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Identity as a key factor in the acculturation of young Moroccan-Dutch adults

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Many young Moroccan-Dutch in transition within the Dutch society face acculturation challenges and have limited social resources. We examined how different access to social capital (supportive networks among family, friends, and neighbourhood) and social identity of Moroccan-Dutch students (N = 172) aged 17 to 33 years are associated with their acculturation outcomes. A path analysis showed that those with a stronger Moroccan-Islamic identity had more negative outcomes and less contact with mainstream Dutch. Co-ethnic support was related negatively to mainstream identity, but positively to co-ethnic ties and perceived exclusion problems in contact with Dutch. Conversely, Dutch support was negatively associated with ethnic identity and exclusion, but positively with Dutch ties and well-being. Participants had an orientation on either the Dutch or Moroccan culture. We conclude that young Moroccan-Dutch do not pursue integration (combining two cultures), and that those who adjust well, have more supportive Dutch and social networks, feel and do much better in the Dutch society than those who separate.

Keywords: acculturation, Moroccan-Dutch, social capital, identity, adjustment, integration

Introduction

The Netherlands is a leading emigration destination for North Africans and since the 1960s, the first waves of unskilled labourers arrived seeking employment. Around 250 000 Moroccans have made the Netherlands their home over the past 50 years (De Haas, 2005; Statistics Netherlands, 2016). However, the unemployment rate is twice as high among Moroccan-Dutch as among Dutch mainstreamers (i.e., the vast majority of indigenous Dutch) (Andriessen, Nievers, Dagevos, & Faulk, 2012). At the same time the Moroccan-Dutch community also hosts many individuals who are successful in the Dutch society (Azghari, Hooghiemstra, & Van de Vijver, 2015). A majority of nearly 386 000 Moroccan-Dutch, who are born in the Netherlands or were at most 6 years of age upon their arrival, has a disadvantaged socioeconomic position (Statistics Netherlands, 2016) and lower access to the Dutch labour market (De Boom, Van Wensveen, Hermus, Weltevrede, & Van San, 2014). This is despite the fact that young Moroccan-Dutch are more visible than their parents in public domains (e.g., media) and exceed their parents in education and mastery of the Dutch language. Employment participation is essential to social identity with host culture in that it is positively related to ties with majority Dutch (De Vroome & Van Tubergen, 2010). To shed light on these very positive and negative outcomes we investigate to what extent their social resources from and identity orientation toward either the mainstream or co-ethnic community relate to success and failure in their adjustment.

We view identity as a mediator between family and community level resources as antecedents and acculturation outcomes (see Figure 1 for our preliminary explanatory model). On the basis of this model we seek to answer two related questions: (i) How do young Moroccan-Dutch with more co-ethnic support differ in identity and outcomes compared to co-ethnics with more Dutch support; and (ii) What role neighbourhood plays in their identification and outcomes? We also propose related hypotheses (see Table 1) that are tested in a path analysis as discussed below.

We examined how resources of young Moroccan-Dutch (supportive networks among family, friends, and neighbourhood) relate to their outcomes (well-being, exclusion, and social participation in co-ethnic/mainstream community). More specifically, we study their psychological (well-being, exclusion) and their sociocultural (social participation with co-ethnics or mainstreamers) adjustment as outcomes. We focus on two dimensions of participation: social network, and social support (Eurostat, 2010). Social networks refer to with whom people interact, and supportive networks consist of people others rely on for support. Social support is defined as the degree to which a person’s basic needs, such as affection, esteem, approval, belonging, and identity, are met through interactions with others (Thoits, 1995).

Identity

Our research focus is on the mediator between social resources and outcomes: the social identity of young Moroccan-Dutch. Thus, we are interested in how they value the social groups to which they belong (Tajfel, 2010). This social context is crucial for ethnic identity formation and plays a significant role in acculturation outcomes (Dimitrova, Chasiotis, Bender, & Van de Vijver, 2014a, 2014b, see also Zonneveld, Brand, & Adams in this issue). Ethnic identity relates positively to well-being and self-esteem (Smith & Silva, 2011).

We see religious identity as a subcomponent of social identity; in our previous study we concluded that young Moroccan-Dutch — though their Dutch language is dominant — expressed their pride of being...
Identity of young Moroccan-Dutch

Moroccan, felt strongly attached to Islam, and showed low participation to the Dutch society (Azghari et al., 2015). A negative association between assimilation and evaluation of Moroccans was reported elsewhere (Badea, Er-rafiy, Chekroun, Légal, & Gosling, 2015). Therefore, we expected that the ethnic identity and participation in mainstream community would be negatively related. Moreover, we predicted that Moroccan-Dutch with a pronounced ethnic identity would show more participation with co-ethnics and more well-being. However, they will show less social participation in the Dutch society and more exclusion (Hypothesis 1a; Hypothesis 1 refers to links between mediators and outcomes). In contrast, co-ethnics with a mainstream identity, who are more oriented to mainstream Dutch, would show the opposite outcomes: low well-being, but higher social participation in the Dutch community and less exclusion (Hypothesis 1b).

Social capital resources
To understand the relationships between the resources of young Moroccan-Dutch and their identity and outcomes, such as their social participation in the Dutch society, we use social capital theory (Lancee, 2012). Social capital is based on ‘who you know’ (Luthans, Luthans, & Luthans, 2004). As defined by Putnam (2000), social capital refers to “connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (p. 19). Social capital and social resources are

Table 1. Results of tested hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Mediator &amp; outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 1a.</strong> Orientation to co-ethnics relates positively to well-being and social participation in the co-ethnic community but negatively to social participation in the Dutch community and more exclusion</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 1b.</strong> Orientation to mainstream Dutch relates negatively to well-being and social participation in the co-ethnic participation but positively to social participation in the Dutch community and less exclusion</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 1c.</strong> Orientation to the family relates positively to well-being and to social participation in co-ethnic community but to the Dutch community</td>
<td>+ *</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 1d:</strong> Integration of young Moroccan-Dutch gives the best outcomes.</td>
<td>-</td>
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<th>2. Antecedents &amp; mediator</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 2a.</strong> Supportive networks of young Moroccan-Dutch among co-ethnics associate positively to their ethnic identity.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 2b.</strong> Supportive networks of young Moroccan-Dutch among Dutch associate positively to their mainstream Dutch identity.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 2c.</strong> Supportive networks of young Moroccan-Dutch among family associate positively to their family identity.</td>
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<th>3. Antecedents, ties &amp; outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 3a.</strong> Young Moroccan-Dutch who live in an ethnically diverse and poor neighbourhood have more bonding ties and show low participation in the mainstream Dutch community.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 3b.</strong> When due to exclusion the social network of young Moroccan-Dutch is limited to co-ethnics their bonding social capital, which is based on co-ethnic or family social support and living in an ethnically diverse and poor neighbourhood, is higher compared to their bridging social capital, which is based on Dutch support and living in a more affluent Dutch homogeneous neighbourhood</td>
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</table>

Note. Confirmed (+), rejected (–), * = Indirectly, via ethnic identity.
closely related (Levasseur, Richard, Gauvin, & Raymond, 2010); people use social capital as a resource to achieve their goals. It is higher when individuals know more people with the same outlook (Field, 2010). We are interested in two aspects (Helliwell & Putnam, 2004) that are relevant for our target group: social capital as derived from social support and neighbourhood characteristics (socioeconomic status and ethnic diversity of the residential area).

In the social capital literature a distinction is made between people’s within-group connections (bonding) and between-group connections (bridging) (Putnam, 2007). The connection between social capital and identity lies in the nature and strength of bonding and bridging ties. We expect that young Moroccan-Dutch with stronger bonding ties and ethnic identity rely more on co-ethnic supportive networks (Hypothesis 2a; Hypothesis 2 refers to links between antecedents and mediatrors). In contrast, we hypothesise that co-ethnic peers with more bridging ties, who are oriented to the Dutch culture, rely more on Dutch supportive networks (Hypothesis 2b). Regarding the links between antecedents, ties, and outcomes (Hypothesis 3), we expect that living in an ethnically diverse and poor neighbourhood relates positively to bonding ties (co-ethnics) but negatively to social participation in the Dutch community (Hypothesis 3a; Hypothesis 3 refers to links between antecedents and outcomes).

To understand the bridging and bonding processes, we explain how the social context of Moroccan-Dutch relates to their acculturation orientations. Therefore we explored their ties with family, co-ethnics, mainsteamers, as well as experiences and attitudes in contact with mainstream Dutch.

**Acculturation**

More appreciation of family among Moroccan-Dutch is associated with more positive acculturation outcomes and positive attitudes towards both ethnic and host culture (Ait Ouarasse & Van de Vijver, 2004). Therefore, we expected that family support would be related positively not just to family identity (Hypothesis 2c), but also to social participation in both their ethnic and mainstream communities and well-being (Hypothesis 1c).

The orientation of Moroccan-Dutch towards the Dutch community is linked to their sociocultural outcomes, such as school performance. Their orientation towards the Moroccan-Islamic culture is related positively to ties with co-ethnics, such as having Moroccan-Dutch friends. We use Berry’s (2005) model of acculturation to understand how different orientations in mainstream society relate to variation in outcomes and ethnic identity. It has been demonstrated that a combined orientation on ethnic and mainstream communities correlates positively with psychological adaptation (which refers to well-being and good mental health) and gives the best results for psychological well-being and participation (Berry, 2005). This integration, which requires good ties with both co-ethnics and mainstream Dutch, is for many Moroccan-Dutch a challenge (Stevens, Pels, Vollebergh, & Crijnen, 2004). That challenge is due to the negative experiences they perceive in their interactions with Dutch, such as prejudice and discrimination (Jikel, 2012), which has made their ethnic identity salient, in particular their Islamic and Moroccan culture (e.g., Slootman, 2014). However, the idea that integration is associated with the best acculturation outcomes constitutes a good working hypothesis that has found support elsewhere; therefore, we tested whether the hypothesis that integration gives the best outcomes also applies to young Moroccan-Dutch (Hypothesis 1d).

**Outcomes**

In this section we introduce the examined outcomes of our target group: psychological adjustment (well-being, exclusion) and sociocultural adjustment (social participation with co-ethnics or mainsteamers).

**Well-being**

A stronger ethnic identity, which according to our model associates with more bonding with co-ethnics (see hypothesis 1a), is assumed to be beneficial for psychological outcomes, whereas a stronger mainstream identity, which associates with bridging with mainstreamers (see hypothesis 1b), is assumed to be beneficial for sociocultural outcomes in the mainstream context (Ward, 2001). To examine the positive outcomes of young Moroccan-Dutch we used self-esteem and life satisfaction as two indicators of psychological well-being (Berry, 2005). Self-esteem is defined as feelings of self-worth (Rosenberg, Schoeler, Schoenbach, & Rosenberg, 1995). Self-esteem is what people experience when evaluating different things about themselves, such as their social status, ethnic group, school achievement, or job (Heatherton & Wyland, 2003). Satisfaction with life is a result of evaluating various life domains; such as work, family, and health (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). Self-esteem is positively associated with psychological well-being (Rosenberg et al., 1995). People with high self-esteem feel more satisfied with their lives (Diener & Diener, 2009).

**Exclusion**

Moroccan-Dutch have long been one of the most rejected, non-western minority groups in the Netherlands (Hagendoorn & Hraba, 1989). Additionally, rejection by the host society is related to acculturation orientations (Badea et al., 2015). Feelings of being excluded strengthened the ethnic identity of young Moroccan-Dutch and their co-ethnic networks. This identification with the in-group can be seen as a response to threats they feel from the out-group (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002).

Recent research has shown that Moroccan-Dutch suffer from stereotypes by the Dutch (Azghari et al., 2015). When this leads to ethnic discrimination or exclusion, it is assumed to be negatively associated with their psychological well-being; notably their self-esteem (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999).

**Social participation**

For immigrants having work in the Dutch society – especially where intercultural relations are possible – is positively associated with interactions with majority Dutch, which enhances their social participation (De...
We assume that positive experiences of young Moroccan-Dutch, such as access to important social resources (e.g., supportive networks) and successful participation in the Dutch society, are associated with positive outcomes (e.g., self-esteem). Conversely, negative experiences, such as obstacles (e.g., discrimination) that jeopardise their social participation in the Dutch community relate to negative outcomes (e.g., low participation). In acculturation studies both outcomes show relationships with attachment to their family, co-ethnics, or mainstreamers. When due to exclusion problems their social network is limited to co-ethnics, we expect that their bonding social capital, which is based on co-ethnic or family social support and living in an ethnically diverse and poor neighbourhood, is higher compared to their bridging social capital, which is based on Dutch support and living in a more affluent Dutch homogeneous neighbourhood (Hypothesis 3b). Social participation is positive for life satisfaction and happiness (Eurostat, 2010) and support from family and friends relates positively to psychological well-being (Thoits, 1995).

**Method**

**Participants**

The sample comprised Moroccan-Dutch university students ($N = 172$; 68 men; age: $M = 23.61$ years, $SD = 3.88$). Participants lived in different parts of the Netherlands and one female reported to study in Stellenbosch (South Africa). Only eight of them were not born in the Netherlands and emigrated as a child from Morocco. With regard to the birthplace of their parents, all were married with a partner born in Morocco, but two mothers were born in Spain and one in Algeria; one father was born in Spain and another one in Algeria. Table 2 gives an overview of the students regarding gender, age, and how many participants lived in one of the 22 largest Dutch cities where two-thirds of all Moroccan-Dutch live (De Boom et al., 2014), with the most having roots in the Rif region in Morocco where people speak often Tarifit, a Berber language.

**Procedure**

Data was collected between February and May 2015 by mailing a request to 596 Moroccan-Dutch students between the age of 17 and 33 years of age, using Qualtrics, to seek their approval (and the permission of the parents if under 18 years of age). The mail specified that participation would take place on a voluntary and anonymous basis by filling in the online questionnaire that took 20 minutes. All agreed to cooperate via the consent letter, in line with ethical demands and clearance procedures within the Tilburg School of Humanities. Purposive sampling using snowballing and social media (e.g., WhatsApp) was used for recruitment.

**Measures**

We used a structured self-completion questionnaire to administer perceived social capital, social identity, and well-being measures. The instruments were in the Dutch language. All items were answered on a 5-point Likert scale ($1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree$) except for satisfaction with Life items where we used a 7-point scale ($1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree$). For behaviour items we used a 5-point scale ($1 = Never, 5 = Always$). To fine-tune the instruments a focus group interview ($n = 4$) and a pre-test ($n = 6$) were conducted, which led to a slightly revised questionnaire. A detailed description and psychometric properties, such as the internal consistencies of the scales, are given below.

**Social capital measures**

For social capital we used social support and neighbourhood as two indicators. For measuring social support we changed the question “Whom can you really count on to be dependable when you need help?”, based on the Social Support Questionnaire by Sarason, Levine, Basham, and Sarason (1983), to a statement “When I need help, I rely on my family/Moroccan-Islamic or Dutch community”. The instrument had eight items for assessing support from their ethnic community ($\alpha = 0.84$, $M = 2.93$, $SD = 0.81$), six items about support from their family ($\alpha = 0.78$, $M = 3.95$, $SD = 0.62$), and four items about Dutch support ($\alpha = 0.72$, $M = 2.54$, $SD = 0.80$). Example items for this scale: “I talk about my problems with my Moroccan/Dutch friends” and “I help my family”.

To measure the neighbourhood characteristics where young Moroccan-Dutch reported to live we used eight items ($\alpha = 0.86$, $M = 2.90$, $SD = 0.86$). With the first five items we established to which extent their neighbourhood could be described as poor (with most people with low incomes and high unemployment) and diverse (where a high density of immigrants live and where more than half of the school population is not native Dutch). We then reverse coded the final three items for measuring to which extent their neighbourhood could be characterised as rich (with most people with high incomes and low unemployment) and homogeneous (with most mainstream Dutch and schools where more than half is native Dutch).

**Social identity measures**

For measuring the social identity of our sample we adapted three existing scales for assessing the ethnic, family, and religious identities (Dimitrova et al., 2014a; 2014b). We adjusted all items to be specific for our target group; so we changed for example religious into Islamic. Item examples were “Being <Moroccan, Muslim, Dutch> is important for me”, “I consider myself <Moroccan, Muslim, Dutch>”, and “I am proud to be member of the <Muslim, Moroccan, Dutch> community”. For religious identity we added five items to measure how their religious practices were manifested in daily life such as praying and fasting during Ramadan. Also, we used six items to measure cultural behaviour from different perspectives. Examples were “My behaviour is typical Moroccan/Dutch”. With 49 items ($\alpha = 0.97$, $M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.72$) we assessed how much they identified with the Moroccan-Islamic community. We measured to which extent they defined their ethnic identity as being Moroccan (22 items) and Muslim, either culturally (22) and/or religiously inspired (5). We excluded the importance of being a Berber or an Arab because these two backgrounds of their parents did not play a significant role in describing their ethnic identity.
Items also addressed the extent to which they defined themselves as being Dutch or part of the family. For family identity we used 17 items ($\alpha = 0.95, M = 4.10, SD = 0.67$) and for assessing their Dutch identity 21 items ($\alpha = 0.94, M = 3.14, SD = 0.74$).

**Well-being measures**

To assess their well-being we used the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) from Diener et al. (1985), and self-esteem from Rosenberg (1979). For global life satisfaction we used five items ($\alpha = 0.88, M = 4.90, SD = 1.34$), such as “I am satisfied with my life”. We measured self-esteem with ten items ($\alpha = 0.88, M = 3.87, SD = 0.65$), such as “I am satisfied with myself” and “I feel I am a person of worth”.

Exclusion was measured using nine items ($\alpha = 0.82, M = 2.37, SD = 0.68$). Perceptions of rejection by the Dutch were assessed with three items, which we adapted from Wiley (2013) and adjusted to our group: “Because I am Moroccan/Muslim, I don’t think that the Dutch will ever fully accept me” and “The Dutch treat me positively” (reverse scored). We had six items to measure problems and experiences in school, such as “My teacher treated me unfairly because I am Moroccan/Muslim”.

With eight items ($\alpha = 0.87, M = 3.64, SD = 0.82$) we assessed social participation with co-ethnics. Co-ethnic participation means having a dominant social network with co-ethnic friends, celebrating Islamic feast of sacrifice (Eid al-Adha in Arabic), eating Moroccan food, and preferably buying it in a Moroccan-Islamic shop. We used five items to establish with whom they shared most time, and who their best co-ethnic friends were; and three items for assessing their food and celebration preferences within the Moroccan-Islamic community. For the social participation with the Dutch we used six items ($\alpha = 0.78, M = 2.61, SD = 0.81$) to measure with whom they shared most time, activities, and who their best friends were (within the mainstream community); and with two to determine to which extent they celebrated Santa Claus (Sinterklaas in Dutch), and preferred eating Dutch food. All twelve scales that we discussed here were found to be unifactorial with loading values varying between 0.44 and 0.68.

**Results**

In the following sections, we present a path model based on the mediation model of Figure 1 and test our hypotheses. First we present findings on the relationships between social capital resources, identities, and adjustment, followed by discussion of our research results.

**Path modelling of social capital resourcing, social identity and adjustment**

We examined how different access to social capital of young Moroccan Dutch is associated with their identity and how identity is associated with their socio-cultural and psychological adjustment. We tested the relationships between the different variables in our hypothesised model by developing a structural equation model (SEM) with AMOS. The model provided a good fit to the data: $\chi^2(40, N = 172) = 74.3, p < 0.001$; $\chi^2/df = 1.85$; TLI = 0.95; CFI = 0.97; RMSEA = 0.07. In Figure 2 we present the path model. Firstly, not all predictions were confirmed and some significant associations were not predicted. We describe this in more detail below. Secondly, we found a full mediation model in which social capital on the one hand and well-being and exclusion problems on the other were fully mediated by identification.

**Social capital, identity, and outcomes**

There was no direct significant association between social capital and well-being or exclusion. However, we found a partial mediation model for the link between social capital and social participation: from co-ethnic support to social participation with co-ethnics (standardised $\beta = 0.22, p < 0.001$), from Dutch support to social participation with mainstream Dutch ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.001$), and from ethnically diverse neighbourhood to social participation with co-ethnics ($\beta = 0.14, p < 0.01$), and mainstream Dutch ($\beta = -0.17, p < 0.001$). As the last modification we added two correlations between co-ethnic support and neighbourhood diversity ($0.23, p < 0.001$) and between co-ethnic support and family support ($0.46, p < 0.001$). We also found that family support was not associated with Dutch identity.

Social support, one of the two examined social capital resources, is supposed to have a positive association with well-being (Suurmeijer et al., 1995). We expected...
that Moroccan-Islamic support would not only associate positively to well-being and co-ethnic participation and negatively to social participation with mainstream Dutch (Hypothesis 1a), but also positively to ethnic identity (Hypothesis 2a). Hypothesis 2a was fully supported, but Hypothesis 1a was just partially confirmed in the positive link between appreciation of the ethnic identity and co-ethnic participation (see Table 1). The expected positive link between co-ethnic support and well-being was not found. Moroccan-Islamic support was significantly associated with ethnic identity ($\beta = 0.63, p < 0.001$), which in turn showed a significant, positive link with social participation with co-ethnics ($\beta = 0.56, p < 0.001$) and a negative link with social participation with mainstream Dutch ($\beta = -0.30, p < 0.001$). However, we did not observe any significant association between co-ethnic support and well-being, nor was the link mediated via ethnic identity. Instead, we found a significant positive association between ethnic identity and exclusion ($\beta = 0.16, p < 0.05$). It seems like identification with co-ethnics was positively related to exclusion problems young Moroccan-Dutch perceive and negatively to social participation within the mainstream Dutch community. These two links reduce their well-being and interaction with the Dutch.

**Support and identity**

Our path analysis showed that Dutch support was strongly related with mainstream identity ($\beta = 0.73, p < 0.001$), which supported Hypothesis 2b. Moreover, we observed that support from the co-ethnics and mainstream Dutch were negatively associated with respectively mainstream Dutch identity ($\beta = -0.16, p < 0.001$) and ethnic identity ($\beta = -0.18, p < 0.001$). It should be noted that family support showed a positive association with ethnic identity ($\beta = 0.23, p < 0.001$). However, there were no significant paths between co-ethnic or mainstream Dutch support and family identity.

Furthermore, we found that mainstream Dutch identity was positively associated with well-being ($\beta = 0.17, p < 0.05$) and negatively with exclusion ($\beta = -0.28, p < 0.001$). This finding disconfirms the first part of our Hypothesis 1b where we expected a negative link between mainstream identity and well-being. This means that orientation to the mainstream identity and Dutch support enhances self-esteem and satisfaction with life, and also help to prevent exclusion problems. There was – in line with our second part of Hypothesis 1b – a significantly positive association between the Dutch identity and social participation with mainstream Dutch ($\beta = 0.26, p < 0.001$), but a negative association with co-ethnics ($\beta = -0.12, p < 0.05$). Based on the observed opposite links between supportive networks from and, identification to, co-ethnics or mainstream Dutch and their opposite orientations and outcomes, we had to reject our hypothesis 1d in which we expected that integration would give the best outcomes. We found that a stronger orientation on mainstream Dutch to be associated with better results in their sociocultural and psychological adjustment than stronger orientation to co-ethnics. Young Moroccan-Dutch seemed to value family identity most ($M = 4.10$), followed by ethnic identity ($M = 3.65$), and then Dutch identity ($M = 3.14$); although it should be noted that a significance test of the differences is impossible as not exactly the same items were used to assess these identities.

With regard to family support we found a significant positive association to family identity ($\beta = 0.74, p < 0.001$) and from this mediator to well-being ($\beta = 0.54, p < 0.001$). However, there was no significant path between family identity and exclusion, which implies that appreciation of family identity was not directly related to protection against exclusion problems. These relationships confirmed

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{Social support family} & \rightarrow \text{Family identity} \\
& \rightarrow \text{Ethnic identity} \\
& \rightarrow \text{Dutch identity} \\
& \rightarrow \text{Participation co-ethnics} \\
& \rightarrow \text{Participation mainstream Dutch} \\
& \rightarrow \text{Well-being} \\
& \rightarrow \text{Exclusion problems} \\
\end{align*} \]
our Hypothesis 2c and also the first part of Hypothesis 1c where we predicted that family identity would be positively related to well-being. This is in line with earlier research in which stronger family ties were associated with more well-being (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2008). No significant links were found between family support and exclusion, or between family support and social participation with Dutch mainstreamers. Furthermore, when we calculated the indirect effects via the bootstrap technique in AMOS, we did observe an indirect effect from family support via ethnic identity to co-ethnic social participation ($\beta = 0.13, p < 0.01$). This means that the second part of our hypothesis 1c is partially supported: family support was positively associated with co-ethnic participation only via ethnic identity. We conclude that indirect effects reinforced the findings of the direct effects.

Hypothesis 3a was also supported: the neighbourhood where young Moroccan-Dutch lived played a role in their bonding and bridging process. Living in an ethnically diverse, so-called ‘poor and black neighbourhood’, related positively to social participation with co-ethnics ($\beta = 0.14, p < 0.01$) and negatively to social participation with the Dutch ($\beta = -0.17, p < 0.001$). Living in an ethnically diverse neighbourhood tends to associate with having fewer contacts with mainstreamers. As a result people in these neighbourhoods rely more on bonding ties for support, which confirms our hypothesis 3b, but it does not preclude the development of a Dutch identity ($\beta = 0.14, p < 0.01$).

Discussion

Our research finding that support from the Moroccan-Islamic community was positively related with ethnic identity, and co-ethnic orientation related positively to co-ethnic participation, is in line with earlier studies (Phinney, 1991). Co-ethnic identification can also be reinforced by feelings of rejection (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002a). However, this strong ethnic identity also relates positively to more experienced exclusion among this group in contact with mainstream Dutch and to weak social participation to the Dutch community. We found the opposite outcomes when social support comes from mainstreamers. Secondly, living in an ethnically diverse neighbourhood is negative for bridging social capital.

Our expectation that social capital and identity of young Moroccan-Dutch are related with their psychological and sociocultural outcomes in the Dutch society was confirmed. Social support of Moroccan-Dutch is studied here in three different social networks: family, co-ethnics, such as friends from the ethnic group (Moroccan-Dutch/Isamic), and mainstream Dutch. We found that co-ethnic support is positively related to ethnic identity and that Dutch support is positively related to Dutch identity. In the International Comparative Study of Ethnocultural Youth project (ICSEY), similar results were reported whereby ethnic identity was stronger than national identity and a negative correlation was found between the two identities among some young Dutch immigrants, suggesting either separation or assimilation (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001). Furthermore, family support was via family identity positively linked to well-being and negatively to exclusion.

Access to different social resources and orientations of young Moroccan-Dutch relate to opposite identity outcomes: co-ethnic or mainstream Dutch. Our sample valued bonding (co-ethnic) ties more than bridging (interethnic) ties. When the participants have a stronger Moroccan orientation, they face more exclusion, score low in social participation in the Dutch society, and high in co-ethnic participation, whereas those who have a Dutch orientation show higher scores in well-being and social participation, and low in facing exclusion and participation in the co-ethnic community. This bonding and bridging process may help to explain how resources, such as co-ethnic or mainstream support, are related to the negative and positive outcomes among young Moroccan-Dutch.

Implications and limitations

The Netherlands is shifting to a participative society (Verhagen, 2009), which is a civil society where welfare institutions become less available and people more dependent on their social network or resilience for dealing with their needs. Although this transition fits in the Moroccan society and culture, where people are more dependent on each other, making this major social and cultural change is more difficult for minorities that feel excluded from the mainstream society (Freshwater, 2004). This feeling among disadvantaged minorities is supposed not only to make their ethnic identity and co-ethnic ties and networks stronger but also to help them to reduce the stress of perceived discrimination (Mossakowski, 2003) and, according to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), to cope with negative experiences resulting from their increased ethnic self-esteem. However, young Moroccan-Dutch who receive Dutch support and have a dominant mainstream identity, and do not live in a diverse and poor neighbourhood, have better chances to participate successfully in the Dutch society and achieve more positive outcomes as compared to co-ethnics who get co-ethnic support and hold a strong ethnic identity. Living in such a transitional society makes this gap bigger; support will mainly come from co-ethnics, which strengthens feelings of separation and exclusion.

An important limitation is that our sample had a university education that cannot be expected to represent all young Moroccan-Dutch. However, our findings give clear signals that their educational background does not protect them from problems to participate successfully in the Dutch society. We speculate that the negative scenario of this successful group in terms of their high schooling would be worse among co-ethnic peers who have a lower education or left school to find work. Another limitation is that we collected quantitative data, so we could not always control who completed the online questionnaire – despite the fact that we mailed each one personally – neither were we able to ask each participant in depth what reasons and experiences they had for choosing these contrasting acculturations options and to elaborate on their backgrounds. Therefore, conducting a qualitative follow-up research study is needed. Interviewing young Moroccan-Dutch and mainstream Dutch social
professionals, who work with this ethnic group, would lead to a better understanding of who or what according to these two groups plays a crucial role to help young Moroccan-Dutch to adjust well and obtain positive acculturation outcomes.

Conclusions

Despite the confirmation of most predictions, significant associations between the variables in some cases were in the opposite direction than expected; we had to reject the idea that ethnic identity relates positively to well-being and negatively to exclusion. Instead, we found positive links between Dutch identity and well-being and no relationship between ethnic identity and well-being. This contrasts to findings from acculturation research where a positive link was found between ethnic identity and psychological adaptation (Berry, 2005). Our data challenge the view that integration among young immigrants promotes the best adaptation and gives the best results for both well-being and participation, but are more in line with Ward and best adaptation and gives the best results for both well-being and no relationship between ethnic identity and well-being. The collected works of Ed Diener (pp 71-91), Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer.


Lancee, B. (2012). Immigrant performance in the labour market: Bonding and bridging social capital. Amsterdam, the Netherlands: Amsterdam University Press.


