

The Mediating Role of Authenticity on Mindfulness and Wellbeing: A Cross Cultural Analysis¹

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Abstract

Both mindfulness and authenticity have been found to positively affect psychological well-being. The current study investigated the relationships between an interesting mix of eastern and western phenomena including mindfulness, authenticity and psychological well-being and considered the cultural diversities in measures of these variables. Participants ($N = 165$) completed the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale, Authenticity Scale, and the Psychological Well-Being Scale. Findings demonstrated that authenticity acts as a partial mediator for the relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being. Authenticity remained a partial mediator in the White British sample but acted as a complete mediator of the relationship between mindfulness and well-being in the Chinese sample. We make several suggestions for therapeutic approaches that focus on authenticity and support a previous claim that person-centred psychotherapy can be considered a form of mindful therapy.

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Introduction

Research in the field of Humanistic and Positive Psychology aims mainly to explore factors that build strength and facilitate wellness (Linley, Joseph, Harrington & Wood, 2006). Correlational studies have revealed that both mindfulness and authenticity are strongly related to well-being (Baer, Smith, & Allen, 2004; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Goldman & Kernis, 2002; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis & Joseph, 2008). Despite these studies of well-being focusing on mindfulness and authenticity, little is known about how these two well-being traits relate to each other. The present study aims to advance understanding of the relationships between mindfulness, authenticity and psychological well-being, and tentatively proposes a mediation model and analyses these data through a cross-cultural lens.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness has its roots in Buddhist meditation, but it has become one of the buzzwords of the early 21st century after its ‘de-Buddhification’ (Sun, 2014). The secular mindfulness practices developed unadulterated by exposure to Buddhist philosophy or teaching method, some researchers suggest that it’s unnecessary to understand Buddhist philosophy to practice mindfulness. Turnbull and Dawson (2006) argue that the way Western researchers define ‘Mindfulness’ oversimplified its original meaning, meaning that Western style meditation mindfulness may lead to a mere superficial calmness.

Brown and Ryan (2003) suggest that the most everyone has the capacity to attend and to be aware, their study indicates that mindfulness is a characteristic, and it plays a significant role in a variety aspects of well-being. Whilst the meaning of mindfulness is no longer restricted to cultivation and training, many western researchers have found it useful to define and operationalize it as a relatively stable trait or disposition (Joseph, Murphy & Patterson, 2016). The definitions of ‘mindfulness’ have varied across time and place, though there are overlapping components (e.g., attention to the present moment). For the purpose of this study, we adopted Cash and Whittingham’s (2010) conceptualization of mindfulness, which proposed that mindfulness is the psychological process of focusing one’s attention on the present internal/external events and experiencing with non-judgmental and non-response attitudes.

Thompson and Waltz (2007) argue that everyday mindfulness is different from mindfulness during meditation. They found that mindful individuals during everyday life may not be more mindful during mindfulness meditation than individuals who are less mindful during everyday life. Suggesting that people with lower dispositional mindfulness can experience mindful states not significantly differently from those with a more mindful disposition.

Mindfulness encompasses two elements: self-regulation of attention and attitude towards one’s experiences. Joseph, Murphy and Patterson (2016) view ‘the attitudinal qualities of mindfulness to be qualities that emerge as a consequence of increased ability to regulate attention to present moment experiencing’ (p. 300). Thus, individual differences in qualities of mindfulness might depend on the quality of attitude towards one’s experiences.

Meditation is a way to strengthen the ‘attitudinal qualities’ of mindfulness, but it is not the only way (Brown, Ryan & Creswell, 2007a).

Therefore, a non-meditator can also show a high level of dispositional mindfulness if they hold a high-quality ‘mindful attitude’ towards their experiences. Researchers refer to ‘mindful attitudes’ as ‘non-judgmental’, ‘non-response’, ‘curiosity’, ‘openness’ and ‘acceptance’ towards one’s experiences including thoughts, perceptions and sensations (Cash & Whittingham, 2010; Joseph, Murphy & Patterson, 2016). Meditation, and other formal mindfulness practices, foster the practitioners’ state mindfulness during the practices and also strengthen their dispositional mindfulness, but one’s dispositional mindfulness does not have to be developed through mindfulness practices.

Benefits and Salutary Outcomes of Mindfulness

Several mindfulness measures have been developed in recent years. The Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS; Baer, Smith, & Allen, 2004) and the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS; Brown & Ryan, 2003) were two of the earliest and most frequently used scales. Both of KIMS and MAAS have shown positive correlations with a variety of well-being measures (Baer, Smith, & Allen, 2004; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011). Researchers found that dispositional mindfulness is negatively related to depressive symptoms (Cash & Whittingham, 2010). Individuals who were rated more mindful tended to show a higher level of self-compassion (Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011). In a study exploring the concept of a wandering mind, this was found to be positively associated with depression and negatively related to dispositional mindfulness (Deng, Li &

Tang, 2014). In addition, Wang and Kong (2014) found emotional competence had a mediating effect on the relationship between mindfulness and life satisfaction and mental illness. Mindfulness also plays a key role in fostering different forms of self-regulation and enhancing well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Levesque & Brown, 2007; Schultz & Ryan, 2015). It has been shown that the satisfaction of the basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness is positively associated with mindfulness (Brown & Ryan, 2004). Mindfulness is also related to higher levels of self-esteem (Brown & Ryan, 2003) and reduced reactivity to threat (Brown, Ryan & Creswell, 2007b).

Cross-Cultural Studies of Mindfulness

Few studies have examined the level of mindfulness among different cultures. Özyeşil (2012) investigated the relationship between mindfulness and basic psychological needs (competence, autonomy and relatedness) among American and Turkish university students. The study suggested that autonomy was the most important need and is associated with mindfulness, even across cultures. American students showed significantly higher mindfulness, autonomy, competence and relatedness than Turkish students.

However, in another cross-cultural study, researchers found there was no significant difference in mindfulness based on MAAS scores between a sample of Thai and North American participants (Christopher, Charoensuk, Gilbert, Neary & Pearce, 2009). In this study researchers used both KIMS and MAAS to assess participants' level of dispositional mindfulness. However, there are some issues with construct validity in the KIMS having provided a poor fit to the data both for the North American and Thai samples, failing to

replicate Baer, Smith and Allen's (2004) original validation study. Based on this, we elected to use the MAAS to assess participants' dispositional mindfulness. These two findings suggest that cross cultural differences will vary depending on which cultures are being examined and supports the case for further study of cross cultural differences in the area of mindfulness research.

Authenticity

Humanistic psychology, based on Rogers' (1961) ideas, proposed that there is a tendency to express and activate all the capacities of the organism and the self, which is inherent in all organic and human life. This fundamental motivation towards growth is termed the actualising tendency. Self-actualisation occurs when organismic experiencing is congruently symbolised in the self-concept and with actual behaviour. When individuals trust in their organismic valuing rather than being governed by fixed introjected values held within the self-concept, the individual is being open and curious towards inner experience and the world outside. This points clearly to the intrinsic drive towards being authentic, where authenticity is representative of the concordance between organismic experiencing, awareness and action of person.

Based on Rogers' theory, Barrett-Lennard (1998) outlined this tripartite construct of authenticity stating that it involves 'consistency between the three levels of (a) a person's primary experience, (b) their symbolized awareness, and (c) their outward behaviour and communication' (p. 82). Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis and Joseph (2008) developed the Authenticity Scale based on the tripartite model. In the scale, the first aspect of authenticity,

self-alienation, reflects the reaction to the inevitable mismatch between conscious/symbolized awareness and actual organismic experience. The second aspect, authentic living, involves the congruence between experience as consciously perceived and behaviour. It involves expressing and behaving as one's true self (e.g. emotions, cognitions, intentions, beliefs etc.) in most situations and to live in accordance with one's values and beliefs (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis & Joseph, 2008). The third aspect of authenticity, accepting the influence of others, involves the extent to which one is open to the influence of others and the belief that one has to conform to the expectations of other people.

Kernis (2003) defined authenticity as 'the unobstructed operation of one's true- or core-self in one's daily enterprise' (p. 13) and states that authenticity can be broken down into four separate, but interrelated, components. The first component is awareness that refers to possessing, and being motivated to increase, knowledge of and trust in individual's motives, feelings, desires, and self-relevant cognitions. Authentic people, therefore, are more aware of the fact that they possess multifaceted self-aspects rather than simple dualities (e.g. masculine vs. feminine, introverted vs. extroverted, emotional vs. stoic), and they would strive to integrate them into a cohesive self-structure. As Rogers (1961) suggests, when an individual becomes more open and aware of their organismic experiences, they would be less inclined to use a presumptive classification framework to understand their reality. This increased flexibility in the self-concept is the result of developing one's self-awareness. The second component is unbiased processing that involves objectivity evaluating any self-relevant information, whatever the source, be it internal or external. From Rogers' perspective, unconditional positive self-regard contributes to a more accurate symbolization of self-

experiences due to the lack of distortions, biases, or defence mechanisms (Rogers, 1961). The third component is the extent that behaviour is based on one's intrinsic values, needs, and preferences and not as a consequence of extrinsic goals. The last component is a relational orientation that involves revealing one's true self in close relationships. 'People high in relational authenticity will be involved in healthier, more satisfying, and fully functioning relationships than people low in relational authenticity' (Kernis & Goldman, 2006, p. 301). These two authenticity models interrelate with each other, 'authentic living' is a combination of 'behavioural' and 'relational' authenticity, and 'self-alienation' is a combination of 'unbiased processing' and 'awareness'.

Benefits and Salutary Outcomes of Authenticity

The Authenticity Inventory (AI; Goldman & Kernis, 2002) and the Authenticity Scale (AS; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliouis & Joseph, 2008) were designed to directly measure dispositional authenticity. Both of AI and AS showed a strong relationship with a variety of well-being measures (Goldman & Kernis, 2002; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliouis & Joseph, 2008). 'Self-alienation' and 'accepting external influence' is negatively associated with subjective happiness on life satisfaction, and 'authentic living' is positively associated with subjective happiness and life satisfaction (Sarıçam, 2015). Authentic individuals tend to feel less anxious in the moment and authenticity is related to self-regulatory progress (Franzese, 2011). Authenticity is also related to inhibitory and goal-directed behaviours. Self-alienated individuals need more time to reconfigure their mental resources and/or have a diminished self-confidence in their own problem solving abilities which result in a slower, tentative

decision making style. A lower levels of authenticity is also related to more dependant and avoidant decision making styles (Pinto, 2014).

Cross-Cultural Study of Authenticity

Cross-cultural study in the field of authenticity is limited. Whether authenticity as a construct is equally beneficial in Chinese and Western social contexts, it remains unknown.

A cross-cultural study (Slabu, Lenton, Sedikides & Bruder, 2014) that examined the role of culture in authenticity suggested that one's cognitive style might affect authenticity; an analytic cognitive style is more prevalent in Western cultures and a more holistic cognitive style is more prevalent in Eastern cultures. People with a more holistic thinking style tend to focus on context and relationships, and believe that events are the products of external forces and situations. Conversely, people with a more analytic thinking style tend to focus on the object itself, and believe that events are the product of individuals and their attributes. These findings are from a study of 622 participants from United States of America (USA), China, India and Singapore. Participants completed the Analysis-Holism Scale (Choi, Koo & Choi, 2007), the Self-Construal Scale (Singelis, 1994), and the Authenticity Scale (Wood, Linley, Maltby & Joseph, 2008). The results suggest that participants from the USA are the least interdependent and the most analytical in cognition style, characteristics associated with higher authenticity. Conversely, Chinese and Singaporean participants were shown to be the most interdependent and the least analytical in cognition style. The study suggests there may be differences in authenticity dependent on cultural background.

Psychological Well-Being

The eudaimonic view of well-being is attributed to Aristotelian ethical philosophy.

Aristotle argued that eudaimonia is the highest state that human action can bring and it is about acting virtuously and behaving in a way that is authentic and developmental for its own sake (Broadie, 1991). Therefore, humans flourish when they fulfil their true nature.

In contrast to eudaimonic well-being, hedonism as a view of well-being has been expressed in varied forms such as through the satisfactions of bodily pleasures, appetites and self-interests. Commonly, hedonic psychologists tend to regard the satisfaction of subjective pleasures of the mind and the body as indicative of higher well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Joseph (2012) argued that the problem with 'seeking hedonic well-being as the road to happiness is that it does not automatically lead to greater eudaimonic well-being' (p. 19).

However, 'greater eudaimonic well-being does seem to lead to greater hedonic well-being' (p. 19). People who pursue happiness as a goal in itself will fail to achieve it, because happiness can be achieved only as a by-product of other activities.

Ryff (1989) adopted the eudaimonic view of well-being and analysed multiple frameworks of positive functioning generating a multidimensional model of well-being known as psychological well-being. The model of psychological well-being consists of six distinct aspects of human actualization: autonomy, personal growth, self-acceptance, life purpose, mastery, and positive relatedness. In the present study, we adopted the eudaimonic approach measuring psychological well-being.

The Relationships between Mindfulness, Psychological Well-Being and Authenticity

As written earlier, both mindfulness and authenticity are related to a variety of positive

psychological outcomes (Baer, Smith, & Allen, 2004; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Goldman & Kernis, 2002; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis & Joseph, 2008). In addition, Heppner and Kernis (2007) suggested that mindfulness and authenticity are interrelated. Brown and Ryan (2003) have found that higher mindfulness is associated with more self-congruence, and they claimed that attempts to ‘quiet the ego’ plays an important role in mindfulness exerting its beneficial effects. ‘Quiet the ego’ has been explained as ‘to detach one’s feelings of self-worth from one’s everyday affairs’ (Heppner & Kernis, 2007, p. 248). This means that individuals who hold mindful attitudes towards their experiences have a more flexible self-concept; their self-concepts have less impact on the way they observe and experience their internal and external world. They are able to receive more ‘information’ from the reality, rather than information that is not matched with their self-concept being filtered out of their consciousness or distorted in order to make experience consistent. Indeed, for individuals with high mindfulness, their self-concept and organismic valuing process become more consistent, which leads to greater well-being.

However, the focus of these studies (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Heppner & Kernis, 2007) was on the salutary effects of mindfulness, they didn’t examine the role authenticity plays in the association between mindfulness and psychological well-being, therefore, it remains unclear how mindfulness relates to different components of authenticity and what is the role of authenticity in the association between mindfulness and psychological well-being. It is important to examine how mindfulness exerts its beneficial effects in different levels of congruence, as this can inform researchers and clinicians in how to utilize mindfulness strategies to enhance well-being. This study aims to advance understanding of the

relationships between mindfulness, authenticity and psychological well-being, the mediation model between them will be tested and the cultural differences will be examined, partially filling a gap in understanding the relationship between mindfulness and authenticity.

Method

Participants

The sample included 165 participants and was diverse in gender and ethnicity. All of the participants are university students in the UK, and most of them are studying in a single institution (82%). In the sample, 123 (74.5%) were females and 42 (25.5%) were males; 92 (55.8%) were international students and 73 (44.2%) were non-international students; 82 (49.7%) were Caucasian, 58 (35.2%) were Asian, 16 (9.7%) were Black African/ African Caribbean, and 7 (4.2%) were mixed ethnic origin. Overall, 47% of responses indicated that first language was not English, leaving 53% of responses indicated that first language is English.

Procedure

All self-reported measurements used in this study were filled in online by participants. Google Forms was used to set up all the questionnaires online. The publication of the questionnaires was promoted using social media and a University virtual learning forum. Participants completed the questionnaire surveys on-line at their own pace. There was an introductory page showing the purpose of this study, ethical clearance, researcher contact information, and confirming voluntary and anonymous participation. Participants who

confirmed all of these information were then automatically redirected to the full questionnaire.

Measures

The Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS; Brown & Ryan, 2003) consists of 15 items (e.g., “I find it difficult to stay focused on what’s happening in the present”), all measured on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (almost always) to 6 (almost never). The mean rating across all items is computed. Higher scores reflect higher levels of dispositional mindfulness. Across multiple samples, researchers reported internal consistency coefficients above .80 (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Previous research found that the MAAS had a moderate positive correlation with emotional intelligence. MAAS was positively correlated with several measures of self-regulation and a variety of indicators of psychological well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003).

The Authenticity Scale (Wood, Linley, Maltby & Joseph, 2008) is designed to assess different features of authenticity which have been emphasized in person-centred psychology: self-alienation (e.g. “I feel as if I don’t know myself very well”), authentic living (e.g. “I am true to myself in most situations”), and accepting external influence (e.g. “I usually do what other people tell me to do”). The Authenticity Scale contains 12 items scored using a Likert scale from 1 (does not describe me at all) to 7 (describes me very well). Each factor subscale contains 4 items. In a validation study the researchers reported adequate internal consistency for each factor, with Cronbach’s alpha scores of $\alpha = .78$ for self-alienation, $\alpha = .78$ for accepting internal influence, and $\alpha = .69$ for authentic living. In addition, test-retest reliability

coefficients ranged from .79 to .84 (over two weeks) and from .78 to .81 (over four weeks).

Research (Wood, Linley, Maltby & Joseph, 2008) demonstrated that the Authenticity Scale is correlated with self-esteem, Subjective Well-Being and Psychological Well-Being.

The Psychological Well-Being Scales (PWBS; Ryff, 1989) consist of 84 items; it is used to evaluate psychological well-being by the measuring six interrelated dimensions: Self-acceptance (e.g. In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.), Positive relations with others (e.g. I feel like I get a lot out of my friendships.), Autonomy (e.g. I tend to worry about what other people think of me.), Environmental mastery (e.g. My efforts to find the kinds of activities and relationships that I need have been quite successful.), Personal growth (e.g. In general, I feel that I continue to learn more about myself as time goes by.), and Purpose in life (e.g. I have a sense of direction and purpose in life.). The internal consistency (α) coefficients for each factor has been reported: self-acceptance, .93; positive relations with others, .91; autonomy, .86; environmental mastery, .90; purpose in life, .90; and personal growth, .87. A shorter version of scale, the 3-item scales have been conducted in this study, it only includes 3 selected items for each dimension.

The short demographic questionnaire is a categorical assessment tool designed to measure demographics with respect for diversity across several categories: ethnicity, gender, undergraduate/postgraduate, subject, etc.

Results

Means and Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations and reliability for all measures are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for all measures

	<i>N</i>	Mean	SD	α
MAAS	165	4.05	.76	.84
AS	165	5.09	1.02	.88
PWBS	165	4.50	.60	.80

Note: MAAS = Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale; AS = The Authenticity Scale; PWBS = Psychological Well-Being Scale; SD = Standard deviation.

** $p < .01$

According to the results of Table 1, all of the measures were found to be highly reliable.

Table 2 shows that all of the measures are positively correlated with each other.

Table 2. Pearson correlation between AS, MAAS and PWB (*N* = 165).

	MAAS	SA	AL	AEI	AS	PWB
MAAS	-					
SA	.53**	-				
AL	.23**	.39**	-			
AEI	.48**	.50**	.40**	-		
AS	.54**	.83**	.71**	.82**	-	
PWB	.49**	.61**	.52**	.52**	.70**	-

Note: MAAS = Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale; AS = The Authenticity Scale; SA = Self-Alienation; AL = Authentic Living; AEI = Accepting External Influence; PWB = Psychological Well-Being.

** $p < .01$

Mediation analyses

It was predicted that an individual's level of dispositional mindfulness would predict psychological well-being, but that this relationship will be mediated by preference for authenticity. This is important for advancing understanding of the relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being. Figure 1 shows this mediation model.

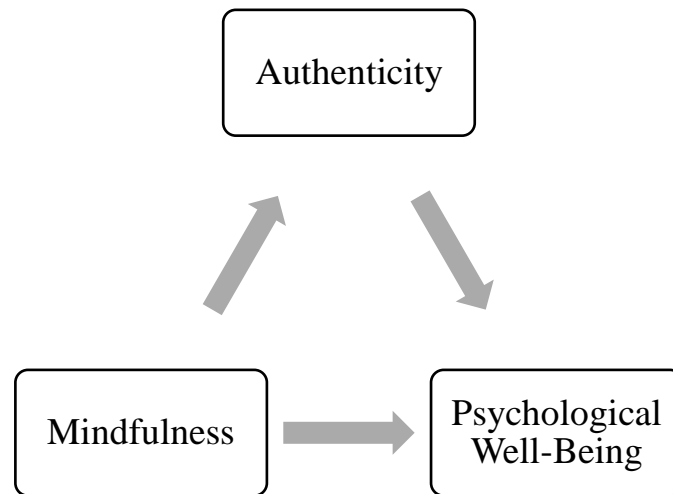


Figure 1. Mediation Model

A linear regression analysis was used to determine the relationships between MAAS mindfulness and psychological well-being. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is .24. The Beta value ($\beta = .49$) of MAAS is positive and significant on psychological well-being. Therefore, an individual's level of mindfulness predicts changes on psychological well-being. Then a multiple regression was carried out to determine the relationship between MAAS and psychological well-being, mediated by authenticity. From the result, the coefficient of determination (R^2) increased from .24 to .51. The change in R^2 is significant, indicating that the inclusion of the mediator variable authenticity had significantly improved the explanatory power of mindfulness on psychological well-being. The relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being is significant. The Beta value of MAAS is higher (Before: $\beta = .49$, $p < .01$; After: $\beta = .15$, $p < .05$) before (see Table 3.) inclusion of authenticity as the mediator. Authenticity is therefore considered to be a partial mediator, as the beta value of MAAS has

reduced after inclusion of authenticity but remained statistically significant. Table 3 shows the β coefficients and the R^2 change for this mediation analysis.

Table 3. Regression analysis to test for the mediating effect of authenticity on the association between MAAS and psychological well-being.

Mode		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	95% CI for β		R^2 Δ change
		B	SE	β		Lower	Upper	
1	(Constant)	2.95	.22		13.27	2.51	3.38	
	MAAS	.39	.05	.49**	7.15	.28	.49	.24**
2	(Constant)	2.12	.20		11.02	1.78	2.56	
	MAAS	.12	.05	.15*	2.33	.02	.22	.51**
	AS	.36	.04	.62**	9.42**	.29	.44	

Note: MAAS = Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale; AS = The Authenticity Scale; PWBS = Psychological Well-Being Scale; SE = standard error; CI = confidence interval.

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

Cultural Differences

Further statistical analysis was performed to consider if the MAAS, AS and PWBS mean scores of the Chinese and White British students were statistically significantly different. The findings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. t-test results of scores of all measures of Chinese and White British students

Dependent Variable	Ethnicity	N	Mean	SD	t
MAAS	White British	51	4.11	.76	1.16
	Chinese	43	3.93	.67	
AS	White British	51	5.20	.93	2.37*
	Chinese	43	4.77	.84	
S-Alienation	White British	51	5.63	1.48	2.56*
	Chinese	43	4.92	1.15	

AL	White British	51	5.39	1.03	1.18
	Chinese	43	5.15	.95	
AEI	White British	51	4.59	1.37	1.32
	Chinese	43	4.23	1.22	
PWBS	White British	51	4.58	.60	2.41*
	Chinese	43	4.30	.52	
Autonomy	White British	51	4.22	.83	2.35*
	Chinese	43	3.83	.78	
EM	White British	51	4.24	1.02	.83
	Chinese	43	4.08	.78	
PG	White British	51	5.22	.72	1.83
	Chinese	43	5.00	.66	
PRWO	White British	51	4.73	.97	1.96
	Chinese	43	4.35	.88	
PIL	White British	51	4.76	.79	2.67**
	Chinese	43	4.32	.82	
S-Acceptance	White British	51	4.34	1.13	.28
	Chinese	43	4.28	.93	

Note: MAAS = Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale; AS = The Authenticity Scale; S-Alienation = Self-Alienation; AL = Authentic Living; AEI = Accepting External Influence; PWBS = Psychological Well-Being Scale; EM = Environmental Mastery; PG = Personal Growth; PRWO = Positive Relations with Others; PIL = Purpose in Life; S-Acceptance = Self-Acceptance; SD = Standard deviation.

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

According to the results of Table 3, White British ($M = 4.11$, $SD = .76$) and Chinese ($M = 3.93$, $SD = .67$) did not differ significantly on levels of MAAS, $t(92) = 1.16$, $p = .25$; White British ($M = 5.20$, $SD = .93$) reported significantly higher levels of authenticity than Chinese ($M = 4.77$, $SD = .84$), $t(92) = 2.37$, $p < .05$; White British ($M = 4.58$, $SD = .60$) reported significantly higher levels of psychological well-being than Chinese ($M = 4.30$, $SD = .52$), $t(92) = 2.41$, $p < .05$. Interestingly, White British ($M = 5.63$, $SD = 1.48$) and Chinese ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 1.15$) are only significantly different on self-alienation ($t(92) = 2.56$, $p < .05$) but not on authentic living ($t(92) = 1.18$, $p = .24$) and accepting external influence ($t(92) = 1.32$, $p = .19$). And White British and Chinese are significantly different on autonomy ($t(92) =$

2.35, $p < .05$) and purpose in life ($t(92) = 2.67, p < .01$), but not on self-acceptance ($t(92) = .28, p = .78$).

Mediation Analyses

To examine the mediating effects of authenticity on the association between mindfulness and psychological well-being in the samples of White British and Chinese students, two multiple regressions were carried out to determine if the mediation model can be applied the same for these two sample groups.

Table 5. Regression analysis to test for the mediating effect of authenticity on the association between mindfulness and psychological well-being in the sample of White British.

Mode		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	95% CI for β		R ² Δ change
		B	SE	β		Lower	Upper	
1	(Constant)	2.66	.38		6.99	1.90	3.43	
	MAAS	.47	.09	.59**	5.14	.29	.65	.35**
2	(Constant)	1.90	.37		5.15	1.16	2.64	
	MAAS	.21	.10	.26*	2.12	.01	.40	.54**
	AS	.35	.08	.54**	4.40**	.19	.52	

Note: MAAS = Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale; AS = The Authenticity Scale; PWBS = Psychological Well-Being Scale; SE = standard error; CI = confidence interval.

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

For the sample of White British students (see Table 5.), authenticity is still a partial mediator on the association between MAAS and psychological well-being. The Beta value of mindfulness dropped from .59 ($p < .01$) to .26 ($p < .05$) after inclusion of authenticity as mediator, but it is still statistically significant. This is consistent with the result of regression analysis for the total sample. Interestingly, for the sample of Chinese students (see Table 6.),

authenticity is a full mediator on the association between MAAS and psychological well-being. Because the association between MAAS and psychological well-being completely disappears (Before: $\beta = .45, p < .01$ After: $\beta = .15, p = .28$) after inclusion of authenticity as the mediator.

Table 6. Regression analysis to test for the mediating effect of authenticity on the association between mindfulness and psychological well-being in the sample of Chinese.

Mode		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	95% CI for β		$R^2 \Delta$ change
		B	SE	β		Lower	Upper	
1	(Constant)	2.92	.43		6.81	2.06	3.79	
	MAAS	.35	.11	.45**	3.27	.13	.57	.21**
2	(Constant)	2.07	.40		5.16	1.26	2.88	
	MAAS	.11	.10	.15	1.10	-.09	.32	.47**
	AS	.38	.08	.60**	4.51**	.21	.54	

Note: MAAS = Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale; AS = The Authenticity Scale; PWBS = Psychological Well-Being Scale; SE = standard error; CI = confidence interval.

** $p < .01$

Correlation Analyses

Finally, correlation analyses were carried out to determine if the relationship of measures was the same for the samples of White British and Chinese students.

Table 7. Pearson correlation between AS, MAAS and PWB in the sample of British (N = 51).

	MAAS	SA	AL	AEI	AS	PWB
MAAS	-					
SA	.54**	-				
AL	.09	.18	-			
AEI	.60**	.45**	.11	-		
AS	.61**	.82**	.52**	.77**	-	
PWB	.59**	.60**	.41**	.48**	.70**	-

Note: MAAS = Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale; AS = The Authenticity Scale; SA = Self-Alienation; AL = Authentic Living; AEI = Accepting External Influence; PWB = Psychological Well-Being.

** $p < .01$

Table 7 shows that, for the sample of White British, there was no significant correlations between authentic living and MAAS ($r = .09, p = .54$), authentic living and self-alienation ($r = .18, p = .21$), authentic living and accepting external influence ($r = .11, p = .43$). Table 8 shows that, for the sample of Chinese, except of the correlation between authentic living and MAAS ($r = .24, p = .12$), other measures are positively correlated with each other.

Table 8. Pearson correlation between AS, MAAS and PWB in the sample of Chinese ($N = 43$).

	MAAS	SA	AL	AEI	AS	PWB
MAAS	-					
SA	.52**	-				
AL	.24	.32*	-			
AEI	.37*	.32*	.42**	-		
AS	.51**	.73**	.73**	.79**	-	
PWB	.45**	.43**	.54**	.56**	.68**	-

Note: MAAS = Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale; AS = The Authenticity Scale; SA = Self-Alienation; AL = Authentic Living; AEI = Accepting External Influence; PWB = Psychological Well-Being.

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

Discussion

This study was designed to test a model in which mindfulness predicts psychological well-being because it fosters authenticity. Correlational analysis indicated that mindfulness was positively related to authenticity and psychological well-being. These results are consistent with previously reported relationships between mindfulness and psychological well-being (Baer, Smith, & Allen, 2004; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Hollis-Walker & Colosimo,

2011), authenticity and psychological well-being (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis & Joseph, 2008), mindfulness and authenticity (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Heppner & Kernis, 2007).

The mediation model has been shown in that authenticity partially mediated the association between mindfulness and psychological well-being. This is to say, people with higher levels of both mindfulness and authenticity tend to have higher psychological well-being rather than when people are lower in either mindfulness or authenticity. This finding supports Joseph, Murphy and Patterson's (2016) statement that person-centred therapy shares aspects of being a form of mindful therapy. Person-centred therapy was developed as a form of psychotherapy by Carl Rogers in the 1940s, a generally agreed upon definition has formed in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Person-centred therapy emphasizes therapeutic attitudes, such as congruence, empathy and unconditional positive regard. When a person-centred therapist experiences these relationship conditions, they are being mindful to the client's experiences and in turn the client gradually changes their own attitudes towards their experiences; as a result, the client is able to be more aware of the incongruence between their organismic valuing process and self-concept, indeed the client becomes more authentic, increasing in their mindful disposition and becoming mentally healthier.

In this study, the results showed that the White British students' self-alienation, authenticity total score, autonomy, purpose in life and psychological well-being total score were statistically significantly higher than the scores of Chinese students. But, their scores of authentic living, accepting external influence, mindfulness, self-acceptance, environmental mastery, positive relations with others and personal growth were not statistically significantly different. This suggests that White British students were more likely to be aware of their

actual physiological states, emotions, deep level cognitions, compared to Chinese students. Because Western culture motivates individuals to find and affirm positive attributes to the self, 'self-regard' is more easily internalised as a condition of worth, that is, Western students might feel more worthy of positive regard if they feel positively self-regarding. However, Eastern Asian cultures emphasize commitments to social roles, social obligations, and readiness to respond to social expectations (Morling, Kitayama & Miyamoto, 2002). In addition, self-criticism is thought to be an important way to improve skills in Eastern Asian culture, which is more acceptable in the Eastern Asian context than in the Western context (Heine et al., 2001). In other words, Eastern Asian students are less motivated to find and affirm positive attributes to the self. Therefore, compared to Western students, Eastern Asian students are more likely to feel alienated from themselves. Interestingly, there was not significant differences in self-acceptance between White British and Chinese students.

There was not a statistically significant difference in mindfulness between White British and Chinese students. As mentioned earlier, individual differences in qualities of mindfulness depends on the qualities of attitude towards one's experiences. Therefore, the qualities of attitude towards self-experiences that White British and Chinese students held were similar. In effect, Western and Eastern Asian cultures advocate different models of moral virtue, suggesting individuals are impacted by different types of conditions of worth throughout socialisation periods. For both Western and Eastern Asian individuals, they have been taught that some experiences are more worth having compared to others. Therefore, they can't hold mindful attitudes ('non-judgemental', 'non-response', 'curiosity', 'openness' and 'acceptance') towards some of their experiences, their self-concepts disturb the way they

receive information from the organism, which might lead to lower self-regulated attention.

These results are consistent with those that have previously reported no cultural difference in mindfulness between American and Thai students (Christopher, Charoensuk, Gilbert, Neary and Pearce, 2009). However, this conflicts with another cross-cultural study that found there was a significant difference in mindfulness between American and Turkish students (Özyeşil, 2012). Different cultures may lead to differing impacts in mindfulness, cross-cultural study is important for understanding the development of mindfulness.

In this study we also re-tested the mediation model for White British and Chinese students separately. Interestingly, for the sample of Chinese students, authenticity became a full mediator on the association between MAAS and psychological well-being, but authenticity remained a partial mediator for the sample of White British students. This suggests that authenticity played an even more important role on the association between mindfulness and psychological well-being in the Chinese sample.

White British and Chinese modes of socialization may result in different trajectories and somewhat different contexts for the development of both dispositional mindfulness and authenticity. Western culture encourages self-regard, individuals tend to show more interest on themselves, which leads to a lower self-alienation, therefore a certain degree of implicit ‘authenticity’ seems to be built into the Western socialization process, such that an individual may still show higher levels of authenticity while still not necessarily demonstrating mindful attitudes towards self-experience.

In contrast, Chinese socialization process encourages self-criticism, and actively discourages Rogerian-style dispositional authenticity. Chinese people tend to show more

interest on group, rather than themselves, and without the condition of self-regard, which leads to lower authenticity and psychological well-being. Rogerian-style dispositional authenticity and psychological well-being may be likely only to emerge when, through mindfulness, the person has achieved some degree of autonomy from implicit, automatic socialization pressure and processes.

All the socialization process is also the process of introjection of condition of worth, they may differ in the content, if it is condition, no matter it encourages individual to regard oneself and be authentic or not to do so, they are just same in hindering people to accept themselves completely and live in an authentic way.

Implications for Practice

These findings offer some justification for the importance of developing mindful attitudes in counselling practice. These are perhaps linked to concepts such as the non-directive approach and unconditional positive regard in person-centred experiential psychotherapy. This study implies that ‘cross-cultural counselling’ would be an effective way to help clients to become more aware of the culturally bound nature of their own values and worldviews. It is not important what kind of concept of self-worth a culture advocates, distinguishing ‘good’ or ‘bad’ doesn’t really help individuals to become better people. Whatever conditions of worth the client introjects, to trust the client’s ability to find their own answer and direction, rather than telling them what is right and wrong would be preferable to developing authenticity. The person-centred experiential psychotherapist experiences core conditions as the way to be mindful with client’s experiences, the client becomes more

mindful as they are changing the attitudes towards their own experiences. As the client is developing a stronger conscious awareness, the incongruence between organismic valuing process and self-concept would be sensed and eventually decrease, which in turn leads to greater psychological well-being.

Conclusion

In this study we have confirmed that authenticity partially mediated the association between mindfulness and psychological well-being in the total and White British sample but completely mediated the relationship in the Chinese sample. The importance of the role authenticity plays on this association varies among ethnicities. Further work is required to understand the relationship between unconditional positive self-regard, mindfulness, authenticity and psychological well-being.

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