# Newcomers' Acculturation and Adaptation into Canada: The Role of Hope

Presented By:

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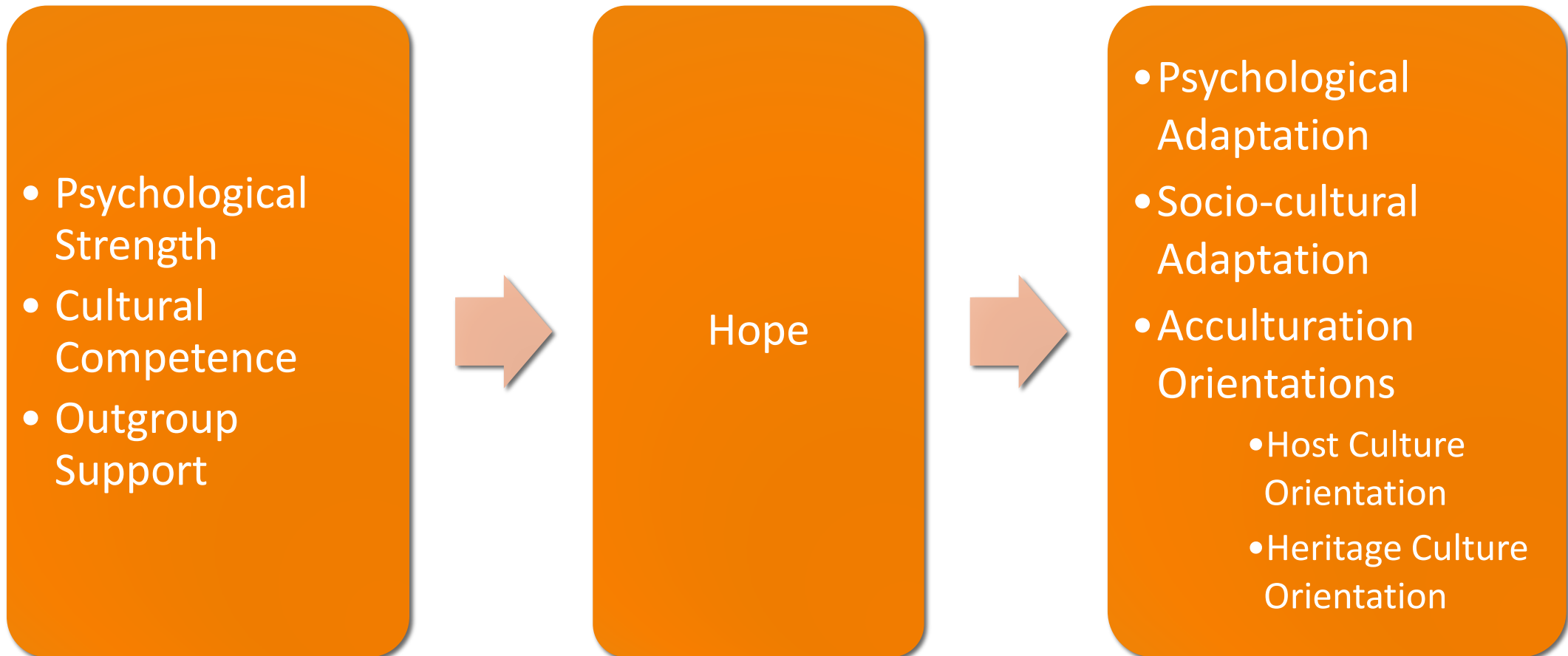
# Psychological Research on Immigrants

- Deficit model perspective (Cobb et al., 2019)
  - Focusing on pathological outcomes of immigration

- Challenges of adaptation are well-established (e.g., Chemin et al., 2018; Hynie, 2018; Simich et al., 2012)

# Positive Psychological Perspective on Immigration



- The perception that immigrants are at higher risk (Cobb et al., 2019)

- Positive psychological perspective on immigration-based research?

# Current Study

**Psychological Strength · Cultural Competence · Outgroup Support**

→

**Hope**

→

**Psychological Adaptation · Socio-cultural Adaptation · Acculturation Orientations**
- Host Culture Orientation
- Heritage Culture Orientation

# Key Concepts

- ## Psychological strength
  - Consisting of personal growth, self-acceptance, autonomy, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and positive relations with others (Ryff & Singer, 2006, 2008)

- ## Cultural competence
  - Communication abilities in host society's language and having cultural knowledge of host society (Lay & Nguyen, 1998)

- ## Outgroup support
  - Perceived support received from larger society friends (Zimet et al., 1988)

- ## Hope
  - "A positive motivational state derived from the sense of successful agency (goal-directed determination) and pathways (planning to meet goals)" (Snyder et al., 1991, p.287)

# Key Concepts (Cont.)

- ## Psychological adaptation

  - Feeling comfortable and happy with respect to being in the new culture (Demes & Geeraert, 2014)

- ## Socio-cultural adaptation

  - Practical and behavioral aspects of adapting to a new culture (Demes & Geeraert, 2014)

- ## Host culture orientation

  - Preference for host culture across a number of areas, such as friendship, traditions, and characteristics (Demes & Geeraert, 2014)

- ## Heritage culture orientation

  - Preference for home culture across a number of areas, such as friendship, traditions, and characteristics (Demes & Geeraert, 2014)

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# Literature Review

- Psychological strength ➡ Resilience, focusing on positive life events, optimism, and adaptive coping (Garcia & Siddiqui, 2009; Gloria et al., 2009; Landa et al., 2011; Sagone & De Caroli, 2014)

- Psychological strength ➡ Less psychological distress and fewer physical symptoms (Safdar et al., 2021)

- Outgroup support ➡ Sense of community, life satisfaction, less psychological distress (Hombrados-Mendieta et al., 2019; Safdar et al., 2021)

# Literature Review

- Proficiency in host society's language ➡ Better mental health and life satisfaction (Lee at al., 2021)

- Cultural competence ➡ fewer depressive symptoms, less psychological distress and physical symptoms (Oppedal et al., 2020; Safdar et al., 2021)

- Psychological strength, outgroup support, and cultural competence ➡ Hope?

# Literature Review

- Hope ➜ Goal-directed in life (Snyder et al., 1991)

- Hope ➜ Better social relations, social competence, perceived support (Barnum et al., 1998; Snyder et al., 1997; Sympson, 1999)

- Hope ➜ Setting goals in host society (e.g., employment)

- Hope ➜ Drawing resources from heritage culture

# Literature Review

- Hope ➜ High levels of self-worth, positive affect, optimism, life satisfaction, positive interaction (Bailey & Snyder, 2010; Bailey et al., 2007; Snyder et al., 2002)

- Hope ➜ Establishing meaningful goals and acting on these goals (Snyder, 2000)

# Hypotheses
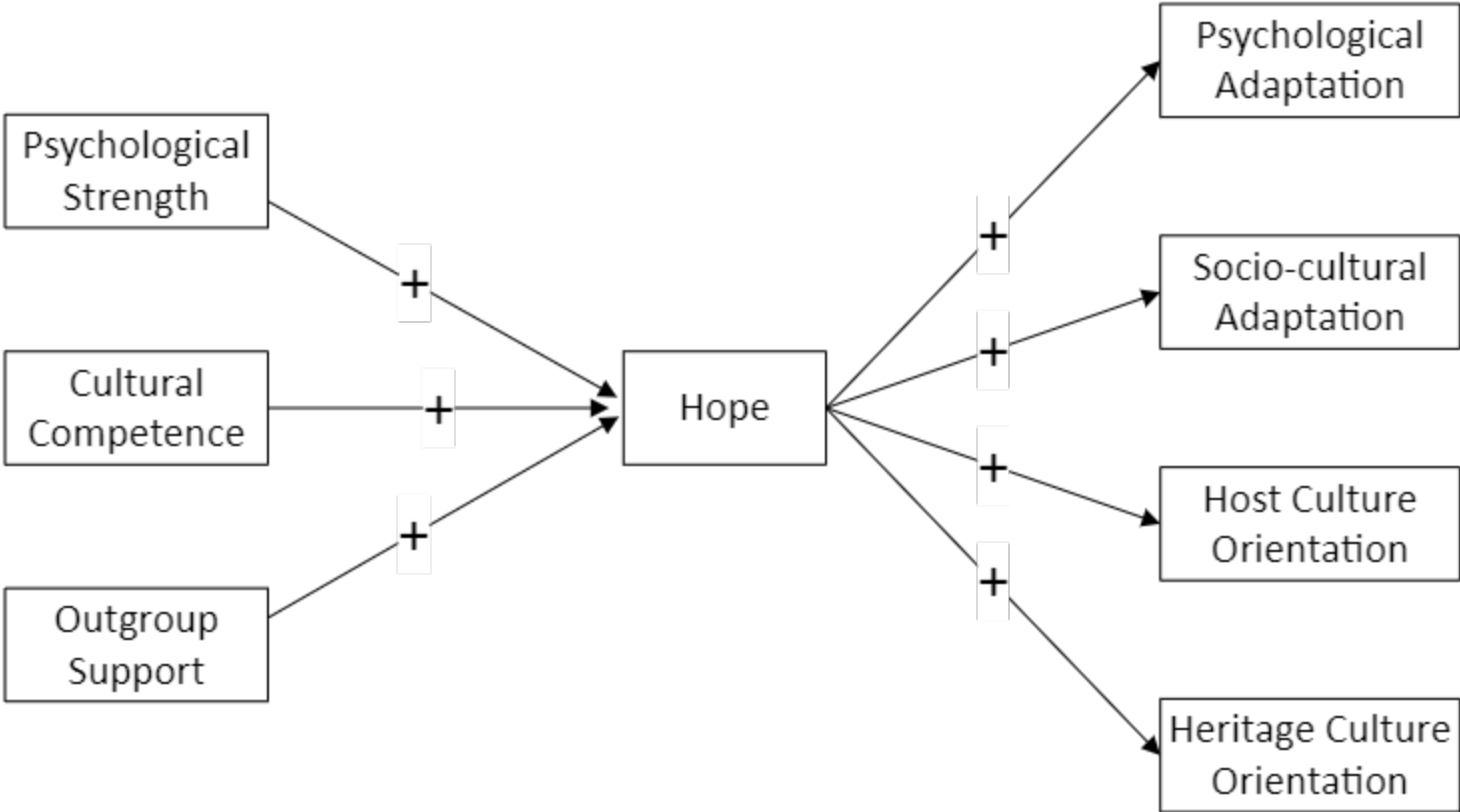
# Method

- Online data collection

- 134 Newcomers ($M_{age} = 36.29; SD = 9.45$)

- 67.9% Women

- 47.7% Muslim; 53.4% University degree

# Measures

- **Psychological Strength.** 18 items (Ryff & Singer, 1996)
  - *"In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live"*

- **Cultural Competence.** 11 items adapted from Lay and Nguyen's scale (1998).
  - *"I am able to understand jokes and idioms in the host country's language"*

- **Outgroup Social Support.** 3 items taken from Multi-dimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet et al., 1988)
  - *"I have Canadian friends who would help me when I want help"*

- **Hope.** 12 items (Snyder et al., 1991)
  - *"I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me"*

# Measures (Cont.)

- **Acculturation Orientations.** 8 items based on Demes and Geeraert's (2014) Brief Acculturation Orientation Scale

  - *"It is important for me to take part in home/host country traditions"*

- **Psychological Adaptation.** 8 items based on Demes & Geeraert's (2014) Brief Psychological Adaptation Scale

  - *"How often have you felt excited about being in Canada?"*

- **Socio-cultural Adaptation.** 12 items based on Demes & Geeraert's (2014) Brief Socio-cultural Adaptation Scale

  - *"How easy or difficult do you think it is for you to adapt to social norms (how to behave in public, style of clothes, what people think is funny)?"*

# Evidence for Mediation
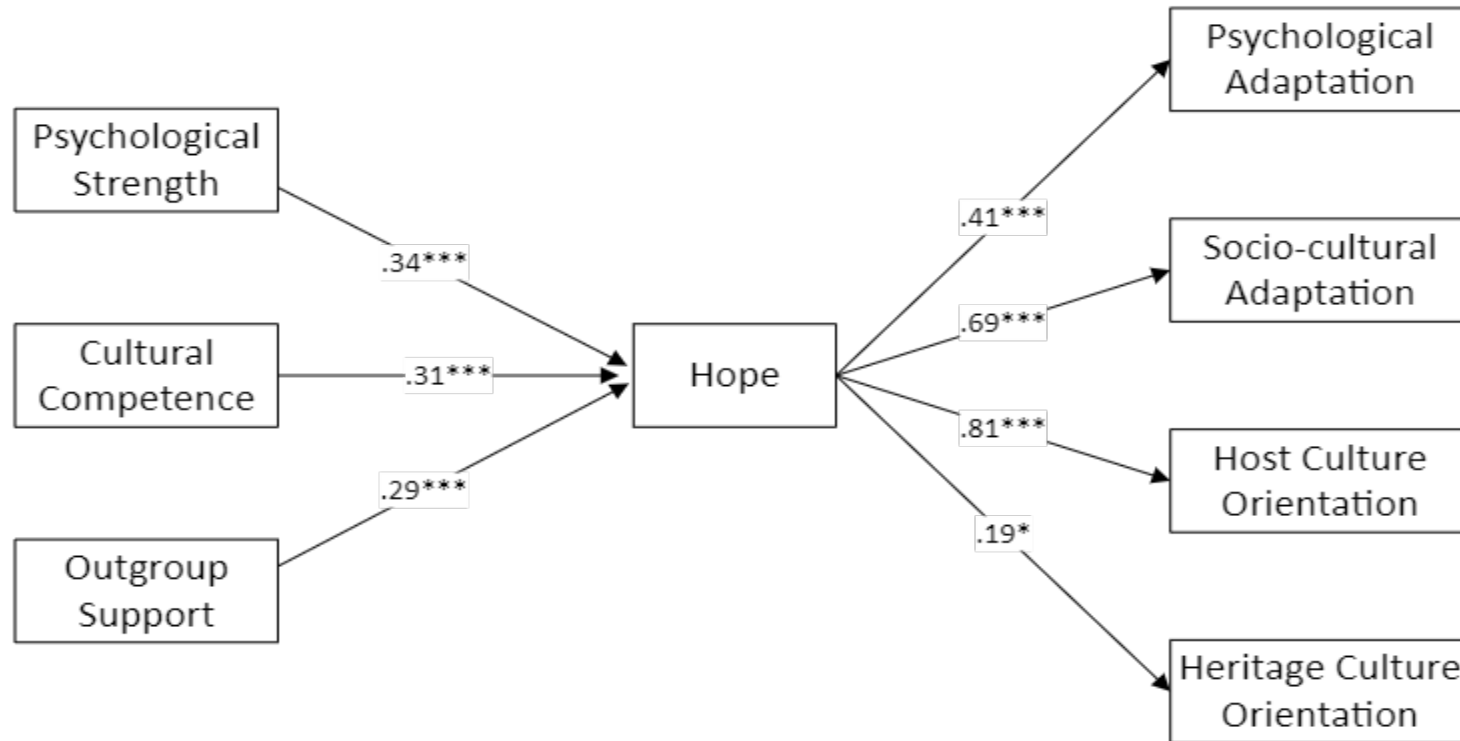


All indirect paths were significant except for the indirect effect of outgroup support on heritage culture orientation

$p* < .05$, $p** < .01$, $p*** < .001$

# Discussion

- Hope as an underlying mechanism

- Hope-based interventions

- Issue of directionality
  - Longitudinal studies

- Investigating use of character strengths in new society

- Building positive connections

# Thank You!

Collaborators,

- Saba Safdar, PhD
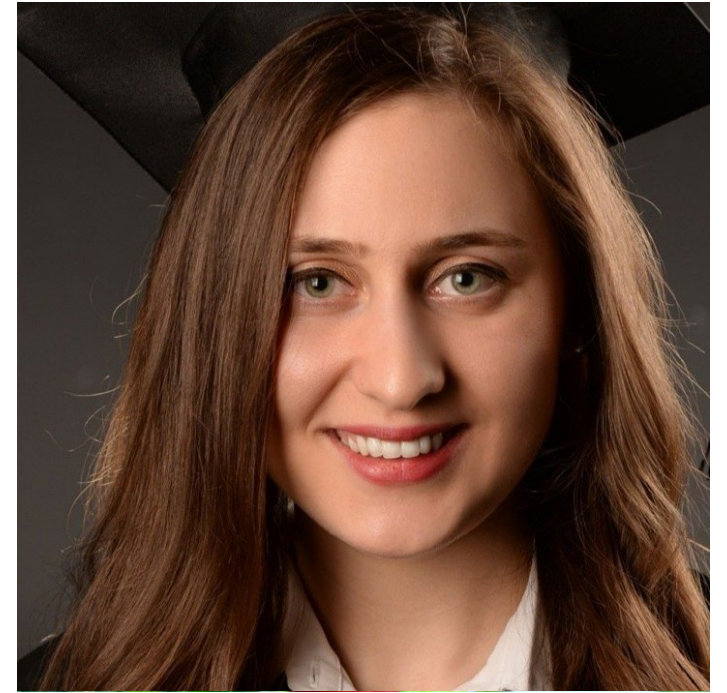- Saghar Chahar Mahali, MA

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