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Ethnic and national identity among second-generation immigrant adolescents in France: The role of social context and family

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Abstract

This study, based on 365 second-generation adolescents from five ethnic groups, examined the cultural identity according to two orientations (ethnic and national) including two components (affirmation and exploration). Parents (356 mothers, 292 fathers) are also interviewed. Following ecological models of development and acculturation, multiple layers of context and their influence were analyzed: socialization with peers (ethnic composition of school and friends), the perception of discrimination and several aspects of parent-adolescent relationship including the perception of adolescent of their relationship with parents and both mothers' and fathers' reports on their own ethnic and national enculturation practices and on their parental styles. Ethnic and national affirmations were found to be two independent orientations. Regression analysis showed that the highest explanation of variance came from the adolescent's perception of their relationship with their parents, followed by parental enculturation, and perceived discrimination. The school and peer context explained a lesser amount of variance. Parents' contribution to cultural identity is not limited to the ethnic orientation; parents also contribute in a positive way to national identity. The parents' contribution was different in the case of mothers and fathers. This reflects the dynamic of acculturation within immigrant families.

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Keywords: Ethnic and national identity; Parental socialization; Discrimination; School context; Immigration

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Introduction

In the post-modern world, identity can be considered as a capital providing a sense of worth and a source of flexibility. The key element is to construct an identity pragmatically situated in the social matrix (Côté, 1996). A central question for adolescents born in a country to which their parents immigrated is their capacity to surf between two cultures and negotiate their own identity in such a way that they maintain their links with their family and achieve full citizenship (Lafromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993).

Conceptual models refer to ethnic identity as a multidimensional dynamic construct. However, despite the core requirement for an adolescent born in an immigrant family to feel part of the host society, very little research has addressed the question of national identity within a bi-dimensional model of acculturation, where both ethnic and national identities are considered as elements of a broader cultural identity (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001). Conceptual models also suggest that cultural identity is highly determined beyond personal characteristics by social networks, especially family and peers, community (including ethnicity, size of the community and attitudes towards integration), and national contexts (level on ethnic diversity and policies towards diversity, migration and specific ethnic groups) in an interactive manner (Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997; Phinney, Horenczyk et al., 2001; Supple, Ghazarian, Frabutt, Plunkett, & Sands, 2006).

The present research was conducted in France, a multicultural, multilingual and multiconfessional country with moderate levels of ethnic diversity and immigration (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006). France has a long tradition of immigration but has consistently send mixed messages towards adaptation and integration. On one hand, there is a full range of easily accessible ethnic associations and services, and social services concerned by immigrants' problems. Furthermore, children can learn their heritage language within the school system. On the other hand, France endorses an "assimilationist citizenship" model of diversity that advocates political, socio-economic and civil rights, while considering the safeguarding of cultural rights as an obstacle to the equality of rights in other domains (Sabatier & Boutry, 2006).

This article addresses the question of the construction of cultural identity with a multidimensional approach based on two orientations (ethnic and national), two critical components (affirmation and exploration) and their sources of influence. In keeping with ecological models of development and acculturation, cultural identity is considered as shaped by multiple contexts, socialization with peers (school settings and friends), perception of attitudes of the host society towards one's own group and by many facets of adolescent relationships with both mothers and fathers. The respective weight of each environmental layer on the four issues of cultural identity will be examined after the dimensions of cultural identity and their sources of influence have been reviewed.

Dimensions of cultural identity

Affirmation and exploration

Following Erikson's (1968) and Marcia's (1966, 1980) seminal works, for whom the search for and development of one's identity were crucial developmental tasks, the first models of ethnic identity sought to identify developmental stages centered on two dimensions of search and

commitment (Cross, 1991; Phinney, 1989). Because of the dynamic characteristics of the identity process and of its reactivity to contextual factors, and due to the difficulty to classify individuals into separate stages, recent developmental research has adopted a dimensional approach. Phinney's pioneering work (1992) proposed a global measure of ethnic identity based on young adults and adolescents and containing three intercorrelated sub-dimensions. However, a reexamination of the factorial structure with a large sample of adolescents identified two distinct although intercorrelated dimensions: affirmation (as well as sense of belonging) and exploration (Roberts et al., 1999). This finding is consistent with research in other domains of identity, such as vocational or relational (Meeus & Dekovic, 1995).

Recent empirical studies have underscored the importance of examining separately the two dimensions despite their intercorrelations. Longitudinal studies suggest different developmental pathways for affirmation and exploration. Ethnic affirmation appears to grow at the beginning of early adolescence, to reach a plateau in mid-adolescence, and to be characterized thereafter by individual trajectories. In contrast, exploration appears to grow only after the first or second years in junior high-school and to phase out after 10th grade (French, Seidman, LaRue, & Aber, 2006; Pahl & Way, 2006). Moreover, recent research indicates distinct sources of influences for the two dimensions. Ethnic affirmation seems to be related to parental child-rearing styles but not to family ethnic socialization and only indirectly to discrimination, while ethnic exploration appears to be mainly related to family ethnic socialization and to the perception of discrimination (Romero & Roberts, 1998; Supple et al., 2006).

Ethnic and national identity

Cultural identity is a broad term used here to include both ethnic and national identity and their interplay. Identity among immigrants has been studied primarily in terms of ethnic identity, but there has been far less attention paid to conceptualizing and studying immigrants' identification with society at large. Researchers have considered, at least implicitly, that the two identities are located along a continuum from ethnic to national. However, a number of studies have provided evidence for a two-dimensional model of acculturation (Phinney, Horenczyk et al., 2001). Ethnic identity and national identity may vary independently; that is, each identity can be on the opposite poles of secure and strong or thwarted and weak. It is possible to identify strongly with both cultures (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). The interplay of the ethnic and national identities depends on the inclination of the host society and on the attitudes of specific groups (Berry et al., 2006; Bourhis et al., 1997).

Sources of influence of the identity-in-context

Social context

School context. School is an important context for socialization. This is where children spend most of their daytime during the week and encounter the national school standards (values and knowledge). Because high schools cater for adolescents from different residential areas, adolescents may encounter more social and ethnic diversity there than in elementary schools. The transition to high-school makes them aware of ethnic diversity, provides them with opportunities to select their friends according to their affinities and multiplies encounters with other cultures, with both positive and negative (such as experience of discrimination) outcomes.

Nonetheless, research has indicated differential effects of ethnic composition of the neighborhood and the school, probably depending on the status of ethnic groups in society at large. Attending a heterogeneous high school may enhance the saliency of ethnicity and, as a consequence, arouse ethnic affirmation as a distinctive trait to be proud of and to be defended, as observed with immigrant descent especially in Latinos (Supple et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor, 2004). While in other circumstances high ethnic density maintains ethnic behaviors and language, and as a consequence, ethnic identity, but leaves adolescents less aware of ethnic and intergroup issues, this seems to be the case of native students living in isolated environments. For these groups, to be involved in a more mixed environment is an opportunity to meet peers from society at large and to enhance the level of national identity (Kvernmo & Heyerdahl, 1996; Lysne & Levy, 1997).

Peer relationships. Social networks and friendships are assumed to be associated with cultural (ethnic and national) identity and social interaction may provide an avenue by which ethnicity is experienced and explored (Laperrière, Compère, D'Khissy, Dolce, & Fleurant, 1994). Phinney, Romero, Nava, and Huang (2001) have observed that interaction with peers from one's own ethnic group predicts ethnic identity, while parental cultural maintenance has only an indirect effect through adolescent ethnic language proficiency. In contrast, the role of national friends on cultural identity is seldom examined. Because it appears that same-ethnic best-friends pairs are more easy-going and supportive than cross-ethnic best-friends pairs (Smith & Schneider, 2000), one may hypothesize that national friends may have an influence on cultural identity but to a lesser degree than same-ethnic friends, and probably only on national identity.

Perception of discrimination. Perceived discrimination is considered as a key element for understanding how well minority youth construct their identity (Erikson, 1968). In their developmental model of identity, both Cross (1991) and Phinney (1989) considered perceived discrimination as a life event driving awareness of intergroup relationships and of one's ethnicity.

Within the social psychological field, several points of view have been expressed. Tajfel and Turner (1986) identified several consequences of being a member of a devalued group and outlined three strategies of coping: (a) individual mobility (e.g. escape from the group); (b) reinforcing ethnic identity by comparing oneself positively with the out-group, an option confirmed by Branscombe's "rejection-identification" model (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999); and (c) involvement in social movements. However, more accurate predictions with regard to orientation of cultural identity come from the interactive acculturation model, which takes into account the mutual attitudes of majority and minority groups. This model considers that the perception of discrimination may strengthen ethnic group identification and weaken ties with the national group (Bourhis et al., 1997).

Findings of empirical studies using global measures of ethnic identity during adolescence are contradictory. Some report a positive correlation (Phinney, 1990), some a negative one (Greene, Way, & Pahl, 2006), and others fail to find a link (Verkuyten, 2002). In contrast, when subdimensions of identity are analyzed, a positive correlation between perceived discrimination and ethnic exploration has been observed (Pahl & Way, 2006; Romero & Roberts, 1998).

Family socialization

Family, as the first locus of socialization, is referred to as a complex social system in which each member (children and each parent) contributes to the quality of life of the family. This is

especially true during adolescence. Within an immigrant family, the acculturation orientations of each family member interact with the orientations of other members, and may influence the adaptation of the family as a whole (Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993; Vatz Laaroussi, 2001). While endorsing different levels of acculturation and identity (Sabatier & Berry, 2007), both mothers and fathers transmit values of cultural competences and identity (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Killian & Hegtvedt, 2003). Nonetheless, the emotional climate of the family and the coherence of parental values form the context of the transmission (Knafo & Schwartz, 2001; Schönpflug, 2001). In consequence, the present investigation examines family socialization and takes into account both the perception that adolescents have of their relationship with parents and the contribution of each parent along two dimensions: emotional (i.e. family emotional climate) and cultural (i.e. attachment to culture and enculturation) (Rosenthal & Cichello, 1986). All of these dimensions may be critical for the development of second-generation adolescents.

Adolescents' perception of family relationships. From the adolescent's point of view, family relationships are assessed in the present investigation along two cultural dimensions: the adolescents' attachment to parental culture and the perception of cultural harmony with parents, with one affective dimension, self-disclosure. Attachment to parental culture refers to the affective link of adolescents with the cultural roots of their parents and their lifestyles during their childhood. This provides them with a cultural anchorage surpassing factual cultural knowledge, which may reinforce the sense of belongingness to the ethnic group (Rosenthal & Cichello, 1986).

Cultural harmony between adolescents and parents refers to the adolescents' perception of congruence with their parents on the subject of cultural values and orientations. A distance between adolescents and parents on cultural values is expected in immigrant families as part of the normal developmental process (Sam & Virta, 2003). Disagreements may be a source of development (Rosenthal & Hrynevich, 1985).

Self-disclosure of adolescents to parents refers to the way adolescents voice their concerns and report their daily activities to parents. Disclosure appears as the most important source of parental knowledge about children's activities and emotional states. It is related to mutual trust and to familial emotional climate (Kerr, Stattin & Trost, 1999).

Parental contribution. While most research on children emphasizes family ethnic socialization as the primary influence of ethnic identity, both parental child-rearing style and parental cultural socialization contribute to the identity and adaptation of immigrant youth, and these two dimensions have been assessed in the present research (Rosenthal & Feldman, 1992; Schönpflug, 2001). Family ethnic socialization has given rise to many definitions and assessment measures. It includes values and attitudes, cultural lifestyles and ways of expressing feelings, knowledge, behavioral components such as food, language, participation in associations, and contextual components such as home decoration and ethnic density of the neighborhood (Quintana, Castañeda-English, & Ybarra, 1999; Romero, Cuéllar, & Roberts, 2000). In contrast, the question of socialization in the host society has been seldom addressed and only as a secondary facet to explain adaptation or ethnic identity (Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Romero et al., 2000; Rosenthal & Cichello, 1986). Because parents decided to immigrate to improve their life and that of their child, they try to adapt by seeking a balance between the need for cultural and self-continuity (the ontological dimension), and the need to adapt to the new environmental practical demands

(the pragmatic dimension). In the present study, the national and ethnic dimensions of socialization are considered along these two dimensions: pragmatic and ontological (Camilleri & Malewska-Peyre, 1997; Youniss, 1994).

Studies on family ethnic socialization at adolescence have produced mixed results. Phinney and colleagues (Phinney, & Chavira, 1995; Phinney, Romer, et al., 2001) found no direct association between parental ethnic socialization, as reported by parents, and adolescents' ethnic identity. Quintana et al. (1999) found that ethnic socialization including teaching about cultural background and contextual factors was positively associated with ethnic identity achievement. Rosenthal and Cichello (1986) found that parental maintenance of cultural ties, but not their traditional values, is linked to ethnic identity. Finally, Supple et al. (2006) found that family ethnic socialization is directly associated with exploration and resolution, but not with ethnic affirmation. Altogether, the specific contribution of each parent is very seldom examined, despite the critical role of the father in social development. However, these sparse findings indicate that the father contributes differently to the mother, even if his contribution is less important than the mother's (Killian & Hegtvedt, 2003).

Finally, parenting styles foster a context favoring the acceptance of parental influence (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Transmission of family values is facilitated by a more empathic and less authoritarian climate (Schönpflug, 2001). Ethnic pride and affirmation are enhanced by parents who are warm, controlling and who promote autonomy (Rosenthal & Feldman, 1992; Supple et al., 2006). However, no correlation was found between ethnic exploration and parental styles.

Research goals

The current study attempts to fill a gap by examining various sources of influence arising from several environment layers of cultural identity and by taking into account both ethnic and national orientation and two key dimensions-affirmation and exploration-with second-generation adolescents from different ethnic groups. The question addressed here concerns the relative influence of peer context, perceived discrimination, and influence of mothers and fathers, and the interplay of all these sources of influence on both national and ethnic identity. Given the state of research knowledge on parents' influence during adolescence, we took into account both cultural and emotional facets of socialization as experienced by adolescents and by each parent.

In view of the different levels of correlations and beta weights published in the literature between the various predictors and different facets of identity, we expected that variables pertaining to parental relationship would predict cultural identity more than those relating to the adolescent social environment (school ethnic density and friends), at least for ethnic identity. Concerning discrimination, we expected a link with ethnic exploration and national identity (affirmation and exploration). We also expected that variables concerning parental child-rearing styles and family climate would contribute positively to the cultural identity, albeit mainly for ethnic identity and especially for exploration.

The paucity of research focusing on national identity hardly allows predictions about its sources of influence. Because national identity is more complex and is less clearly delineated than ethnic identity, it seems reasonable to expect that it will be less predicted than ethnic identity. It also seems reasonable to expect that national identity will be explained by encounters with

members of the host society more than by parents, although parents through their socialization practices and attitudes towards French society will have an influence, but to a lesser extent than for ethnic identity.

Finally, the purpose of this research is not to look at ethnic differences *per se* but to understand general processes, which encompass ethnic groups in general. However, because differences across groups have been well documented in the literature, such differences are examined in order to situate more precisely the other sources of influences.

Method

Participants

Participants were 395 second-generation adolescents born in France (219 females, 55%) and their parents (356 Mothers and 292 Fathers) from five ethnic groups, Algerians, Antilleans, Moroccans, Portuguese and Vietnamese (see sample size in Table 1). The mean age was 15.5 years (SD = 1.8; range: 11–19). Most of the adolescents lived with their two parents at home (85%). Families were recruited by same-ethnic research assistants mainly through school lists and the snowball method. The number of eligible families who received the information about the study is not exactly known, but the rate of participation can be estimated at about 66% on the basis of field notes of interviewers.

Parents' level of schooling and ethnic composition of surroundings varied across groups (see Tables 1 and 2). Vietnamese parents had a higher education level (at least to high school level) and the ethnic composition of their surroundings was lower, while Algerians and Moroccans had a lower education level (mostly none or the first primary years) and Moroccans especially lived close to their ethnic peers. This pattern is consistent with the situation of these immigrant groups in France, especially in the Parisian area where this sample comes from.

Procedure

Each family member filled out a questionnaire in an individual interview at home with a sameethnic interviewer. The mean duration was half an hour for parents and an hour and a half for adolescents. Because all schooled parents read and spoke French, the questionnaires were in French. For some unschooled parents the interviewer read the questionnaire and sometimes explained the question in the parents' language.

Measures

Adolescents

National and ethnic identity. An adapted French version of the multiple group ethnic identity measure (MEIM) was used for adolescents (Phinney, 1992) with a parallel questionnaire for national identity purpose-built for this research. Based on the R-MEIM proposition (Roberts et al., 1999) and a factor analysis, two sub-dimensions were computed: *identity affirmation* and *exploration* for both ethnic and national identity, resulting in four scores. The *ethnic affirmation*

Table 1 Means and standard deviations for adolescents

N (% of girls)	All		Algerians		Antilleans		Moroccans		Portuguese		Vietnamese		F
	395 M	(55%) SD	89 M	(54%) SD	63 M	(62%) SD	99 M	(55%) SD	94 M	(53%) SD	50 M	(56%) SD	
Identity													
Ethnic affirmation	4.03	0.73	4.18 ^b	0.74	3.98^{b}	0.65	4.24 ^b	0.66	3.95^{b}	0.76	3.56 ^a	0.62	9.34***
French affirmation	3.32	0.93	3.38^{ab}	1.04	3.16^{a}	1.04	3.15^{a}	0.95	3.41 ^{ab}	0.82	3.59 b	0.58	2.68*
Ethnic exploration	3.37	0.99	3.44 ^{ab}	0.99	3.05^{a}	1.00	3.77^{b}	1.00	3.19^{a}	0.95	3.20 a	0.78	7.30***
French exploration	3.02	1.24	3.13 ^b	1.41	2.37^{a}	1.20	3.19 ^b	1.26	3.00^{b}	1.02	3.30 b	1.09	5.85***
Social context													
% same-ethnic peers in class	19.46	19.12	18.85 ^c	14.65	9.44 ^{ab}	6.31	36.94 ^d	23.25	15.60 ^{bc}	14.89	5.94 ^a	6.29	47.04***
% French peers in class	46.58	27.57	49.83 ^a	23.15	47.60^{a}	29.03	37.92^{a}	29.30	43.63 ^a	26.32	62.58 ^b	24.42	7.65***
% same-ethnic friends	40.73	29.50	30.15^{a}	21.74	45.50^{b}	32.39	50.40^{b}	29.78	43.90^{b}	30.38	28.72 a	26.75	8.83***
% same French friends	29.29	28.90	30.95 ^{ab}	25.96	21.84^{a}	28.15	20.30^{a}	28.84	35.76 ^b	26.56	41.05 ^b	32.42	7.07***
Discrimination	2.17	0.96	2.32^{b}	0.94	2.19 ^b	0.84	2.72 ^c	1.13	1.63 ^a	0.59	1.76 ^a	0.53	22.60***
Family relationship													
Attachment to parents' culture	4.50	0.66	4.52 ^{ab}	0.82	4.53 ^{ab}	0.63	4.73^{b}	0.46	4.36^{a}	0.65	4.27 a	0.63	5.85***
Disclosure to mother	1.49	0.63	1.46 ^{ab}	0.61	1.49 ^{ab}	0.70	1.53 ^{ab}	0.60	1.61 ^b	0.63	1.25 a	0.62	2.81*
Disclosure to father	1.03	0.60	0.91	0.58	1.08	0.62	1.07	0.60	1.16	0.62	0.92	0.51	2.52 *
Cultural harmony w. mother	3.74	1.42	3.95 ^{ab}	1.24	4.27^{b}	1.21	3.39^{a}	1.53	3.71 ^{ab}	1.46	3.50 ^a	1.45	4.60 **
Cultural harmony w. father	3.66	1.48	3.89 ^{ab}	1.33	4.09^{b}	1.34	3.24^{a}	1.61	3.66 ^{ab}	1.43	3.59 ^a	1.53	3.77**

Note: Means with superscripts $(^{a,b,c,d})$ in the same line are homogeneous subsamples according to Tukey's post-hoc test (p < .05).

Table 2 Means and standard deviations for parents

	All		Algerians		Antilleans		Moroccans		Portuguese		Vietnamese		F
	\overline{M}	SD	M	SD	<u> </u>								
Mothers (N)			(83)		(51)		(94)		(89)		(41)		
Level of schooling ^a	1.73	1.39	1.11 ^a	1.34	2.82 ^c	0.93	1.05 ^a	1.21	1.70 b	0.80	3.39 ^d	1.31	46.41***
Enculturation styles													
French—emotional attitudes	2.82	0.90	2.63 ^a	0.93	2.64 ^a	0.79	2.82 ^{ab}	0.92	2.92 ^{ab}	0.91	3.23 ^b	0.74	4.05**
French—pragmatic attitudes	3.95	0.75	4.26 ^b	0.71	4.05^{ab}	0.68	3.86^{a}	0.74	3.74^{a}	0.77	3.88^{a}	0.70	6.29***
Ethnic—pragmatic attitudes	4.28	0.72	4.52 ^b	0.64	4.23 ^{ab}	0.70	4.42 ^b	0.71	3.91 ^a	0.77	4.34 ^b	0.55	9.87***
Conversations on culture & immigr	3.73	0.96	3.52^{a}	0.86	3.94 ^{ab}	0.89	4.03 ^b	0.98	3.59 ^{ab}	0.95	3.50^{a}	1.05	5.12**
Parental styles													
Democratism	3.64	0.79	3.50^{ab}	0.89	3.82 ^{bc}	0.63	3.91 ^c	0.68	3.48 ^{ab}	0.79	3.42^{a}	0.75	6.18***
Authoritarianism	3.03	0.80	3.25^{a}	0.67	2.51 ^a	0.77	3.38^{a}	0.83	2.87 b	0.68	2.74 ^{ab}	0.77	15.82***
Fathers (N)			(72)		(29)		(88)		(73)		(31)		
Level of schooling ^a	1.89	1.47	1.40 ^a	1.56	2.68 ^b	0.86	1.45 ^a	1.27	1.70 ^a	0.92	4.17 ^d	0.93	34.82***
Enculturation styles													
French—emotional attitudes	2.80	0.97	2.66^{a}	0.99	2.59^{a}	1.14	2.77 ^{ab}	0.97	2.86 ^{ab}	0.87	$3.25^{\rm b}$	0.93	2.47*
French—pragmatic attitudes	4.00	0.79	4.30 ^b	0.70	3.99 ^{ab}	0.64	3.94 ^{ab}	0.81	3.78 ^a	0.75	4.00^{ab}	0.93	4.46**
Ethnic—pragmatic attitudes	4.38	0.67	4.58 ^b	0.50	4.51 ^b	0.65	4.45 ^{ab}	0.63	4.10^{a}	0.78	4.22 ^{ab}	0.65	6.34***
Conversations on culture and immigr	3.79	0.95	3.85 ^{ab}	0.91	3.89 ^{ab}	1.02	4.07 ^b	0.94	3.49 ^a	0.95	3.51 ^a	0.79	4.75**
Parental styles													
Democratism	3.60	0.85	3.53 ^{ab}	0.87	3.71 ^{ab}	0.80	3.89^{b}	0.75	3.33 ^a	0.87	3.43 ^{ab}	0.88	13.87***
Authoritarianism	3.16	0.81	3.31 ^{bc}	0.78	2.64 ^a	0.77	3.52^{c}	0.80	2.97 ^{ab}	0.62	2.67^{a}	0.77	5.18***

Note: Means with superscripts (a,b,c,d) in the same line are homogeneous subsamples according to Tukey's post-hoc test (p < .05). a Level of schooling 1 = no schooling or first primary years; 5 = some university level.

score included seven questions with a 5-point Likert scale. The sample item read as follows: "I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group". Cronbach's alpha was .82 (range across ethnic groups: .73–.83). The *French affirmation* scale included five questions (e.g. "Being a member of the French society is important for me"). Alpha was .80 (range: .67–.85). The *ethnic exploration* scale included four questions (time spent thinking and learning about ethnicity, conversation on the theme with parents or other persons). Alpha was .69 (range .59–.69). The *French exploration* scale had two questions (time spent learning about national identity, conversations with others). Alpha was .75 (range: .47–.90). Factor analysis indicates that national and ethnic identity are two independent scales with two intercorrelated but distinct subdimensions (for ethnic identity r = .55; for national identity = .35), in agreement with the R-MEIM data (Roberts et al. 1999).

Socialization context. Socialization context was assessed by the ethnic composition of the class, the percentage of French and same-ethnic friends and the perception of discrimination.

- (i) Ethnic composition of the class: Many participants attended ethnically heterogeneous schools. To assess the amount of contact with French society and their own ethnic group, we asked adolescents the number of French, same-ethnic and other-groups peers in their class, and checked the accuracy of their evaluation with them. Two indices were used: the percentage of students of French ancestry and from the same-ethnic group in the class.
- (ii) *Friends*: Three questions measured on a 5-point scale the percentage of ethnic and French friends related to specific issues: one was a general question while the two others were about the sharing of emotions, secrets and concrete exchanges (CD, school information, leisure, etc.). A summary index was computed for the percentage of same-ethnic or French among their friends. Alpha for ethnic friends was .79 (range: .70–.81) and for French friends was .83 (range: .70–.91).
- (iii) Perceived discrimination: Tchoryk-Pelletier's discrimination scale (1989) consists of twelve items with a 5-point Likert scale measuring the perception of personal discrimination within the school context and the neighborhood (shops, police) and that of group discrimination (employment, police and social services, lodging) ($\alpha = .91$; range: .76–.93).

Relationship with parents from the adolescent's perspective: Adolescents answered three questionnaires. The first two questionnaires had parallel versions for each parent.

- (i) Self-disclosure to parents: Thirty-six questions assessed with a 0–3 point scale, on how much adolescents disclosed information to their parents in six domains: school, friends, personality, sexuality, economic level and family climate (West & Zingle, 1969). Alphas were .95 for mothers, .96 for fathers, and above .90 for all groups.
- (ii) Perception of cultural harmony with parents: One question assessed cultural harmony with each parent and was adapted from Rosenthal and Hrynevich (1985) (1–5-point scale): "Do you think that misunderstandings between you and your mother [father] are related to cultural differences between you?"
- (iii) Attachment to parents' culture: Three questions evaluated how much adolescents were attached to their ethnic culture because this represents their roots and the parents' childhood. Here, is an example for Moroccans: "I appreciate that my parents tell me the memories of their own childhood, especially those related to their life in Morocco" ($\alpha = .68$; range: .44–.87).

Parents

The parents' questionnaire included three sections: (1) enculturation attitudes towards ethnic and French cultures, (2) conversation on ethnic and intergroup topics, and (3) parental styles (authoritarian and democratic style).

Enculturation measures

Enculturation attitudes were evaluated by a questionnaire constructed for the purpose of this research and based on non-directive interviews with more than 20 second-generation adolescents. Three dimensions appeared as important for adolescents. Two focused on pragmatic adaptation (cognitive, social, and behavioral): one on ethnic orientation, the other on French orientation. The third dimension evaluated attitudes towards French emotional lifestyle (ontological adaptation).

- (i) *Pragmatic ethnic enculturation*: Four questions assessed to what extent parents thought they have to integrate their children within their own culture and ethnic social network. Here is an example for Algerians: "I believe that Algerian parents should teach their children how to behave like Algerians." Alphas were .64 for mothers and .66 for fathers (range: .60–.68).
- (ii) *Pragmatic French enculturation*: Five questions assessed to what extent parents thought they have to integrate their children into French society (e.g. "In my opinion, parents should keep abreast about what is going on here and teach their children how things work here"). Alphas were .70 for mothers and .75 for fathers (range: .50–.80).
- (iii) *Emotional French enculturation*: Four questions assessed to what extent parents appreciated and wanted to adopt the emotional and relational style of the French society (e.g. "I believe that the French way of listening to children is something that everybody should adopt"). Alphas were .64 for mothers and .67 for fathers (range .57–.71).

Conversations with adolescents on cultural topics

An index of the frequency of conversations parents have with their adolescents been constructed from four questions related to culture, country of origin, immigration and racism (1 "never" to 5 "very often"). Alphas were .75 for mothers, .75 for fathers (range .67–.78).

Parental styles

Two dimensions of parenting styles were assessed. Questions are adapted from Dornbush's Questionnaires (Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987). All questions were on a 5-point scale.

- (i) *Democratism*: Seven questions assessed to what extent parents accepted to have open discussion with their children on several social topics (movies, values, etc.) and were open to adolescents' own ideas and contributions to family decisions. The sample item read: "Do you think that adolescents are mature enough to have personal opinions on moral values?". Alphas were .71 for mothers and .78 for fathers (range: .58–.80).
- (ii) *Authoritarianism*: The authoritarianism measure had 10 questions, 6 dealing with behavioral and emotional reactions from parents in the case of poor academic results (upset, reduced freedom, make life miserable) and 4 investigating the values of parents with regard to hierarchy among family members (e.g. parents know best, children should not argue with parents). Alphas were .77 for mothers and .76 for fathers (range: .64–.78).

Results

The preliminary part of analysis examined: (a) the differences between ethnic groups for all the adolescent and parent variables; (b) the differences and correlations between the two orientations of cultural identity (ethnic and national) for affirmation and exploration, respectively; and (c) the consistency between mothers and fathers for all the measures across the whole sample and for each group.

Tables 1 and 2 show differences among groups for almost all variables. However, post-hoc tests did not reveal that a simple pattern of differences across groups and variables could be identified, except that the Vietnamese had the highest scores on French affirmation and exploration and the lowest scores on ethnic exploration and affirmation. Results from t-tests with paired samples (not reported in tables) indicated that ethnic affirmation and exploration were respectively higher than national affirmation and exploration in all groups, except for the Vietnamese for whom no differences on either dimension were observed, and for the Portuguese in the case of exploration (see Table 1). Affirmation of ethnic and French identity were negatively correlated (r = -.12, p < .05) in all groups and varied from .18 for Vietnamese to -.18 for Algerians, but none of them reached the level of significance due to the sample sizes. The correlation between ethnic and national exploration was positive (r = .29; p < .001) with a variation across groups: there was no correlation for Antilleans and Vietnamese, while it ranged from .29 (Moroccans) to .41 (Portuguese) in the other three groups.

Parents offered a relatively consistent environment to their children (see Table 2). Correlations between mothers and fathers for each measure (not reported in tables) were all high (mean r = .61 with all r > .57). The paired t-tests were all non-significant with the exception that fathers, compared with mothers, were more authoritarian (t = 3.15, p < .01) and tended to have stronger enculturation attitudes towards ethnicity (t = 1.95, p = .05).

In the second part of the analysis, several multiple hierarchical regressions were carried out to identify which factors predict the four dimensions of identity (affirmation vs. exploration, ethnic vs. French) and their respective weights. Owing to the requirement of a large sample given the number of predictors in this study, the whole sample was combined. Dummy variables for ethnicity were created in order to ascertain the effect of ethnicity. Based on the recommendation by Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken (2003), the Portuguese was chosen as reference group with three arguments, the size of the sample in the present study, and the fact that this group is one of the largest in France with less cultural distance and better adaptation. In step 1, gender, age, parental education and the four cultural dummy variables were entered into the regression model in order to control their effect. In step 2, we entered the variables relevant to the peer socialization context (percentage of same-ethnic schoolmates, and same-ethnic or French friends) in a stepwise procedure. Step 3 concerned perceived discrimination. In step 4, we entered all variables pertaining to the adolescents' perception of family climate (disclosure to parents, cultural harmony with parents, attachment to the parents' culture) in a stepwise procedure. Step 5 concerned enculturation practices and attitudes of parents and the last step focused on parental styles. For ease of presentation, only regressions with both parents and the last resulting model in each regression analysis are presented in the tables.

On the whole, the explained variance of ethnic affirmation and exploration was higher than that of national ones, and the explained variance of affirmation (ethnic and French) tended to be

Table 3 Variation in the percentage of explained variance (variation of R^2) by each step taken individually after controlling demographic variables and ethnicity

	Affirmation		Exploration		
	Ethnic	National	Ethnic	National	
Controlled variables					
Ethnicity	0.09***	0.03*	0.07***	0.06***	
Demographic characteristics	0.03**	0.01 ns	0.01 ns	0.01 ns	
Group of predictors					
Social environment	0.04**	0.04*	0.04**	0.01 ns	
Discrimination	0.04***	0.04***	0.07***	0.01 ns	
Parent-adolescent relationship					
Adolescents' perception	0.22***	0.06**	0.20***	0.10 ***	
Parental enculturation	0.17***	0.10***	0.16***	0.05 ns	
Parental styles	0.06**	$0.02\mathrm{ns}$	0.04*	0.04*	

higher than that of exploration (ethnic and French), although this is not clear for all facets of the social environment (see Tables 3 and 4). Table 3 reports the variance added by each layer of variables taken individually when personal characteristics (age, sex, and parental education) and ethnicity are first entered (see lines 1 and 2). Demographic variables had almost no influence, and the contribution of ethnicity almost disappeared when the other variables were entered, except for ethnic affirmation where the Vietnamese appeared as a distinct group.

The social environment context contributed modestly. The percentage of French friends predicted only French affirmation. The school context had virtually no influence when ethnicity was controlled. The perception of discrimination negatively predicted French affirmation, and also contributed only slightly to ethnic exploration.

Parents had the greatest influence on affirmation and exploration for both orientations, both through the adolescents' perception and through parental enculturation. In general, the variance was explained by a combination of adolescents' and parents' variables, except for French exploration, which was explained only by the perception of adolescents (see Tables 3 and 4). For ethnic affirmation and both dimensions of exploration, the highest contribution came from the adolescents' perception of their relationship with their parents. This was followed by parental enculturation for ethnic affirmation and exploration. A reverse pattern appeared for national affirmation, with the influence of parents being greater than the perception of adolescents (see Tables 3 and 4). However, beyond this general pattern, regressions revealed different patterns of influence for each of the four dimensions of identity and the specific contribution of each parent to cultural (ethnic and national) identity.

Ethnic affirmation was explained by the attachment of adolescents to their parents' culture, and by mothers' pragmatic ethnic enculturation attitudes. Ethnic exploration was explained positively by the adolescents' attachment to parents' culture, the mothers' conversations on cultural and intergroup topics, and disclosure to fathers: it was negatively explained by the feeling of cultural harmony with the father and by the paternal French pragmatic attitude. National affirmation and

Table 4 Regression of affirmation and exploration identity (β weights)

	Affirmation		Exploration			
	Ethnic	French	Ethnic	French		
R^2 adj	0.41	0.19	0.35	0.09		
F	16.98***	5.39***	10.71***	3.60***		
Demographic characteristics						
Age	$0.02\mathrm{ns}$	0.10^{+}	$-0.01 \mathrm{ns}$	$0.07\mathrm{ns}$		
Gender	0.01 ns	0.03 ns	0.03 ns	$-0.02 \mathrm{ns}$		
Parents education	0.06 ns	$-0.09 \mathrm{ns}$	0.04 ns	$-0.01 \mathrm{ns}$		
Ethnicity						
Algerians	$0.00\mathrm{ns}$	0.08 ns	0.07 ns	0.09 ns		
Antilleans	$-0.06\mathrm{ns}$	0.02 ns	$-0.06 \mathrm{ns}$	-0.13^{+}		
Moroccans	$-0.06\mathrm{ns}$	0.04 ns	0.05 ns	0.07 ns		
Vietnamese	-0.23***	0.03 ns	-0.05 ns	0.01 ns		
Social environment						
% French friends	-0.10^{+}	0.13*				
Discrimination		-0.27***	0.12+			
Relationships w. parents adolescent perspe	ective					
Attachment to parents' culture Disclosure to mother	0.48***		0.35***			
Disclosure to father Cultural harmony w. mother		0.22***	0.16**	0.24***		
Cultural harmony w. father		-0.15*	-0.13*	-0.15*		
Mothers enculturation att. and practices French emotional attitudes French pragmatic attitudes	0.18**	0.21**				
Ethnic pragmatic attitudes Conversations	0.18***		0.20***			
Fathers enculturation att. and practices						
French emotional attitudes French pragmatic attitudes Ethnic pragmatic attitudes Conversations		0.14*	-0.13*			

exploration were predicted by the adolescents' perception of their relationship with their fathers. Disclosure to father had a positive impact, while the perception of cultural harmony with the father seemed to have a negative one. In the case of national affirmation, the mothers' positive attitudes concerning the emotional way to raise children in France (French emotional attitudes) and the fathers' attitudes to an ethnic pragmatic enculturation also contributed to the explained variance.

Parental styles contributed to both ethnic affirmation and exploration but their contribution is not any more observed when other variables are entered (see Tables 3 and 4).

Discussion

The goal of this study was to examine cultural identity-in-context with its two components, affirmation and exploration, and its two cultural orientations, ethnic and national across several ethnic groups. It was also to understand how these four issues of cultural identity are shaped by multiple layers of the context, peers' context', discrimination and parental influences from the adolescent's point of view and from the reports of both mothers and fathers themselves in the ecological framework.

Because differences across ethnic groups are reported constantly in the literature, the role of ethnicity has been examined, even if this aspect was not the main goal of the study. All in all, differences were numerous but post-hoc tests did not suggest any clear-cut different cultural pattern as a whole. Some differences are nonetheless important for the understanding of cultural identity. Both ANOVA and multiple regressions underscored the specificity of some groups, mainly the Vietnamese, with regard to cultural identity. This group presented a lower ethnic identity and a higher national identity than many other groups, but the multiple regressions identified only one clear effect of Vietnamese ethnicity (with Portuguese as referent group): ethnic affirmation. Antilleans, also appeared to be a specific group with regard to French exploration, but only for this dimension and only marginally. Antilleans as a group have a close-knit complex relationship with France. They are a French ethnic minority by ancestry and are immigrants only in the geographical sense (Galap, 1993). In this study, they presented a lower level of French exploration than all other groups. Probably because their parents are more familiar with the French system, Antillean adolescents showed no special motivation to explore French identity.

The different patterns of articulation between ethnic and national identity across groups in this study require special attention. Previous studies have shown that the two identities are not situated along a single bipolar axis but along two independent axes, the pattern of their combination being related interactively to many factors from the host society, the ethnic groups and the individuals (Bourhis et al., 1997; Phinney, Horenczyk et al., 2001). In the present study, ethnic and national affirmation appeared as two independent orientations that were even slightly negatively correlated, even if their interplay is a matter of culture and historical links between France and each group. The two former French colonial groups, Algerians and Vietnamese, tended to adopt opposite ways to combine their identity, although no correlation reached significance. Algerians tended to adopt a monocultural identity in which the two orientations are negatively correlated, while Vietnamese tended to adopt a bicultural identity. This culture-specific combination has been found elsewhere. Berry et al. (2006) observed such a variation in correlations across countries and in cultures within countries. However, in each country, this also relates to ethnocultural groups. Typically, whatever the host country, Vietnamese adopt a bicultural strategy of acculturation, while adolescents of Muslim faith adopt a monocultural identity. Such a link with faith was not observed in the present study. The two Muslim groups adopted dissimilar strategies: with Algerians the correlation was negative while with Moroccans it was null. Differences between the two Maghrebian groups reflect their historical links with French society and their history of immigration. Vietnamese cultural identity is explained by their cultural view of "invisible" integration in which they try not to attract public attention while having, at least in the first generation, strong cultural customs in the private sector. Moreover, in France, and in our sample, the Vietnamese had a high level of education and because their population is a small one, they live in low ethnic-density neighborhoods. Nonetheless, with regard to all sources of influence on groups, the role played by ethnicity is clear but modest. Its weight decreased when other variables were taken into account.

Beyond the cultural differences, the results clearly indicate different sources of influence for the four issues of cultural identity. Although intercorrelated, affirmation and exploration were shown to be two different processes. This finding is consistent with the seminal work of Marcia and with those in recent studies (French et al., 2006; Pahl & Way, 2006; Romero & Roberts, 1998; Supple et al., 2006), each dimension being differently explained. This reinforces the need to disentangle the two components of identity instead of focusing only on a single global measure in order to grasp the subtle influences and processes involved, as French et al. (2006) have argued.

In the same vein, the two orientations of cultural identity are predicted through different processes. Ethnic identity (affirmation and exploration) is better explained by all levels of variables than French identity. This is in line with studies by Knafo and Schwartz (2001) and Phalet and Schönpflug (2001) indicating that collectivist values are more often transmitted than individualist ones in immigrant families. One may argue, however, that this is also a question of saliency. Ethnicity is easier to grasp in a minority–majority intergroup relationship than nationality. While the boundaries of ethnicity are clear, those of national identity in terms of behavior and feelings are diffuse and vague because of intra-group diversity (Phinney, 1990).

This study has examined the part played by each of three layers of the social environment in the process of shaping cultural identity: social environment (school composition and friends), perception of discrimination and various facets of parent–adolescent relationships. It has discussed how the social environment (school composition and friends) can shape an adolescent's identity in a horizontal mode of socialization, with ethnic composition at school and in the neighborhood playing a role in cultural identity. In contrast to the results obtained by Supple et al. (2006) and by Phinney, Romero et al. (2001), we did not find any influence of ethnic composition or of same-ethnic peers on any measure of cultural identity. Same-ethnic friends did not contribute to any issues of identity. In comparison, socialization with mainstream friends positively predicted French affirmation and tended to predict ethnic affirmation negatively. In agreement with Umaña-Taylor (2004), the percentage of variance of identity explained by the social context was small. This could be due to the French policy towards immigrants and diversity, especially at school. France has no segregated schools, the percentage of private schools is low, and there is strong support for the fair and equal treatment of all, without any consideration of social or racial differences.

The perception of discrimination exerts an influence, which is in line both with the interactive acculturation model and with some developmental models of identity. Perceived discrimination negatively predicted national affirmation, as anticipated by the "interactive acculturation model". Perceiving rejection from the national group acts as a barrier against integration and identification to the host national group but does not provide any reasons to identify to one's own group, at least during adolescence, as observed in adults by Branscombe et al. (1999). Moreover, the perception of discrimination was an incentive to explore one's own identity in addition to other dimensions of the social and familial context, although it was marginal when all other effects were taken into account. This finding is consistent with Cross's model of ethnic identity in early adulthood, which purports that perceiving discrimination acts as an encounter that stimulates reflection about the meaning of one's ethnicity. It is also in line with the findings of Pahl and Way

(2006) and Romero and Roberts (1998) who found a positive link in adolescents between perception of discrimination and ethnic exploration but not with affirmation.

Finally, as expected in our hypotheses, family relationships exerted a greater influence than other variables, with the perception by adolescents of family relationships being the main predictor for three of four issues of cultural identity. Attachment to the parental culture was a strong predictor of both ethnic affirmation and exploration. Interestingly, it had no influence on national affirmation and exploration, confirming that the two orientations are independent. There is some evidence from the literature that family climate, mainly through parental childraising style, is related with ethnic pride and ethnic affirmation. We observed an effect of family climate, mainly through the relationship with the father as reported by adolescents, but it concerned exploration (ethnic and French) and French affirmation. No such relation was observed for ethnic affirmation, except for the attachment of adolescents to their parents' culture. For example, they are pleased when parents relate their memories of their childhood in their country of birth.

An analysis of the pattern of all the familial predictors of cultural identity revealed the differential role of each parent and the dynamic nature of the influence. From the adolescents' point of view, communication with fathers has special importance. Disclosure to the father together with the perception of disagreement on cultural topics predicted French affirmation as well as the two issues of French and ethnic exploration. It seems that such a relationship is conducive to discussion and that disagreement is a key factor for orientation towards the host society and a good incentive for development and adaptation. Although these data may appear contradictory and puzzling, one can argue with Goodnow (1994) that disagreement, especially on cultural topics or values in immigrant families, is to be expected during adolescence and young adulthood. It does not imply conflict and is part of the developmental tasks for acquiring autonomy. Disagreement with the father on cultural topics within a friendly or secure climate may be an occasion to test ideas and to exchange knowledge and points of views, thus constituting a means for clarification and achievement of identity (Goodnow, 1994; Grotevant & Cooper, 1986).

The contribution of each parent to enculturation either towards the ethnic group or towards French society is different. Fathers contribute only in a pragmatic sense to French enculturation. On the other hand, mothers offer ethnic stimulation through their conversations on cultural topics, which are related to ethnic exploration, and their pragmatic ethnic attitudes are related to ethnic affirmation. Furthermore, however, they stimulate French affirmation through their French emotional attitude. This complementary role of parents providing adolescents with multiple perspectives within the family circle, is a valuable source of sociocognitive development (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). This view is consistent with the hypotheses of Szapocznik and Kurtines (1993) and Vatz Laaroussi (2001) concerning the dynamic of the family system in an immigrant family.

Strengths and limitations of the study

The strength of this study is to investigate simultaneously four issues of cultural identity, to examine the respective roles played by predictors arising from several layers of the social environment and to examine the impact of both parents from their point of view. This strength is

also a weakness. First, interactions between the variables and the path of influence were not tested, as the ecological models suggest doing. Second, while the findings indicate different types of influence between mothers and fathers, the respective roles of parents could not been tested with the same rigor as in dominance analysis proposed by Barber, Stolz, and Olsen (2005) owing to the complexity of the analysis with such a large number of variables. Third, because we focused on a general process rather than on the specific dynamic of acculturation within each ethnic group, we are unable to say how much the general pattern applies to each group. Finally, the measure of cultural harmony, which appeared as a predictor, may be ambiguous. Although it is hard to know how each adolescent understood it, there would seem to be no correlation with confidence in parents or with attachment to parental culture. However, given the findings, more research on the topic of distance from the culture of parents is needed.

Conclusions

The ecological framework of analysis and the multidimensional approach to identity adopted in this study in order to examine the acquisition of cultural identity in second-generation adolescents living in France appears fruitful. The results are promising for understanding the identity process and its influence on second-generation adolescents. In this French sample, all the layers of the social environment are important, including friends (mainly French peers) and the perception of discrimination, but it appears that parents have the strongest influence. The perception of adolescents has to be taken into account and must be distinguished from what the parents said. The parents' contribution to cultural identity is not just a matter of ethnic identity and the French identity is not only a matter of influence from French society, it is also a family matter. This research underscores the role of parents in French affirmation and French exploration, an issue that has not been examined previously. The family dynamic is complex, and it appears that open discussion where members may disagree is a good developmental incentive for adolescents. The latter point is of importance for prevention programs with minority families and needs further research.

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