to previous research reporting high independent self-construal scores for both countries (Fischer et al., 2017; Özkarakar-Gradwohl et al., 2020). This study adds to the existing research by expanding on the moderating effect of nationality on the relation between parental autonomy support and independent self-construal.

## Methods

### Participants

A total of 609 individuals participated in the study, with 390 participants completing the survey. The final sample had an age range of 18 to 25 ( $M = 21.72$ ,  $SD = 2.06$ ), and the gender distribution was 76.4% female and 18.7% male. Participants older than 25 were excluded as well as participants who did not indicate their age. The distribution of the nationalities of participants who completed the survey fully are as follows: Turkish (26.4%;  $N = 103$ ), German (20%;  $N = 78$ ), Greek (41.3%;  $N = 161$ ), Bulgarian (12.3%;  $N = 48$ ). For the statistical analyses, only the Turkish and German participants who completed the questionnaires relating to the measured variables were included ( $N_{\text{total}} = 269$ ;  $N_{\text{Turkish}} = 162$ ;  $N_{\text{German}} = 107$ ;  $M_{\text{age}} = 21.67$ ,  $SD_{\text{age}} = 2.05$ ). Female participants made up 71.4% ( $N = 192$ ) of the sample, 26.4% ( $N = 71$ ) were male, 2.2% ( $N = 6$ ) were non-binary or did not want to disclose their gender. The educational level of the participants was as follows: 55.4% had a high school diploma or equivalent, 32.0% had a Bachelor's degree, 1.9% had a Master's degree. Single participants made up 66.9% of the sample whereas 32.0% had a partner (not married) and 0.4% were married. Out of the 269 participants, 86.2% ( $N = 232$ ) were students.

## **Procedure**

Data collection for this study occurred at two moments: the fall of 2021 and the fall of 2022. In 2021, data were collected among Greek, Turkish, and Bulgarian young adults, whereas the data collection in 2022 focused on German young adults. For Greek, Turkish, and German participants, data collection was done in their native language. For Bulgarians, the data collection was done in English due to practical reasons. There were two eligibility criteria for this study: respondents had to be born in the respective country and be aged between 18 and 25 years. Through G\*Power, the sufficient sample size for Turkish and German participants was determined to be  $N = 96$  for both. Respondents were recruited through researchers' own personal contacts and social media. In this thesis, the Turkish and German respondents' data was used.

The study was conducted fully online, thereby employing the online survey tool Qualtrics. First, participants were presented with an information letter and were asked to fill out the informed consent. By doing so, participants were informed that all provided information was confidential, would be processed anonymously, and that no sensitive personal information would be stored. Subsequently, participants filled out sociodemographic questions, several self-report questionnaires, and vignette-related questionnaires. Participation was estimated to last approximately 15-20 minutes. Participants did not receive any financial compensation. The procedures in this study were approved by the Ethics Review Board of the Faculty of Social & Behavioral Sciences at Utrecht University on November 11, 2021, filed under number 21-2108 and November 7, 2022, filed under number 22-2017. Additionally, the study was pre-registered on the Open Science Framework (<https://osf.io/rc42d>).

## **Measures**

### ***Parental Autonomy Support***

*Children's Perceptions of Parents Scale* (POPS; Grolnick et al., 1991) contains the subscale regarding maternal autonomy support which was utilized in this study. An example item is "My mother listens to my opinion or perspective when I've got a problem.". Parental autonomy support was measured with 7 items on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all true*, 5 = *very true*). The internal consistency regarding maternal autonomy support was found to be  $\alpha = .53$  (Grolnick et al., 1991), and the Turkish adaptation yielded the Cronbach's alpha as .90 and the test-retest reliability as  $r = .70$  (Kocayörük, 2012). No information regarding German reliability was found. In this study, the reliability was  $\alpha = .87$  in the Turkish sample and  $\alpha = .88$  in the German sample.

### ***Independent Self-Construal***

The *Self-Construal Scale* (SCS; Singelis, 1994) is a scale measuring individuals' self-construal containing two distinct dimensions, namely the interdependent and independent self-construal with a total of 24 items. The relevant subscale for this study was the independent self-construal subscale and an example item from it is "My personal identity independent of others, is very important to me.". This subscale was measured with 12 items on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). The reliability of the independent dimension was found to be adequate in two different samples ( $\alpha = .74$  and  $\alpha = .70$ , in Singelis, 1994). In a previous study, the reliability was  $\alpha = .62$  for the Turkish sample (Uskul et al., 2004). The German translation of this scale was adapted from Hannover et al. (2000), but information about its reliability was absent. For this study, the reliability of the independent self-construal scale was  $\alpha = .49$  in the Turkish sample and  $\alpha = .68$  in the German sample.

### ***Demographic Variables***

Demographic information regarding the participants (nationality, gender, age, education, marital status, job status, student status and which study) was gathered through demographic questions that preceded the survey.

### Statistical Analyses

The statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Version 28. Descriptive statistics of the data and bivariate correlations were examined first. Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was utilized to examine the relations between the background variables and the study variables. To test the relation between parental autonomy support (as the independent variable) and independent self-construal (as the dependent variable), linear regression analysis was used. An independent samples t-test was carried out to compare independent self-construal scores. In order to test how nationality influenced this relation and the independent self-construal outcome, Hayes' PROCESS extension (version 4.2) for SPSS was used to perform the moderator analysis.

## Results

### Preliminary Analyses

The descriptive statistics of and correlations between the study variables can be found in Table 1, demonstrating significant correlations. An independent samples t-test was performed to examine the differences in means of the study variables among Turkish and German young adults. Turkish participants ( $M = 3.82$ ,  $SD = 0.83$ ) reported statistically significant lower autonomy support compared to their German peers ( $M = 5.46$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ),  $t(178.209) = -12.77$ ,  $p < .001$ , Cohen's  $d = -1.70$ . Regarding independent self-construal, Turkish ( $M = 4.98$ ,  $SD = 0.63$ ) and German ( $M = 4.93$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ) participants' scores did not differ significantly,  $t(267) = 0.68$ ,  $p = .50$ , Cohen's  $d = 0.08$ .

**Table 1***Descriptive Statistics of and Bivariate Correlations Between Measured Variables*

Variable	Turkish		German		1	2
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
1. Autonomy support	3.82	0.83	5.46	1.14	-	.23**
2. Independent self-construal	4.98	0.63	4.93	0.70	.43***	-

*Note.* The results for the Turkish sample ( $n = 162$ ) are shown above the diagonal. The results for the German sample ( $n = 107$ ) are shown below the diagonal.

\*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

When examining the relation between background variables and independent self-construal, results of an ANCOVA showed that age, sex, education, marital status, and student status did not relate significantly to the study variable. Only job status related significantly to independent self-construal,  $F(1, 251) = 5.55$ ,  $p = 0.02$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .02$ . Further, a one-way ANOVA revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the independent self-construal scores of full-time employed ( $M = 5.30$ ,  $SD = 0.60$ ) and not employed ( $M = 4.89$ ,  $SD = 0.64$ ) participants, and Tukey's HSD Test demonstrated this as  $p = .003$ , 95% CI [0.11, 0.69]. In the main analyses, the possible effects of job status were controlled for.

### Primary Analyses

In line with the first hypothesis and accounting for the covariate, a hierarchical regression analysis using the "enter" method was performed to examine the relation between job status, autonomy support, and independent self-construal. In step 1, "job status" was added and in step 2, "autonomy support" was added. The fit of the first and second models yielded significant results,  $R^2 = .04$ ,  $F(1, 267) = 10.31$ ,  $p = .001$ , and  $R^2 = .08$ ,  $F(2, 266) = 10.77$ ,  $p < .001$  respectively, indicating that the models had a good fit. The results of the regression were

reported in Table 2, demonstrating that autonomy support significantly positively related to independent self-construal ( $p = .001$ ).

**Table 2**

*Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Job Status and Autonomy Support as Predictors*

Variable	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	95% CI		<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
					LB	UB		
Step 1							.037	.037
Constant	5.43	.15	35.74	< .001	5.13	5.73		
Job status	-0.18	.06	-3.21	.001	-0.29	-0.70		
Step 2							.075	.038
Constant	4.89	.22	21.95	< .001	4.45	5.33		
Job status	-0.15	.06	-2.67	.008	-0.26	-0.04		
Autonomy support	0.10	.03	3.30	.001	0.04	0.17		

*Note.* SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval; LB = Lower Bound; UB = Upper Bound.

In order to test the second hypothesis, a moderator analysis (using Hayes' PROCESS extension in SPSS) was performed to examine whether nationality played a moderator role in the relation between autonomy support and independent self-construal while controlling for job status. The fit of the model yielded a significant result,  $R^2 = .15$ ,  $F(4, 264) = 11.72$ ,  $p < .001$ , confirming that the model had a good fit. The results of the moderation analysis showed that autonomy support and nationality both significantly related to independent self-construal, but the interaction of these variables was not significant (see Table 3). Adding the interaction to the model did not significantly change the model,  $\Delta R^2 = .004$ ,  $F(1, 264) = 1.38$ ,  $p = 0.24$ .

**Table 3**

*Moderator Analysis Results with the Effect of Autonomy Support on Independent Self-  
Construal by Nationality, Controlling for Job Status*

Variables	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	95% CI	
					LB	UB
Constant	5.418	.150	36.192	< .001	5.123	5.712
AS	0.204	.041	5.000	< .001	0.124	0.284
Nationality	-0.480	.101	-4.777	< .001	-0.678	-0.282
AS*Nationality	0.092	.078	1.176	0.24	-0.062	0.246
Job status	-0.190	.055	-3.467	< .001	-0.298	-0.082

*Note.* AS = Autonomy Support; SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence Interval; LB = Lower Bound; UB = Upper Bound.

### Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate the moderating effect of Turkish and German nationalities on the relation between autonomy support and independent self-construal. It was expected that (a) parental autonomy support would positively relate to independent self-construal and (b) Turkish and German nationalities would strengthen this relation and not differ on the outcome. Although prior work has established that parental autonomy support and independent self-construal are correlated constructs (Kong & Ho, 2016), the research regarding their relation is limited, much less about the moderating effect of nationality on independent self-construal. Moreover, this research was conducted to broaden the existing research on the contribution of parental autonomy support to increasing cultural value integration, particularly independent self-construal.

The correlation between autonomy support and independent self-construal for the Turkish sample was weak and positive, and for the German sample the correlation was moderate and positive. Overall, the significant correlation between these two constructs were

aligned with existing literature (Kong & Ho, 2016; Treger & Schmitt, 2018). When comparing the means of autonomy support and independent self-construal in the two samples, German young adults reported significantly higher autonomy support than their Turkish peers. On the other hand, similar to the findings of Fischer et al. (2017), Turkish participants scored higher on independent self-construal than Germans but this difference was not significant, contrary to Özkarar-Gradwohl et al. (2020)'s findings.

The results obtained from the hierarchical regression confirmed the first hypothesis and yielded preliminary evidence that higher autonomy support promotes higher independent self-construal. A surprising result was that job status also played a role in the independent self-construal outcome; participants working full-time scored significantly higher on independent self-construal than not employed participants. This could be explained by the full-time employed participants' professions. Brickson (2000) has claimed that individuals who have a more "personal" self may put more emphasis on job aspects that provide self-improvement and opportunities to distinguish them from others. Therefore, the job demands of the full-time employees in the sample could be parallel with their independent self-construal, making this self-construal more salient. Moderator analysis indicated that while autonomy support was significantly related to independent self-construal, nationality did not moderate this relation despite having a significant effect on independent self-construal, hence, the second hypothesis is not confirmed. Overall, the findings of this study suggest that autonomy support results in independent self-construal in Turkish and German young adults, irrespective of nationality.

The first finding builds on the existing evidence on the association of parental autonomy support and independent self-construal (Kong & Ho, 2016), by confirming a relation between the two. The second finding, although non-significant, contributes to research in the sense that this was, to my knowledge, the first study to investigate whether or not Turkish and German nationalities moderate the relation between autonomy support and independent self-construal.



Furthermore, it implies that regardless of country, autonomy support can result in independent self-construal. Having said that, the non-significance in this sample does not mean that nationality is not under any circumstance a moderator in the relation between autonomy support and independent self-construal – perhaps it signifies that the evidence for this was simply not adequately strong in this sample.

### **Strengths and Limitations**

This study comes with its strengths and limitations. Perhaps the most prominent strength of the study is that it is the first to assess the relation between autonomy support and independent self-construal while also having nationality as the moderator. Another strength is the use of previously validated scales that also had established high reliabilities, establishing easier replicability.

An important limitation of this study was its cross-sectional design, which prevents the ability to draw causal conclusions. Another limitation was the sample characteristics. Although the sample size provided sufficient power, generalizability of results is limited due to the inclusion of only two countries. Additionally, the results can mostly be generalized to females and not so much males, as the data was largely representative of the female population.

### **Implications for Practice & Further Research**

More research centering the relation between autonomy support and independent self-construal is needed, as this thesis offered preliminary evidence of a relation between these constructs. The present study did not assess the relation between interdependent self-construal and autonomy support – research concerning this should also be carried out. Future studies can investigate which underlying mechanisms are involved in the link between autonomy support and self-construal to gain a better understanding of the relation.

Adding to the literature concerning basic need support strengthening the endorsement of cultural values (Chirkov et al., 2005, 2011), present findings point to the influence of parental

autonomy support on the independent perception of the self. This could facilitate the comprehension of within- and between-culture variances in self-construal, although this thesis only focused on independent self-construal and not on other views of the self. For instance, Harb and Smith (2008), have proposed more distinguished categories of self-construal, namely: the personal, the collective-vertical, the relational-vertical, the collective-horizontal, relational-horizontal, and the humanity-bound self-construals. By investigating these components and their possible relation to autonomy support, research could be more nuanced.

Even though the second alternative hypothesis is not accepted, it probes a novel concept that more research can possibly uncover more about in the future. Researchers are urged to investigate the moderator relation of nationality with Turkish and German samples further as well as with different nationalities to increase the generalizability of results.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, autonomy support was linked with independent self-construal. Turkish and German young adults with seemingly autonomy-supportive parents reported higher scores of independent self-construal, indicating that greater autonomy support encourages greater independent self-construal. ANCOVA results indicated that job status related to independent self-construal, and participants working full-time reported significantly higher independent self-construal than not working participants. Contrary to the second hypothesis, nationality was not a significant moderator in this relation, but it had a significant effect on independent self-construal. Nevertheless, the present findings shed a light on an area of research where a knowledge gap exists. Researchers are encouraged to investigate the way in which autonomy support increases cultural value integration and whether these effects are universal.

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