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Identity development among ethnic minority youth:

Integrating findings from studies in Europe

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Summary

In the context of increasing ethnic diversity in many European countries, a successful development and integration of ethnic minority youth becomes a central concern for the future of Europe. It is particularly important to understand identity development among ethnic minority youth, since it may present specific challenges and possibilities for both youth and societies. The aim of this review is to integrate recent findings on identity development among ethnic minority youth in Europe. We identified three crosscutting themes in the literature. The "intensified identity work" approach suggests that ethnic minority youth are more engaged in identity work compared to their mainstream peers. The "diverging identity outcomes" represents a discussion on the opposite outcomes of identity development among ethnic minority youth. The "third way or hybrid identity" approach suggests that ethnic minority youth can build on globalization and other cultural resources, as well as on their own developmental flexibility to form novel, adaptive patterns of identity. We discuss the complementarity of the three approaches and suggest directions for further studies with ethnic minority youth. We also show how the findings of this review can help practitioners and policy makers in Europe to support ethnic minority youth in their identity development.

Keywords: identity; youth; Europe; ethnic minorities; immigrant

Introduction

Youth (adolescents and emerging adults) are among the most sharply affected by the growing socio-economic inequalities in the European societies (OECD, 2017). Some groups of young people face a particularly high risk of social disadvantage[1] (European Commission, 2016). Specifically, ethnic minority status is one of the most salient markers of social disadvantage among youth in Europe (European Commission, 2016; OECD, 2017).

The ethnic minority status applies to ethnic groups that are considered in some ways (e.g., in numbers or power) inferior to the rest of the population (Malloy, 2013). Ethnic minority groups in Europe include those who have been in a minority situation for a long time (i.e., traditional minorities) and those who moved to another country relatively recently (i.e., immigrants) (Malloy, 2013). Both types of ethnic minorities in Europe were formed through diverse socio-historical processes[2] (Anderson, 2017). This suggests that the situation of ethnic minority youth across Europe can vary, depending on the historical context, country policies, minorities' responses to these policies, and other factors (Anderson, 2017; Wheatley, 2007). However, on average, ethnic minority youth face a higher risk of social disadvantage

[1] The term "social disadvantage" refers to a wide variety of interlinked aspects of social divisions and injustices, including poverty, social exclusion, a lack of opportunities, human rights violations, social immobility, and a lack of human and social capital (Dean & Platt, 2016).

[2] Based on Anderson's (2017) classification, the category of 'old' or traditional ethnic minorities includes at least ten different types, from cross-border minorities in border regions (e.g., Hungarian-speaking regions across the borders of Hungary with all seven of its neighboring countries), to diaspora who are widely scattered across Europe (e.g., Armenians, Jews, or Roma) or minorities in re-created nation-states (e.g., Russians in the Baltic States). The category of 'new' ethnic minorities or immigrants is also heterogeneous and includes such types as imperial/ colonial settlers in the colonized countries (e.g., ethnic Germans and Hungarians in the former Yugoslavia or Russians across the former USSR), migrants from the former colonies to the homeland of the colonizers (e.g., Congolese in Belgium), as well economic migrants (e.g., Turks in Germany, migrants from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe to Western and Northern parts of the continent) (Anderson, 2017).

compared to the mainstream youth. In almost all EU countries, youth from the newly formed ethnic minorities are over-represented among those not in education, employment or training, and among those with a high risk of poverty (European Commission, 2015). While the data on the current situation of traditional ethnic minorities in Europe are scarce, the existing findings show that some of them face similar disadvantages regarding the economic situation, education, language, or citizenship (Wheatley, 2007). For example, Russian youth in Estonia face educational limitations related to their parental socio-economic disadvantages (Lindeman, 2013); Turks, Pomaks, and Roma in Bulgaria have a lasting history of poverty, unemployment, and educational underachievement (Tomova, 1998); while Roma youth face multiple social disadvantages across Eastern and Central Europe (Dimitrova et al., 2017).

At the same time, the existing understanding of psychosocial development of ethnic minority youth is rather limited and fragmented (Reitz, Motti-Stefanidi, & Asendorpf, 2014; Titzmann & Lee, 2018). There is an on-going discussion whether the development of ethnic minority youth should be viewed as similar to their peers in the mainstream population, or whether it should be approached as qualitatively distinct (Sam & Berry, 2010). Similar questions arise when studying identity development among ethnic minority youth.

Identity development is one of the key aspects of psychosocial development among ethnic minority youth. On the one hand, identity development is a central developmental task for all youth, with important implications for subsequent psychological functioning and self-regulation (Arnett, 2014; Eichas, Meca, Montgomery, & Kurtines, 2015; Erikson, 1968). For youth, building a sense of who one is also means developing a personal feeling of well-being and self-confidence, a sense of direction in life, and a possibility for the integration into a larger society (Erikson, 1968), which is a key concern for ethnic minorities in Europe (Crul & Schneider, 2010). On the other hand, the task of forming an identity is strongly related to the context and evolves through continuous person-context interactions (Bosma & Kunnen,

2008), which means that a person builds an identity through continual relations with one's social and cultural contexts. As such, identity development for ethnic minority youth may entail specific challenges and resources, not shared with the mainstream youth.

Considering this, the aim of our review is to integrate the findings on identity development among ethnic minority youth in Europe. We ask whether identity development in ethnic minority youth follows normative patterns identified in the studies with the mainstream youth or presents specific, unique patterns. Currently, the knowledge on this question in the European context is limited, since most of the studies on identity and related developmental outcomes among ethnic minority youth come from the United States (US) (Schotte, Stanat, & Edele, 2018). The existing reviews in Europe have focused on broad developmental outcomes for ethnic minority youth, such as externalizing and internalizing difficulties or academic achievement (Belhadj Kouider, Koglin, & Petermann, 2014; Dimitrova, Chasiotis, & van de Vijver, 2016), without discussing identity. Others have reviewed only selected aspects of identity among ethnic minority youth, for example, cultural identity (Vedder & van Geel, 2017), or have focused on social psychological, rather than developmental aspects of identity (e.g., Verkuyten, 2005). In addition, scholars in the field (e.g., Kunst & Sam, 2013; Vedder & van Geel, 2017) observed a lack of attention to normative (i.e., age-related) development of identity among ethnic minority youth. Thus, there is a need for a broader discussion on identity development among ethnic minority youth focusing on the European context.

Recent migration trends in Europe have contributed to the changing ethnic and cultural composition of many European countries (Favel, 2008). The level of societal diversity has become unprecedented in some parts of Europe (Vertovec, 2007). In this context, a successful development and integration of ethnic minority youth is of a central concern for the future of Europe (Crul & Schneider, 2010). Deeper knowledge on identity

development among ethnic minority youth may contribute to identifying the most effective integration policies and help psychologists and other professionals working with youth to understand developmental needs of ethnically diverse youth in Europe.

Identity as a Developmental and Acculturative Task

Since the focus of this review is on identity development, we consider the developmental approach to identity as our point of departure. However, identity of ethnic minority youth can also be conceptualized from acculturation or social identity perspectives. We present these approaches and discuss their implications for the findings on identity development among ethnic minority youth.

The developmental perspective on identity follows Erikson's psychosocial lifespan theory, where identity is considered one of the major developmental tasks of a human life (Erikson, 1968). A person aims to build a coherent sense of self by integrating one's goals, values, and life scenarios. Developmental changes in adolescence facilitate the revision of childhood identifications and creation of a qualitatively new identity, which ensures a sense of personal continuity and uniqueness. This process should result in an integrated identity, which provides a comfortable sense of self, is congruent with one's abilities and needs, and is recognized by significant others and the society at large (Erikson, 1968). In a less favorable scenario, a person experiences identity confusion, which implies a lack of clarity of who one is and where one is going (Erikson, 1968).

Building on Erikson's ideas, the classical identity status model (Marcia, 1966) conceptualized identity formation as based on two processes - exploration (i.e., considering different meaningful alternatives) and commitment (i.e., investing in personally meaningful goals or values) (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). Different combinations of these processes produce four identity statuses (Marcia, 1966): achievement (commitment following exploration), foreclosure (commitment, but no exploration), moratorium (exploration, but no commitment),

and diffusion (an absence of both exploration and commitment). Among youth, the share of those in moratorium and identity achievement statuses tends to rise over time, while foreclosure and diffusion statuses decline or fluctuate (Kroger, Martinussen, & Marcia, 2010).

More recently, researchers proposed new process-oriented models of identity development to advance Marcia's status approach (e.g., Crocetti, Rubini, & Meeus, 2008). The process-oriented perspective conceptualizes identity development as a dual-cycle process, in which commitments are developed in an iterative process of identity formation (i.e., making identity commitments after considering the alternatives) and maintenance (i.e., deeper understanding and consolidation of the commitments already made) (Meeus, 2011). In addition, identity exploration and commitment are considered as multidimensional processes. For example, the three-factor process-oriented model (Crocetti, Rubini, & Meeus, 2008) includes commitment and two distinct modes of exploration: reconsideration of commitments (a comparison of current commitments with possible alternatives) and in-depth exploration (a process of thinking about the enacted commitments). Thus, recent approaches on identity emphasize the multidimensionality of identity processes and a cyclical nature of identity development.

Another key aspect of identity development is the content, which refers to what one considers when forming an identity (e.g., what goals, values, or beliefs) (Meca et al., 2015). There are numerous identity-relevant content areas, which refer to distinct identity domains (Schwartz, 2001). The salience of different identity domains varies across developmental periods, cultural settings, or populations (Goossens, 2001). Erikson (1968) emphasized that occupational and relational domains were particularly important for a young person's identity, but he also referred to politics, ethnicity, and other domains. While some findings indicate that in adolescence occupational identity is the most salient domain (e.g., Skorikov & Vondracek, 1998), other findings suggest that in emerging adulthood the relational domains

may take over in a relative salience and importance (Vosylis, Erentaitė, & Crocetti, 2018). Ethnic minority youth, besides building their identity in age-related domains, such as occupational and relational identity, also invest in additional domains, such as ethnic and cultural identity (Motti-Stefanidi, Berry, Chryssochoou, Sam, & Phinney, 2012). Thus, identity development in different domains can vary in salience and importance for different youth.

Overall, the concept of identity in the developmental perspective has evolved to include multidimensional conceptualizations of identity processes and domains, which allows for a nuanced and dynamic approach. However, though it has been employed extensively in studies with mainstream youth, this approach has rarely been applied in studies with ethnic minorities.

Instead, many studies on the identity of ethnic minority youth have been driven by social psychological or acculturation frameworks, which conceptualize identity in terms of cultural group affiliation and intercultural contact. For example, based on the acculturation framework (Berry, 1997), identity of ethnic minority youth is likely to undergo changes resulting from the contact between their heritage culture and the mainstream culture in the country of residence. The processes and outcomes of such changes are referred to as acculturation (Berry, 1997). The acculturation approach offers four identity configurations: an integrated (or bicultural) identity (strong ethnic identity, strong national one), a separated identity (strong ethnic identity, weak national one), an assimilated identity (respectively low ethnic, strong national), and a marginalized identity (rejection of both ethnic and national identity) (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001). As it focuses on identity change resulting from an intercultural contact, the acculturation perspective has not dwelled upon normative (i.e., age-related) identity development. It was also limited to the domain of

cultural identity, defined as a sense of belonging to cultural group(s) (e.g., ethnic or national) and the feelings associated with these memberships (Phinney et al., 2001).

Subsequent models in the field have offered a more integrative approach, which considered both normative development and social affiliation aspects of identity (e.g., Phinney, 1992; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Umaña-Taylor, Yazedjian, & Bámaca-Gómez, 2004). However, these newer models continued to focus only on cultural or ethnic identity. As a result, most of the studies with ethnic minority youth have investigated cultural or ethnic identity, leaving other identity domains (e.g., occupational, relational) out of the focus (a few recent exceptions in the European context include Crocetti, Fermani, Pojaghi, & Meeus, 2011; Crocetti, Rubini, Luyckx, et al., 2008; Crocetti, Rubini, & Meeus, 2008; Dimitrova et al., 2017; Ketner, Buitelaar, & Bosma, 2004; Meeus, Oosterwegel, & Vollebergh, 2002). In comparison, cultural or ethnic identity of the mainstream youth is rarely assessed (Haugen & Kunst, 2017).

In terms of identity processes, cultural or ethnic identity has often been investigated as a general single factor without differentiating between identity processes (Syed et al., 2013; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004). Even those conceptualizations, which have emphasized the distinction between different identity processes (e.g., Phinney & Ong, 2007; Umaña-Taylor, et al., 2004), still did not take into account different modes of identity processes (e.g., exploration as happening through in-depth exploration and reconsideration of commitments) (Syed et al., 2013). Such situation has resulted in a limited picture of identity development among ethnic minority youth in terms of identity processes and developmental cycles (Meeus, 2017; Syed et al., 2013).

Recently, there has been a growing emphasis on the importance of integrating developmental, social psychological and acculturation approaches in studying identity development among ethnic minority youth. Integrative models have been proposed by Fuligni

and Tsai (2015), Motti-Stefanidi and colleagues (2012), Schwartz and colleagues (2013), Syed and colleagues (2013), Szabo, Ward, and Flecher (2016), and Titzmann and Lee (2018). These models acknowledge that immigrant adolescents, like all individuals, are challenged to master normative development, while simultaneously facing acculturative tasks. However, in the European context, there are still few studies based on these approaches. This leaves our understanding of how identity develops among ethnic minority youth a relatively open question.

Three Salient Themes on Identity Development among Ethnic Minority Youth

After reviewing the recent findings from the European studies on identity and related outcomes among ethnic minority youth, we have identified three most salient crosscutting themes[3]. These themes resonate across studies based on different methodologies and have their theoretical underpinnings in the approaches discussed above.

The first theme emphasizes the "intensified identity work" among ethnic minority youth. Here, the status of ethnic minority is considered a risk factor for identity development and related outcomes. Besides dealing with normative developmental tasks ethnic minority youth simultaneously face acculturative tasks. It is considered that due to these challenges, ethnic youth are more actively engaged in identity work, for example, they have to consider more and often contradictory alternatives in order to find satisfying identity commitments (Crocetti et al., 2011).

The second salient theme can be called the "contrasting identity outcomes". Here, personal and social adaptation of ethnic minority youth is analyzed using the dichotomy of migration morbidity versus immigrant paradox (Dimitrova et al., 2016). Migration

[3] First, we conducted literature search with Boolean statements such as identity AND (immigrant OR ethnic) AND (adolescen* OR youth). Only studies published in English in international peer-reviewed journals since 2000 were considered. We then eliminated the studies that focused on other than European contexts and samples. Finally, we grouped the remaining studies according to their research questions and approaches to ethnic minority youth identity. The first group included comparative studies on identity processes among ethnic minority and mainstream youth. The second group included studies on the links between identity and broad developmental outcomes among ethnic minority youth. The third group included studies on the ways ethnic minority youth construct their identities in their respective environments.

morbidity refers to findings showing that immigrant youth have less favorable developmental outcomes compared to their mainstream peers. Immigrant paradox references findings that show more favorable developmental outcomes among immigrant youth compared to the mainstream youth. In a number of European studies, identity development and, particularly, its outcomes have been analyzed through the lenses of these approaches.

The last theme, called the "third way or hybrid identity", emphasizes that identity development among ethnic minority youth is in many ways different from that of the mainstream youth. As recently observed, ethnic minority youth are able to "create a personal third, sometimes hybrid, identity" (Belhadj Kouider et al., 2014, p. 386). This indicates the possibility that identity in ethnic minority youth develops as a very specific response to their unique socio-cultural situation, which can be viewed as both challenging and resourceful at the same time (e.g., Caneva, 2016; Kunst & Sam, 2013). Below we present the three themes in more detail and review empirical findings pertinent to each. In parallel, we discuss how these three approaches are related and may complement one another.

"Intensified identity work". The claim that ethnic minority youth undergo more intensive identity work than the mainstream youth was addressed in several studies focusing on ethnic identity. In one study, ethnic identity processes in Turkish and Moroccan youth were compared with the majority youth population in the Netherlands. Findings showed that ethnic identity processes (i.e., exploration and commitment), were high among ethnic minority youth (Wissink, Deković, Yağmur, Stams, de Haan, 2008). Another study in Italy has found that ethnic identity exploration was high among Eastern European and North African immigrants, compared to Italians, but ethnic identity commitments were higher only among Eastern European youth (Musso, Moscardino, & Inguglia, 2017). These differences in the levels of ethnic identity exploration and commitment were also found across different ethnic minorities in France (Sabatier, 2008), but the identified variation across ethnic groups

did not have any simple pattern and the mainstream population was not represented in this study. Thus, existing findings support the "intensified identity work" hypothesis regarding identity development for the ethnicity domain, however, this effect, to some extent, varies across domains and ethnic minority groups.

Another set of studies compared identity processes in educational and relational identity domains. Comparing the mean levels of identity processes between ethnic minorities (Turkish and Moroccan youth) and the mainstream group (Dutch) in the Netherlands revealed that identity commitments and exploration in the educational domain were higher in both minority groups, while identity exploration and commitment in the relational domain were higher only in Turkish adolescents (Meeus, Oosterwegel, & Vollebergh, 2002). Another similar study in the Netherlands, which employed a person-oriented approach based on the three-factor model (Crocetti, Rubini, Luyckx, & Meeus, 2008), has found that moratorium (low commitment, moderate in-depth exploration, and high reconsideration of commitment) and searching moratorium (high commitment, in-depth exploration, and reconsideration) identity statuses were more often found among Turkish and Moroccan than in the mainstream (Dutch) population (Crocetti, Rubini, & Meeus, 2008). A study with Italian adolescents also provided similar results (Crocetti, Fermani, Pojaghi, & Meeus, 2011). Specifically, the variable-oriented results of this study showed that reconsideration of commitment was high among ethnic minority youth. In addition, person-oriented analyses revealed that more ethnic minority youth were in the searching moratorium status. Moreover, this study highlighted differences between ethnic groups: youth from Asian families displayed higher reconsideration of commitment than their peers from Africa, South America, and Eastern Europe (Crocetti et al., 2011).

Taken together, these studies provide support for the "intensified identity work" hypothesis, that is, youth from ethnic minority groups may be going through a more intensive

identity crisis across different identity domains (ethnic, educational, relational) compared to mainstream youth. However, the intensity of identity processes varies by identity domain and ethnic origin - certain domains may require more intensive work for some ethnic groups (e.g., the relational domain for Turkish adolescents in the Netherlands), but not for others.

"Diverging identity outcomes". One of the most salient questions in the literature on ethnic minority youth in Europe is whether being an ethnic minority presents a risk factor or an advantage for developmental outcomes, such as academic achievement, internalizing and externalizing problems, or well-being. Two recent reviews (Belhadj Kouider et al., 2014; Dimitrova et al., 2016) have shown that developmental outcomes among ethnic minority children and youth in Europe tend to be poorer compared to the mainstream populations. Adolescents with an immigrant background were more prone to externalizing problems, while children from immigrant groups were more prone to developing internalizing problems. Other factors that increased the vulnerability of ethnic minority youth included low socioeconomic status, parenting characteristics, such as maternal harsh parenting, an uncertain cultural identity of the parents, as well as unsupportive policies in the country of residence.

While identity development was not directly assessed in these reviews, identity was conceptualized as an explanatory factor for the broad developmental outcomes among ethnic minority youth. Identity can play the role of a mediator between specific experiences of ethnic minorities and their developmental outcomes (e.g. Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, & Solheim 2009; Kunst & Sam, 2013; Reitz et al., 2014). It can also be a moderator, which either ameliorates or exacerbates the effects of specific experiences of ethnic minorities on their developmental outcomes (e.g. Ikram et al., 2016; Schaafsma, 2011; Spiegler, Verkuyten, Thijs, & Leyendecker, 2016). How can less favorable developmental outcomes among ethnic minority youth, documented in the recent reviews, be interpreted considering the possible mediating or moderating role of identity?

When discussing what can go wrong with identity development, Crocetti, Beyers, and Çok (2016) refer to the "dark side of identity development", which includes such identity aspects as a process of reconsideration of commitments, a status of searching moratorium, and a lack of identity integration. As mentioned in the previous subsection, high levels of reconsideration of commitment and searching moratorium were found among ethnic minority youth in Italy and the Netherlands (Crocetti, Rubini, Luyckx, et al., 2008; Crocetti, Rubini, & Meeus, 2008; Crocetti, et al., 2011). These two identity aspects have links with higher distress and both internalizing and externalizing difficulties (Crocetti, Rubini, Luyckx, et al., 2008). In addition, Hannover and colleagues (2013) reported that a substantial part of ethnic minority students in Germany had non-integrated ethnic and national identities in the school context, which was related to lower academic achievement compared to those with integrated identities. Taken together, these findings can provide some explanation for migration morbidity among ethnic minority youth in Europe. "Intensified identity work" can lead to higher levels of the "dark side of identity development", which, in turn, is related to less desirable broad developmental outcomes among ethnic minority youth, such as higher internalizing or externalizing difficulties or lower academic achievement.

However, there are some indications that the patterns of less desirable outcomes for ethnic minority youth only appear at a certain age. For example, Spiegler et al. (2016) found that ethnic identity exploration moderated the link between ethnic identity commitment and cross-ethnic friendships: when exploration was low, higher commitments were associated with fewer cross-ethnic friendships, but this only appeared in middle, not early adolescents (Spiegler et al., 2016). In addition, in younger adolescents, positive links between ethnic identity exploration and acculturative stress were stronger, compared to older adolescents, since older adolescents have stronger identity commitments and can be better integrated into the society (Musso, Inguglia, & Lo Coco, 2017). These findings illustrate how the co-

occurrence of normative developmental and cultural challenges faced by ethnic minority youth may interact in shaping psychosocial adjustment, as suggested by Titzmann and Lee (2018).

Another way to discuss identity outcomes for ethnic minority youth is based on the acculturation perspective. The four cultural identity configurations (Phinney et al., 2001) (integrated or bicultural, separated, assimilated, and marginalized) are expected to have different developmental outcomes among ethnic minority youth. Those ethnic groups that develop an integrated cultural identity (identify both with an ethnic and a national group) are expected to have the best outcomes (Berry, 1997; Phinney et al., 2001). The least desirable outcomes are expected for those with marginalized identities, while separated and assimilated identities should lead to intermediate outcomes (Berry, 1997).

Despite the initial expectations that this pattern is universal (Berry, 1997), numerous empirical studies in the field, including the ones from the European context, have provided mixed findings (e.g., Rudmin & Ahmadzadeh, 2001; Schotte et al., 2018). The findings diverge on several moderating factors at individual, group, and societal level. One of the most important moderating factors in studies which were carried out in Europe has to do with how an ethnic minority group is positioned in mainstream society. As shown by Dimitrova and colleagues (2017), the results of the association between ethnic identity and well-being can even be opposite, depending on the country context - for Roma youth in the Czech Republic and Romania the link was positive, while in Kosovo and Bulgaria negative. A similar pattern of positive and negative relationships was detected when comparing Turkish youth in Germany and in Bulgaria, respectively (Aydinli-Kurakulak & Dimitrova, 2016). These findings suggest that ethnic identity, which is usually considered an asset for ethnic minority youth, may have no protective power when an ethnic group faces lasting discrimination.

However, other studies provide mixed findings in relation to this assumption. The study in Germany showed that less accepted immigrants, compared to those that are more accepted in the society, benefited more from the identification with the mainstream context (i.e., assimilation), but this effect appeared only at the level of the academic achievement (Schotte et al., 2018). When well-being was assessed, the less accepted groups benefited more from the identification with the ethnic group (Schotte et al., 2018). Further, a protective effect of ethnic identity for well-being in the context of discrimination was demonstrated for different ethnic minority age groups, including youth, in the Netherlands (Schaafsma, 2011). The study with Turkish-Belgian youth showed that when perceived discrimination was high both strong ethnic identification and strong national identification were related to positive outcomes (Baysu, Phalet, & Brown, 2011). For immigrants from the former Soviet Union in Finland, higher perceived discrimination increased disidentification with the national group, but not with the ethnic group (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009).

As can be seen from these findings, no simple pattern of differences appears across studies. Thus, the understanding of the role of cultural identity configurations in explaining identity-related outcomes among ethnic minority youth in Europe is still limited. Though the level of perceived discrimination may explain some differences, more factors are necessary to account for the diversity of findings (e.g., Schulz & Leszczensky, 2016). Taken together, these diverging findings are in line with an observation that identity development patterns among ethnic minority youth vary depending on the context, which is made of multiple interdependent layers of relationships, cultural meanings, policies, etc. (Vedder & van Geel, 2017). On the other hand, these diverging findings can also be methodological artefacts related to different methods of assessment used across studies. For example, Rudmin and Ahmadzadeh (2001) found no consistent patterns across different measures of acculturation, while Schwartz and Zamboanga (2008) reported a larger number of empirically

derived acculturation patterns than those covered by theoretically derived acculturation measures.

Besides the methodological critique, the acculturation model and the concept of marginalization was criticized as a limiting framework for analyzing psychosocial adjustment of ethnic minority youth (e.g., Kunst & Sam, 2013; Rudmin & Ahmadzadeh, 2001). The acculturation model does not account for the cultural globalization and complex intercultural processes characteristic to the current European societies (Kunst & Sam, 2013). Ethnic minorities do not necessarily view themselves as faced with a choice between a heritage and a host culture, but are rather able to construct identities based on their own terms and preferences (Verkuyten, 2005). The theme called the "third way or hybrid identity" emerged as another salient topic in the recent studies on identity among ethnic minority youth in Europe.

"Third way or hybrid identity". From the acculturation perspective, ethnic minority youth are categorized as either integrated, separated, assimilated, or marginalized based on their ethnic and national identity (Berry, 1997). However, an alternative perspective suggests that ethnic minority youth have more identity options, based on different cultural and personal resources. In other words, there is a possibility of finding a "third way" to build one's identity. It can also be referred to as a "hybrid identity" pattern, which implies that "one is able to claim desired images, positions, and self-understandings in a variety of contexts" (Verkuyten, 2005, p. 174).

Hybrid identities are constructed by mixing, blending, and combining different elements from various cultures, nations, and groups. Superordinate identities, such as a global identity (Kunst & Sam, 2013) or, in the European context, a European identity (Lannegrand-Willems & Barbot, 2015) can be examples of hybrid identities found among European youth. Ethnic minority youth can also develop novel hybrid identities based on their specific

experiences and contexts. For example, young immigrant men in Scotland creatively complement their identity as Scottish Muslims by a global network of identifications with cultures in Asia and Africa (Hopkins, 2007). A study with Moroccan adolescent girls in the Netherlands revealed how they are able to creatively interpret, compromise, and reinvent cultural meanings in order to overcome the apparent contradictions between the traditional and modern approaches to gender, relationships, work, and religion (Ketner et al., 2004). Similarly, ethnic minority youth in Sweden actively construct their own language, concepts, and categories to refer to their position in the Swedish society (Wiltgren, 2017). By flexibly (dis)identifying with the newly created cultural categories, minority youth negotiate their sense of belonging in the multicultural Swedish society (Wiltgren, 2017).

These examples reveal a high level of flexibility involved in negotiating youth identities among different cultures (Caneva, 2016). Such flexibility is a response to globalized and dynamic cultural contexts of youth development (Caneva, 2016). On the one hand, such contexts provide increased possibilities of choice for youth constructing their identities, but on the other hand, they also bring higher perceptions of uncertainty and unpredictability related to a globalized world order (Caneva, 2016). The desirable outcome in such contexts is to construct multifaceted and continually changing identities, which would ensure enough "space" and flexibility to adjust to a constantly changing globalized world (Caneva, 2016; Verkuyten, 2005).

The flexibility of cognitive systems that characterize adolescents (Crone & Dahl, 2012) can provide ethnic minority youth the developmental tools to define their identity by dynamically positioning their selves in two or more cultures. For instance, this flexibility can be employed in the context of a heightened inter-ethnic conflict by a stronger affirmation of one's ethnic identity compared to the identity of the mainstream society (e.g., Moroccan youth in the Netherlands; Verkuyten, Thijs, & Stevens, 2012). Developmental flexibility is

also reflected in the ability of ethnic minority pre-adolescents and adolescents to switch between their multiple group identities in order to gain social acceptance among the maximum number of peers in their environment, as demonstrated in a study carried out in the United Kingdom (Rutland et al., 2012). This ability makes ethnic minority children more advanced in their peer relationships compared to their mainstream peers.

These examples are in line with the claim that contextual cues are central to flexible identity formation in ethnic minority youth (Fuligni & Tsai, 2015). Moreover, they also show how global identity or similar emerging patterns of hybrid identity may constitute a resource for youth development, particularly in a hostile social context (Kunst & Sam, 2013). For example, a strong global identity was shown to explain positive psychosocial adaptation of minority youth in the context of discrimination experiences (Kunst & Sam, 2013). Additionally, active ethnic identity exploration fostered intercultural competence, especially in multicultural contexts (Schwarzenthal, Juang, Schachner, van de Vijver, & Handrick, 2017).

Generally, the "third way or hybrid identity" perspective reveals a distinct way of building an identity embedded in the context and characterized by flexibility and continual dynamics. The identified patterns of mixing and combining different identity elements across cultural, national, and ethnic boundaries present ethnic minority youth as agents able to negotiate their own personal meanings and identities. In addition, this perspective shows the situation of ethnic minority youth as both challenging and resourceful, and thus it can shed more light on the positive potential of ethnic minority youth. By employing a contextualized approach and by capitalizing on their developmental flexibility, researchers can pinpoint more precisely developmental resources and adaptive strategies that these young people use.

Integration of the Existing Findings, their Limitations, and Future Directions

The aim of this review was to integrate the findings on identity development among ethnic minority youth in Europe. Our findings suggest that ethnic minority youth compared to the mainstream youth in Europe may be undergoing a more intensive identity crisis and engage more actively in identity exploration and commitment processes. Such a pattern was observed in ethnic, educational, and relational identity domains, though with some variations across different ethnic minority groups. While increased levels of commitment, at least in the ethnic domain, may serve as a developmental resource for ethnic minority youth (e.g., Schaafsma, 2011), high levels in some other identity processes may suggest that these youths undergo difficulties in their identity development (Crocetti, Rubini, Luyckx, et al., 2008; Crocetti, Rubini, & Meeus, 2008; Crocetti et al., 2011). In particular, "intensified identity work" can lead to higher levels of the "dark side of identity development", which, in turn, can be related to higher internalizing and externalizing difficulties or lower academic achievement found among ethnic minority youth in Europe (Belhadj Kouider et al., 2014; Dimitrova et al., 2016).

At the same time, the findings of this review highlight that identity development and its links to broad developmental outcomes among ethnic minority youth may be complex and require additional research efforts. The existing European studies on cultural identity and its outcomes provided mixed findings with no simple patterns of differences. The outcomes of cultural identity or its aspects–ethnic and national identity–vary considerably across ethnic minority groups and contexts. The moderators include the level of discrimination faced by ethnic minorities, the nature of policies in the host country, the domain of adjustment (social or psychological) assessed, and also the study participants' age. A systematic review in this field could more clearly identify the consistent patterns and provide more explanations for complex variations across existing studies.

On the other hand, the large variations across existing findings suggest that youth from different ethnic groups across Europe may be finding their own unique ways to deal with the issues of identity development. By building on their developmental resources, such as flexibility of cognitive systems (Crone & Dahl, 2012; Fuligni & Tsai, 2015), as well as on cultural resources, such as globalization (Kunst & Sam, 2013), ethnic minority youth may be able to combine different identity elements across cultural, national, and ethnic boundaries and construct hybrid and dynamic identities. The existing studies in the European context provide examples for how such identities are constructed and how they are used by ethnic minority youth to negotiate their position in the host society. Hybrid identities may be part of adaptive strategies that ethnic minority youth use to overcome the specific challenges they face in the present-day Europe.

Despite the insights obtained by integrating the existing findings, it is important to acknowledge that the current understanding of the processes and patterns of identity development among ethnic minority youth is still rather limited. First, if identity is a dynamic and continual process, then there is a lack of focus on identity processes and change in studies with ethnic minority youth. Only a handful of studies with ethnic minority youth in Europe have applied a process-oriented approach to identity (e.g., Crocetti et al., 2011; Crocetti, Rubini, & Meeus, 2008; Meeus et al., 2002). Moreover, there is a lack of longitudinal research addressing identity development in ethnic minority youth. The longitudinal approach could help to clarify if, for example, ethnic minority youth stay in high levels of moratorium and reconsideration of commitment for prolonged periods, or whether these are temporary difficulties on the way to more favorable identity outcomes, as documented in a study from the US context (Syed, Azmitia, & Phinney, 2007).

In addition, identity domains studied among ethnic minority youth are limited to cultural or ethnic identity, while inquiry into other domains is very rare. The general

assumption that for ethnic minority youth the domains of ethnicity and culture are the most salient has recently been challenged both empirically and theoretically. Recent findings from the European context show that such domains as religion and family (Dimitrova et al., 2017), or education, work, and romantic relationships (Ketner et al., 2004) may be more important for ethnic minority youth than their cultural or ethnic identity. It has also been suggested that different aspects of identity may play different functions in the context of acculturation. While cultural identity is likely to change and may bring identity-related distress in the context of acculturation, identity in other domains, such as relational, educational, vocational may protect a person from a loss of balance and provide a sense of stability and continuity (Schwartz, Montgomery, & Briones, 2006). This points to the importance of studying different domains of identity among ethnic minority youth, including the domains considered developmentally relevant for mainstream adolescents and emerging adults, such as vocation, education, and relations (Erikson, 1968; Skorikov & Vondracek, 1998; Vosylis et al., 2018).

Moreover, the prevailing focus on the cultural aspects of identity among ethnic minority youth may also result in overlooking the effects of social disadvantage faced by these youths across European societies. It is acknowledged that cultural learning requires intellectual, social, and economic resources (Rudmin, 2006), but these resources, on average, are rather limited among ethnic minority youth compared to the mainstream youth in Europe (European Commission, 2016). Focusing on the cultural influences (such as choosing a particular acculturation strategy) to explain unfavorable developmental outcomes among ethnic minority youth may shift the attention away from the effects of different aspects of social disadvantage that ethnic minority youth face (e.g., a lack of access to quality education, a lack of social capital, an increased risk of poverty). This suggests that measures of different aspects of social (dis)advantage should be included in future studies on identity and related outcomes among ethnic minority youth.

Finally, ethnic minorities in Europe include diverse groups living in different national contexts with varied policies, historical perspectives, and socio-economic conditions (Anderson, 2017). However, existing studies in the field cover so few groups that it is very difficult to identify broader patterns. While some Western and Northern European countries are covered more often, very little is known about ethnic minority youth living in other parts of Europe. Thus, more diverse samples of ethnic minority youth should be included in the studies on identity development and a comparative perspective should be applied. Comparisons with several groups assessed in the same national context (e.g., Schotte et al., 2018) or the same ethnic group assessed across different national context (e.g., Aydinli-Kurakulak & Dimitrova, 2016; Dimitrova et al., 2017), as well as comparisons between ethnic groups and the mainstream youth population (e.g., Crocetti, Rubini, & Meeus, 2008; Crocetti et at., 2011; Meeus et al., 2002) seem to be fruitful approaches for studying identity development among ethnic minority youth. In addition, some ethnic minorities are doing better than the mainstream, both psychologically (Dimitrova et al., 2017) and socio-economically (Wheatley, 2007). While the predominant focus is on explaining difficulties rather than successful adaptation, a positive youth development approach, as proposed by Motti-Stefanidi and colleagues (2012), may help to switch the focus.

Nevertheless, the considerations highlighted in this review can already be taken into account by practitioners in order to help ethnic minority youth in their identity development. The findings indicate that practitioners should take identity development issues as particularly important in their work with ethnic minority youth, since these youths may be undergoing a more intensive identity crisis compared to mainstream youth. In addition, the assumption that cultural or ethnic identity is most salient and important for ethnic minority youth should be critically considered, since the salience of domains varies by ethnic group and context. It is also important to reconsider some general assumptions that certain cultural

identity configurations are related to particular developmental outcomes, since these relationships can vary substantially across ethnic minority groups in different contexts. The factors that connect cultural identity development to certain outcomes still have to be specified by further studies. Finally, practitioners and policy makers should adopt a positive potential perspective on ethnic minority youth in order to look at their situation as both resourceful and challenging for youth themselves and for European societies.

Conclusions

The findings of this review indicate that ethnic minority youth, compared to the mainstream youth in Europe, may be undergoing a more intensive identity crisis and engage more actively in identity exploration and commitment processes, at least in ethnic, educational, and relational identity domains. However, variations in this pattern are observed across different ethnic minority groups. The findings on cultural identity also add evidence on context-related variations of identity development. The patterns and outcomes of cultural identity vary considerably across ethnic minority groups and their contexts. The moderators of these links include the level of discrimination, the nature of policies in the host country, the domain of functioning assessed, as well as some individual factors, such as age. In line with the contextualized approach to identity development, the studies with ethnic minority youth reveal their ability to develop hybrid and flexible identities across cultural, national and ethnic contexts. Though existing findings are limited in certain aspects, such as few identity domains and processes included in the analyses and few ethnic groups and integration contexts studied, practitioners and policy makers can use them to get a deeper understanding of how ethnic minority youth develop their identities in the present-day Europe.

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