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Assessing Identity Intersectionality in Adolescents and Emerging Adults.
A Theoretical and Methodological Model

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Der Mensch erkennt sich nur im Menschen,
nur das Leben lehret jedem was er sei.

Only in man does man know himself,
life alone teaches each one what he is.

L'uomo si conosce solo nell'uomo, solo
la vita insegna ad ognuno che cosa egli sia.

J. W. von Goethe (1790), "Torquato Tasso", act 2, sc. 3

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PREFACE

What is identity? How does it form and develop? Is it an individual or collective process – or some of both? How can we assess identity? What is the best age group in which to study it?

Unfortunately (or not), these questions have yielded many, perhaps too many, diverse answers. As a result, current identity literature is extremely fragmented, where subfields of identity often "talk past" each other and pay little or no attention to one another (Schwartz, 2001; Schwartz, Luyckx, & Vignoles, 2011). Although they have dealt with many of the same issues and have pursued many of the same objectives, different approaches to identity have evolved largely separately without talking to each other or working to share knowledge and advances. Consequently, the concept of "identity" has been assigned multiple meanings across literatures, and integrating these various meanings has rarely been attempted (Vignoles, Schwartz, & Luyckx, 2011). Indeed, a Google Scholar search with "identity" as a keyword turns up tons of records that are only loosely (if not at all) related to each other, reporting studies focusing separately on identity statuses, identity styles, narrative identity, social and group identity, and many others, with each perspective using different methods and measures. To a certain extent, the presence of different identity literatures focusing on disparate aspects of the identity construct (e.g., personal goals, life stories, interpersonal relationships, group memberships, et cetera) might be considered as an advantage. Indeed, integrating aspects of the various perspectives would create a whole that is larger and more inclusive than any of the individual

perspectives, generating a more appealing perspective. The point being made here is that connections between and among the various identity perspectives need to be explored – something that has only recently begun to occur (Syed, 2012).

The present research was thus designed as an attempt to integrate aspects of various theoretical and empirical perspectives on identity construction in adolescence and emerging adulthood. From our point of view, integrating across perspectives means not only taking into account what each perspective has to offer, but also developing a larger model that is more inclusive and overarching than any of the component theories. We all know, for instance, that measures have been developed to place a person into a specific identity status, or to assess the extent to which a specific domain is central to someone's sense of self, or to ascertain the extent to which attachment to groups affects one's self-perception, or to use someone's life story to discover how he or she construes his or her own identity over time. However, a person is not simply an identity status, or a group member, or a worker – the person is *all* of these issues together. Further, these various identity components may change differently over time (Carlsson, Wängqvist, & Frisén, 2015). Dividing the person into various roles, group memberships, and commitments would overlook the complexity of what identity is and the purposes that it serves (e.g., Serafini & Adams, 2002). Indeed, identity would be better intended as a "bridging construct", or rather as a compound embracing multiple dimensions and components in reciprocal complex relationships.

We might say that the intent of the present work was to create a process of integration at two levels simultaneously: one theoretical, integrating different

approaches to identity research, and the other empirical, proposing a model and a measure for assessing such integrative conception of identity. Indeed, from this point of view, the development of identity is considered as consisting of a process of integration across the various relational contexts in which one functions, through adaptive mechanisms activated by the individual (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). An in-depth analysis of this process would help to facilitate an understanding of what happens when difficulties arise in developing an integrated self across domains (e.g., Azmitia, Syed, & Radmacher, 2009; Schachter, 2004, 2005), especially in the case of youths who belong to minority groups for one or more identity dimensions (ethnic, sexual, religious, etc.). For instance, the domains of sexuality and religion may clash when individuals from highly religious backgrounds wish to engage in sexual relationships and behaviors (especially those relationships and behaviors that are frowned upon within the specific religious tradition to which one belongs). Thus, it is reasonable to suppose that a homosexual boy might find it harder to integrate the sexual dimension of his identity into his overall sense of self if his family does not recognize and accept his sexual orientation (Elizur & Ziv, 2001). Similarly, a Black person who lives in a largely white community may experience some difficulty in integrating his ethnic identity with her peer group or neighborhood identity (depending on how the person's ethnicity is regarded by her peers and neighbors).

Such overlap between and among identity domains parallels the concept of *intersectionality* (Crenshaw, 1996; Hurtado, 1989). Intersectionality refers to the ways in which different aspects of self interconnect and to the modalities through which identities become more or less salient according to the different social contexts

in which individuals interact (Crenshaw, 1996; Narváezet al., 2009). Indeed, specific identity components may be activated (or deactivated) by features of the social context such as discrimination (versus inclusion) and social marginalization (versus acceptance) (Sellers et al., 1997). The application of the intersectionality *paradigm* to psychological research has been matter of fairly recent scientific interest (i.e. Cole, 2009; Schachter, 2004, 2005; Syed, 2010), and will constitute a precious point of reference for the present study.

However, the core questions of my research can be synthesized as follows: "How can we assess such complex interplay between identity dimensions and life contexts?", "What would be the best analytical method to study this kind of data?", and "How can we use results obtained?". I tried to answer these questions first through the construction of a new tool for identity assessment, secondly through the use of innovative (for social sciences) analytical strategies, from where to derive some theoretical conclusions and possible implications for preventive and treatment interventions.

Nevertheless, before focusing on strictly methodological issues, I will describe the theoretical model underlying this work.

In Chapter 1, a general overview of identity literature is provided to contextualize the "cross-contexts-domains model" that I introduce here. This perspective, as already mentioned, builds on key works on intersectionality conducted by Syed and colleagues (e.g., Azmitia et al., 2009; Syed, 2010), by Schachter (2004, 2005), and by others (e.g., Cole, 2009). Critically, we propose that identity is a cross-domain, integrative meta-construct that is greater than the sum of its component domains. To

paraphrase the title of Bowleg's (2008) article, being a Black lesbian woman means more than the sum total of being Black, homosexual, and female. What is fundamentally new about the perspective proposed here is that not only are various identity domains considered together, but their overlap is considered across various relational contexts in which the person functions. For example, the intersection of religion and sexuality may be experienced differently within the family context than when spending time with peers or with one's romantic partner. Our perspective is based on a fundamentally developmental view of identity processes. Indeed, as noted above, identity is one of the key developmental tasks with which adolescents and emerging adults are faced. Thus, I will provide an overview of the current state of identity research, which was inspired by the pioneering work by Erikson (1950), passing for the social identity theory proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1986), and other classic theories. In doing so, I will specify the ways in which existing identity literature (and literature on contextual influences) has guided the present theory and methodology.

Chapter 2 will review literature focused specifically on identity domains. To be more precise, each of several domains (e.g., gender, sexuality, religion, ethnicity) will be addressed, presenting a brief review of work in these fields and showing how identity develops with each of these areas. Each of the domains treated refers to one of the identity dimensions assessed through the novel measure presented in thus work. We argue that it is possible (and necessary) to consider different identity domains at the same time, but also to approach them in a *non-absolute* assumption, that is contextualizing them as working together through reciprocal (rather than

unidirectional) interactions. Such approach is similar to the concepts of centrality and salience formulated by Sellers et al. (1998), who state that *"the MMRI (Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity) assumes that identities are situationally influenced as well as being stable properties of the person"* (pp. 23). That is, identity is comprised of various domain-specific processes that intersect in complex ways, and where these intersections may differ depending on the context in which they occur.

Accordingly, our model is designed to evaluate the salience of each identity dimension within the different life contexts with which a person interacts. It is well-known that each of us, depending on the environment or situation we are in at a specific point in time, displays the part of him/herself that is most salient in that situation or context (Bamberg, 2004; Cross, Gore, & Morris, 2003). Because little work has examined the salience of specific domains within specific contexts, the first step of my research project is focused on developing a quantitative measure to capture the interaction of person, domain, and situation.

Issues associated with life contexts are specifically discussed in Chapter 3, which is dedicated to understanding how and why the various environments in which individuals live influence developmental processes – such as by fostering or inhibiting successful integration of various identity components. The need to consider environmental factors derives directly from Eriksonian theory, which focuses on transactions between person and context. For Erikson (1950), individuals are embedded in social contexts, within which a continuous stream of reciprocal person-context influences occurs.

After this review of theoretical issues, methodological procedures are presented. Chapter 4 is aimed at explaining how the new *Identity Labels and Life Contexts Questionnaire* (ILLCQ) was constructed and tested. The ILLCQ was inspired by qualitative methodology utilized by Narváez et al. (2009). I developed the ILLCQ starting with a pilot study consisting of two focus groups with a small Italian sample. These focus groups were used to identify the dimensions and the contexts to include in the measure and the best manner in which to display it. The ILLCQ was then administered in paper-and-pencil format to a sample of Italian high-school and college students. Finally, building on the experience from and results of this first administration, a larger online administration was conducted within two samples: one Italian and one from the US.

Finally, in Chapter 5 analytic methodology and results are presented. The ILLCQ presents a structure that diverges from classical test theory and, thus, does not match the assumptions for analytic techniques usually employed in the construction and validation of psychometric questionnaires. Therefore, a detailed description of hierarchical clustering, heat maps and means plots - which were used to analyze the ILLCQ data - is provided, explaining why these techniques permit the analysis of "bridging" constructs as identity, and allow us to cluster the intersections between identity domains and life contexts. We could say that these analyses allow us to answer the questions: "How many identities people feel to have?", "How does the salience of each of these identities fluctuate within life contexts?", and "Is identity more consistent across domains or across contexts?". The answers obtained can

stimulate interesting reflections not only about identity research, but also about new

possible ways to construct psychometric tools to measure complex phenomena.

CHAPTER 1

IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION BETWEEN PERSONAL AND SOCIAL MOTIVES

1.0 Introduction

This Chapter retraces the pattern of thought that led to the design of the present research. This study, indeed, was born from a series of reflections and questions raised while trying to understand what are the specific processes implied in the formation of modern adolescents and emerging adults' identity, and what could be the factors that may hamper them. The theoretical background of departure was that of clinical psychology, with a specific interest in adolescence and transition to adulthood, and applied clinical psychology, which relies on research to inform its practices.

The following pages in this Chapter, thus, do not comply with the usual structure encountered in reviews of identity literature, and might result a little bamboozling for those who expect to read a chronological or logical sequence of theories about identity. Nonetheless, we believe that presenting the discourse as it unraveled in our mind will allow the reader to understand more profoundly how we got to the theoretical model and the empirical measure we describe in the present work. However, hereinafter in Chapter 2 and 3, a more structured review of identity literature will be presented to better "connect the dots" of our writing.

1.1 Personal and relational processes in the development of identity

As stated by Ryan and Deci (2011), identity formation has become a quite challenging task due to the fluid and dynamic features of modern societies. Indeed, compared to more traditional cultures, where some relatively fixed factors "helped" individuals to find their way, contemporary Western contexts offer so many options and so little guidance that people, especially youths, sometimes find it hard to define themselves in a clear and stable manner (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996; Côté & Levine, 2002). In Italy, for example, the current educational, economic and social situation, characterized by high rates of unemployment and job insecurity, coupled with a procrastination of transition to adulthood, has been identified as the cause of the so-called "postponed identity" (Sica & Aleni Sestito, 2010). This particular identity configuration, typical of Italian youths, is described as the tendency to procrastinate commitments and postpone consolidation of identity (Aleni Sestito, Sica & Ragozzini, 2011; Crocetti, Rabaglietti & Sica, 2012).

It is well-known (Erikson, 1963; 1968) that *"the major struggles of identity fall upon adolescents, for whom the establishment of secure identities is critical for passage into the adult world"* (Ryan & Deci, 2011, p. 226). According to Harter (2012), adolescence is a time when individuals begin to consolidate a mature sense of self. A number of key skills develop during adolescence and facilitate the abstract thinking that is necessary for identity work. Indeed, because the self is a cognitive and social construction, it develops through a *theory of mind* – the elaboration of an increasingly comprehensive cognitive theory about oneself and the others – as well as through internalizing feedback from important others through social interactions.

It is useful to briefly note the different self-components that develop during childhood and adolescence, as a way of facilitating a better understanding of how we are conceptualizing identity construction. Harter (2012), for example, enumerates *self-awareness, egocentrism, accuracy of self-appraisal, self-esteem, narcissism, self-enhancement strategies, and authenticity* as self-components that develop over time between early childhood and emerging adulthood. These are all aspects of the self that is being constructed during adolescence and the transition to adulthood.

From an identity construction perspective, the I-self and Me-self are essential components of one's theory of mind. James (1890) was the first to distinguish between the I-self (the knower or subject) and the Me-self (that which is known, or the object of self-knowledge). When the I-self becomes aware of the Me-self, the I-self is able to make attributions about its agency and continuity over time – where agency and continuity represent basic identity-related needs (Ryan & Deci, 2006; Vignoles, 2011).

The construct of self becomes increasingly complex as individuals mature and begin to understand that they display or enact different "selves" in different situations. Social and discursive psychologists often view this phenomenon as the person possessing various different identities (Bamberg, 2004), whereas developmental psychologists are more likely to view the phenomenon in terms of situational fluctuations in the person's general sense of identity (Klimstra et al., 2010). Regardless of how it is framed, the inclusion of multiple identities within the self presents a challenge for the adolescent, in that she or he must integrate these various self-presentations into a coherent sense of self – a "me" that is consistent

across time and place (Dunkel, 2005; Erikson, 1950). By late adolescence, most adolescents are able to recognize the larger sense of self that underlies the various self-presentations, and to integrate both positive and negative aspects of one's identity without threatening one's self-integrity.

Erikson (1950) referred to such a larger sense of self as *identity synthesis*, where *identity confusion* represents the inability to extract an underlying "me" from one's situational self-presentations (see also Côté & Levine, 2002). *Theory of mind* – the ability of the I-self to observe the Me-self, and to recognize an independent mind in the others – improves gradually throughout childhood and adolescence (Baron-Cohen, 1995; Fonagy & Target, 1997; Battistelli, 1992; Marchetti & Massaro, 2002). This instance of theory of mind has also been referred to as *perspective taking* (Selman, 2003; Thompson, 2006) and, to some degree, represents the antithesis of the child's innate egocentrism (Piaget, 1970). That is, whereas young children cannot appreciate others' spatial, cognitive, or emotional perspectives, by the beginning of adolescence (11-13 years old), the individual is usually clearly aware that others have personal opinions about him/her and that these opinions may be important. Others' judgments can prompt the adolescent to engage in (sometimes painful) in-depth self-analysis and rumination (Kerpelman & Pittman, 2003). How this self-analysis is handled often determines whether the person manifests positive or negative mental health.

Returning to the developmental skills proposed by Harter, I find that her arguments about the *accuracy of self-appraisal* and the display of the true self (*authenticity*) particularly match our theoretical framework. Self-appraisals become

increasingly complex due to the ability to make social comparisons, to appreciate the discrepancy between real and ideal self-images, and to acknowledge both positive and negative self-attributes (Butler, 2003; Trzesniewki et al., 2011). Authenticity refers to displaying the true self, or, on the contrary, of engaging in pretentious behaviors to make oneself look better to others. The term "authenticity" has been used to refer to a number of different concepts, preventing scholars from articulating a univocal and comprehensive theory (Harter, 2002; Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Vannini & Franzese, 2008). For example, Waterman (1992; 1993), from an eudaimonist perspective, links this term to the individual's approximation to one's daimon, or one's actual potentials; whereas, Deci and Ryan, in their Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000) refer to successful integration of various self-aspects in an autonomous regulation that helps satisfying basic needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Futhermore, we can say that authenticity is linked with the process of *impression management*, which helps people to negotiate between their true self and the self that they display in social interactions. Goffman (1959) suggests that people naturally move between sincere performances in which individuals profoundly believe, and cynical performances in which they show a sort of front to others.

To this end, Kernis and Goldman (2005) elaborated a "Multicomponent Conceptualization of Authenticity", which is constituted by four components: (1) *awareness,* (2) *unbiased processing,* (3) *behavior,* and (4) *relational orientation. Awareness* refers to the *"knowledge of and trust in one's motives, feelings, desires, and self-relevant cognitions"* (Kernis & Goldman, 2005, p. 294), including the

recognition of one's own attributes and functioning. Being aware of one's own inner qualities and feelings helps promote the integration of polarities (e.g., a general predisposition toward honesty with a tendency to tell "white lies"). Closely associated with self-awareness is *unbiased processing,* which refers to objectivity in making positive and negative judgments about oneself, about one's emotions, about one's internal experiences and information, as well as to presenting oneself realistically in interpersonal situations. An accurate evaluation of one's own characteristics and abilities is fundamental for making coherent behavioral choices that are most likely to be adaptive in both the short and long term. Both awareness and unbiased processing are parallel to Harter's idea of self-appraisal.

The third component of Kernis and Goldman's theory results directly from the first two components: if the individual has a good knowledge and a realistic perception of her/himself, tends to act in keeping with his/her attitudes and inclinations, then s/he is likely engaging in *authentic behavior*. In contrast, *inauthentic behavior* is intended to pander to others, irrespective of individual's true feelings, desires and needs. Finally, the fourth component of authenticity, *relational orientation,* makes reference to the ability to reveal one's true self in close relationships, and to be genuine rather than engaging in fake performances. An authentic relational orientation allows others to better know someone, which in turn increases congruence between self-perceptions and the ways in which others perceive the person.

Reflecting on these theoretical propositions, one might wonder why individuals would be more or less prone to be authentic, to share their inner reality and feelings

with others, to render positive or negative judgments of self, to act coherently across time and situation, and so on. One possible explanation might involve the *psychological motives* that facilitate the construction of identity. Vignoles and colleagues (2006) identified six such motives: *self-esteem, continuity, distinctiveness, belonging, efficacy,* and *meaning*. *Self-esteem* refers to the maintenance and enhancement of positive feelings and opinions toward oneself, through different mechanisms such as self-enhancement and self-improvement. *Continuity* refers to the need for maintaining consistency in perceptions and experiences of oneself (both personally and as a member of social groups) across time and space. Note that such consistency does not preclude change, but rather assumes that the person maintains a view of her/himself as "the same individual" across time and place (Côté, 2000; Erikson, 1968). The third motive, *distinctiveness,* drives people to maintain a sense of differentiation from others and to feel unique. On the other hand, the *belongingness motive* accounts for the human predisposition to join dualistic and group relationships, within which individuals experience closeness and acceptance. *Efficacy* is fundamental in identity construction insofar as it provides individuals with a sense of competence and control. Finally, *meaning* concerns the need for finding significance and purpose in life. These motives seem to be universal across cultures and age groups, and can also promote both authenticity and false-self behavior (Vignoles et al., 2006).

It is well known, for instance, that by age 12-13, adolescents understand the benefits associated with false-self behavior, especially in terms of receiving social approval and recognition (Harter, 2002). Early and middle adolescents strongly

depend on others' opinions to support their self-esteem, and not surprisingly, this reliance on external validations often increases the insecurity of their *self-esteem* (Trzesniewki et al., 2011). Indeed, as suggested by Kernis, Lakey, and Heppner (2008), people with *secure high self-esteem* tend to feel satisfied of themselves, to have relatively stable feelings of self-worth, and accept their weaknesses. On the contrary, individuals with *fragile high self-esteem* may present frequent and sudden shifts in their self-worth feelings, depend on continual validation of their value, and overreact to critics. At the heart of many early adolescents' vulnerabilities are judgments by important others such as parents and other adults who serve as role models for them – and also peers, who become increasingly important points of reference and cornerstones in self construction (Newman et al., 2007; Hill et al., 2007; Meeus, 2003).

The importance of others' opinions for the maintenance and enhancement of self-esteem is illustrated through sociometer theory (Leary, 1999; Leary & Baumeister, 2000). This theory states that self-esteem is important not only in itself, but also because it functions as a gauge of social effectiveness, where individuals strive to enhance their relational value and social acceptance. *"Early human beings must have developed a mechanism for monitoring the degree to which other people valued and accepted them. This psychological mechanism - the sociometer - continuously monitors the social environment for cues regarding the degree to which the individual is being accepted versus rejected by other people"* (Leary, 1999, p. 33).

The following excerpt from the self-narration of a fifteen-year-old girl in Harter's work (2012) may help to exemplify such inner turmoil:

"I try to act different, like Beyoncé. She's a really hot singer. I'll be a real extrovert, fun-loving and even flirtatious, and think I am the best-looking girl in the room. The guys will really notice me! […] I know in my heart of hearts that I can never look like the pop singers or movie stars, so why I do even try? […] Then I get self-conscious and embarrassed and I feel totally humiliated, so I become radically introverted and I don't know who I really am" (p. 698).

Indeed, adolescence represents a turning point in young people's social life, in that their circle of relationships broadens beyond the family to include peers[1]. Peers represent an important frame of reference in dealing with developmental tasks; furthermore friends might also support emerging adults in navigating through adolescence towards adulthood (Helsen, Vollebergh, & Meeus, 2000). Peer groups are therefore important in terms of being part of a real or ideal "group", "crowd", "clique" or "gang" of peers, who share the same interests, feelings, concerns and ideals, give youth the opportunity to *belong* (Brown et al., 1986; Newman et al, 1976). Moreover, as stated within social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), feelings of belonging to a group also helps adolescents to identify with a set of characteristics and features that they can incorporate into their overall sense of identity. Social identity, indeed, represents the part of self-concept that derives from the awareness of belonging to a social group and the affective meaning given to such belonging (Spears, 2011). The core mechanism underlying social identity is the process of *social categorization* (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), which occurs

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[1] This issue will be addressed more deeply in Chapter 2 (see page 50 and following) and 3 (see pag. 71 and following).

when individuals assign themselves and others to discrete social categories defined by specific features. For example, in inter-ethnic social interactions among strangers or acquaintances, people often classify one another according to their skin tone, accent, or other physical or cultural traits. Social aspects of identity are integrated, along with personal components of identity, into one's overall self-concept that, hopefully, is gradually achieved with growth.

However, troubles that may occur in unraveling these developmental nodes towards identity integration have enthralled not only scholars and clinicians, but also writers and poets. In particular, one of them, the Italian novelist Luigi Pirandello, seems to grasp these issues profoundly in his novel "Uno, nessuno, centomila" (transl. "One, No One, and One Hundred Thousand").

> *«I was obsessed by the thought that for others I was not what till now, privately, I had imagined myself to be»* (p. 7)[...] *«If for the others I was not the one I had always believed I was for myself, who was I?»* (p. 12). [...] *«What else I had inside of my head, but this trouble that I found myself to be no one and one hundred thousand?»* (p. 151) (Pirandello, 1990).

The dilemma expressed by Pirandello's character, Vitangelo Moscarda, brilliantly epitomizes some adolescents' feelings of being strangers to themselves, as well as feeling segmented into separated pieces that are difficult to bring together. The novel *"recounts the tragedy of a man who struggles to reclaim a coherent identity for himself in the face of an inherently social and multi-faceted world"* (Pepe et al., 2012). Departing from a simple comment on his nose made by his wife, Moscarda

realizes that others' opinions about him are many and all different from his own – calling into question his whole identity. The story exemplifies the fragility of many people's self-concepts even later in adulthood.

Just like Moscarda, adolescents often start their "research for the truth" by observing the changes that puberty brings into their body. An adolescent's body assumes new shapes, new dimensions, new strengths and abilities, and even new smells that the adolescent hardly recognizes as her or his own. Moreover, adolescents realize that, if they were to compile the images that others hold of them, they would appear in so many different forms that they would become hopelessly lost. Thus, like Pirandello's Moscarda, they embark upon social experiments to develop a clear and coherent self-image, which hopefully will be validated by the adolescent and by others.

Again, merging together different views of oneself is not an easy task, and various factors may intervene in this process, supporting it or else making it even harder. As stated by Donahue et al. (1993), *"in particular, children and adolescents who experience continual conflict and distress within the family system may fail to integrate their various relationship experiences into a coherent self"* (p. 844). It is clear that family is the primary relational context where children are socialized and receive feedback from parents and other relatives (Scabini & Manzi, 2011; Steinberg, 2014)[2]. Parents and caregivers' feedback – as that of other important people in life – functions as a mirror, constituting the core of the *looking glass self* (Cooley, 1902), through which children can gradually develop their self-image (Winnicott, 1971; Lacan, 1966). *"In imagination we perceive in another's mind some thought of our*

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[2] See Chapter 3 for detailed discussion on this argument.

appearance, manners, aims, deeds, character, friends, and so on, and are variously affected by it" (Cooley, 1902, p. 25): the concept expressed by Cooley clearly explains the ongoing, dynamic interchange that exists between the individual and her/his experience of the world in which one lives.

Though paramount in childhood, this mechanism remains active during all lifelong and, particularly in adolescence, youths continue to utilize others' feedback to collect information about who they are, and who they have become, and to perceive their identities as interpersonally valid (Jeammet, 2009). Swann defines this process through *self-verification theory* (1983), which posits that individuals observe others' reactions toward them, and develop their own self-concepts through others' reactions. Through the recursive influences between individual self-concepts and social-interactional feedback, young people's self-concepts become progressively more complex and stable, allowing individuals to predict how their inner feelings and social interactions will influence one another.

Over generational time, integrating various domains of identity has become more complex and uncertain. The digitalization of life, through mechanisms such as the Internet, text messaging, electronic mail, and social media, has contributed further to the fragmentation of one's identity. Nowadays, people continuously create "accounts" and "avatars" for social networks and applications they use in daily life, but people's online identities are not always consistent with their offline ones. Being a Facebook or Twitter user means presenting oneself to others, often in a detailed way and in a manner designed to frame oneself in a favorable light. We could say that people concretely "construct" their virtual identity, having the chance to modify

it anytime they like (Pepe et al., 2011). More unsettlingly, people can create more than one account and can create a separate identity for each one. Therefore, the contrast between "real" and "virtual" identities compounds additional complications onto an already complicated and confusing world.

Nevertheless, digital media develop and change very rapidly, and the ways in which people use these media have changed in accordance. Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin (2008) argued a substantial difference between early online means of communication and socialization, such as chatrooms and forums, and more recent ones, especially social networks. According to Zhai and colleagues, in the past people were used to present themselves anonymously, hide their real identity so as not to show their true appearance, and create a virtual "mask" to wear to their liking. Instead, social networks currently used (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) lead more frequently to a ''nonymous'' (word used by Zhao et al. for "onymous") presentation of self, namely based on true and recognizable details. Thus, a fictitious identity created in an onymous setting cannot be dismissed, because people with whom one interacts through the Internet are often people encountered also in real life, establishing with them so-called ''anchored relationships'' (Zhao, 2006). Contrarily to anonymous environments, in which people were free to convey whatever identity they wanted and to dismiss these identities whenever they wished, onymous settings place constraints on the freedom of identity claims, because of the necessity to maintain congruence between online and offline identities (Brennan & Pettit, 2004). As a result, the "mask" displayed on the Internet must be worn for the majority of the time, and identity performance also occurs in offline life, likely conforming to

established social norms and suppressing the "true self". Focusing on this issue would be crucial to study and understand identity processes how they occur in real time, opening up new possibilities for identity-related preventive and treatment interventions with youth.

Another conceptualization that has been developed to account for sociocultural and economic transformations of society is that of *identity capital* (Côté, 1996; Côté & Levine, 2002), which refers to what and how individuals "invest" in "who they are". The identity capital model, indeed, postulates that, in many Western social and economic systems, lack of institutional supports for important developmental transitions places the responsibility for identity outcomes largely on individuals' personal resources, both tangible (i.e. behaviors and possessions) and intangible (i.e. personality features) (Côté & Schwartz, 2002). This model helps explaining why each person finds her/his individualized answers to identity-related questions and developmental tasks. Specifically, the ways in which a given person chooses to pursue life goals are dependent on the abilities and possibilities that s/he brings to the task, and on her/his identity capital. Evidently, some trajectories result more adaptive than others, and understanding what is an "adaptive" and what is not may help professionals to help those adolescents who have trouble finding their way or who make "bad" choices. Indeed, youth who address developmental issues in a more agentic and proactive manner (*developmental individualization*) are more likely to form a coherent sense of self and use their resources in the social world and labor market. On the contrary, adolescents and emerging adults who approach changes more passively (*default individualization*) may have more difficulties in forming

their identity and taking advantage of opportunities (Côté, 2000). In confirmation of these assumptions, Côté and Schwartz (2002) studied the relationship between personal agency and individualization processes in a sample of emerging adults. They found that agentic personality (self-esteem, purpose in life, internal locus of control, and self-control) is more likely to engage in information-based identity strategies, including exploration and commitment, and less likely to adopt avoidance-based strategies. On the other hand, those emerging adults who utilize default individualization strategies reported low scores in ego strength, self-esteem, and life purpose, and also lacked commitments to goals, values, and beliefs that could guide them in developing a sense of identity.

Sometimes, despite access to social and economic resources (in some cases), or in part because of a lack of resources (in others case), identity work does not proceed well. Let us consider what may happen when messages coming from important others are contradictory or lead the adolescent to engage in false-self behavior. Sometimes parents or important others fail to recognize the young boy or girl as an individuated person with an independent existence, with personal desires, needs, and thoughts. Consequently, adults sometimes impose their opinions, or exercise an excessive control over them, which may prevent children from developing and displaying their real self, or from acquiring autonomy and forming a genuine sense of identity (Connolly & Goldberg, 1999; Noom, Deković, & Meeus, 2001; Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003). In other words, parents can exercise *psychological control* (Barber, 1996) over their children:

> *"control attempts that intrude into the psychological and emotional development of the child (e.g., thinking processes, self-expression, emotions, and attachment to parents). Behavioral control, in contrast, refers to parental behaviors that attempt to control or manage children's behavior"* (p.1).

As we will explain further in Chapter 3, family dynamics and functioning deeply influence identity development, constituting a facilitating or contrasting context for adolescents' identity integration. Pressure from family may be more severe than pressure from peers in terms of effects on identity development, but regardless of the source of psychological control, autonomy may be undermined by intrusive others. Autonomy represents a key developmental task of adolescence and emerging adulthood (Connolly & Goldberg, 1999; Noom et al., 2001; Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003), and it refers to volitional decision-making – which is promoted by close, supportive relationships with family, friends, and partners throughout life (Beyers & Goossens, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2002).

CHAPTER 2

IDENTITY DIMENSIONS BEYOND DOMAINS BORDERS: THE "CROSS-CONTEXTS-DOMAINS" APPROACH

2.0 Introduction

As reviewed above[3], for most of its history, the identity literature has focused on different aspects and dimensions separately, and there are still relatively few attempts to develop integrative models that consider identity as an integrative, multidimensional construct (Vignoles, Schwartz, & Luyckx, 2011). These attempts have been increasing in recent years, however (see Azmitia et al., 2009; Usborne & Taylor, 2010). The term "identity" itself has been used to refer to a number of concepts within different theoretical frameworks: it comprises personal values, goals, and beliefs, as well as cultural attachments, sexual attraction and behavior, and family commitments, to mention only a few.

Generally speaking, we could say that "identity" has been used to make reference both to individual, relational, and collective dimensions of identity (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). At the *individual level*, some authors have considered issues connected to age (Arnett, 2000; Côté, 2000; Luyckx et al., 2013); gender (Field et al., 2011; Årseth et al., 2009; Sandhu & Tung, 2006); sexual orientation (Dahl & Galliher, 2012; Archer & Grey, 2010; Elizur & Ziv, 2001); physical appearance (Harter, 2012; Wängqvist, & Frisén, 2013); and leisure activities (Haggard & Williams, 1992; Stebbins, 2007). In reference to the *relational level*, researchers have focused on peer groups (Meeus & Deković, 1995; Schachter & Ventura, 2008;

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[3] See Preface, pag. 1

Weeks & Pasupathi, 2010); family (Crocetti & Meeus, 2014; Scabini & Manzi, 2011); and romantic relationships (Collins, Welsh, & Furman, 2009; Furman & Shaffer, 2003). Finally, among *collective dimensions*, literatures have developed around religion (Alisat & Pratt, 2012; Kim & Wilcox, 2014; Peek, 2005); ethnicity and culture (Beckeret al., 2012; Pasupathi et al., 2012; Syed & Azmitia, 2010; Schwartz et al., 2008; Schachter, 2004); socioeconomic status (Beegle, 2007; Knutson, Miropolsky, & Olson, 2012; LaVeist, 2005); and politics (Levy, 2013; Huddy, L., 2001).

One could argue that it may be debatable to use the same term to name so many phenomena. Authors such as Brubaker and Cooper (2000) and Rattansi and Phoenix (2005) have argued against using the word "identity" at all, because of its lack of precision (Vignoles, Schwartz, & Luyckx, 2011). In essence, a term that means everything winds up meaning nothing. However, rather than discontinuing use of identity as a construct, an alternative course of action might be to consider identity as referring to *all* these phenomena together, in their reciprocal interactions, rather than one *or* another. Our "cross-contexts-domains model" tends exactly to this conception.

Nonetheless, as mentioned above, in this Chapter we address several identity dimensions and life contexts separately, to delve into the specific contribution of each of them upon identity development, and to try to offer a synthetic overview of the state of art of research for these issues. Each paragraph corresponds to one (or more) of the 13 identity domains in the first part of ILLCQ. These dimensions

emerged from a literature review and from suggestions obtained from adolescents and emerging adults involved in the pilot study[4].

The presentation of these components are grouped into two sections: "Individual identities" and "Collective identities" to differentiate between identity domains that make reference to primarily intra-individual factors, and those which develop from social relationships, and from the belongingness to a group of people with whom one shares values, characteristics, or interests. The third level of identity identified by Sedikides and Brewer (2001), referring to "Relational identities", has been addressed in the following Chapter, since we have considered the various components of relational identity as contexts where the individuals interact. That goes without saying, in some cases the differentiation between identity domains and identity contexts – as well as between one domain and another, or one context and another – might very hard and seem forced, nevertheless, it helps understanding why all these components have been considered important to include in our measure. All of them, indeed, have a more or less important effect in shaping adolescents and emerging adults' identity.

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[4] For a detailed description of the procedures for measure construction see Chapter 5.

2.1 Individual identities

2.1.1 Gender and Sexual identity

Sexual identity comprises the interrelationship among components of biological, psychological, behavioral, and social nature (Thompson, 2014). The biological dimensions are embraced by *sex,* which refers to anatomic (primary and secondary features), genetic, and hormonal factors that define a person at birth as male, female or interesexed (a variable combination of female and male genitalia). *Gender* or *gender identity* refers to the personal psychological sense of being male, female, or something else. Traditionally, gender has been considered as binary (either male or female), but gender variance is now acknowledged to be a condition regarding a wide number of people, such as transgender and transsexual people, who do not believe that they fit neatly within the male or female genders These people often experience a sense of distress associated with their body, which is felt as "wrong" (APA, 2011). *Gender roles* concern behaviors, attitudes, and functions considered by culture and society as suitable for men and women, for example different roles assigned to spouses, or the different kinds of jobs appropriate for males and females. This dimension is closely associated with *gender expression,* which refers to the ways people use to express their gender, such as through clothes, behavior, body characteristics, and so on. Finally, *sexual orientation* is related to patterns of sexual, affectional, and romantic attraction towards a person belonging either to the same sex, a different sex, or both. In addition to the traditional definitions of heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual, literature has also accounted for different forms of homosexualities (Bell & Weinberg, 1978; Savin-Williams, 2001; Vrangalova &

Savin-Williams, 2012), and various forms of sexual orientations in general, such as asexual, queer, and pansexual. Every component of sexual identity is influenced both by individual and sociocultural factors.

Very early in life, already by three years of age (Fausto-Sterling, 2012), children acquire the knowledge of being a boy or a girl, and they begin to understand others' expectations in relation to their gender. According to cognitive developmental theories (Boston &Levy, 1991; Kohlberg, 1966; Slaby & Frey, 1975), the understanding of gender moves forward by stages. By the age of 2 or 3 years, children are correctly aware of their and others' gender (*gender labeling)*. They gradually reach, by the age of 4, *gender stability*, namely they realize that gender remains the same over time, but they are still influenced by external stereotypical features, such as hair length and clothing. Subsequently, by the age of 7, children achieve *gender constancy*, learning that gender is independent from external features. From a developmental and maturational point of view, thus, at this age children usually have the main cognitive tools to define their own and others' gender identity. In Kohlberg's conception, once gender constancy is achieved, through the acquisition of stereotypic models seen and heard from the context around them, children believe that their gender is fixed and unchangeable, so that they seek to behave only in ways that are congruent with that self-conception.

Although these classic theories made fundamental contributions to the study of gender identity development, they also presented some limitations that have been addressed by more recent theories. Among these, Bussey and Bandura (1984; 1992; 1999) reported that "*there is no relationship between children's understanding of*

gender constancy and their preference for gender-linked activities, preference for same-gender peers, or emulation of same-gender models, regardless of how gender constancy is assessed" (1999, p. 4).More generally, Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory articulates gender development within a more complex structure. As the basis of Social Cognitive Theory, Bandura (1986) posited a triadic reciprocal causation among personal factors, behavior patterns, and environmental events. Specifically, personal factors refer to cognitive, affective and biological events; behavior refers to the activities carried out in connection with gender; and environmental events refer to the influences of social contexts. There are no fixed patterns of interactions among the three dimensions; in contrast, behavioral outcomes depend on specific social interactions and cultural conditions. This aspect of Social Cognitive Theory is perfectly coherent with our view of identity as developing from the continuous interaction between the individual and the contexts of life.

Baumeister and Stillman (2006), for instance, have studied *the degree to which the sex drive is shaped by social, cultural, and situational factors* (p. 1). Baumeister and Stillman call this aspect "erotic plasticity", highlighting once again that sexual behavior is influenced by biological, social, cultural, and situational factors. In their study, they found that Erotic plasticity is likely higher in women than in men, and varies across culture and religion. Though reporting strong evidence for greater plasticity in women than in men in relation to several aspects, such as stimuli activating sexual arousal (Chivers, Rieger, Latty, & Bailey, 2004; Hoffmann, Janssen, & Turner, 2004); gender of sexual partners (Rosario et al., 1996; Rust,1992; Savin-Williams, 1990); sexual activities (Adams & Turner, 1985); and sexual

attitude-behavior consistency (Herold & Mewhinney, 1993), Baumeister and Stillman suggest a lack of reliable explanations for such differences. It would be interesting, from this point of view, to delve into this issue, studying the effects that environment has on women and men also in the construction and reinforcement of gender identity.

When talking about sexual identity, it is common to make reference to sexual minorities, and especially to homosexual, bisexual, transsexual, or transgender people, or to non-heterosexual forms of sexual orientation or gender identity. Notwithstanding, *compulsory heterosexuality* is a social and cultural ideological framework, in which the norms of heterosexuality are assumed to apply to everyone, and where individuals are assumed to be heterosexual unless/until they provide information to the contrary. The ways in which sexual minority individuals experience and function within such pressures, and the outcomes of such experiences, together with other intervening factors, are likely to determine whether, and to what extent, the individual feels stigmatized and self-stigmatized (Worthington et al., 2008).

The idea of specific and diverse developmental pathways for LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) people in the construction of sexual identity was suggested some decades ago within Cass's (1979) pioneering work. Cass theorized a six-stage model, now considered as a "coming out" model, rather than a gender identity model per se (Savin-Williams, 2005). Many subsequent authors have introduced models of sexual identity development (Worthington et al., 2008), and among these, Fassinger and Miller (1996) and McCarn and Fassinger (1996) applied

Eriksonian identity theory to gay and lesbian people. These authors derived a four-phase model including *awareness, exploration, deepening/commitment, and internalization/synthesis*, both at individual and group level. This work is in line with the newest LGBT and sexual research paradigm, which aims at identifying commonalities in sexual identity development across subgroups (Diamond, 2003; Dillon et al., 2011).

2.1.2 Identity and age: patterns of changes over time

When talking about identity, researchers and theorists has mainly focused on the stages of life during which identity is expected to be formed, changed or defined. Traditionally, such stages have been identified with adolescence and, since 2000, with Arnett's (2000) theorizing, emerging adulthood (roughly ages 18-25).

Erikson (1950) posited in the 5th stage of his epigenetic theory a tension between *Identity* and *Role Confusion*. During this stage, which corresponds to adolescence (roughly ages 12-18), the individual has to synthesize the solutions found for the previous stages to answer the question "Who am I?". Foreshadowing Arnett's work on emerging adulthood, Erikson (1968) posited a period of *psychosocial moratorium*, *"during which the young adult through free role experimentation may find a niche in some section of his society, a niche which is firmly defined and yet seems to be uniquely made for him"* (p. 156). Thus, *young adult*'s identity is still "under construction," and the psychosocial moratorium constitutes a transition between adolescence and adulthood.

As suggested by some authors (e.g., Harter, 2012), adolescence cannot be considered as a single, homogenous stage. Rather, it consists of different sub-phases,

each of which presents specific developmental issues[5]. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that, in early adolescence, youth are more likely to be involved, in Marcia's words, in the exploration of different identity alternatives. This exploration may be gradually replaced by more or less stable commitments through late adolescence and emerging adulthood.

The concept of "emerging adulthood" was introduced explicitly by Arnett (2000) to refer at the age between late teens and mid-twenties (roughly 18-25 years). He defined this stage as *"a neither adolescence nor young adulthood, but theoretically and empirically distinct from them both"* (p. 469). As Arnett reports, there had already been some theoretical contributions to the understanding of the early adult years prior to his work, in particular from Erikson (1968), Levinson (1978), and Keniston (1971). However, Arnett notes that the significance of this developmental period has increased because of consistent socio-cultural changes.

Industrialized societies have witnessed a postponement of the timing for the transition to adulthood, because of prolonged studies and more extensive searches for stable jobs (Côté, 2000). From Arnett's point of view, *emerging* adulthood is different both from adolescence and *young* adulthood: adolescence starts much earlier now than in the past due to biological changes that advance puberty, and it ends later than in the past partly because of compulsory school attendance. On the other hand, the late teens and early twenties are not characterized by enduring adult commitments in most Western societies (Macmillan, 2006). Emerging adulthood is characterized by *identity exploration*, *instability, self-focus, feeling in-between,* and *possibilities to explore* (Arnett, 2004).

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[5] For a more detailed description of Harter's model, see Chapter 1.

Important issues to consider when studying emerging adulthood are those connected to cultural context, educational attainment, and social class. All of these issues can significantly shift the borders and the meaning of this stage. For example, it is important to mention here (and more widely in Chapter 3) two recent Italian emerging-adult studies conducted by Crocetti and Meeus (2014). These studies highlighted the importance of family support during the transition to adulthood. These samples included both students and workers (aged 18-28), most of whom reported living with their parents or in a condition of semi-autonomy (e.g., in an apartment paid for by parents).

Accordingly, the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), in its last Report on Social Cohesion (2013), has showed telling data about this aspect of adolescents and emerging adults' situation. Indeed, it emerged that in 2012 the 90,6% of youths aged 18-25 and the 43,6% of those aged 23-35 were still living with their parents, especially in the southern regions, where percentages were respectively 90,3% and 51,5%. From a psychological point of view, these data mean that in Italy transition to adulthood occurs within the family environment (Crocetti, Rabaglietti, & Sica, 2012).

2.1.3 School and career identity

In adolescence and emerging adulthood, school and college - and then job choices - represent an important dimension in identity formation, because education and work greatly determine (and are determined by) young people's interests and contribute to future professional identity. Indeed, education and work are among the most commonly examined identity domains.

Locke Davidson (1996) reported results from a three-year longitudinal investigation of 55 students from four large urban high schools in California. Narratives collected from students, among other dimensions, highlighted how some disciplinary devices served to encourage or inhibit aspects of student identity, especially in the case of ethnic minority students.

Academic identity has been conceptualized in different ways, and these various definitions may represent parts of a whole. For example, the definition of academic identity has been used to refer to a sense of belonging within a school setting (Goodenow, 1993), to the degree of importance placed on doing well in school (Walton & Cohen, 2007), to the alignment of current academic behavior with career expectations (Oyserman & Destin, 2010), and to students' writing and studying behaviors (Attenborough, 2011; Hyland, 2011). Walker and Syed (2013) suggested an additional component of academic identity – the degree to which students identify with their academic major. In Walker and Syed's opinion such definition of academic identity is more in line with the Eriksonian theory, because "*it contains both an identification component (the major) and an identity component (the subjective sense of connection to the major)*". Indeed, exploration and commitment processes in college students have been studied largely in college populations (e.g. Arnett, 2000), and research on identity among working emerging adults has occurred much less frequently (Luyckx et al, 2013). It has been reported that college students are more likely than their working counterparts to engage in adaptive and ruminative forms of exploration, and less likely to enact identity commitments (Luyckx, Schwartz, Goossens, & Pollock, 2008). This could mean that college functions as an

institutionalized moratorium, a sort of identity laboratory where emerging adults can explore different identity possibilities (Côté, 2006; Erikson, 1968), though in some cases having already some important points of reference for their definition as students within a specific major. Identifying with a major and a future professional figure provides students also with a sense of group belongingness with peers - differentiated from students in other majors and providing role models to emulate (e.g., professors).

At the same time, emerging adulthood is a time when youth start entering the labor market, or prepare to make commitments to a career (Arnett, 2000). Work commitments are very important to individuals' identities, because, as Thompson (2014) reports, *"work provides a sense of worth, validation, and self-affirmation. It provides the social context in which one can feel coherent, unique, and valued"* (pag. 118).

Work, career, or vocational identity (all of which are synonymous with one another; Vondracek, 1995) can be defined as the way individuals construe themselves in the career context (Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004). Nevertheless, the current global economic crisis has changed the way in which people think about their career identities. Indeed, in past decades, jobs were considered as a sort of internal compass for individuals, whereas today career identity is more likely to refer to the individual's personal values, motivations and broader career interests, decoupled from a particular job or position (McArdle, Waters, Briscoe, & Hall, 2007). In addition, McArdle et al. found that commitments in career and a view of

oneself as possessing specific abilities, rather than a job or affiliation with a specific employer, were most strongly associated with greater self-esteem and employability.

It has been suggested (Stringer & Kerpelman, 2010; Vondracek, 1995) that career identity development during emerging adulthood is influenced by a number of important factors, such as career-decision self-efficacy, support for career from parents, and past work experiences. Each of these factors is essential to consider together when studying career identity.

More generally, career identity commitments are associated with more stable job choices and greater work satisfaction (Kidd, & Green, 2004; Perrone, Ægisdóttir, Webb, & Blalock, 2006), partly because work provides a sense of belongingness to a group or a community with which to share values, interests, and important life experiences. Ethical codes shared among professionals and colleagues can represent important points of reference in individuals' lives, even outside the workplace. In addition, having a job facilitates identity integration and a greater sense of autonomy and self-esteem, especially when it is fulfilling and promotes self-actualization.

2.1.4 Physical appearance

The body plays a central role in adolescence, given that changes brought about by puberty imply a reworking of adolescents' body image. Physiological transformations occur at multiple levels, such as hormonal, neurological, sexual, and musculoskeletal, and manifest themselves irrespective of adolescent's willingness and readiness to change. Such modifications can be more or less sudden and vary from person to person; for example, it has been found that early timing of body maturation has stronger effects on youth adaptation than later timing (Brooks-Gunn,

1991). Notwithstanding, this trend seems to apply more to girls than to boys – for example, early maturing girls (those who got their menarche before the age of 11) are especially vulnerable to depression, low self-esteem, early sexual behavior, pregnancy (Brooks-Gunn, 1991), and social anxiety (Blumenthal et al, 2011). Archibald and colleagues (2003) found that White American early-maturing girls are more likely to experience depression not only during adolescence, but across the lifespan. On the contrary, Berzonsky and Lombardo (1983) found that early-maturing boys were less likely than later-maturing boys to experience *youth crisis*. In any case, perceived good appearance consistently emerges as the strongest single predictor of self-esteem among both male and female adolescents (Harter, 1999).

Pubertal adolescents are very preoccupied with their physical changes and appearances (McCabe & Riccardelli, 2003), mostly because of the comparisons they make against the social and cultural standards that determine their judgment of attractiveness and body adequacy (Brinthaupt & Lipka, 2002). Unfortunately, in some cases such concerns might assume more or less serious pathological forms, as in the case of dysmorphophobia, or body dysmorphic disorder. This disorder is characterized by an excessive preoccupation with one or more imagined defects in one's physical appearance, accompanied by rituals, such as mirror gazing or constant comparing, and serious relational problems (Aravind & Krishnaram, 2008).

Clay, Vignoles, and Dittmar (2005) studied the relationship between body image and self-esteem among adolescent girls (aged 11-16), finding that ultra-thin icons portrayed in the media led girls to a report greater dissatisfaction with their body and

self-image. Self-esteem decreased among older girls in the sample, assumedly due to greater exposure to and internalization of media models.

Some authors (e.g., Pruzinsky & Cash, 2002; Smolak, 2004; Wängqvist, & Frisén, 2013) have identified different components of body image such as *body-esteem* and *body ideal internalization.* Body-esteem, or rather people's evaluations of their appearances, in turn, consists of three fundamental aspects: (1) people's overall evaluations of their appearance, (2) their evaluations of their weight, and (3) their views about what other people think about their looks. The second dimension of body image, namely *body ideal internalization,* represents the extent to which people have internalized societal ideals about body and physical attractiveness (Cusumano, & Thompson, 1997; Wängqvist, & Frisén, 2013). Although importance given to such societal ideals varies across societies and cultures, in many Western cultures appearance is assigned a high value, with a predominant ideal of thinness for girls and muscularity for boys (Jones, Vigfusdottir, & Lee, 2004; Ricciardelli & Williams, 2012; Smolak & Stein, 2006). Gender differences have also been found in the centrality of concerns about the body in female and male adolescents, with greater worries and lower self-esteem among girls (e.g., Calogero & Thompson, 2010; Davison & McCabe, 2006; Frisén & Holmqvist, 2010). As Wängqvist and Frisén (2013) reported, this gender difference can be explained considering that cultural models and attitudes towards males and females are usually more demanding for the latter through the different. Wängqvist and Frisén, found also that Swedish girls were more engaged in identity exploration than boys, especially in interpersonal dimensions, as if they looked for others' approval to feed their body-esteem; and that

this gender difference was "related to more positive views of what others thought about their bodies, but also to higher internalization of society's body ideals which is associated with a more problematic body image" (p. 491). On the contrary, stronger commitments in relational aspects of identity (family, peers, romantic relationships) was associated with more positive evaluations attributed to others about one's appearance, but were not associated with internalization of societal ideals. Wängqvist and Frisén (2013) concluded that boys generally reported stronger commitments in relational dimensions and better body-esteem, and this might mean that either a more solid commitment leads to a better body-esteem, or, on the contrary, a better body-esteem make boys feel more confident to engage in interpersonal relationships. In any case, regardless of gender differences, it appears sound the importance of social influences on the self-perception of body image, the self-value thus attributed, and the integration of this aspect in the overall identity.

Furthermore, pressures from these cultural and societal ideals are even more persistent in the present time because of the ubiquitous presence of the Internet and social networking. In online onymous relationships[6], people can choose a "face" to show to others, altering their appearance to their liking. Profile pictures on Facebook, for example, represent a sort of "visiting card", which can constitute the first - if not the only - element on which one bases one's judgments about people. Physical appearance, thus, becomes fundamental to be socially accepted and liked by others. Shared models regarding beauty, attractiveness, and look often form the basis for social inclusion or exclusion from peer groups. As an example, Coleman (1961) examined paths to peer group membership for boys, with a strong emphasis on the

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[6] For more details, see pag. 21

importance of athletic ability and physical appearance in determining the type of peer group to which a given boy would be admitted.

It can be surmised, then, that especially in adolescence and emerging adulthood, concerns about physical appearance, agreeableness, and consequent social acceptance represent crucial areas in the formation of identity, in the development of self-image, and thus in psychosocial well-being.

2.1.5 Leisure activities in the development of identity

"Through leisure activities we are able to construct situations that provide us with information that we are who we believe ourselves to be, and provide others with information that will allow them to understand us more accurately" (Haggard & Williams, 1992).

These words clearly explain the role of leisure activities in the development of identity, particularly in adolescence. Though dated, Haggards and Williams' work provides a significant contribution in understanding how people can affirm their identity through participation in certain activities. That is, leisure activities may be chosen because of their ability to affirm valued aspects of individual's identity (Coatsworth et al., 2005). Indeed, behaviors which have been freely chosen and performed – such as leisure activities - influence one's self-perception more than constrained behaviors do. This issue can be understood if we consider that in freely performed behaviors individuals decide what specific aspects of the self they want to focus on and show to others at a given time. Remarkably, Coatsworth and colleagues (2005) describe how leisure activities serve people's identity affirmation because

activities symbolize certain desired character traits, identity images, or ideal selves. They call "leisure identity images" those identity images which derive from the engagement and identification with a specific leisure activity. In one of their studies (1992), Coatsworth and colleagues found that some activities embodied discrete sets of leisure identity images, while other activities shared identity images; and that participants tended to desire more leisure identity images associated with chosen activities, rather than those associated with other activities.

Very often leisure activities become an out-and-out lifestyle through which youth construct a shared social identity, made of common *"values, attitudes and orientations"* (Stebbins, 2007, p. 68). This is the case of extreme sports, such as snowboard, surfing, or climbing, which has been defined as "lifestyle sports" (Tomlinson et al., 2005), and which has partly replaced different kind of sports, more relaxed, and with a different attitude toward competition. Obviously, much of the effect that lifestyle sports have on identity depends on the strength of commitment in such activities. For example, Wheaton (2003) differentiated between "hardcore lifestylers", "weekend warriors", or "flaneur", that constitute a sort of statuses hierarchy in sports. Also sport equipment, or clothing, or rituals and habits (i.e. checking the weather, or living near the beach for surfers) can represent visible and recognizable signals of a sport identity (Wheaton, 2003).

In Italy, the status of "soccer player" exercises a powerful appeal on male children, preadolescents, and adolescents, who sees in that a strongly desired identity. Therefore, playing soccer at competitive level since childhood can shape an

importantly identity and become a lifestyle, thus influencing education (because children and youth often travel with the team), look, eating habits, and so on.

Contrarily, in some cases the choice of playing sports is strongly wanted by parents, who might have high expectations about children's performance. Pressures from parents and stress implied in competitive sport environment might have negative outcomes on youths' development and health. In addition, it should be noticed that many sport activities, especially in Western societies, are *sex-segregated* and *male-dominated* (Gill & Kamphoff, 2010), with the function of perpetuating stereotyped images of masculinity and femininity (Messner, 1992). Thus, practicing a certain sport activity may be stigmatized, if not conforming to social gender stereotypes of a specific culture, and prevent youths to engage in it, even though felt as important for self-actualization. For example, a study conducted in southern Italy (Scandurra et al., 2013) with a sample of undergraduates, found that ballet, dance, gym, and skate were considered extremely feminine activities, whereas rugby, football, motocross and wrestling were defined as extremely masculine.

The study of leisure activities implies studying also spaces and physical locations where these activities are carried out and with which youth's body interacts during the activity itself. The most studied spaces have been urban realities, such as clubs, nightclubs, malls, and open-spaces, which are closely interconnected with consumism. That is to say, youth are seen as lifestyle based consumers (Miles, 2000). Thomas (2005), for example, highlighted the importance of malls and other consumption symbols and spaces for "hanging around" as central to the normative

production of identities, particularly for young females, providing the opportunity for the display of capital in a leisure environment.

2.2 Collective identities

2.2.1 Socio-economic status and identity

Socioeconomic status (SES) strongly affects people's identity development, because it determines the neighborhood where they live, the peers with whom they associate, the schools they attend, et cetera. Depending on family SES, children and adolescents will live in a certain place, will receive a certain kind of education, eat a certain type of food, get a given quality of health assistance, and rely on a specific type and quantity of family support (Beegle, 2007; Knutson, Miropolsky, & Olson, 2012).

In particular, low-SES families face numerous difficulties and challenges, for example unemployment, poor or inadequate medical assistance, substance addiction, and unsafe neighborhoods (LaVeist, 2005; Robinson, 2003), which can also affect the quality of parenting and family relationships (Bradley & Corwin, 2002). As a consequence, adolescents of economically disadvantaged families are at higher risk for loneliness, depression, unruly behavior, substance use, and school maladjustment (Ackerman, Brown, & Izard, 2004).

More extensively, identity development is affected by poverty insofar as poor adolescents experience *derogatory self-relevant information, limitations in opportunity structure, and excessive stress* (Phillips & Pittman, 2003), with consistent effects on health (Oyserman, Smith, & Elmore, 2014). Knowing that *self-*

relevant information refers to information people receive about themselves from others, in the case of poor adolescents, social stigma associated with poverty is internalized and perceived as a shameful and embarrassing aspect of the self, which might cause low self-esteem and depressive feelings. This negative self-perception can prevent adolescents from exploring and committing to identity alternatives (Beegle, 2007; Phillips & Pittman, 2003). *Educational and occupational limitations* are often associated with poverty and economic disadvantage, such that poor adolescents have less access to possibilities of choice and agency. Furthermore, they may need to work to provide income for the family, which limits their opportunities to explore identity alternatives. Phillips and Pittman (2003) also suggest that *chronic exposure to stress* can affect poor adolescents' cognitive resources, personal self-representations, and motivation. Stress and distress experienced by low-income adolescents may also derived from exposure to violence and crime – a which are likely more frequent in high-risk neighborhoods – and may assume the form of post-traumatic-stress symptoms (Berman, 2000). Furthermore, Knutson, Miropolsky, and Olson (2012) found that poor adolescents, compared to their mid-high SES counterparts, may score higher on avoidance and procrastination and are likely to receive less support from parents, teachers, and peers.

Socioeconomic status affects the development of poor adolescents' identity for other reasons as well. Recent reports in both the US and the UK indicate that "being rich" is children's top aspiration (Brown, 2005; Schor, 2004), and the accumulation of (non-necessary) goods, such as cars, expensive clothes, smartphones, and so on, is among their highest concerns (Goldberg, Gorn, Peracchio, & Bamossy, 2003).

Striving for materialistic wealth is closely associated with identity development and well-being, because it allows people to - or at least gives them the illusion of - *"move closer to an ideal identity, create a desired social image, and achieve positive emotional states"* (Dittmar, 2011; p. 745). Contemporary consumer society and culture instills a "material good life" ideal through pervasive, incessant, and subtle messages of which people are not even fully aware. Even though such messages are not processed consciously, they contribute to establishing people's values, desires, and aspirations (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorelli, 2002; Shrum, 2002), especially in the case of adolescents and emerging adults. Material goods thus become extensions of the self (Dittmar, 2008, 2011), extending it beyond physical body's border, so that threats to these spatial-symbolic extensions of the self are experienced as identity threats (Burris & Rempel, 2004).

Therefore, adolescents construct their identities based on models and goods presented by the media and an entire consumer culture, and sharing such models with their peers. Comparisons among peers occur not only about *who or how one is*, but also about *what one owns,* and *how one presents himself or herself.* Banerjee and Dittmar (2008) found that higher perceived peer pressure in children was associated with higher rates of materialistic values and higher probabilities of being rejected by peers. In turn, more materialistic adolescents are more likely to report emotional and behavioral problems (Flouri, 2004), as well as consumer behaviors with pathological components, such as compulsive buying or addiction to bidding in auctions. (Dittmar, 2005; Banerjee, & Dittmar, 2008). Generally speaking, we can say that placing heavy emphasis on materialistic values is detrimental, because it does not

satisfy the basic need for social relationships and self-actualization (Banerjee & Dittmar, 2008) and may result in lower well-being (Dittmar, 2005; 2011). It is reasonable to believe that disadvantaged adolescents may experience the desire for possessions and possibilities for "material good life" in an even more frustrating way, perceiving themselves as even further from the materialistic ideal.

2.2.2 Ethnic and racial identity

Ethnicity and race have been considered only in some identity literatures, and not others – at least until very recently. In recent years, also identity status/neo-Eriksonian researchers have begun to examine the development of both personal and cultural/ethnic identity across ethnic groups (Azmitia et al., 2009; Schwartz, Zamboanga, Meca, & Ritchie, 2012). Within the literature on cultural identity, there has been a long debate about the distinction between ethnic identity and racial identity. The "Ethnic and Racial Identity in the 21st Century working group" (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014) recently proposed the metaconstruct of ethnic/racial identity (ERI) to refer both to one's ethnic background and to racialized experiences in one's life (e.g., discrimination). Although there may be some important distinctions between ethnic and racial identity, there are some important overlapping aspects between these two dimensions. The metaconstruct of ERI has been developed to refer specifically to the United States, and it has yet to be applied to other national contexts.

The importance of studying issues associated with ethnic and racial dimensions of identity stems from evidences about the specific challenges that immigrants and minority group members of have to face, including inadequate educational resources,

marginalization into low socioeconomic and underresourced communities, and institutional discrimination, which could influence the development of their identities (e.g., Oyserman & Destin, 2010; Phillips & Pittman, 2003; Yoder, 2000).

With the increasing diversity and multiculturalism within contemporary Western societies, the intersection across personal and ethnoracial dimensions have received increasing attention in the identity literature. Already some years ago, Schwartz et al. (2009) laid out some promising directions for identity research. Among these, it was highlighted that researchers should study the application of identity models across cultures and ethnicities, and that ethnic and national identity should be study along with personal identity (Schwartz, Montgomery, & Briones, 2006).

In Phinney's developmental model (1990), ethnic identity comprises three dimensions of group or collective identity: ethnic heritage, racial phenotype, and cultural background (Phinney, 2006). Following Erikson's identity theory and Marcia's operationalization of some of Erikson's concepts, Phinney states that ethnic identity develops through two distinct yet interrelated processes: *exploration* and *commitment*. Exploration refers to engagement in ethnicity-related activities or in the search for the meaning of ethnic background, whereas commitment refers to the affective bonds that individuals maintain toward their ethnic background and to their sense of belongingness to an ethnic group. As in the case for other identity dimensions, ethnic identity does not carry the same salience for everyone and in every time of life; on the contrary, ethnic identity may be most salient in adolescence and emerging adulthood, and for immigrants and ethnic minorities (Phinney, 2006; Phinney & Ong, 2007). The commitment/affirmation dimension of Phinney's model

is borrowed from Social Identity Theory (e.g., Tajfel & Turner, 1986), which suggests that ethnic identity is more salient for minorities and when some threat is perceived. Syed and Juang (2014), testing empirically Phinney's theory, found that White participants tended not to identify with a specific ethnic group, nevertheless, those who did presented higher levels of exploration and commitment. The point being discussed by the authors was that minority and majority groups might differ significantly in the meaning they give to ethnic identity. Thus, substantial changes in research methods on ethnic identity could help overcoming this bias.

From a developmental point of view, the ability to consider the perspective of both dominant and minority ethnic groups would increases with the development of cognitive skills, which reach maturation during adolescence, and allows young people to adopt a multicultural viewpoint (Thompson, 2014).

To this end, considering the increasingly multicultural flavor of many Western societies (Birman, 2011), a consistent strand of research has been focused on immigrants and their descendants' *acculturation,* namely the "orientation toward one's cultural heritage and toward the receiving society in which one resides" (Schwartz et al., 2013, pp. 156). Acculturation can be considered as a cultural identity process (Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010), which works differently for first-, second- or later-generation immigrants. For most of first-generation immigrants the heritage culture is the primary influence, and the culture of the receiving environment must be balanced with it. However, in the case of second- and later-generation immigrants, the influence of the heritage culture is often indirect (through family and community), and to be balanced with receiving culture,

in which the person lives most or all of her/his life (Schwartz et al., 2013; Schwartz, Unger et al., 2010). The feeling of being pressured to manage such a balance has been described as "bicultural stress" (Romero and Roberts, 2003) and is likely linked with negative health outcomes (Berry et al. 2006; Romero, Martinez, & Carvajal, 2007). Experiencing bicultural stress can interfere with the development of a clear and reliable sense of identity for immigrant adolescents (Côté, 2006), and make it difficult for them to relate both to the heritage and receiving cultures (Romero et al. 2007). For instance, as Oshri et al. (2014) found in a recent longitudinal study, recently arrived Hispanic immigrant adolescents are likely to consume alcohol as a way of reduce stress related to difficulties in balancing the heritage and receiving cultures. In terms of consequences for identity development, generally, it seems that bicultural stress increases identity confusion over time. Identity confusion in immigrant adolescents may also be caused by the difficulty to identify with an in-group, especially when living in contexts with high ethnic heterogeneity.

2.2.3 Peer group identity

Following cognitive developmental theory, three cognitive capacities are necessary to form group identity: a) *representations*, b) *operations*, and c) *reflective thinking* (Newman & Newman, 2001). Such capabilities develop already in childhood, when groups are mainly experienced on the basis of common activities.

a) For the authors, the first form of group identity derives from the ability of *representing* groups through symbols, drawings and words. In adolescence representational ability improves thanks to the maturation of cognitive and neurological processes and to the multiplication of group experiences.

b) *Groups operations* refer to the possible dynamics and mechanisms which regulate the inclusion/exclusion, the ingroup/outgroup attitudes, stereotyping and the understanding of group functioning. Children are early aware of their belongingness to family, neighborhood, school or sport groups, and can fantasize about roles and functions in the group. Even though children can experience isolation and exclusion by fourth and fifth grade, adolescents gain more advanced skills for experiencing and understanding bonding and acceptance, concerning about rejection, participating in group dynamics.

c) *Reflective and comparative thinking* is necessary to develop group identity, because it requires the ability of decentering one's own point of view and looking at the own group from an external perspective. This means that adolescents become gradually aware of social implications of being perceived a of a specific group in his or her community.

These cognitive abilities are fundamental, but not sufficient to develop group identity. The authors, indeed, postulate further interconnected factors, which comprise the capacity to categorize people into groups with specific features, and compare one's own group with others; the experiencing of a sense of history as a member of a group and the emotional investment in the group.

In addition, recalling developmental conflicts in Erikson's psychosocial theory, they theorize an additional interesting conflict (or *crisis*), typical of adolescence: *group identity versus alienation* (Newman and Newman, 1975, 1976, 1999, 2001). For the authors, adolescents are torn about joining peer groups and feeling comfortable to be its member, and on the other hand being overburdened by social

pressures, or feeling unwelcome and isolated. A balance between these opposite tendencies should be reached in adolescents' development: group affiliation, indeed, become central to the identity formation process during adolescence (Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011; Brown, 1990; Pugh & Hart, 1999; Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990), though parents and family continue to constitute important points of reference.

Naturally, adult life implies autonomy and independent functioning, but also requires the ability to participate and function within groups, from family to work groups, organizations and community. Joining a group means sharing and respecting norms, values, interests and activities (Arnett, 1996). Group norms are used by adolescents as identity markers to define themselves, similar to their peers and distinct by parents and family (Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011; Brown, 1990; Davis, 2012). Furthermore, peer groups facilitate intimate self-disclosure (Buhrmester & Prager, 1995; Davis, 2012), which helps youth constructing and consolidating their story and identity definition. As McLean and Jennings (2012) found in their study, friends contribute (even though at a lower than mothers) in scaffolding self-presentational aspects of narrative identity. In addition, as also stated by Sherif and Sherif (1964), they constitute a major *reference set* and a context where adolescents can explore identity-related experiences outside the family.

Moreover, being member of one or more groups provides the individual with a feeling of being loved and cared for, esteemed, valued, and safe, buffering negative effects of psycho-social stress (Bukowski, Hoza, & Boivin, 1993; Laursen, Furman, & Mooney, 2006; Wilkinson, 2004; Brown, 2004). Groups and friendships help individuals in their definition, purpose and worth, with positive mental and physical

outcomes (Lock *et al*., 1993; Longhofer, & Floersch, 1993; Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990; Newman & Newman, 2007).

From an opposite perspective, some research has demonstrated that peer groups can play a negative influence on youth, exercising pressure to engage in risk behaviors (Kiesner, et al., 2002; Urberg, Degirmencioglu, & Pilgrim, 1997), such substance abuse (Urberg et al., 1997), unsafe sex activities (Henry et al., 2007), delinquency (Kiesner et al., 2002), and school dropout (Cairns, Cairns, & Neckerman, 1989). Nevertheless, it has been interestingly showed that the development of a firm and *synthesized* identity can protect youth from being overpowered by group pressures to risk behaviors (Dumas, Ellis, & Wolfe, 2012; Luyckx et al., 2013; Schwartz et al., 2015).

This short review on the connection between peer group and identity would be incomplete without mentioning again the associated with the use of social networks in constructing social identity and connect with peers. As found by Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin (2008), *"the Facebook selves appeared to be highly socially desirable identities individuals aspire to have offline but have not yet been able to embody for one reason or another"*. In other words, people on Facebook tend to present "possible selves", or "hoped-for possible selves" (Markus and Nurius, 1986; Higgins, 1987), whose social aspects are much more emphasized than individual ones. Also in the provision of additional information, people on Facebook tend to care more about shared interests, hobbies, and cultural preferences, which allocate them within specific groups or cliques, than providing strictly individual characteristics and thoughts (Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008). In addition, very often users

demonstrate to be "well-rounded" through pictures of them having fun with friends, or might develop a sort of "compulsive friendships asking", where the more "friends" one has in Facebook, the more is popular, and the more feels self-confident.

2.2.4 Political identity

In an interesting review of literature on politics, Huddy (2001) underlines that, though identity research has been growing in the last decades, study on politics has been slightly influenced by this field of research. In other words, researchers on political behavior and political psychology have slowly incorporated the concept of identity in their work, despite the main recent political movements (such as feminism, LGBT rights and so on) constantly recall in their claims the idea of identity issues.

The author identifies three main current strands of research on politics identity. The first considers political identity in terms of national identity, patriotism and multiculturalism (Citrin, Wong, & Duff, 2000; Schatz, Staub, & Lavine, 1999). In one of these research, for example, Sears and Citrin (2000) found that members of diverse ethnic and racial groups in the United States identified themselves primarily as American and then as members of minority ethnicity or race. As a consequence, it is possible to assume that national identity does not depend on the salience of a group designation. The second strand focuses on the linkages between racial identity and ingroup/outgroup dynamics, asserting the importance of subjective group membership in determining political attitudes and behavior (Sidanius, Feshbach, Levin, and Pratto, 1997; Gibson and Gouws, 1999). The third strand of research addresses the nature of political identities, including the identification with a political

party or an ideological epithet as a term of self-definition. This implies a more social aspect of political identity, rather than an individual one.

Huddy (1997; 2001) reports that stereotypes associated with a certain political category function as a factor of identity stability. Obviously, Huddy's thought is based on social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981) and self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987).

It is reasonable to believe that political ideologies can find rich soil in adolescents' willingness for identifying in grandiose ideas and icons. The newly-acquired abstract thought gives them the ability of thinking about abstract concepts and ideologies, which are often idealized and counterposed to the familiar ones. As also Erikson stated, this is the time when political commitments start to be undertaken, and can constitute a central aspect in adolescents' identity. Similarly to other identity aspects, political affiliations provide adolescents with winsome opportunities of social encounters and popularity not only among peers, but also among adults. In addition, a crucial aspect of political identity is that it mostly represents a chosen identity, rather than an ascribed one. Indeed, apart from politically committed families, political beliefs are not usually transmitted through family culture, if not indirectly as a set of moral and civil values. Indeed, as Parker (2005) reports

> "*politics involves making comparisons and choices among - and commitments to - values and interests and groups and individuals (including choices not to choose among available choices). The choices and the commitments we make in politics are ones with which*

> *we mean to - or by which we cannot help but - identify ourselves"*
>
> (pag. 53).

In addition, these comparisons and commitments occur under social conflicts, where one can be one of the losers, or one of the winners. But also one can shift from losers to winners. Mobility and changeability of political commitments are, indeed, diffuse characteristics, which allow people to rethink and explore again their own political identity.

Political identity is closely associated to civic engagement, because political identity seems to be able to motivate civic actions, similarly to what happens with moral identity (Beaumont et al., 2006; Colby et al., 2007). Indeed, politically committed individuals tend to engage in political actions to maintain consistency between their identity and behaviors. Notwithstanding, it is important to distinguish between political and non-political civic actions, as they present themselves as empirically distinct. Crocetti and colleagues (2012a), for examples, found that Italian adolescents with achieved identity status were more engaged in volunteering actions, but their identity status did not correlate with political involvement. In another research, Porter (2013) explored the relationship between moral and political identity and different types of civic action in a sample of college students. Porter found that adolescents' political identity was related to political action, but not to nonpolitical volunteering. These results appear sound insofar as they confirm that identity and behavior go together, in order to maintain identity consistency. Furthermore, Porter's findings highlight that political engagement emerge very early in some adolescents, also before the age of vote.

2.2.5 Religious identity

Religious identity is deeply intertwined with spirituality (Thompson, 2014) and can be defined as the feeling of sharing specific values, faith and practices dictated by a religious culture, which allow individuals to connect with a higher, supernatural reality or entity. It also comprises a more or less intense sense of belonging to a religious community. Religious beliefs can deeply influence the construction of individuals' identity, because it determines in a more or less pervasive manner people's lifestyle, such as what to eat, what to dress, what kind of people and places to attend, how to spend free time, and what kind of internal values system to follow.

From a developmental point of view, the pioneer Fowler's theory (1974; 1981; 2006) highlighted the complexity of factors determining the development of faith, or - we would say - of religious identity. These factors *"include biological maturation, emotional and cognitive development, psychosocial experience, and the role of religiocultural symbols, meanings, and practices. This complexity is increased if we consider gender and race, which we try to do in this account"* (2006, p. 36). Evidently, Fowler's perspective is in line with our multifaceted conception of identity. Specifically, he distinguishes different stages in faith development from infancy to adolescence: *Primal Faith* (Infancy to Age 2); *Intuitive-Projective Faith* (Toddlerhood and Early Childhood); *Mythic-Literal Faith* (Middle Childhood and Beyond); *Synthetic-Conventional Faith* (Adolescence and Beyond); *Individuative-Reflective Faith; Conjunctive Faith;* and *Universalizing Faith*. To the scope of this work, we are interested in briefly describing only the Synthetic-Conventional Faith, which is strictly dependent from cognitive acquisitions occurring with puberty and

adolescence. The acquisition of abstract thought makes adolescents able of producing their own thinking, to reflect upon themselves, and to describe and synthesize their meanings (Piaget, 1970, 1976). Thus, this is the stage of the *personalization of the world,* and also God - or deity in general - can be characterized with personal qualities. This is the era of attachments to values and beliefs, which can be nonetheless followed uncritically, and only later can become matter of critical reflection. In Fowler's theory, previous deficits in object relationships and in the acquisition of a third-person perspective could prevent adolescents from using God as a constructive self-object, reducing his figure to a narcissistic projection, trapped in the dependence from others' confirmation of self (Fowler, 2006). Ultimately, Fowler thought that faith involves development and conversion, but, in turn, development prepares the way to conversion. Humans have innate readiness for faith, but need a facilitating environment for their faith to develop (Fowler, 1981).

Indeed, religion has been often studied in its relationship with the transmission of religious traditions and practices within family interactions. In particular, religiosity seems to imbue parenting styles, and specifically parental control could be a possible derivative of teachings of the religious tradition with which parents identify (Kim, & Wilcox, 2014). Authors found that orthodox Catholic and Protestant parents are more likely than their unaffiliated counterparts to exercise control over their adolescent children, especially in regard to engagement in risky behaviors, such as teen sex and drinking.

Similarly, Lori Peek (2005), in a study on the development of Muslim identity in a sample of second-generation Muslim Americans, for whom this aspect of identity

had become the most salient, found that religious identity is the result of a complex on-going process and develops through three different stages: (1) religion as ascribed identity, (2) religion as chosen identity, and (3) religion as declared identity. In the first stage, religious identity is given for granted and usually is not so salient; in this stage religion is often practiced because of family education and prescriptions. Religion often constitutes an ascribed identity in the case of majority religion faith. In the second stage, with the cognitive maturation of youth, religion is considered not more unquestionable, but it is autonomously chosen and practiced. In this sense, peers and close friends play an important role in constructing and reinforcing religious identity. The third stage was found to have occurred in correspondence to a crisis, that is the 11th September. For the sample interviewed by the researcher, such a huge event made them reinforcing their religious identity, praying more often and increasing their need for a spiritual anchor, to offer a positive social representation of their religion. A central point in Peek's reflection is that *"religious boundaries and meaning are constructed both from within and without, in response to internal conflicts and choices and external pressures and rewards that drive identity formation"* (p. 236).

As a matter of fact, religion, serves important functions also at social and community level. Indeed, it answers to the innate human inclination to a supernatural reality, which gives sense to his existence (Bering, 2006); it fosters social relationships (Thompson, 2014), and preserve group and family cohesion. Finally, religion can provide important identity markers, which help promote individual self-

awareness and maintain self-identity, especially in the process of acculturation for immigrants and ethnic minorities (Peek, 2005; Williams 1988).

CHAPTER 3

THE IMPACT OF LIFE CONTEXTS ON IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

3.0 Introduction

Individuals function in a number of different life contexts on a daily basis. Some of these contexts are relational, referring to being in the company of specific people such as family, friends, and romantic partners. Other contexts are spatial, such as neighborhoods, schools, and churches. Still other contexts involve the use of one's time, such as how one spends one's leisure time. So the term "context" can take on a number of meanings, but we use Bronfenbrenner's (1979) concept of "microsystems" to characterize the various settings in which young people find themselves at various points during their day. Broadly, a microsystem is defined by the individuals and structures with which people directly interact on a regular basis. Commonly referenced microsystemic contexts include family, peers, school, and neighborhood (Gorman-Smith, Tolan, & Henry, 2000) – although social institutions such as churches, and relational contexts such as romantic partnerships, can also be viewed as contexts for identity development (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). To be more precise, the theoretical framework we refer to goes beyond Bronfenbrenner's theory and embraces ecodevelopmental theory (Szapocznik & Coatsworth, 1999), which was developed to systematize risk and protective factors in drug abuse. Ecodevelopmental theory adds to socio-ecological theory by considering the reciprocal influence between specific ecosystems (such as family, peer and school) and the integrated effects of these interactions on

developmental outcomes. Consistently, we look at complex contextual structures as jointly influencing identity development. Furthermore, as Schwartz et al. (2006) found, *self-concept* represents a fundamental element intervening in the effects of environment on development and adjustment. Depending on the more or less active role played by adolescents in their environment and development, adjustment can be accounted for primarily by contexts factors, or by a combination of personal *and* contextual factors *together*. Again, as already highlighted in previous chapters, individuals and contexts are engaged a complex and changeable relationship.

It is well known that a given context elicits specific responses on the part of the individual. For example, the work or school context is a setting in which individuals often behave formally and follow rules, whereas the peer context is a setting in which rules tend to be less formal and more flexible and unspoken (Amerio et al., 1990). For another example, young people are likely to behave differently in the company of their parents than in the company of a romantic partner. So the way in which identity is expressed and lived likely varies not only as a function of *which aspect of identity is being considered*, but also *in what context the identity is being expressed or observed*. In this chapter we briefly review several important contexts in which young people operate, and the contributions of these contexts to young people's identity development.

3.1 Family

Family is the original context in which individuals learn to interact with other people. Family is *"fundamental in forming the social nature and ideals of the individual social status and ideals"* (Cooley, 1909, p. 23), and in determining the

ways in which individuals will experience further future relationships with other social contexts (Scabini & Manzi, 2011). Parents shape their children's self-development by providing opportunities for children to engage with specific toys, media, peers, educational materials, et cetera – and parents often communicate their beliefs to their children in both direct and indirect ways. For example, as already addressed in Chapter 2[7], parental socialization is especially strong in collective domains such as ethnicity (Umaña-Taylor, Bhanot, & Shin, 2006) and religion (Martin et al., 2003; Okagaki & Bevis, 1999). Parents display objects in their home that reflect their beliefs, and discussions with children about these objects can aid in socialization efforts. Parents' routines, such as prayer and religious attendance schedules, or the exercise of traditional rituals and customs, also expose children to ideas and role models that will likely shape the child's identity.

Furthermore, parents can contribute to molding youths' identity by conveying to children their own beliefs about the "best" way to express oneself, adapting themselves to better match children's specific needs and characteristics, and acting as mediators between children and society (Schachter & Ventura, 2008).

Three main theoretical strands have conceptualized the influence of family and parents on children's identity construction (Beyers & Goossens, 2008). The first such strand is *attachment theory* (Bowlby, 1969), which states that a secure attachment style with parents or caregivers provide children and adolescents with a secure base from which to start exploring the outer world autonomously. This trend has been demonstrated in several studies that have found adolescents with a secure attachment

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[7] See pag. 44

style to be more likely to engage in identity exploration (i.e. Green & Campbell, 2000).

The second theoretical frame is represented by *neo-analytical theory*, which asserts that identity development implies a process of separation-individuation (Mahler & Furer, 1963), in which the autonomy of toddlerhood is extended and expanded (Blos, 1967). This process can occur only if adults support youth's personal autonomy and individuality (Beyers & Goossens, 2008; Luyckx, Soenens, Vansteenkiste, Goossens, & Berzonsky, 2007; Schwartz, Côté, & Arnett, 2005). Separateness has been operationalized (Koepke & Denissen, 2012) in terms of (a) non-imitation of parents' opinions and actions, (b) recognition of parents as ordinary, rather than idealized, people; (c) maintenance of "secrets" from parents, that is, a space of private life; (d) independence from parental emotional and functional support; (e) independence from excessively negative feelings towards parents; (f) material independence; and (g) physical distance. These dimensions can be seen as a series of normative processes, which first may assume a defensive character against family enmeshment, but then are reconfigured to permit a more mature relationship with parents, based on reliance, self-disclosure, and egalitarian roles (Smetana, 2011; Koepke & Denissen, 2012). Obviously, the validity of this theorization must be contextualized within the specific cultural environment each time, since autonomy and separateness might have different meanings and imply different practices, depending on sociocultural values and traditions, as well as on institutional and economic factors (Aassve, Billari, Mazzuco, & Ongaro, 2002).

The third theoretical strand integrates the previous two (Grotevant & Cooper, 1985), postulating that adolescents can most effectively engage in exploration and commitment when their relationship with parents is well-balanced between autonomy and emotional support, between connectedness and individuality, or to say it in Bosma and Kunnen's words (2001), between adaptation and assimilation. Some studies have found that this association is stronger for girls (Samoulis et al., 2001; Sartor & Youniss, 2002; Schultheiss & Blustein, 1994; Willemsen & Waterman, 1991). Similarly, parents' gender seems to matter, such that mothers more strongly influence identity processes than fathers do (e.g., Samoulis et al., 2001).

What emerges from all of this research is that supportive parenting, neither too detached neither too intrusive, is a key factor in adolescents' identity construction. Families where such developmental movements and shifts are not supported or permitted may prevent adolescents from constructing a coherent sense of identity, with possible negative emotional and behavioral outcomes. Possible inhibiting family environments include those characterized by parents' psychological control, that is an intrusive and persistent pressure from parents to think, behave, and feel in the way that the parent dictates (Barber, 1996). As a result, rules and values imposed by parents are merely introjected, rather than integrated and thoughtfully considered (Assor, Roth, & Deci, 2004). Psychological control can manifest itself through various manipulative and subtle mechanisms, such as guilt induction, invalidation of child's perspectives, and love withdrawal (Barber & Harmon, 2002), all of which exert negative effects on well-being and increase the probability of internalizing

problems and risky behaviors. As an example, parental conditional regard seems to be positively associated with fluctuations in children's self-esteem; negative reaction to failures, accompanied by a sense of being unworthy; short-lived satisfaction after a success, and feeling pressure by the prospect of the next demand from parents (Assor, Roth, & Deci, 2004). Further, psychologically controlling parenting is thought to provoke maladaptive perfectionism in children, which has been found to be a mediating factor for negative health outcomes, such as depressive symptoms (Soenens et al., 2008a) and eating disorders (Boone et al., 2014; Soenens et al., 2008b).

In modern society, where socioeconomic structures, the need for higher education, and wavering job market prolonged the time for moratorium, family of origin continues to exert powerful effects on adolescents' and emerging adults' lives. Especially in Mediterranean societies, such as Italy, youth tend to live with their parents for a longer time (e.g. Aassve, Billari, Mazzuco, & Ongaro, 2002; Crocetti & Meeus, 2014) in comparison with their North-European peers. Crocetti and Meeus (2014), for example, found that Italian emerging adults still living with their family of origin reported an increasingly better relationship with their parents over time, as a result of a new equilibrium achieved in the transition to emerging adulthood. Significantly, Crocetti and Meeus also found that, among Italian emerging adults still living at home, family was attributed higher importance than friends. Indeed, to describe Italian youths' situation the demographer Livi Bacci (2008) coined the so-called "delay syndrome'', which would be characterized by: (1) protraction of education; (2) delay of entry into the job market, coupled with high rates of

unemployment; (3) inclination to remain in the parental home until the late 20s or 30s; (4) postponement of engaging in a committed partnership; and (5) delayed assumption of parenthood. Evidently, this syndrome affects profoundly the development of identity, provoking uncertainty, instability, and the feeling of having poor external resources and opportunities (Crocetti, Rabaglietti, & Sica, 2012; Karaś, Cieciuch, Negru, & Crocetti, 2014). In line with these evidences, Crocetti et al. (2011) compared identity formation in large samples of Italian and Dutch adolescents. Findings suggested that Italians presented lower commitment, higher in-depth exploration, and higher reconsideration, compared to the Dutch peers. In addition, Italian adolescents were prevalently classified into the moratorium and searching moratorium statuses, compared to the early-closed statuses reported by Dutch youths. Interestingly, high levels of reconsideration and searching moratorium statuses in Dutch adolescents were associated with problematic family relationships and maladaptive functioning, while in the Italian sample these factors seemed to be more adaptive. Thus, it is possible to surmise that Italian adolescents may experience weaker pressure from parents towards the achievement of a stable identity, using adolescence years to considering and reconsidering their identity (Aleni Sestito & Sica, 2014).

Family, therefore, has a central role in adolescents' identity development, but one may notice that we have been talking exclusively about parents, overlooking other components of family, such as siblings, who have been given much less attention in literature. Relationships with siblings are particularly important, because in the family siblings are more like peers, as opposed to hierarchical relationships that most

youth maintain with parents. In the construction of identity, siblings fulfill two opposite functions, namely *identification* and *differentiation* (Wong et al., 2010). Identification refers to the possibility of having a model from which it is possible to learn and assimilate behaviors, values, abilities, and relational skills. On the other hand, individuals can define their identity by affirming their uniqueness and difference from siblings. These processes are, in turn, influenced by gender constellation and birth order, with same-sex siblings higher both in identification and differentiation (Benin & Johnson, 1984; Schachter, Gilutz, Shore, & Adler, 1978). As for birth order, later-born siblings seem to be more likely to identify with earlier-born siblings, while the reverse seems to be more rare (Branje, Van Lieshout, Van Aken, & Haselager, 2004; Whiteman, McHale, & Crouter, 2007). Identification processes are stronger when age difference is higher (French, 1984). On the contrary, earlier-born siblings are higher in differentiation from brothers or sisters (Whiteman et al., 2007), and the greater the age difference is, the stronger this tendency (Feinberg, McHale, Crouter, & Cumsille, 2003). On the whole, older siblings seem to engage more in identity exploration and commitments, perhaps because of their stronger identification with parents, and tend to influence younger siblings in various life domains (Kalakoski & Nurmi, 1998), such as school and career choices (i.e. Whiston & Keller, 2004). Similarly, Tucker, Barber, and Eccles (2001) found that later-born adolescents who consulted siblings for advice regarding career and education choice were more likely to report positive expectations for college graduation success and for future occupational identity. Schultheiss et al. (2001)

found that, for adolescents, siblings' support was considered especially important in career and educational transitions.

3.2 School and workplaces

Schools are important social contexts in which identity is deeply influenced and shaped, because of their socializing functions in which adolescents struggle to define themselves in relation to others, primarily peers (i.e. Dornbusch 1989; Wilkinson & Pearson, 2013). School contexts are important "experimental environments" where adolescents come in contact with new adult models to interact and identify with, as well as with peers with whom one shares common goals and activities, and experience competition, which has a positive performance-propelling function. Prosocial behavior, or on the contrary antisocial tendencies, are learned and expressed primarily in educational contexts, supporting or contrasting family teachings and values. Personal characteristics of adolescents, such as personality features, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation, mutually interact with characteristics of the context itself and of the people who populate it. As an example, girls are less encouraged than boys to succeed in scientific subjects; ethnic-minority adolescents are more likely to experience social isolation; and sexual-minority youth are often dissuaded from expressing their inner feelings and behaving in accordance with them.

As noted above, educational contexts tend to be "laboratories" for identity development (Montgomery & Côté, 2003). Commitment in school and career influences the way in which adolescents experience study and intellectual activities: to this end, it is crucial whether the career attended has been chosen by adolescents

or ascribed by parents. In addition, parental expectations can affect children's school success and self-esteem, making them feeling worthy or unworthy; and increasing probability for the development of maladaptive perfectionism (Soenens et al., 2008a) and negative health outcomes (Soenens et al., 2008b; Boone et al., 2014).

3.3 Neighborhood

"Of the neighborhood group it may be said, in general, that from the time men formed permanent settlements upon the land, down, at least, to the rise of modern industrial cities, it has played a main part in the primary, heart-to-heart life of the people" (Cooley, 1909, p. 25).

In the past, the neighborhood community represented a fundamental point of reference for individuals and families, providing mutual material and emotional support. Nowadays, massive urbanization and the deterioration of bonds to places have significantly reduced the meaning and the importance of neighborhood in some contexts, but somehow it still constitutes a cornerstone for the life of people in small villages and countries and has significant effects on health outcomes.

In relation to identity development, neighborhood can constitute a significant agent for different reasons. First, it influences individuals' lifestyle through implicit and explicit community rules, habits, and customs, which are internalized and can be assumed as objects of identification, even beyond the physical permanence in that place. Available resources in a specific neighborhood determine the quality and quantity of opportunities for its inhabitants. As an example, it has been found that residents who live in neighborhoods with green, walkable spaces, and bicycle tend to

be more physically active and healthy (Saelens et al. 2003). Secondarily, the feeling of belonging to a community rather than another, and living in a specific neighborhood, can inform self-presentation to others, as well as the way how one is perceived by others. For children and adolescents, neighborhood is something "imposed" by parents, and which they can appreciate or, on the contrary, despise. Acquiring autonomy could mean, thus, also moving away from a place adolescents do not like, and settling (or spending time) in a neighborhood (in the same or a different town) that better matches their tastes and needs.

3.4 Peer group

Peer contexts embraces a number of places and situations, which are often intertwined and not easily to differentiate by other contexts here addressed separately, such as leisure contexts, school and workplaces, and romantic relationships. Though aware of this "artificial" separation, this choice was taken to better point out specific characteristics of each of them.

Aggregation with peers is a spontaneous process since childhood, but in adolescence it acquires particular meanings and features, fundamental in the developmental transition to adulthood.

> *The general fact is that children, especially boys after about their twelfth year, live in fellowships in which their sympathy, ambition and honor are engaged even more, often, than they are in the family* (Cooley, 1909, p. 23-24).

Spending time with peers is strongly encouraged by society and educational system (classes are formed by children and youth of the same age), so that at the beginning groups of fellows are almost mandated by parents and teachers. However, at a later stage adolescents choose the groups they want to join and attend, based on shared interests, activities, values, and personality characteristics. Social identity and social categorization theories (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) help understanding processes implicated in group affiliation: adolescents identify themselves and others with discrete categories that allow them to distinguish and differentiate their ingroup (the one they belong to) from the outgroups (the ones different from the one own). Ingroup/outgroup mechanisms start functioning also in minimal groups, and make people attribute all positive features to the first and all negative ones to the second. Thus, two important processes occur in this dynamics: *identification* with members of the ingroup, and *differentiation* from members of the outgroup. Through the internal cohesion and the emotional commitment with the ingroup, adolescents reinforce their identity, even more definite and valorized due to its diversity from the one of "the others". The "we" of the peer groups provide adolescents with new models to identify with, at the same time different and similar to the familiar ones. As for the leisure spaces addressed in the following paragraph, spaces and time spent with peer groups become something "secret", where adults cannot get in without a valid reason, and where relationships are regulated by implicit rules, rituals, and allegiances (Amerio, Boggi Cavallo, Palmonari & Pombeni, 1990; Aguirre & Rodriguez, 1997). Where these characteristics are strongly established and rigidly defended, a peer group can become a so-called

"urban tribe" (Aguirre & Rodriguez, 1997), or a youth sub-culture, such as punks, emos, fashion-victims, and so on. Affiliation to these tribes help defining identity not only through new identifications, but also determining the overall lifestyle of their members: how to dress; where to go and what to do in leisure time; what kind of music to listen to and so on.

The concepts of peer influence and peer pressure have been largely studies in contemporary literature, and it has been demonstrated that peer groups have both positive and negative effects on identity development, social skills, adaptive or maladaptive behaviors, and well-being (Kiran-Esen, 2003; Lebedina-Manzoni & Ricijaš, 2013; Sim & Koh, 2003).

3.5 Leisure places

As mentioned above[8], leisure activities are prominently chosen by youth, rather than ascribed by adults (Haggard & Williams, 1992; Larson, 2000), and often represent for them a real and symbolic "private space", away from home and parental control. The hedonistic nature of such activities lets adolescents express aspects of self, which are hardly displayed in the other contexts in which adolescents interacts. Let us think about adolescents while dancing, playing music or sports, singing, painting, or simply reading a book, watching a movie, or going shopping: they probably express their most genuine and spontaneous dispositions, perhaps hidden or latent even when they find themselves with friends or romantic partners. This conception is coherent with Waterman's *discovery model* of identity (Waterman, 1992, 1993), which postulates that identity work occurs through experimentations

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[8] See Chapter 2, pag. 41

with different activities to discover or identify the activity or activities that most allow self-expression and self-realization.

Leisure contexts imply physical places, which are differently structured and characterized: depending on the type of activity, the body will be more or less involved, and the physical contact with objects, tools, and other people will be more or less central. This means that leisure contexts offer the opportunity to experiment, elaborate, and integrate both psychological and physical boundaries; they allow adolescents to exercise their new somatic abilities, shapes, and strength.

These contexts can be formal or informal, namely can be spontaneously constituted by participants in the activity, as for example in the case of a group of friends going to the cinema, or they can be more structured and formally organized, that is a competitive soccer team. Depending on the nature of these contexts, also the relationships among participants can change: they can be egalitarian, among peers (as in the case of the cinema), or on the contrary, can entail a sort of hierarchy, especially when adults fulfill a leading role (as the trainer of the soccer team) (Amerio, Boggi Cavallo, Palmonari & Pombeni, 1990). In both cases, adolescents experiment new types of interpersonal relationships, different both from the ones in the family, and from the ones in the educational contexts: they get to know other aspects of the others and of the self, contributing to the formation of a more complex and multifaceted identity. Nonetheless, it has been found that more structured activities are negatively related to antisocial behavior, while low-structured activities seem to positively correlate with it (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000; Mahoney, Stattin, & Lord, 2004).

The choice of leisure activities widely hinge upon the availability of resources and opportunity to practice them in the specific context (Zeijl, 2001), as well as upon their potential to fit with the socio-cultural values of the context. Coatsworth and colleagues (2005) realized a cross-national study between United States, Chile, and Italy to investigate whether differences did exist between countries in adolescents' feelings about the leisure activities, the contents of these activities, and identity issues related with them. Within others, an interesting result was that US adolescents who identified sports as self-defining tended to report higher levels of flow and goal-directed behavior; instead Italian and Chilean adolescents presented differences only in goal-oriented behaviors. In addition, it was found that for social activities ("hanging out with friends", "talking with friends", etc) lowest levels of goal-directed behavior and relatively low levels of flow were reported. This difference, though, was less pronounced for Chilean adolescents, probably because of the communal nature of that society. These differences highlight how cultural and social processes contribute to mold activity-related identity experiences: social norms, values and traditions influence identity exploration and activity selection processes (Adams & Marshall, 1996), but also it is reasonable to believe that also cultural expectations about adolescent time use have weight in these experiences (Alsaker & Flammer, 1999; Zeijl, 2001).

3.6. Religious contexts

Religious contexts in adolescence may undergo a decrease of importance, in comparison with childhood and preadolescence, because of the common movement of estrangement and rebellion from parental mandates. Or rather, adolescents can

engage in a deliberate commitment on them. Religious values and practices can be internalized and well integrated into the overall youth's identity, thus leading adolescents to actively participate in religious life. It occurs, indeed, that young boys and girls may choose to join religious groups, beyond activities strictly connected to religious rituals. Religious groups, indeed, can provide adolescents with opportunities to meet and attend peers and friends with whom they share values, interests and activities. The most of these groups present themselves as more or less formal groups, regulated by explicit rules, and hierarchical relationships at the presence of an educator (Amerio et al, 1990).

Religious attendance, beliefs, and affiliation play powerful roles in shaping social beliefs and behavior related to romantic relationships and sexuality. Highly religious-committed adolescents may experience conflicts between their enhanced sexual drive and curiosity, and religious mandates, which are generally forbidding. Conciliating these aspects of identity could be even more difficult for same-sex attracted adolescents, which are often stigmatized as sinful. Sexual scripts available to adolescents in their cultural contexts may shape young people's recognition and interpretation of attractions to same-sex peers, and may encourage young people to deny or suppress same-sex attraction (Diamond & Savin-Williams 2000; Hyde & Jaffee, 2000; Schwartz & Rutter 2000; Wilkinson & Pearson, 2013).

3.7 Romantic relationships

In Erikson's theory, a successful resolution of identity crisis, or rather the acquisition of an integrated and achieved identity, would allow individuals to access intimacy and fidelity. Adolescence (and pre-adolescence, nowadays) is the time

when youth live first romantic, intimate and sexual relationships, which for long time in literature has been considered something trivial and transitory. Nature of romantic relationships are believed to evolve from early adolescence to emerging adulthood, following a standard path, as summarized by Montgomery (2005): *"unlike early adolescent romantic relationships which are often transient and capricious, or middle adolescent romance, which is highly passionate and sometimes idealistic, romantic relationships at the transition to adulthood are characterized by passion, affiliation and intimacy".* Such a developmental path has been found in a number of studies (among others, Bakken and Huber, 2005; Montgomery, 2005; Rotenberg, Schaut and O'Connor, 1993) confirming Erikson's original theorization. Though, one may argue that 21st century extended moratorium has also delayed the time of romantic relationships commitments and marriage, while social pressure for the achievement of a personal identity has become stronger, possibly leading to a ruminative cycle of continued exploration (Luyckx et al., 2008). Thus, a dilemma for emerging adults arises: the presence of commitment may lead to long term relationships, but on the other hand fun and exploration (typical of moratorium) might make emerging adults postpone engagement in intimate committed relationships. In this framework, the developmental ordering of identity and intimacy is called into question. Montgomery (2005) carried out a ten-year longitudinal study with a sample of German emerging adults, and confirmed this ordering, though the significant changes in modern developmental paths.

Currently, romantic relationships in adolescence are thought as powerful and significant identity agents and well-being factors for young people (Collins 2003, Furman & Collins 2008, Furman & Shaffer 2003).

> *The term "romantic relationships" refers to mutually acknowledged ongoing voluntary interactions. Compared to other peer relationships, romantic ones typically have a distinctive intensity, commonly marked by expressions of affection and current or anticipated sexual behavior. This definition applies to samegender, as well as mixed-gender, relationships. [...] This category includes fantasies and one-sided attractions ("crushes"), as well as interactions with potential romantic partners and brief nonromantic sexual encounters* (Collins, Welsh, & Furman, 2009, p. 632).

Thus, romantic relationships constitute interpersonal spaces in which adolescents can experience new relational patterns, and new roles, different and yet similar to the ones lived in family and with peers. In addition, the emphasis given by authors to fantasies and "crushes" is fundamental to understand the processes that bring adolescents to mature couple relationships, recalling the complementary importance of psychic and relational processes. From an interpersonal developmental perspective, adolescents find themselves engaged in a restructuration of primary attachment bonds, since adult attachments require cognitive and emotional skills to integrate attachment, caregiving, and sexual/reproductive components (Waters & Cummings 2000). Collins (2003) identified five elements necessary for the study and the definition of adolescence romantic relationships: romantic involvement; partner

identity; relationship content; relationship quality; and cognitive and emotional processes in the relationship. These factors change over time and present different characteristics in early adolescence, middle adolescence, late adolescence, and emerging adulthood. For example, a quite diffused experience in early and middle adolescence might be having romantic and intimate relationships with both same-sex and other-sex partners. Such dating might either provide a cover for sexual minority youth, or is functional to clarify one's identity (Diamond et al. 1999). Anyway, it must been considered in the light of the universal life-long fluidity in gender identity, sexual attraction, and sexual behavior.

Idiosyncratic articulations among these five factors, coupled with the specific personal characteristics and the emotional and relational background of the adolescent, as well as the contexts in which such romantic relationships are experienced, determine their effect on identity development. More precisely, romantic relationships in adolescence can both foster or inhibit identity exploration and commitment, harmonious relations with peers, succeeding in school, perspectives for the future, and developing sexuality (Furman & Collins 2008, Furman & Shaffer, 2003). On the contrary, poor-quality romantic relationships seem to be associated with bad romantic relationships in the future, with substance use, poor academic performance, externalizing and internalizing symptoms, poor emotional health, and low job competence (Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2001; 2004).

Past research asserted that intimacy and sexual exploration in romantic relationships, while being normative and commonly shared among heterosexual youths, may encounter difficulties or obstacles in sexual minority youth's experience

(D'Augelli, 1988; Koch, 1993; Savin-Williams, 1994). Researchers thought that for sexual-minority youths it could be difficult to date same-sex partners, living isolation or compulsory heterosexuality. Notwithstanding, Russell and Consolacion (2003) found that attractions to same-sex people do not act as barriers to romantic relationships in adolescence. From their study it did emerged a tendency of sexual-minority adolescents to engage in other-sex relationships, but it was also true that heterosexual dating appeared to be normative and socially expected for all youths, independently from their sexual attractions. Sexual-minority adolescents were at risk not because of their same-sex attraction itself, but because they had less opportunity for intimacy.

CHAPTER 4
CONSTRUCTING A MEASURE TO ASSESS THE NEW IDENTITY MODEL

4.0 Introduction

Many domain-specific identity research strands, such as about gender identity (Bussey & Bandura, 1992; 1999), ethnic identity (Phinney, 1990), occupational identity (Skorikov & Vondracek, 2011), moral identity (Hardy & Carlo, 2005), religious/spiritual identity (MacDonald, 2000), and national identity (Schildkraut, 2005), have developed at least somewhat separately from mainstream neo-Eriksonian identity theory and research (see Schwartz, Luyckx, & Crocetti, 2014).

William James, one of the founders of psychology, stated more than 120 years ago (1890) that what we call *self* is a complex concept, comprised of various dimensions, and that individuals act differently in their several life contexts.

> *"In its widest possible sense, however, a man's Self is the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank-account. All these things give him the same emotions".* (James, 1890, pp. 291)

> *"Properly speaking, a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their mind. To wound any one of these his images is to wound him. But as*

the individuals who carry the images fall naturally into classes, we may practically say that he has as many different social selves as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinion he cares. He generally shows a different side of himself to each of these different groups". (ibid. p. 294)

Paradoxically, the acknowledgment of identity complexity has led to a chasm in the study of the various domains and contexts in which identity operates. Generally speaking, different research groups have focused on one dimension at a time, and consequently developed methodologies and measures that have undoubtedly provided important insights into knowledge about identity development and functioning. Nevertheless, even those studies that have paid specific attention to the interactions between two or more identity domains or contexts have assessed such domain through different measures and tools than those employed by other research groups – and no study to date has examined more than a handful of domains together (Narváez et al., 2009).

This fragmentation of the identity literature has limited our ability to understand and appreciate the interactions among the various identity domains. The present study was designed to address this fragmentation by constructing a tool to simultaneously capture identity processes within several domains that represent the core of many individuals' self-representation(s).

Specifically, the measurement tool was designed to answer the following questions:

1. How do individuals perceive themselves with respect to the different identity dimensions?

2. Do these dimensions have different salience for people within the various social contexts in which they interact?

3. Is there similarity between individuals' self-definitions and others' opinions about them?

4. How can different life contexts affect people's identity expressions?

Undoubtedly, the studies carried out within the field of *intersectionality* (Crenshaw, 1996; Syed, 2010) provide an important starting point for a knowledge base to inform the research questions posed here. Intersectionality holds that the whole created by the various identity domains is greater than the sum of the domains themselves. More specifically, the person's overall identity functions not based on simple addition of all his/her identity dimensions, but rather by the subjective and dynamic intersections between and among these dimensions across the different contexts of life (Schwartz, Luyckx, & Crocetti, 2014)[9].

4.1 Conceptual and practical points of departure

In 2009, Narváez and colleagues developed a qualitative strategy to study the intersection among sexual, ethnoracial, and gender identities of people belonging to minority groups, and how these identities interact with different sociocultural contexts and over time. The authors conducted semi-structured interviews during which participants were invited to talk about their own identities and roles, with the support of visual cues (see **Figures 1 and 2**).

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[9] Intersectionality paradigm is presented more widely in the Preface, see pages 3-4

Figure 1 below was used in the first part of Narváez et al.'s (2009) interview, during which people were invited to describe who they were in terms of labels and roles. Four preprinted categories helped people to understand the task, but they could add any other categories they wanted and were asked to write the labels that best described them all over the sheet, around the ME circle. Once this task had been completed, they were invited to talk about the labels and roles mentioned and whether each of these was in harmony with the others, or whether the person perceived conflicts between or among roles.
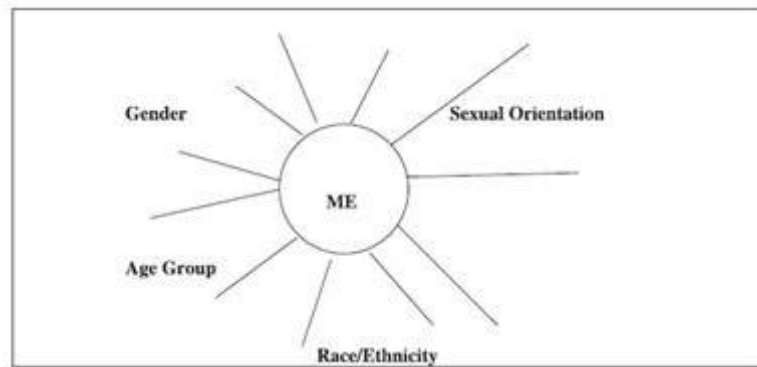
Figure 1 - Identity and roles visual clue

Next, interviewers asked participants to talk about stressors and strengths that characterized each identity, especially focusing on how these stressors and strengths could affect their lives in various social settings. The visual clue shown below was used as a guide (**Figure 2**).

```
AREAS OF LIFE

        Neighborhood/Community

Intimate Relationships/Lovers


    Work/Career Freedom of Expression

                Family
Personal Safety
                Health

  College

            Religious/Spiritual Life
Early Education
                    Politics

ANY OTHER AREA OF LIFE
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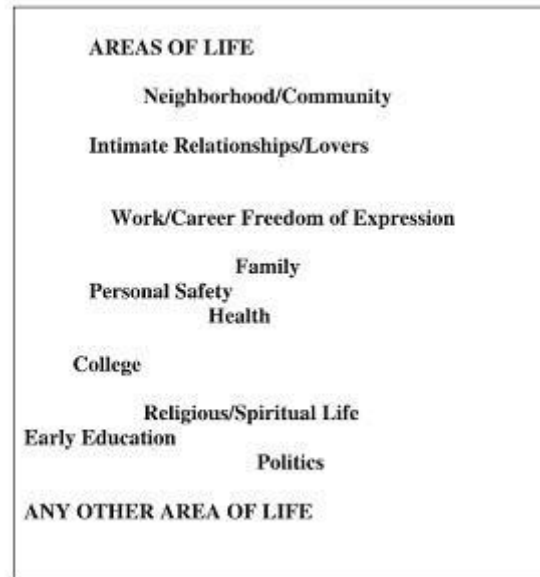
Figure 2 - Relationships between identities and institutions visual clue

The last part of the interview was about *nonevents*, namely possibilities that individuals had not experienced in their life, but that they thought could have improved their psychosocial well-being.

The research strategy employed by Narváez and colleagues opens up the possibility of capturing the interconnections between individuals' identity domains and their prominence within different sociocultural contexts, as well as for the use of self-labels that help respondents become aware of important self-aspects. Moreover, the usage of visual stimuli and self-narrations helps to facilitate the generation of material that may be useful in understanding processes involved in identity construction and development over time.

A key disadvantage of face-to-face interviews, however, concerns the time and resources involved in conducting and coding the interviews. Such resources are not

always available to researchers, and the amount of labor involved often places a limit on the sample size that is feasible.

Therefore, the new identity measure here presented was inspired by, and extended, Narváez and colleagues' methodology. Our goal was to develop a quantitative tool that could capture at least some of the same key information gleaned through the interview. At the same time, an important advantage of a quantitative tool is the ability to administer it in groups or online, as well as recruiting a larger, more diverse, and cross-national sample. However, additional considerations must also be taken into account, as we enumerate below.

First, Narváez et al. (2009) designed their interview explicitly for use with ethnic minority participants. We contend that intersectionality is important for *all* individuals, not just those from minority backgrounds (Schwartz, Zamboanga, Luyckx, Meca, & Ritchie, 2012). Some individuals may be minorities in ways that are less readily apparent than ethnicity – such as sexual orientation, physical or emotional disabilities, and religion. Even for those people who do not identify themselves as minorities in any sense, intersectionality is nonetheless important vis-à-vis the ways in which the person is able to develop a coherent and synthesized sense of self (Erikson, 1950). Although Narváez et al. (2009) stated that their approach was not evaluated among non-minorities – and that the approach would likely not work with non-minorities because they do not experience tensions between contradictory aspects of themselves and mainstream society – we contend that *anyone* can experience aspects of their identities as being in conflict with another, such as work-family conflicts, friend-family conflicts, family-partner conflicts, et

cetera (Harter, 2012). A student can perceive her identity as a family member as incompatible with her studies. A young person may view his modest-income neighborhood as being in conflict with his wealthier friends. Teenagers often experience their social and romantic relationships as incompatible with their schoolwork. That is to say that individuals always live in interpersonal and interactive settings that influence their ways of being, and it would appear unrealistic to consider someone as isolated from his/her environment. Additionally, there is likely variability in the salience and prominence of self-aspects across different social contexts.

Consequently, in the present study, we construe the concept of intersectionality as applying in a wider sense – as a way of understanding the processes underpinning the integration of different domains of identity (Schwartz, Luyckx, & Crocetti, 2014). In addition, Cooley (1902) and Harter (2012) have attended to the dynamics implicated in managing the looking-glass self – how we think others view us (in terms of their implicit and explicit feedback to us). Indeed, as previously mentioned, others' opinions about us strongly affect our overall self-perceptions and play a central role in our choice of strategies to harmonize our various self-views (e.g. Harter, 2002; Leary, 1999; Leary & Baumeister, 2000).

4.2 Constructing the Identity Labels and Life Contexts Questionnaire (ILLCQ)

The new measure designed for the present study, called the *Identity Labels and Life Contexts Questionnaire (ILLCQ),* was constructed in the form of a self-report questionnaire consisting of 3 parts. These three parts are titled *"How I define*

myself", "How others see me", and *"How others affect my way of being",* respectively. The original version of ILLCQ was developed in Italian. The English version was created using independent translations by two Italian psychologists proficient in English and familiar with the topics addressed within the questionnaire. The two translations were then compared, and disagreements were discussed until complete agreement was achieved. Subsequently, the revised questionnaire was evaluated by two adolescents living in the US, one native English speaker and one Portuguese-English bilingual, to test the clarity of the questions. Minor revisions were then incorporated, and the survey was launched online in both languages.

Generally speaking, the measure asks respondents to categorize themselves with respect to several domains of their identity and to assign each domain an importance rating in each of several different life contexts. Subsequently, participants are invited to think about others' opinions about them. Finally, they are asked to reflect on whether they can express freely their sense of identity in every life context, and if not, how they are constrained by one or more contexts. Additional questions ask whether there are some aspects of participants' identities that they feel are not recognized by others or that they try to keep hidden. A final question asks about those events that have been significant in bringing them to where they currently are in their lives.

Typical methods for constructing and validating questionnaires (Dillman, Smith, & Christian, 2009) were followed, so that a first draft of the questionnaire was developed based on extant literature both on domains and contexts of identity. The version shown in Figures 4, 5 and 6 resulted from two focus groups with eight

adolescents (4 females and 4 males) and young adults aged 15-23. The groups (one consisting of three people and one consisting of five people) were geared toward obtaining feedback about the clarity of the tasks, the appropriateness of the domains and contexts included, and suggestions regarding additional issues that participants considered important for understanding their identities.

Pilot participants were first asked to individually read the questionnaire and then to share their opinions with the group and to discuss with the others and the researcher about what should be changed, why it should be changed, and how to change it. In particular, participants were asked for suggestions about additional or different identity dimensions and life-contexts that should be included. The comments received during the two focus groups were then compared and integrated to generate a list of recommended changes. The revised version of the questionnaire then underwent a second evaluation by the same participants, who approved the version presented below.

4.3 Structure of the ILLCQ

The first part, "*How I define myself*", consists of a 13x7 table (**Figure 3**) where columns represent identity domains (Gender, Stage of life, Socioeconomic status, Race, Sexual orientation, School success, Physical appearance, Look, Youth sub-cultures, Political orientation, Religious Faith, Music and Sport), and rows represent life contexts (Family, School/Job, Neighborhood, Peer group, Leisure contexts, Religion places, Dating).

DIMENSIONE	ETICHETTA ED AGGETTIVO	Famiglia	Scuola/ Università	Quartiere	Gruppo di amici	Luoghi di tempo libero	Luoghi di religione	Relazioni sentimentali
Genere		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Fase della vita		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Status socio-economico		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Razza/etnia		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Orientamento sessuale		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Andamento scolastico		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Aspetto esteriore		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Look/ Modo di vestirsi		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Cultura giovanile		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Orientamento politico		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Credo religioso		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Musica		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Sport		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Figure 3 - ILLCQ Part 1 paper-and-pencil 1

The second part, "*How others see me*" (**Figure 4**), presents a 4x13 table, where columns represent important people in individuals' life (Friends, Parents, Partner, Teachers) and rows report the 13 identity domains included in the previous section (Gender, Stage of life, Socio-economic status, Race, etcetera).

Respondents were asked to consider to what extent important others (e.g., parents, peers, teachers) would agree on a scale from 1 (=Strongly agree) to 5 (=Strongly disagree) with the self-definitions they wrote previously for each domain.

Persone importanti nella tua vita	Genere	Fase della vita	Status	Razza/ etnia	Orientam sessuale	Andam. scolastico	Bellezza	Look	Cultura giovanile	Orienta m. politico	Credo religioso	Musica	Sport
Amici													
Genitori													
Partner sentimentali													
Insegnanti													

Figure 4 - ILLCQ Part 2 paper-and-pencil

The third section, "How others affect my way of being" (**Figure 5**), was intended to assess whether the life contexts taken into account in the previous sections are perceived by individuals as affecting their identity in a positive, neutral, or negative manner. These further questions assessed (see Figure 5): (B./C./D.) whether there are some specific aspects of self that the person feels are not recognized by others, what they are, and if so, by whom; (E.) whether there are some aspects of self that the person would change; (F.) specific events considered essential in making the person who he/she is currently; G./H./I. whether there are some aspects of self that the respondent tries to keep hidden from others, what they are, and especially in what circumstances.

Figure 5 - ILLCQ Part 3 paper-and-pencil

The main advantage of the ILLCQ lies in its ability to capture a person's self-views within different domains, and the prominence of these self-views, sometimes connected to roles played, within different life contexts. Indeed, as Harter (1997) stated, *"Adolescents come to describe themselves quite differently across different interpersonal contexts, for example, with parents, teachers, classmates, close friends, and those in whom they are romantically interested"* (p. 835-36).

The points at issue concern the ways in which these different descriptions are brought together to create a coherent sense of self – and the personal and social factors that can foster or hinder this process of integration.

Of course, the measure is characterized by some limitations, some of which were acknowledged by Narváez and colleagues. First, the measure is demanding for the number of rates to give to the items (91 in the first part and 52 in the second one), so that completing it requires paying close attention, which participants do not always do. This increase the risk of having "Miscellaneous Response Sets" or other

types of biased responses, (Paulhus & Vazire, 2007), as the so-called "Christmas Treeing", that is creating a response pattern that has nothing to do with the questions being asked. Second, the measure is cognitively demanding insofar as individuals are asked to adopt another person's perspective, label their identity aspects from this outside perspective, and rate their salience according to several life contexts. Third, asking someone to complete a measure consisting of 91 separate cells is demanding and can place burden on participants.

These issues led us to think about the need to test the appropriateness of the measure for different samples and administration methods. Specifically, we piloted the measure with respondents from different age groups (early, middle and late adolescents, as well as emerging adults), educational level, socioeconomic status, and nations/languages (Italy and US). In addition, different channels of diffusion were used.

In addition to the ILLCQ, we also asked a number of demographic questions, including age, gender, place of residence, family structure, parents' education and employment, birth order, and whether participants had a best friend, a circle of friends, and a romantic partner. We also asked whether participants had always resided in the same home, or whether they had moved at least once during their lives.

Other Identity measures were included in the battery, even if not addressed in this work: the *Aspects of Identity Questionnaire* (AIQ, Cheek & Briggs, 1982), the *Autonomy* and *Identity* scales *from* the *Erikson Psychosocial Stage Inventory* (EPSI; Rosenthal, Gurney, & Moore, 1981), the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA, Harter, 1982), and the *Cohesion and Flexibility* subscales *from* the *Family*

Adaptability and Cohesion Scales IV (FACES IV, Olson, Gorall & Tiesel, 2006), and the *Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire* (SDQ, Goodman, 1997), adapted ad hoc with contents more suitable for adolescents and emerging adults, rather than children.

4.4 Testing the ILLCQ in the field

4.4.1 The trial administration

The first pilot study served mainly to test the usability of the ILLCQ, and thus we administered it paper-and-pencil so that we could obtain direct comments and suggestions from respondents. This feedback helped us to formulate a clearer set of instructions, as well as to identify minor adjustments that needed to be made to the wording of the identities and contexts. For example, the domain of "look" was unclear to some participants, so we added some examples before conducting the larger study. Furthermore, at the end of data collection, participants were asked to provide feedback about the questionnaire. Some useful advice emerged from such discussions and allowed us to correct errors and clarify parts of the measure that were unclear or ambiguous.

Two face-to-face administrations were carried out in Naples (Italy) in October 2013: the first with 66 psychology undergraduates, and the second with 33 high school students. During both sessions, the researchers were present and available to answer questions or provide further information about the tasks. Researchers' assistance seemed to be especially useful with younger students, who often

experienced trouble thinking about themselves from another person's perspective and separating different dimensions of their identity.

4.4.2 The online administrations[10]

The second wave of data collection included three samples collected online through the Qualtrics survey platform. The online format required some adjustments to the graphic features of the questionnaire. As one can surmise from **Figure 6** below, we changed the look and response modality for Part 1 considerably to make it easier to manage and understand. We did likewise for the second (**Figure 7)** and third sections (**Figure 8**). In addition, the battery was divided into sections and augmented with encouragement sentences and a progress bar (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009).

The overall number of responders who had access to the questionnaire was much higher, compared to the effective number we could finally include in our study, due to the high rate of incomplete or unacceptable (for evident miscellaneous response sets) answers we received. Indeed, on a total of 1176 responders, we could include in our sample only 646 people (54,9%). A slight percentage (3,1%) of responses was excluded because of the age of participants, which was higher than 29 (the established limit to consider emerging adults). To understand the reason why so many people did not complete the questionnaire, it would be useful to analyze this issue comparing the three subsamples we recruited.

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[10] The online version of the whole battery administrated, both in English and Italian, is available in the Appendix at the end of the present work (pag. 184 and following).

Sample 1 was gathered from participants living in different regions of Italy. The study was initially advertised through social networks and mailing lists, and this was later expanded to include all students from Federico II through the university listserv (called CSI). We collected data from 551 Italian participants in all (73% females and 27% males,). These participants ranged in age from 14 to 29 ($M = 20.75$ years, $SD = 4.07$), being both high-school and university students.

The second and third samples were gathered in the United States to ascertain the cross-language and cross-cultural validity of the ILLCQ. We gathered data through two channels – Amazon's Mechanical Turk and a university psychology participant pool. In December 2013, the survey was uploaded onto Amazon's Mechanical Turk, targeting respondents aged 18-29. Mechanical Turk is a website (www.MTurk.com) created in 2005 and managed by Amazon.com. It is a marketplace where *workers* are paid by *requesters* to carry out tasks that require Human Intelligence (these tasks are called HITs – Human Intelligence Tasks). The available workforce consists of over 100,000 users from over 100 countries, completing thousands of tasks daily (Buhrmester et al., 2011). Requesters can filter workers through specific criteria (for example, age, country of residence, or accuracy on previous tasks) and must approve the work received before workers can be paid. During last few years, some studies have tested MTurk as a resource to recruit scientific research participants (Behrend et al., 2011; Goodman et al., 2012; Mason & Suri, 2011). Studies have demonstrated that MTurk samples are comparable to college student samples in terms of diversity and willingness to complete measures and tasks (Buhrmester et al., 2012; Paolacci et al., 2010). Although a small number of MTurk participants were from outside the

United States, we included only U.S.-based participants in our final sample. The whole MTurk sample consisted of 162 participants (48.3% females, and 51.7% males). Their ages ranged from 15 to 29 ($M = 23.69$ years, $SD = 3.32$).

Finally, the third sample was gathered from Florida International University (FIU) in Miami, whose student population is heavily minority (about 85% of students are nonwhite) and immigrant (about 70% are first or second generation immigrants).

The study was posted onto the psychology participant pool using the SONA Systems website. Participants received two hours of credit toward a research requirement (where a total of five research hours is required to pass the introductory psychology course). The FIU sample consisted of 417 participants (81% females and 19% males). Their ages ranged from 18 to 29 ($M = 21.17$ years, $SD = 2.36$).

The three samples differed sharply in terms of missing data. Generally, two kinds of missing data were observed in the samples: (a) participants who only provided some demographic data and did not complete any of the measures in the battery, and (b) participants who completed demographic questions and some or all of the other survey measures, but did not complete the ILLCQ. The ILLCQ is somewhat labor-intensive, as mentioned earlier, since participants must rate the importance of 13 identity components across seven life contexts, for a total of 91 ratings, only for the first part.

In total, the percentage of participants who completed the ILLCQ varied significantly across the three samples, χ^2 (2, $N = 1176$) $= 385.07$, $p < .001$, Cramér's $V = .57$. Only 30.3% of Italian participants, compared to 50.6% of MTurk participants and 96% of FIU participants, completed the ILLCQ. When we separated

this missingness into the two types described above, strong differences again emerged, χ^2 (4, N = 1162) = 394.77, p< .001, Cramér's V = .41. Among the Italian participants, 30% completed only the demographic questions and 39.7% completed demographics and part of all the other measures, but not the ILLCQ. Corresponding percentages for the other samples were 14.2% and 35.2%, respectively, for the MTurk sample, and 0.2% and 3.8%, respectively, for the FIU sample. It should be noted that the Italian participants were not compensated in any way; the MTurk participants were offered US $6; and the FIU participants were given credit toward a course requirement.

	Family	School	Neighborhood	Friends group	Spare time	Religious places	Dating
Dimension (do NOT insert numbers on this line)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1. Gender (Female, male, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Life phase (young boy, young girl, adult, adolescent etc)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Socio-economical status (rich, poor, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Race/ethnicity (caucasian; mulatto, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Sexual orientation (heterosexual; gay etc)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. School success	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Physical appearance (beautiful, nice etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Look/Dressing style	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Youth sub-cultures (Punk, Emo, Hippie, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Political orientation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Religious faith	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Music	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Sport	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. Other dimension	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Figure 6 - ILLCQ Part 1 online version

Figure 7 - ILLCQ Part 2 online version

Figure 8 - ILLCQ Part 3 online version

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS STRATEGIES: CLUSTERING ANALYSIS AND HEAT MAP FOR SURVEYS CONSTRUCTION

5.0 Introduction

The measure (ILLCQ – Identity Labels and Life Contexts), developed following procedures explained in the previous chapter, involves a complex structure that is difficult to analyze using traditional statistical strategies. The first section, "How I see myself," is represented as a 13 x 7 grid, which provides 91 variables per each subject. The second part, "How others see me", is represented as a 4 x 13 grid; and the third section is represented as a 7 x 3 grid. Analyzing these grids involves examining not only the main effects, but also the interaction terms – which would require thousands of participants. The nesting of data points within participants also creates a challenge and requires large samples (Singer & Willett, 2003). Such samples are not common in most identity research. An analytic approach is needed that can handle the large and nested data structure created by the grid measures – specifically the multidimensional intersection between identity domains and relational contexts – without requiring an unduly large sample.

In new scale development, commonly used methods include two types of factor analysis, *exploratory factor analysis (EFA)* and *confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).*

5.1 Classical scale development analysis strategies

5.1.1 Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

The EFA algorithm aims principally at two purposes: reducing data and exploring latent theoretical structures (Conway & Huffcutt, 2003).

Reducing data refers principally to grouping different items into a smaller number of latent variables that represent underlying factors or subscales. In other words, EFA allows for detecting the presence of latent unmeasured dimensions that are assumed to underlie the associations among the measured variables. Indeed, especially in psychological questionnaires, items are often considered as indicators of psychological dimensions that cannot be directly measured (personality factors, for example).

In addition, EFA is useful for exploring and empirically testing the underlying structure of abstract psychological concepts. For example, it can be used for testing whether communication abilities are unifactorial, or rather whether multiple dimensions can be extracted.

In these cases, no a priori assumptions are required about the number and the type of factors to be extracted. Largely for this reason, the factor structure emerging from this first analysis is usually tested with further data, which are then analyzed through a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), where the number of factors and their associations with the measured indicators, are specified in advance.

In more statistical terms, given a vector of observable variables, X, with $E(X)=\mu$ and $var(X)=\Sigma$, one can consider elements of X to be generated by a linear combination of unobserved factors, such that:

$$X = CF + \mu + \varepsilon$$

where C is a matrix of coefficients consisting of factor loading scores and F is a vector of factors (Press, 2005).

One of the assumptions of EFA is that the sample size is large enough to estimate correlations between or among variables (Fabrigar et al., 1999; Ford et al., 1986; Henson & Roberts, 2006;Press, 2005) Various ratios between the number of cases and the number of variables have been proposed for EFA (Conway & Huffcutt, 2003) – ranging from 4:1 to 10:1.Such requirements may be challenging (if not infeasible) for researchers who want to develop long surveys with hundreds of variables: a survey consisting of 100 questions (without a complex item structure) would require a sample size of 500-1000 participants. If interaction terms are included, the required sample size may be far larger.

The ILLCQdoes not assume that there are unmeasured latent factors, or at least not in the hierarchical (items nested within subscales) manner in which most questionnaires are constructed based on the Item Response Theory. Indeed, the "building block" within the ILLCQ is the *domain-context pairing*, rather than the *individual item* (as specified within classical and modern test theories).Although they can be used to model interactions among measured variables (Little, Bovaird, & Widaman, 2007), EFA and CFA are not well-equipped to examine data where row-column interactions (rather than single items) are the primary units of analysis.

5.1.2 Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

Confirmatory factor analysis is a form of structural equation modeling (Thompson, 2004), useful to test whether data fit a hypothesized model, to which researchers refer to explain a specific construct. Such model is based on theory and/or previous studies, or from a previous EFA with a different sample.

CFA is generally used in the construction of test instruments (e.g. questionnaires), because it allows for identification of possible subscales (latent factors), suggests how to score items(based on their factor loadings,) and permits testing for the extent to which a measure is invariant or stable across groups, populations, and time (Dimitrov, 2011; Harrington, 2009).

For example, a scale intended to assess depressive symptoms could ask respondents about different types of symptoms and behaviors associated with depression (e.g., difficulties in falling or staying asleep, lack of appetite, sadness, lack of interest, suicidal ideations). These items could be grouped into several subscales referring to dimensionality or severity of depression (sleeping and eating disorders, mood alterations, anhedonia, suicidal ideation or behavior, etc.). Nevertheless, all items and subscales still are intended to measure a latent underlying depressive condition.

In the case of CFA, the number of factors is already known by researcher and each item is a priori assigned to one of these latent factors, which in turn are allowed to correlate (Brown, 2006). CFA is an extremely flexible technique and can be applied to simple, complex, and multilevel data structures (Brown & Moore, 2012) – including interaction terms (Little et al., 2007). However, CFA models require

several preexisting conditions that limit the applicability of this technique to the ILLCQ and similarly structured measures. Specifically, as for EFA, data must be normally distributed and there must generally be 5-10 participants for each model parameter estimated (Jackson, 2003).

As a result, assuming a cases-to-parameters ratio of 10:1, a CFA model estimated on data generated by the ILLCQ, with all possible interaction terms modeled and with error terms allowed to correlate between indicators for the same identity domain across contexts –would require more than 5,000 participants. Again, such sample sizes are not often encountered in identity research. With a moderately sized sample, a CFA model would likely provide unstable estimates (or would fail to converge). Further, as mentioned above, the ILLCQ does not assume latent constructs as underlying correlations between or among items – where such latent constructs are assumed as part of CFA (Brown, 2006).

5.1.3. MANOVA/MANCOVA

Another viable method for measure construction is to use a Multivariate Analysis of Variance or Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANOVA/MANCOVA), which aim, broadly speaking, to identify the linear combination of dependent variables that are most different across groups of participants (Barbaranelli, 2007). MANOVA compares vectors of means across several groups within a sample or population. By comparing the error variance/covariance matrix, MANOVA allows for understanding of mean differences in two or more dependent variables across different groups of subjects (Haase & Ellis, 1987; Bray & Maxwell, 1982). The groups of subjects (categorical independent

variables) considered in the model are defined by one or more grouping variables. As assumptions, (1) each subject must belong exclusively to one group (or cluster); (2) the number of independent variables must be less than the number of participants in each group; (3) independent variables cannot be strongly related to one another; (4) all dependent variables must be normally distributed; (5) relationships between or among dependent variables must be linear; and (6) the variance/covariance matrix must be equivalent across groups (Barbaranelli, 2007). In other words, this method allows researchers to differentiate people on the base of grouping variables. Although MANOVA is useful in some ways, it cannot help us to identify the underlying structure of scores generated by the ILLCQ.

Thus, for the analysis of ILLCQ, an alternative technique is proposed. Specifically, this technique is known as heat mapping, and is widely used in microarray genomics (Brown & Botstein, 1999; Seo & Shneiderman, 2002; Johnson et al., 2010; Weisenberger, 2006) and other areas of the natural sciences (Parks, 1966; Gueler et al., 2002). Heat maps are based upon the hierarchical clustering algorithm (Fraley, 1996; Johnson, 1967) and provide information as to the intercorrelations of a large set of variables with one another.

5.2 Hierarchical clustering and heat maps

5.2.1 Definition and uses of Hierarchical Clustering Algorithm

Cluster analysis is a collection of statistical methods, which aim at identifying groups of samples that behave similarly or show similar characteristics. Cluster methods can be generally classified in two major groups: *hierarchical and non-hierarchical* (Aggarwal, 2014).

- In *hierarchical methods*, clusters are represented hierarchically, through a *dendrogram,* which consist of layers of nodes, each representing a cluster. Depending upon whether the clusters are created in top-down or bottom-up fashion, we can have either *agglomerative* or *divisive* approach. In the agglomerative approach, the starting point is the individual data, which are then merged to create a tree-like structure. In divisive approach, the dataset first constitutes a unique large cluster that it is then divided into several clusters.

- *Non-hierarchical methods* (i.e., k-Means, k-Medians), instead, do not produce tree-like structures and new clusters are formed in successive clustering either by merging or splitting clusters.

In both clustering approaches, the methods can be further classified into three subgroups: distance-based, model-based, and density-based (Guo, 2003). In brief, distance-based methods rely on a distance or similarity measure; model-based (or distribution-based) approaches group data with similar statistical distribution (e.g. Gaussian distribution); finally, density-based methods consider each cluster as an area of higher density than the rest of the data set.

In the social sciences, the most commonly used clustering approaches are non-hierarchical, especially K-Means. In particular, these methods are applied to cluster participants with similar characteristics. On the contrary, hierarchical approaches are not often used in measure validation (Rinn et al., 2010; Muntaner et al., 2012), even though Revelle (1979) stated neatly 40 years ago that these methods might be used in survey development in place of EFA, to overcome the limitations mentioned above.

A further advantage of hierarchical clustering lies in the visual outputs that researchers can obtain from it: dendrograms and heat maps are two of these, and allow easily reading and interpreting results from the investigation of large numbers of related variables (Brown & Botstein, 1999; Wilkinson & Friendly, 2008). Heat mapping has been widely applied to big data in genomics.

The basic algorithm of HC proceeds as follows:

1) Create a dissimilarity matrix, D, based upon a chosen metric measuring distances between points, typically Euclidean, Minkowski, or Mahalanobis;

2) Search this matrix D for a closest pair of clusters (two points to begin such algorithm);

3) Replace that pair of clusters by an agglomerated cluster h, containing both previous pairs;

4) Update D reflecting the deletion of the clusters/points used to form the larger cluster h in steps 2 and 3, and then revise dissimilarities between h and remaining points or clusters;

5) Repeat the procedure from point 2 until a user-specified stopping criterion is met (typically based on distance metrics or cluster size).

Using this procedure, researchers obtain data points nested within a tree structure based upon the merging of similar clusters. In the case of a psychometric measure, this produces a phylogenic-tree-like structure relating survey items to each

other. A dendrogram, depicted in **Figure 9**, shows the nested variable clusters found through hierarchical clustering; in this example, there are three clusters, two of which seem to be related. The first cluster is formed by variables *a* and *c*, while variables *d* and *b* form a cluster that seems to be more closely related to variable *e* than does the *a/c* cluster. Variable *e,* contained within the *b/d* cluster, branches from a higher-level cluster containing all three related variables, showing that nesting can occur within clusters.
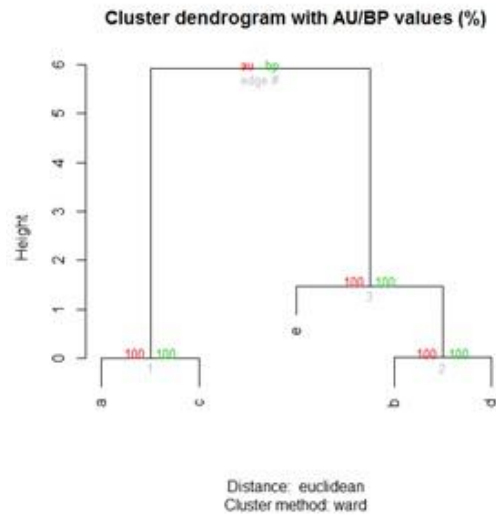
Figure 9 - Sample dendrogram

The dissimilarity matrix used in this clustering can be used to create a heat map (**Figure 10**) based upon final clusters emerging from the algorithm, where red indicates areas of positive correlation (darker is stronger) and blue denotes areas of negative correlation (again, darker is stronger). Specifically, variables *a* and *c* are strongly and positively correlated with each other, as well as variables *b* and *d*; on the contrary, variables *a* and *c* are negatively associated with variable *e*, while variables *b* and *d* are positively correlated with variable *e*.
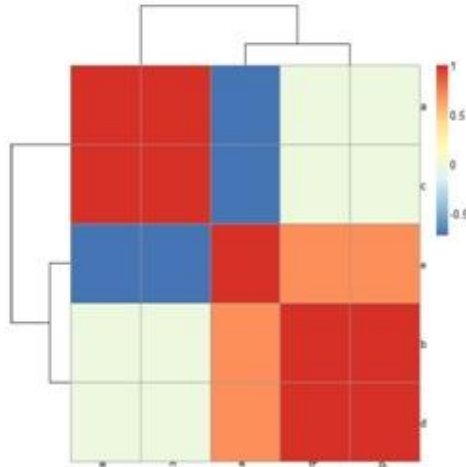
5.2.2 Heat maps: history, uses and application to social sciences

A cluster heat map is an ingenious display that simultaneously reveals row and column hierarchical cluster structure in a data matrix (Wilkinson & Friendly, 2008). It consists of a rectangular tiling of a data matrix with cluster trees appended to its margins. The major convenience of using heat maps lies in its ability of presenting in a relatively compact space a large correlation matrix. The heat map below (**Figure 11**) is reported by Andrade (2008), based on Eisen et al. (1998): the rows represent genes and the columns the sample, so that the color of each cell correspond to the level of expression of each gene in the sample. The dendrograms on the top and side show the clustering structure of the correlation matrix.
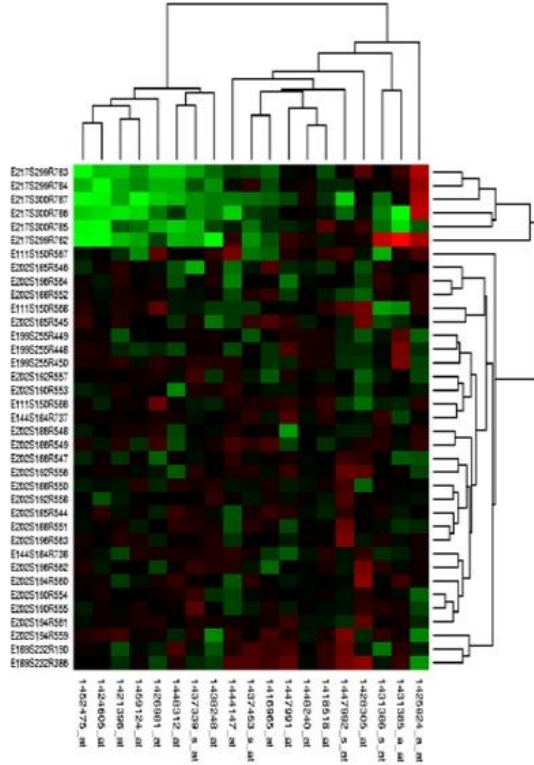
Figure 11 - Sample heat map n.2

Heat maps derive from progressive developments of different data matrix displays, existing even before computer era. Perhaps the first form is that of *shading matrix*, a color-shaded matrix display, which dates back to the end of twentieth century (Wilkinson and Friendly, 2008). In figure 12 one of the first shading matrix from Loua (1873) is reported.

Passing through permuting matrices (Brinton, 1914), seriation (Petrie, 1899), the Guttman Scalogram (Guttman, 1950), and different other clustering displays (Sneath, 1957; Hartigan, 1975), heat maps are today provided from modern statistical packages as part of clustering package (e.g. SYSTAT, R, STATA).
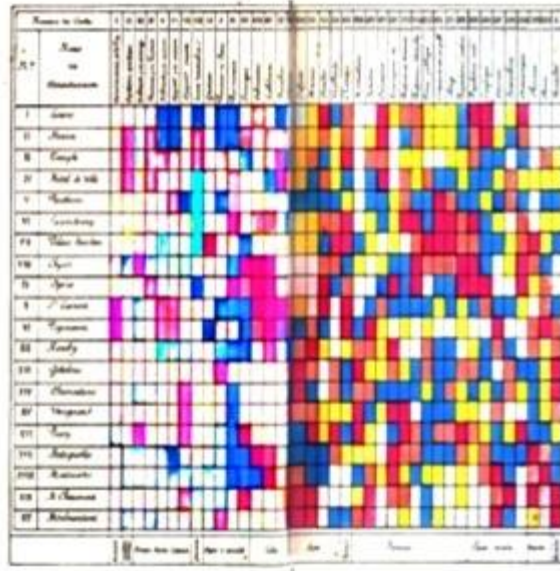
Figure 12 - Sample shading matrix

Heat maps have found a great use in genomics (Brown & Botstein, 1999; Seo & Shneiderman, 2002; Johnson et al., 2010; Weisenberger, 2006), where it has allowed researchers to identify genes that behave in a similar fashion with respect to an outcome (e.g., disease, pathway activation, epigenetic change) through visual means, which may be much quicker than sorting through pages of statistical output from hierarchical clustering on a large number of variables (Brown & Botstein, 1999; Wilkinson & Friendly, 2008).

To our knowledge, this kind of matrix display has not been used frequently in psychology and in questionnaire construction. Nevertheless, heat maps could be very useful to visualize results from hierarchical clustering of large matrix data, especially whether many variables per participant must be analyzed. In addition, this method is viable also in cases when the number of participants is small and the variables many.

5.3 Analysis procedures

5.3.1 Preliminary application of HCA and heat maps to Part 1 of ILLCQ

In the case of ILLCQ, Hierarchical Clustering and Heat Map would have served to cluster both identity dimensions and life contexts, or rather their intersections. Specifically, it has been considered that clusters would somehow represent different cores of the self, as if they answer the questions: "How many selves can I have?", "How each of these is characterized?". The response is exactly in the particular combinations of identity domains/life contexts that would result from HCA.

Thus, HCA was first applied to the 13x7 grid in the first section of the ILLCQ. As explained above, data collected through this table refer to the importance (rated from 1 to 5) that participants assign to each of their identity domains within each of their relational contexts.

Being identity a bridging construct encompassing many aspects, no a priori assumptions were made regarding the relationships among different possible scores reported by subjects. More specifically, it was expected that some identity dimensions could have been more salient in some specific contexts (for example, beauty identity would likely be more important in romantic contexts than in educational ones), but no typical paths of relationships could be foreseen (Harter, 2012).

To demonstrate the effectiveness and the stability of this method, after removing outliers to avoid ceiling effect, all the procedure was first applied to five random subsamples of 130 participants and then to the full sample.

All analyses were run with *R Project,* using specific packages: *pheatmap* to create heat maps; *pvclust* to identify items in each cluster, and the function *pvpick* to test for the significance of nested clusters.

5.3.2 Preliminary Results

In the first pilot analyses, as just mentioned, the algorithm was applied five times: the first on the random 130 subsample, and the other four times through the R *sample* function without replacement. Heat map was created using the Ward algorithm, the Euclidean distance metrics, and the pairwise complete option for missing data (in which all observations with valid values for both variables in a given pair are used), with the traditional red-orange color used to denote similarities and blue used to depict dissimilarities. The result is a color-coded similarities/dissimilarities matrix, where like items are placed near each other.

Results were very similar across samples, revealing similar patterns both for heat maps and hierarchical clustering, suggesting that this method is fairly stable. Below results only from the first sample are reported to avoid redundancy.

As the **Figure 13** shows, several blocks of similarities were obtained. In some cases, the strongest similarities are within-domain, as in the case of "religion", "politics", "tribe", "race", "sport", and "school success"; in some other cases, similarities were found across domains, as for "beauty" and "look" in school, leisure and peer contexts. Interestingly, a context effect seems not to be prominent, that is, apart from "religion", and weaker "neighborhood", no similarities were found within contexts across domains.

Results from the hierarchical clustering algorithm seem to confirm what we see in the heat map. 18 significant clusters (at the .05 level) were extracted, corresponding well with the heat map's ascertainment of important variables.

The **Figure 14** below reports the significant clusters identified with the *pvclust* and *pvpick* functions and circled in red; in addition, to help reading the HC plot, the composition of each cluster is reported in the following page.

Thus, HC more than the heat map shows that there is not a general pattern to extrapolate, on the contrary, some clusters group mainly the same identity dimensions across contexts, while few of them group prevalently the same contexts across identity dimensions. Moreover, the most of them embraces few variables (from two to four), whereas two of them, namely Cluster#15 and Cluster#18, include a larger number of variables (seven and ten, respectively). Reserving more detailed comments for the definitive results on the full US and Italian samples, it is worth commenting here that, even though clusters are mostly formed by items concerning the same identity dimensions, they are grouped together in relation to contexts recurrently appearing together. For instance, this is the case of the peer, leisure, and dating contexts, which comes together in sport, tribe, music, school success, and status identities. Similarly, family and school contexts come together in relation to music, tribe, gender, status, school success, and age identities. Furthermore, it seems interesting pointing out that religious identity and sexual identity seem to have the same relevance in the same contexts, or rather school, neighborhood, peer, and leisure, though pertaining to two different clusters (#4 and #10, respectively). As for

political identity, it constitutes a cluster on its own (#15); while beauty and look identities form a cluster together (#18).

Further comments and interpretation of these results are dispensable, being the sample used partial and composed by US and Italian participants together. Final results are reported hereinafter in the following paragraphs.
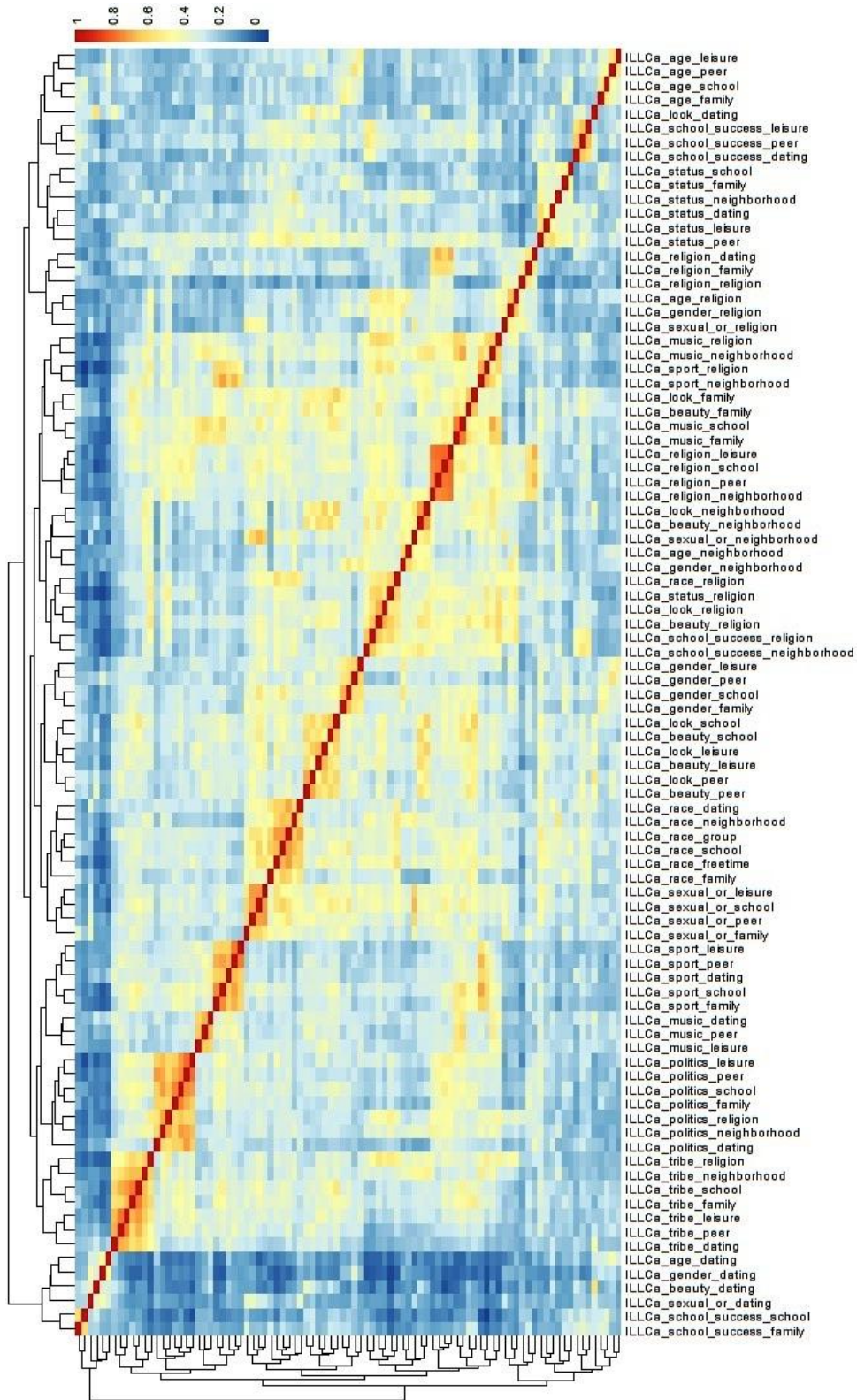
Figure 13 - Heat map of a random subsample n=130

Distance: correlation
Cluster method: ward

Figure 14 - Hierarchical Clustering on a random subsample n=130

CLUSTER MEMBERSHIP (random sample of 130 participants)

[Cluster#1] "ILLCa_sport_peer", "ILLCa_sport_leisure"

[Cluster#2] "ILLCa_music_family", "ILLCa_music_school"

[Cluster#3] "ILLCa_tribe_family", "ILLCa_tribe_school"

[Cluster#4] "ILLCa_religion_school", "ILLCa_religion_neighborhood",

"ILLCa_religion_peer", "ILLCa_religion_leisure"

[Cluster#5] "ILLCa_gender_family", "ILLCa_gender_school"

[Cluster#6] "ILLCa_gender_religion", "ILLCa_age_religion"

[Cluster#7] "ILLCa_tribe_peer", "ILLCa_tribe_leisure", "ILLCa_tribe_dating"

[Cluster#8] "ILLCa_music_peer", "ILLCa_music_leisure", "ILLCa_music_dating"

[Cluster#9] "ILLCa_gender_neighborhood", "ILLCa_age_neighborhood"

[Cluster#10] "ILLCa_sexual_or_school", "ILLCa_sexual_or_neighborhood",

"ILLCa_sexual_or_peer", "ILLCa_sexual_or_leisure"

[Cluster#11] "ILLCa_school_success_peer", "ILLCa_school_success_leisure",

"ILLCa_school_success_dating"

[Cluster#12] "ILLCa_school_success_family", "ILLCa_school_success_school"

[Cluster#13] "ILLCa_beauty_dating", "ILLCa_look_dating"

[Cluster#14] "ILLCa_age_family", "ILLCa_age_school"

[Cluster#15] "ILLCa_politics_family", "ILLCa_politics_school",

"ILLCa_politics_neighborhood", "ILLCa_politics_peer",

"ILLCa_politics_leisure", "ILLCa_politics_religion",

"ILLCa_politics_dating"

[Cluster#16] "ILLCa_status_family", "ILLCa_status_school",

[Cluster#17] "ILLCa_status_peer", "ILLCa_status_leisure", "ILLCa_status_dating"

[Cluster#18] "ILLCa_beauty_family", "ILLCa_beauty_school",

"ILLCa_beauty_neighborhood", "ILLCa_beauty_peer",

"ILLCa_beauty_leisure", "ILLCa_look_family", ILLCa_look_school",

"ILLCa_look_neighborhood", "ILLCa_look_peer",

"ILLCa_look_leisure"

5.4 Full Samples Results

As mentioned above, the second block of analyses was made on both US and Italian samples, separately. The first one consisted of 167 participants, while the second one of 479. Due to notable differences in size, cultural background and demographics between the two samples (see Table 1), we chose to run analyses separately, in order to delve into the specific characteristics of each of them.

As reported in **Table 1**, the two samples differed significantly in all the variables analyzed, but for the distribution of participants between males and females. In both of them, indeed, there was a large predominance of females, which must be taken into account in the interpretation of the results, even though chi-square test in both US and Italian samples revealed no significant differences between boys and girls in no one of the demographic variables. Differences that are worth mentioning concern living arrangement, since more than the half of Italians reported to live with their parents and brothers/sisters, whereas US participants presented a more heterogeneous situation, where the "other" often meant living independently or with a partner. As for having moved from another town, we can see that a high prevalence of Italians (80.8%) had always lived in the same town, while US participants were almost in the same proportion between who had moved from another place, and who did not. Regarding parents' education, the most notable differences are that in the US sample there was a higher percentage of "high school graduate" for both fathers (40.3%) and mothers (42.1%), compared with the Italian counterparts (8.5%, and 9.8%, respectively). Nevertheless, mums in the Italian sample presented a higher prevalence of "bachelor degree" (48.5%) compared to the US ones (32.1%).

Furthermore, regarding parents' job situation, in the Italian sample it seems there is a higher prevalence of workmen among fathers (12.9%) compared to the US one (5.6%), while among mothers a higher percentage of housemakers (45.5%) compared than US mums (12.8%). On the other hand, US mothers present a higher percentage of employees (54.6%) and out of work (8.8%) compared to Italian mums (29.1%, and 4.2%, respectively). Finally, it is necessary to make a caveat about age: Italian sample includes both high-school and college students, thus the age has a wide extension (M=19,9; SD=4), and significantly different from US sample. This is the reason why we chose to present results separately for the two age groups in the Italian sample in addition to the general ones.

In the following paragraphs results from HCA, Heat maps, and means plots of the first part of ILLCQ are reported, compared with histograms from the second part.

Table 1. Comparison of Demographics in U.S. and Italian samples (N = 646)

	USA (n = 479) n (%)	ITA (n = 167) n (%)	Total (n = 646) n (%)	p
Sex				.421
Female	364 (76)	132 (79)	490 (23.2)	
Male	115 (24)	35 (21)	150 (76.8)	
Who do you live with?				.000
Parents	157 (32,8)	25 (15)	182 (28.2)	
Parents, brothers/sisters	171 (35.7)	109 (65.3)	280 (43.3)	
Parents, brothers/sisters/grandpar./uncles/aunts	27 (5.6)	16 (9.6)	43 (6.7)	
Other	124 (25.9)	17 (10.2)	141 (21.8)	
Have you always lived in your current town?				.000
Yes	246 (51.4)	135 (80.8)	381 (59)	
No	233 (48.6)	32 (19.2)	265 (41)	
Father' highest degree/level of school				.000
Doctorate degree	27 (5.7)	6 (3.7)	33 (5.2)	
Master's degree	63 (13.3)	28 (17.1)	91 (14.3)	
Bachelor's degree	117 (24.8)	65 (39.6)	182 (28.6)	
High school graduate	190 (40.3)	14 (8.5)	204 (32.1)	
Some high school, no diploma	55 (11.7)	48 (29.3)	103 (16.2)	
No schooling completed	20 (4.2)	3 (1.8)	23 (3.6)	
Mother' highest degree/level of school				.000
Doctorate degree	17 (3.6)	6 (3.7)	23 (3.6)	
Master's degree	52 (10.9)	22 (13.5)	74 (11.6)	
Bachelor's degree	153 (32.1)	79 (48.5)	232 (36.3)	
High school graduate	201 (42.1)	16 (9.8)	217 (33.9)	
Some high school, no diploma	44 (9.2)	28 (17.2)	72 (11.3)	
No schooling completed	10 (2.1)	12 (7.4)	22 (3.4)	
Father's job				.048
Out of work	32 (6.8)	10 (6.1)	42 (6.7)	
Employee	201 (42.9)	67 (41.1)	268 (42.5)	
Self-employed	110 (23.5)	34 (20.9)	144 (22.8)	
Workman	26 (5.6)	21 (12.9)	47 (7.4)	
Bussinessman	67 (14.3)	17 (10.4)	84 (13.3)	
Housemaker	-	-	-	
Retired	32 (6.8)	14 (8.6)	46 (7.3)	
Mother's job				.000
Out of work	42 (8.8)	7 (4.2)	49 (7.6)	
Employee	260 (54.6)	48 (29.1)	308 (48)	
Self-employed	65 (13.7)	17 (10.3)	82 (12.8)	
Workman	14 (2.9)	3 (1.8)	17 (2.7)	
Bussinessman	22 (4.6)	6 (3.6)	28 (4.4)	
Housemaker	61 (12.8)	75 (45.5)	136 (21.2)	
Retired	12 (2.5)	9 (5.5)	21 (3.3)	
Age	M=21.33 (SD=2.54)	19, 9 (SD=4)	t=5.35	.000

Note: Percentages are based on total number of participants for each of US or Italian group.

P Value is based on Chi-Square test for all the categorial variables; it is based on t-test for "age".

5.4.1 U.S. Sample

As a preliminary analysis, invariance test between cluster solutions in female and male participants was conducted, through *Adjusted Rand Index* (ARI). The agreement between clusterings resulted to be fairly good: ARI=.32, with a confidence interval from .30 to .34 (moderate low) for the first comparison, and ARI=.54, with a confidence interval from .50 to .58 (moderate) for the second. Though, the difference in sample size between the genders warns to interpret this result with caution.

Heat map of the whole US sample (**Figure 15**) shows strong similarities within identity domains, and especially in religion, tribe, politics, and sport dimensions, across contexts, rather than within contexts. This result is confirmed by HC for the most part.

The **Figure 16** shows the results of the application of the HC, and to help reading it, clusters membership is reported to follow. As it is possible to surmise from the dendrogram and read from the list in the following page, the significant clusters (p<.05) identified are 15, and are differentiated in terms of characteristics and number of variables included. We could summarize them in three categories: clusters which group variables regarding the same identity dimensions, clusters regarding the same life contexts, and clusters which mix up both. Among the first type, we count Cluster#1, composed by *tribe/family* and *tribe/school*; Cluster#2 comprises *sport identity/peer* context and *sport identity/leisure* context; Cluster#7 includes again *tribe identity*, but in *peer, leisure, and dating* contexts; Cluster#9 concerning *music identity/peer*, *music/leisure*, and *music/dating*. Similarly, Cluster#11 includes *status identity* in these same contexts of *peer, leisure, and dating*. Cluster#10, instead, is

formed by *beauty and look*s dimensions in *family and school* contexts. Another cluster of this type is Cluster#12, which embraces all items regarding *sexual identity*, except for the dating context. Finally, Cluster#13 groups all items about *religious identity* altogether, irrespective of the various contexts. It is worth pointing out that there are some recurring combinations, the most blatant of which is constituted by *peer, leisure, and dating* contexts. As a matter of fact, they come together for three identity dimensions, namely *tribe* (#7)*, music* (#9)*, and status* (#11); and also peer and leisure contexts appear together for sport identity (#2). Similarly, the contexts *family and school* come out together for *tribe* (#1), *look and beauty* (#10) dimensions. To this end, the coupling of these two dimensions, *beauty and look,* represents an additional recurring finding (#3, #4, #6, #10) to bear in mind. Similarly, *age and gender* dimensions seem to be inseparable, being always together in the clusters #5, #8, #14, and #15.

A further confirmation of these results is obtained by the mean plot (**Figure 17**) below. It represents the fluctuation of the importance attributed to the various identity domains among life contexts. A first glance to this plot catches fluctuations in an overall range of about 2 points: indeed, except for just one low score (sport identity in religious contexts), and two high scores (school success in family and school) all the mean scores vary from 2.1 to 3.9, without reaching low or high extreme values. This means that the salience of the identity dimensions generally tends to be fairly stable across contexts, and that there is certain uniformity within identity dimensions. Nevertheless, few larger wavering do exists, as for example in the case of the dimension of *school success* in *school and family* contexts, which

presents a visibly higher score than in the other contexts. Similarly, the score of *look* dimension in the *dating* context is evidently higher than in the rest of the contexts. Also, the *religious identity* presents two higher peaks in *family and religious* contexts. In addition, as emerged from the previous analyses, there are some identity dimensions, which seem to be coupled in their patterns: look and beauty result one more as almost perfectly overlapping; also gender and age seem to follow the same pattern, although with different scores in family and school contexts. From this plot we can see that school success affiliates itself with this gender-age couple, following a similar pattern. Interestingly, the mean plot makes it clear, more than the others graphics, that there are some contexts exercising a stronger effect on identity dimensions than the other contexts do. As a matter of fact, *neighborhood* presents the highest concentration of (low) scores, followed by *peers*, and *religious* contexts. In this latter, there are only two domains diverging from the others and having higher points: comprehensively religious identity, and also sexual identity.
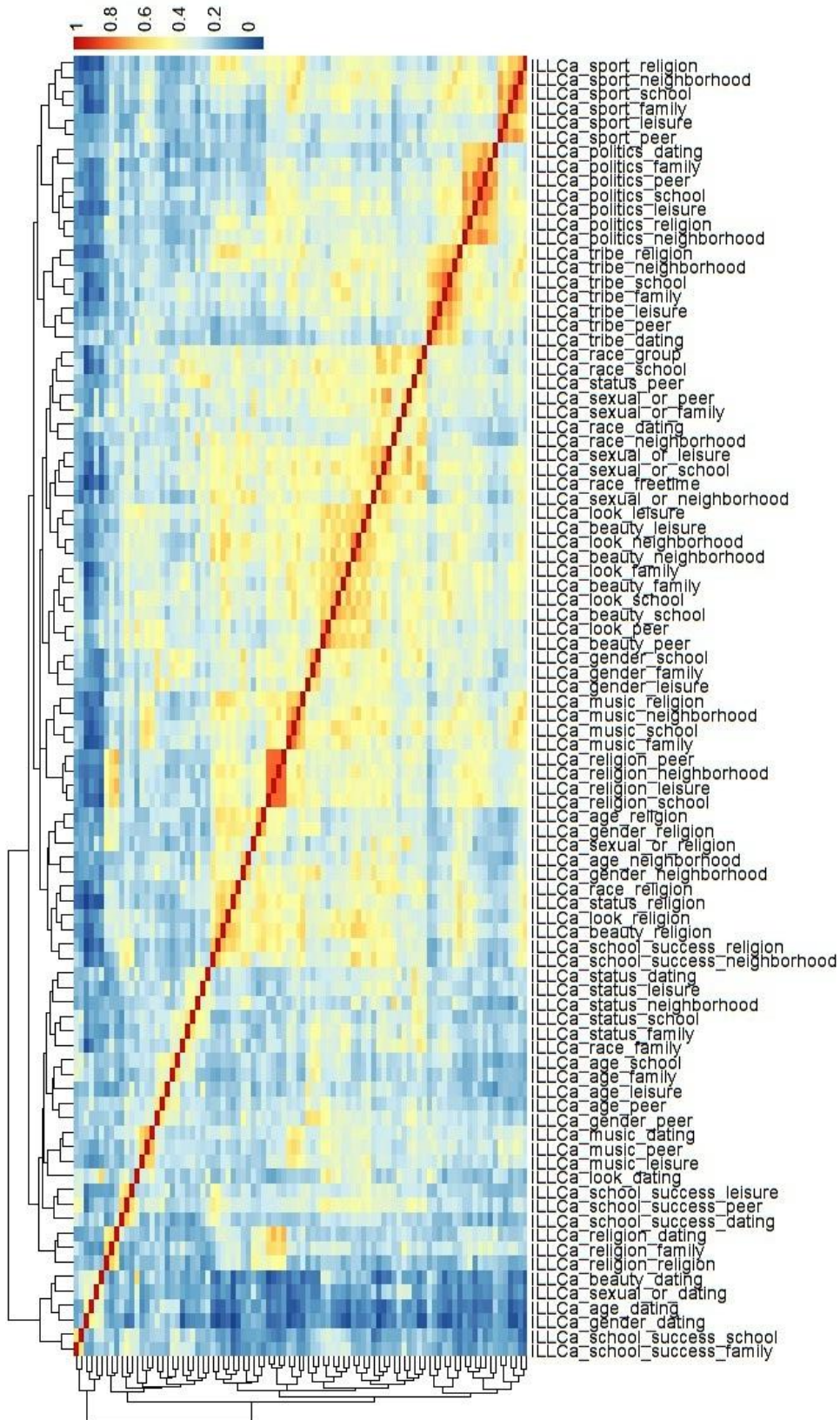
Figure 15 - Heat map of full American Sample (n= 479)

Figure 16 - Hierarchical Clustering of full American Sample (n= 479)

CLUSTER MEMBERSHIP (full US sample, n=479)

1 TYPE: CLUSTERS BY IDENTITY DIMENSIONS

[Cluster#1] "ILLCa_tribe_family", "ILLCa_tribe_school"

[Cluster#2] "ILLCa_sport_peer", "ILLCa_sport_leisure"

[Cluster#7] "ILLCa_tribe_peer", "ILLCa_tribe_leisure", "ILLCa_tribe_dating"

[Cluster#9] "ILLCa_music_peer", "ILLCa_music_leisure" "ILLCa_music_dating"

[Cluster#10] "ILLCa_beauty_family", "ILLCa_beauty_school", "ILLCa_look_family",

"ILLCa_look_school"

[Cluster#11] "ILLCa_status_peer", "ILLCa_status_leisure" "ILLCa_status_dating"

[Cluster#12] "ILLCa_sexual_or_family", "ILLCa_sexual_or_school",

"ILLCa_sexual_or_neighborhood", "ILLCa_sexual_or_peer",

"ILLCa_sexual_or_leisure", "ILLCa_sexual_or_religion"

[Cluster#13]"ILLCa_religion_family","ILLCa_religion_school",

"ILLCa_religion_neighborhood","ILLCa_religion_peer",

"ILLCa_religion_leisure", "ILLCa_religion_religion",

"ILLCa_religion_dating"

2 TYPE: CLUSTERS BY LIFE CONTEXTS

[Cluster#3] "ILLCa_beauty_neighborhood", "ILLCa_look_neighborhood"

[Cluster#4] "ILLCa_beauty_peer" "ILLCa_look_peer"

[Cluster#5] "ILLCa_gender_religion", "ILLCa_age_religion"

[Cluster#6] "ILLCa_beauty_leisure" "ILLCa_look_leisure"

[Cluster#8] "ILLCa_gender_neighborhood", "ILLCa_age_neighborhood"

3 TYPE: CLUSTERS MIXED UP

[Cluster#14] "ILLCa_gender_family", "ILLCa_gender_school", "ILLCa_gender_peer",

"ILLCa_gender_leisure", "ILLCa_age_family", "ILLCa_age_school",

"ILLCa_age_peer", "ILLCa_age_leisure"

[Cluster#15] "ILLCa_gender_dating", "ILLCa_age_dating", "ILLCa_sexual_or_dating",

"ILLCa_school_success_family", "ILLCa_school_success_school",

"ILLCa_school_success_peer", "ILLCa_school_success_leisure",

"ILLCa_school_success_dating", "ILLCa_beauty_dating",

"ILLCa_look_dating"
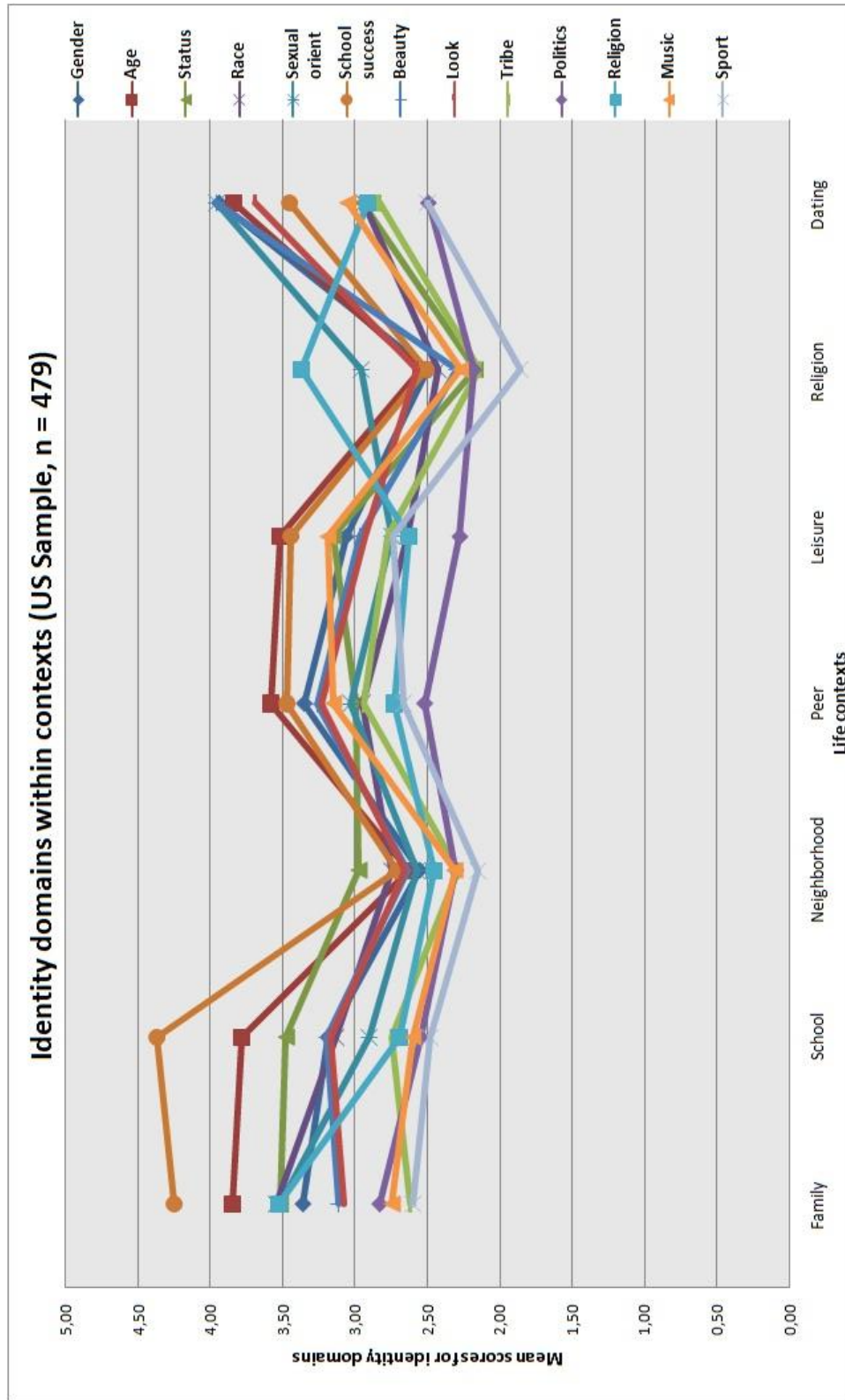
Figure 17 - Mean plot of identity dimensions within contexts for US sample

As previously explained, the second part of the measure collected data about the the perceived recognition of self-definitions by important others. Through a 4 x 7 grid, subjects had to rate (from 1 to 5) how much parents, friends, romantic partners and teachers would have agreed with their self-definitions for each of the seven life contexts presented in the first part. The others' perceived agreement is intended here as the perception of being accepted and recognized by others in relation to specific aspects of self-identity. The graphic below (**Figure 18**) reports mean scores for each of the identity dimensions with respect to the four categories of important others. It is possible to observe that the rates of others' recognition of self-definitions are generally high, with the lowest ones concerning teachers. Specifically, *gender, race, school success and sexual identities* seem to be most recognized dimensions by all the others, even though teachers have lower rates also in these cases. Within these, *race* and *school success* appear as the ones with the most uniform mean scores across others categories; *gender* and *sexual identities,* instead, present some shifts: the first has the highest peak for *partners*; whereas the latter has a fairly lower rate in relation to *teachers*, and then stable within the others. To follow, we can observe that *age, look, tribe, and music* show a similar pattern, with lower scores for *teachers and parents*, and higher scores for *friends and partners. Religion and sport*, in turn, show a common trend: low for *teacher* and increasingly higher for *partners, parents, and friends*. Finally, *beauty* presents a trend which is similar to gender, even if with much lower scores.
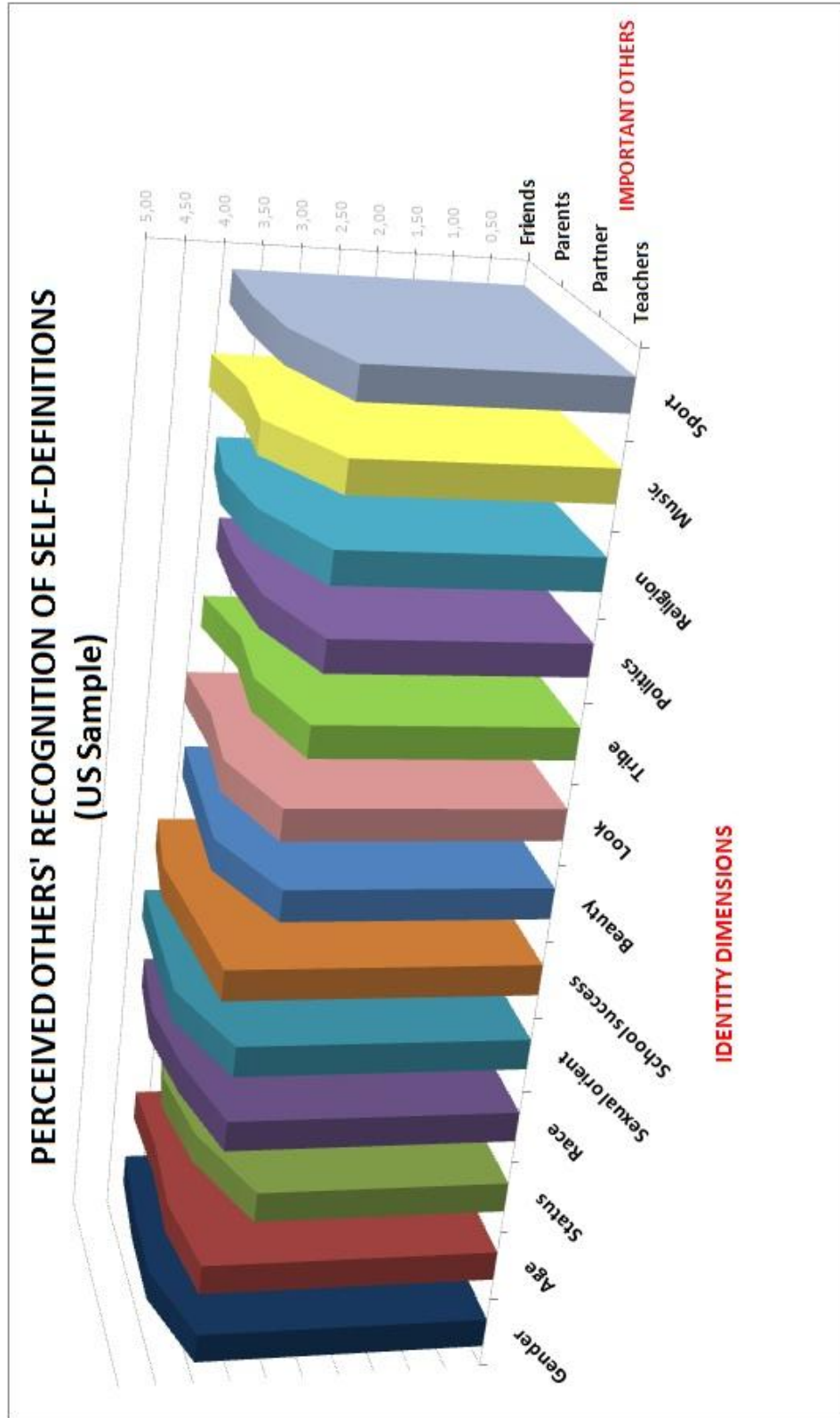
Figure 18 - Mean scores for others' recognition of identity dimensions

5.4.2 Italian Sample

For the Italian sample, we will follow the same presentation we used for the US sample.

The heat map (**Figure 19**) presents strong areas of similarities, sharper than the ones identified in the US heat map. Though, as in the case of the US sample, such similarities are found within identity dimensions across contexts, rather than within contexts. Specifically, the strongest similarities appear to be within race, religious, sexual, and political identities, followed by sport, music and look identities. No one of the red areas in the heat map seems to embrace items concerning different identity dimensions.

As it is possible to observe in the **Figure 20**, and read in the Cluster Membership, hierarchical clustering extracted 11 clusters, which confirm heat map results: sure enough, in the Italian sample it is even more pronounced the tendency, already noted in the US sample, to present clusters mostly formed by items referring to the same identity dimensions. Indeed, the only within-contexts cluster is the #3, comprehending *beauty and look* in the *religious context*. In addition, Cluster#10 is quite close to the second type, even if it is not "pure", as it comprises *gender, age, sexual, and religious identities* within the *religious contexts*, but also includes *gender and age* variables within the *neighborhood context*. For the rest, the other clusters are mostly formed by the same identity dimensions in different contexts, although it is possible to notice that there are some constant matches among identity dimensions and contexts, which are fairly the same as the ones in the US sample. Also in the Italian sample, indeed, the "triad" *peer-leisure-dating* stands out clearly for the

political (#1)*, religious* (4) *and music* (#5) *dimensions*. Also, *family and school* contexts come up together for the *music* (#2) *and school success* (#6) dimensions. Another recurring matching already seen in the US sample is that of *beauty and look* dimensions, which appear to be always together in the clusters #3, #8, and #9. *Gender and age* dimensions, similarly, tend to appear together (#10), even though not with the same strength as for the US sample. Furthermore, in both sample, *school success* dimension tends to form an almost independent cluster (#15 for US and #9 for Italians), but with the difference that in the US sample it is merged with *gender, age, beauty and look* in the *dating* context, while in the Italian sample it comes together with *beauty and look* in *family*. Beyond similarities, some important differences between the two samples are worth being highlighted. One of these concerns *sexual identity*, which in the US sample forms an independent cluster (#12), while in Italian sample it is embraced in a wider cluster (#11), together with *race* and *tribe* dimensions. Curiously, *race* in the US sample did not fit in any of the significant clusters, albeit US sample was more ethnically heterogeneous.

   Outcomes from the mean plot of the Italian sample (**Figure 17**) may help understanding this issue. It stands out clear that, for the Italian participants, *race* is the dimension that has most stable trend and lowest scores of all, whereas in the US sample it is posited in the average scores and presents shifts which are not so much different to other dimensions. This outcome is easily explicable with the great difference in the composition of the two samples in relation to ethnic and racial heterogeneity, since Italians described themselves as "white" in their totality, while US sample was formed by a consistent part of "latin" self-defined people.

Anyway, the soundest evidence from the mean plot of the Italian sample is that there is a widely greater dispersion of mean scores, compared to the US counterpart. Mean lines, indeed, have sharper shifts in their patterns, with overall scores ranging from 1.62 to 4.28. However, some similarities between the two pools of participants have emerged. The most evident is that *neighborhood* exercises the strongest effect on all identity dimensions, as it occurred in the US sample. Similarly, religious context also presents concentrated scores for all dimensions, but religion and sexual identities, which have higher scores. In addition, *beauty and look* have again the same patterns across contexts; as well as *age and gender* follow a similar trend, even though in this case age presents abrupt nosedives in *neighborhood* and *religious contexts*. Also in this case *school success* can be considered as an associate with the couple gender-age, since it presents a similar pattern, albeit the gap between *family and school* and the other contexts is much more drastic for the second sample. Another evident difference is that *tribe* is quite more salient in all contexts, but religious one, than it was for the US sample.
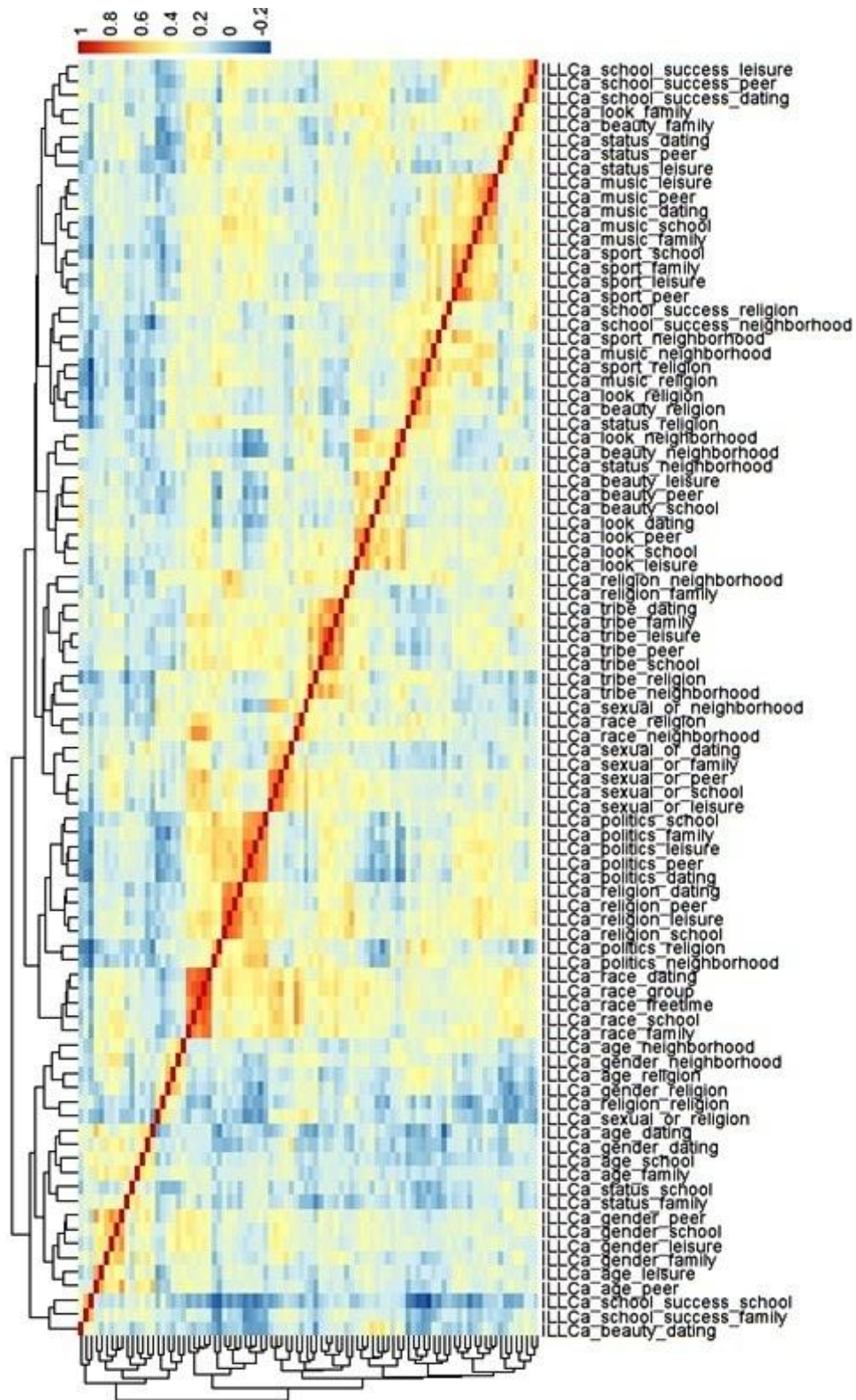
Figure 19 - Heat map of full Italian Sample (n= 167)
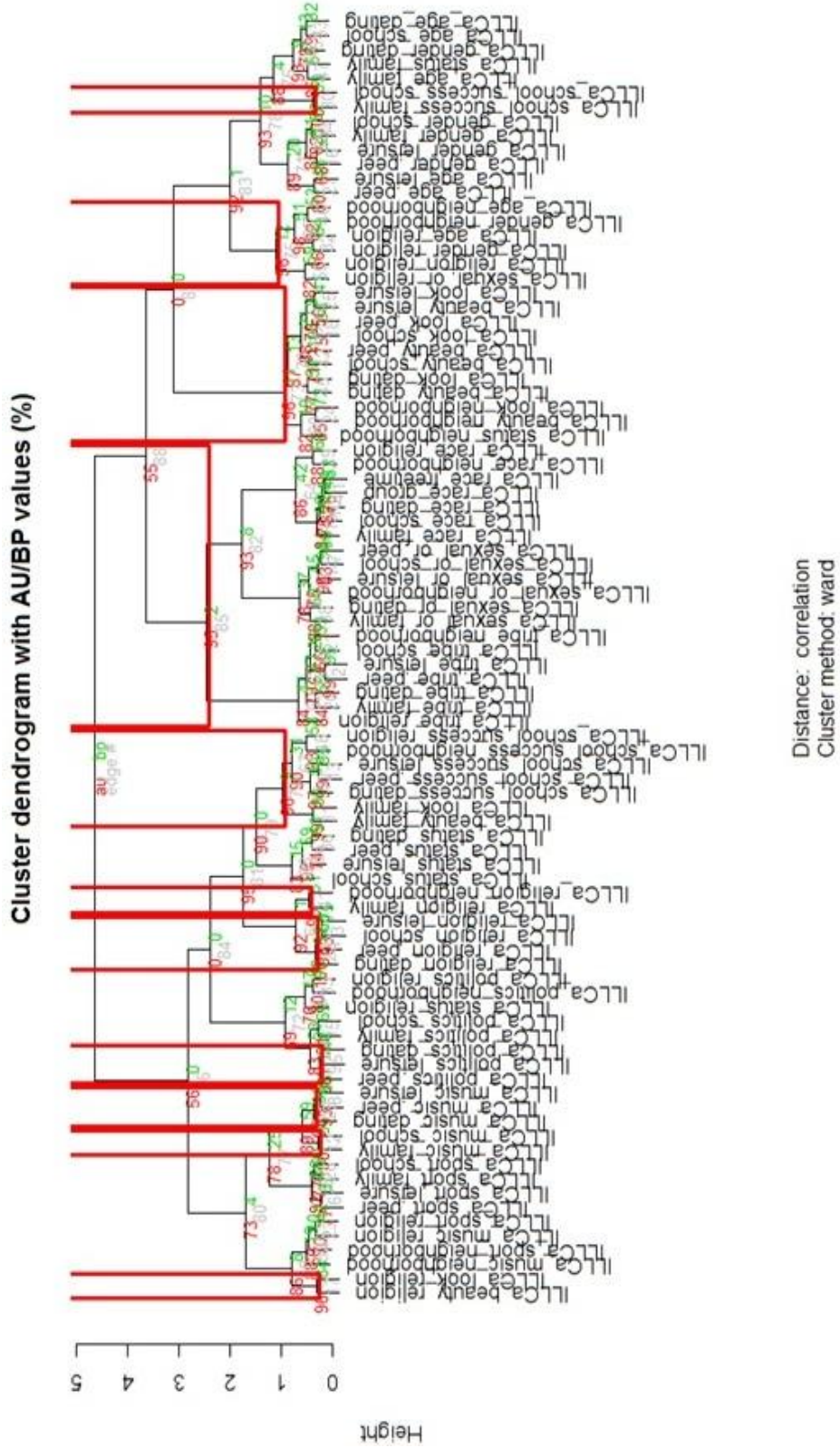
Figure 20 - Hierarchical Clustering of full Italian Sample (n= 167)

CLUSTERS MEMBERSHIP (full Italian sample, n=167)

1 TYPE: CLUSTERS BY IDENTITY DIMENSIONS

[Cluster#1] "ILLCa_politics_peer", "ILLCa_politics_leisure",

"ILLCa_politics_dating"

[Cluster#2]"ILLCa_music_family", "ILLCa_music_school"

[Cluster#4]"ILLCa_religion_school", "ILLCa_religion_peer",

"ILLCa_religion_leisure", "ILLCa_religion_dating"

[Cluster#5]"ILLCa_music_peer", "ILLCa_music_leisure", "ILLCa_music_dating"

[Cluster#6] "ILLCa_school_success_family", "ILLCa_school_success_school"

[Cluster#7]"ILLCa_religion_family", "ILLCa_religion_neighborhood"

2 TYPE: CLUSTERS BY LIFE CONTEXTS

[Cluster#3] "ILLCa_beauty_religion", "ILLCa_look_religion"

[Cluster#10] "ILLCa_gender_neighborhood", "ILLCa_gender_religion",

"ILLCa_age_neighborhood", "ILLCa_age_religion",

"ILLCa_sexual_or_religion", "ILLCa_religion_religion"

3 TYPE: CLUSTERS MIXED UP

[Cluster#8]"ILLCa_status_neighborhood", "ILLCa_beauty_school",

"ILLCa_beauty_neighborhood", "ILLCa_beauty_peer",

"ILLCa_beauty_leisure", "ILLCa_beauty_dating",

"ILLCa_look_school", "ILLCa_look_neighborhood",

"ILLCa_look_peer", "ILLCa_look_leisure", "ILLCa_look_dating"

[Cluster#9] "ILLCa_school_success_neighborhood", "ILLCa_school_success_peer",

"ILLCa_school_success_leisure", "ILLCa_school_success_religion",

"ILLCa_school_success_dating", "ILLCa_beauty_family",

"ILLCa_look_family"

[Cluster#11]"ILLCa_race_family", "ILLCa_race_school",

"ILLCa_race_neighborhood", "ILLCa_race_group",

"ILLCa_race_freetime", "ILLCa_race_religion", "ILLCa_race_dating",

"ILLCa_sexual_or_family", "ILLCa_sexual_or_school",

"ILLCa_sexual_or_neighborhood", "ILLCa_sexual_or_peer",

"ILLCa_sexual_or_leisure", "ILLCa_sexual_or_dating",

"ILLCa_tribe_family", "ILLCa_tribe_school",

"ILLCa_tribe_neighborhood", "ILLCa_tribe_peer",

"ILLCa_tribe_leisure", "ILLCa_tribe_religion", "ILLCa_tribe_dating"
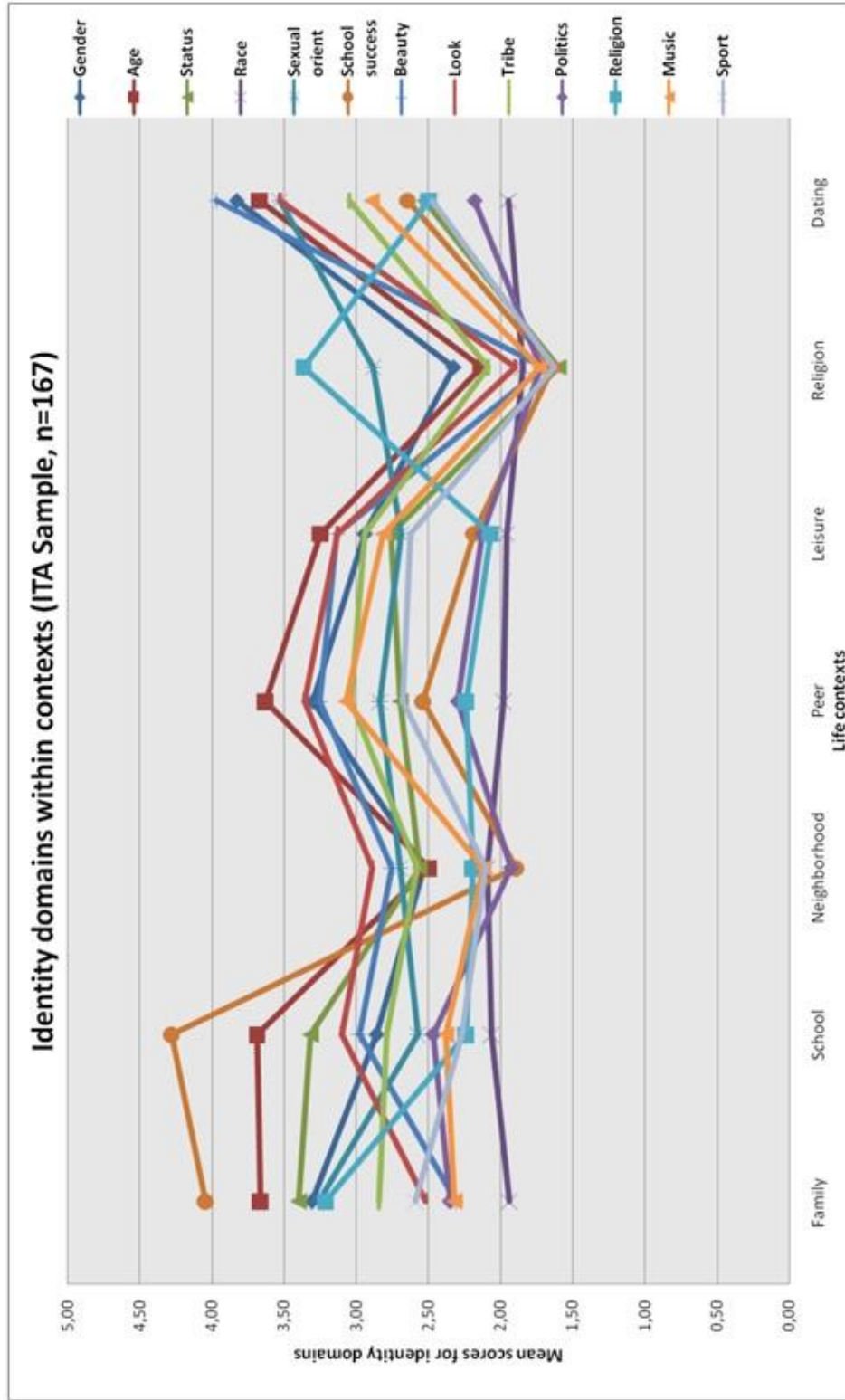
Figure 21 - Mean plot of identity dimensions within contexts for Italian sample

Results from the analyses of the second part of the questionnaire are greatly overlapping with the ones of the US sample, with teachers receiving the lowest mean scores. The dimensions where participants feel more recognized by others are again *gender, race, and sexual identity*, with *school success* losing much of its recognition. This last point calls attention if one considers that the dimensions of *school success* presented the highest salience of all dimensions in the contexts of *family and school*. Similarly, *age* had a greater salience in family, school and dating, and results less recognized exactly by parents and teachers. Finally, the lowest scores in the total of the dimensions result to be *socioeconomic status* and *politics*: the latter had been scored quite low also in the first part, while the first had been attributed a medium salience, especially in the family and school contexts.
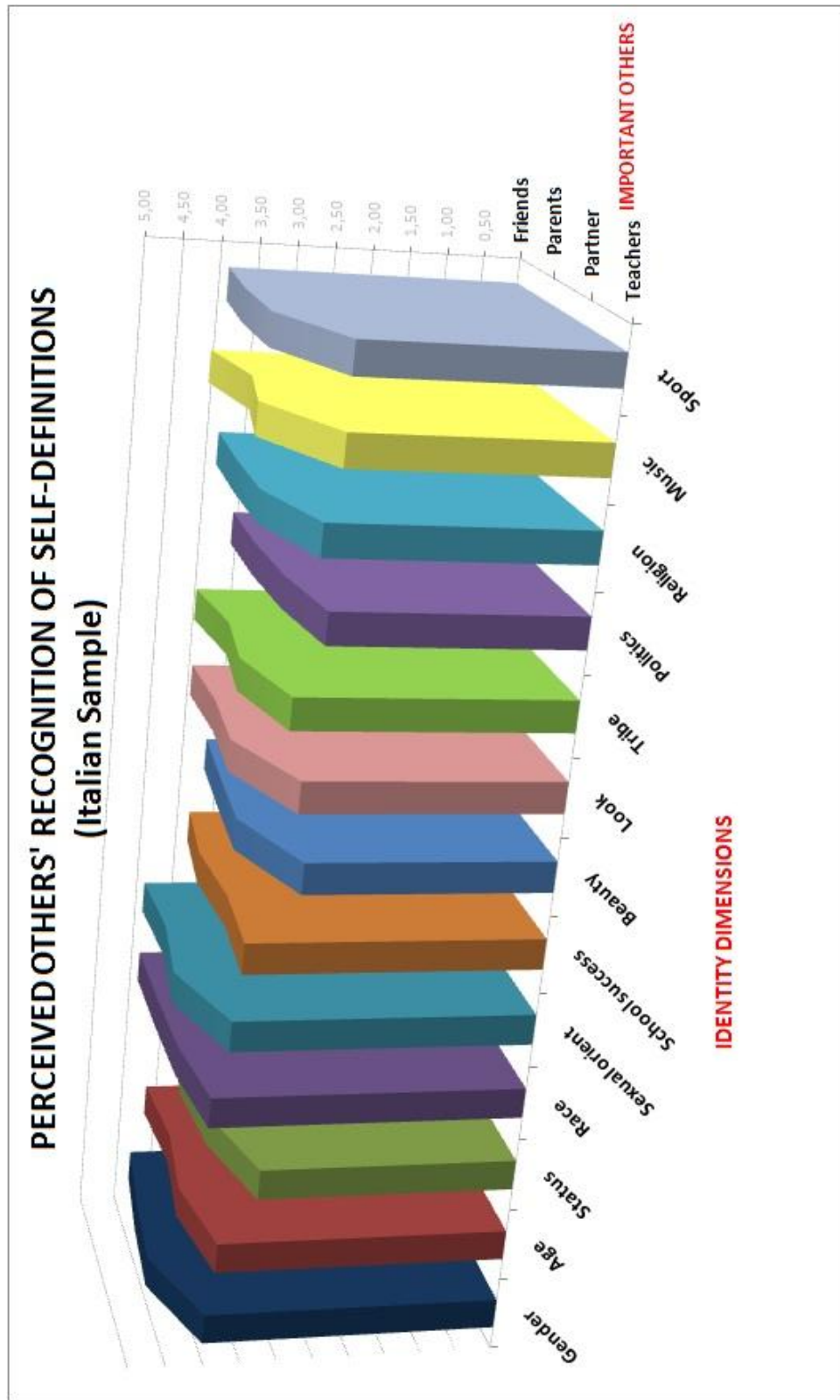
Figure 22 - Mean scores for others' recognition of identity dimensions

5.5 Discussion

Results from the analyses conducted on the ILLCQ seem to have provided interesting answers to the starting research questions. The newly created measure had been principally thought to assess intersections between thirteen identity dimensions and seven life contexts, in term of salience of the first within the second. Furthermore, it had been postulated that different "cores of the self" would have been identified, through the extrapolation of clusters from such intersections, and analyzed in their characteristics. Finally, it was our intention to assess the degree of participants' perceived recognition of self-definitions by important others in their life. Analytic strategies were chosen with the intent of having convergence among indexes to give greater strength to evidences.

One general outcome that is worth being highlighted is that the majority of identity dimensions seemed to have a fairly constant salience across contexts. This trend, furthermore, showed a certain cross-cultural validity, since it was observed in both US and Italian samples. This tendency emerged from all hierarchical clustering, heat map, and mean plot. Indeed, significant clusters extracted (fifteen for US and eleven for Italian sample) were formed mostly by two or more variables referring to the same identity dimensions, and this was true especially for the Italian sample. To confirm this, heat maps showed the strongest similarities among items of the same identity domains, and mean lines in the mean plot showed notable shifts across contexts only in few cases. To understand these results it is important to bear in mind what we asked participants to rate through ILLCQ: how important each identity dimension (self-defined with an open-ended "label") was in each of their life

contexts. To a certain extent, we would suggest that this kind of request may elicit answers referring to a *performative* aspect of identity, since participants were asked to take into account the salience (Sellers et al., 1998) of their self-definition in relational situations. In other words, we asked responders to think about themselves as situated in one context or in another. Leary's sociometer theory (1999) suggests that individuals have an innate mechanism to monitor others' evaluation of self, useful to regulate behavior and self-esteem. Also, Harter's self-appraisal (2012) and role-related selves (1997) theories remind that individuals, and especially young boys and girls, are inclined to show different aspects of self to adapt to the specific social contexts where they interact, *performing a role*. From this point of view, the slight shifts in identity salience encountered in our data (mostly evident in the mean plots) are in line with these theories, and tell us that participants somehow differentiated in their mind among the various contexts and the specific requests coming from them. We would suppose that – and would note down this issue for future research – also their behavior might change from one context to another, in terms of strategies they would adopt to maintain a sense of coherence in their self-image within a certain relational environment (Harter, 2002). Indeed, the prevalence of within-contexts stability could be interpreted as an attempt to keep an internal coherence of their self-perception, fundamental to define the boundaries of identity (Dunkel, 2005; Erikson, 1950).

One might wonder whether this datum could be read in terms of identity *exploration* and *commitment* (Marcia, 1966; Crocetti, Rubini, & Meeus, 2008), identifying in individuals with high shifts in identity salience people with high

exploration of reconsideration levels, whereas, in individuals with slight salience shifts those with high grades of commitment. We believe that future research could develop interesting reflections by exploring correlations between ILLCQ outcomes and status model dimensions.

To this end, it is worth mentioning that US sample showed a greater uniformity of mean scores within dimensions, compared to the Italian counterpart, where mean lines had a greater variability. This datum, if read through the identity status theory, would be in line with numerous findings in literature (Aleni Sestito, Sica & Ragozzini, 2011; Crocetti, Rabaglietti & Sica, 2012) about the tendency of Italian adolescents and emerging adults to procrastinate commitments and identity consolidation.

It might be said, therefore, that Italian adolescents and emerging adults in our pool might be more flexible in their perception of environmental requests and subsequent self-presentation, compared to US people. Said in Bosma and Kunnen's words (2001), Italians might be more prone to accommodation rather than assimilation. We might also construe this outcome through the Eriksonian concepts of *identity confusion* and *identity synthesis* (Erikson, 1950), surmising that Italians would present a more confused identity compared to their US counterparts. Arguably, this result is also partly due to the younger age of Italian participants, compared to US ones.

Obviously, not all identity dimensions are attributed the same *salience*, or *centrality* (Sellers et al., 1998), in one's life, and, proofs against this are especially results from mean plot. Differences in the mean scores of the different dimensions,

indeed, vary one from another, suggesting that they have not only different salience across contexts, but also different centrality in participants' life. As an example, school success, age, socioeconomic status, gender, and sexual orientation are the ones that presented the highest peaks, at least in some contexts. Similarly, race identity presented higher centrality in US participants compared to Italians. Accordingly to literature (Devos & Heng, 2009; Phinney, 1990; Schwartz, Vignoles, Brown, & Zagefka, 2014; Schwartz, Zamboanga, Meca, & Ritchie, 2012), this datum might mean that people pertaining to cultural majority groups (as white people in Italy) tend to take for granted their cultural identity; whereas individuals belonging to cultural or ethnic minority groups (as most of the participants in our US sample) are highly committed to cultural identity.

Evidences especially from hierarchical clustering revealed that some identity dimensions and contexts go close to each other, as if they constitute aspects or environments in which participants perceive common characteristics, and probably behave and perform in similar manners. This is the case of *school and family* contexts on one side, and *peer, leisure and dating* situations on the other side. Theoretically, the most blatant difference between these two groups refer to their different relational structures: the first one is, indeed, based on hierarchical relationships, where the young boy or girl interacts with both peers (schoolmates and siblings) and adults, who play somehow authoritarian roles (teachers and parents). On the other hand, the second group comprises three life contexts where adolescents and emerging adults interact mainly with peers, and where - we might imagine - they

engage in identity performance which are substantially different from the first ones (Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011; Brown, 1990; Davis, 2012).

Furthermore, a specific comment is deserved by the almost perfect overlapping of trends in the dimensions of beauty and look dimensions. These were originally considered separated aspects of the self, because the first refers to an "innate" characteristic of the person, while the second represents something "chosen" by the individual, and through which it is possible to express personality. Nevertheless, results obtained led us to think that they actually belong both to a unique dimension, which is physical appearance. This finding is important for a future adjustment of ILLCQ, where they should be reported in just one variable.

Another interesting finding regards what emerged from the second part of ILLCQ: teachers seem to be those others who less recognize participants self-definitions than all the other categories (parents, friends and partners). Adults in educational contexts play an important role in the definition of youths' identity, affecting self-esteem and functioning as potential models of identification. Thus, the datum encountered in our study might represent a negative factor for our adolescents and emerging adults, who seem to feel little recognized from this category of others in their life. Notwithstanding, it also could be argued that teachers may be considered by youth as playing as circumcised role, delimited just to the school context. If it is the case, the little recognition reported might be due to the belief that teachers have little inference and knowledge of other domains of identity. A specific focus on this matter, perhaps through a qualitative approach, could clarify this point and give precious information.

Speaking more generally, we can say that ILLCQ has demonstrated to be useful providing interesting information about how much and how individuals manage the balance between keeping an internal coherence in their identity, and adjusting to external requests coming from relational contexts (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001; Erikson, 1950). This equilibrium always necessitates some flexibility, which could be difficult to maintain when identity boundaries are uncertain, or too permeable. Such preliminary remarks, coupled with the abovementioned idea of identity as performance, lead us to reflect on a double lens through which ILLCQ data could thus be analyzed: from a collective perspective, as well as from an individual point of view, or better, considering the whole pool of participants together, or single cases. When considered collectively, data gathered through this new measure provide us with an overview on the way how for that specific sample identity dimensions interact reciprocally, and how they intersect with relational contexts. In other words, they give us information about sociocultural expectations with regard to adolescents' and emerging adults' developmental tasks. Thus, whether a specific identity dimension is considered by a pool of young participants more or less important within a certain context compared to other situations (take for example that issues associated with gender identity are equally important in peer and family contexts, but less important within others), should be partly attributed to the meaning and the importance that those identity dimensions are given in that particular sociocultural reality. Applying this conceptual framework to our study, we would say that Italian and US cultures seem to be very similar with respect to some aspects in the demands addressed to adolescents and emerging adults. So, for instance, youth in both

societies may not be expected to engage in political or sport commitments, while they seem to be expected to engage in commitments mostly related to their age and socioeconomic status. To confirm the influence of sociocultural demands on the salience attributed to the various domains of identity, it might be noticed that for US participants the dimension of school success has a higher rate compared to Italians also in contexts different from family and school. This datum could be explained considering that US participants were recruited within their university and were given research credits for that: thus, they answered ILLCQ while their commitment in college identity was supposed to be high.

Differently, ILLCQ could be used to focus on single individuals with the intent of (1) analyzing whether a coherence within identity domains prevails on the adaptation to social contexts, or vice versa; (2) correlating this with the perceived recognition of self by others (second part of the questionnaire); (3) put data emerged from the first two steps in relation with health indices, to identify possible risk or protective factors. Evidently, the second type of analyses has not been realized in the present work, but we believe that it could represent a potential are to explore in the future.

In conclusion, we are confident in the adequacy of the ILLCQ in assessing what we call "cross-contexts-domains model": the present study represents a "trailblazer" for much further research that is needed to make this model acquire validity and reliability.

5.6 Limitations and indication for future research

The results presented in the current work should be interpreted in light of some important limitations.

First, there is evident reason to question characteristics of the sample studied with regard to sex and age. As for the sex of participants, the sample presented significant discrepancies between the number of participants in the Italian subsample and those recruited in US. The great prevalence of US participants makes it necessary to interpret with prudence the differences highlighted and discussed between the two subgroups: a more representative sample of Italian adolescents and emerging adults, indeed, might reveal different patterns in the intersections of identity domains and life contexts. Similarly, the great preponderance of female participants might have hidden important characteristics regarding male youths, even though invariance analyses conducted between male and female participants in the US sample (the Italian sample was too small to split into two subsamples) gave no significant differences between female and male clusterings.

With regard to the age of participants, we had a very wide range (15-29), which should have been split to distinguish among different sub-phases of adolescence (Harter, 2002), and emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). Nevertheless, we could not test differences between the various cohorts, because younger youths were present only in the Italian sample, thus constituting too small groups to analyze separately. Aware of the importance of changes in identity process that occur from adolescence to emerging adulthood, we believe that future research with more representative and well-balanced in sex and age samples is thus desirable.

Second, the cross-sectional design used in the current study did not allow studying changes in identity/contexts intersections across time, missing to show long-term and short-term in identity salience, which could inform about factors determining such changes.

Third, the current study does not include a deep analysis of all the parts of ILLCQ: this choice was partly due to reasons of time in the development of the research, and partly because we wanted to delve mainly into the first part, which constituted the more challenging work. Undoubtedly, this issue will be addressed in future research.

Additionally, something missing in the present work regards the analysis of correlation among the ILLCQ and other identity measures, preventing us to draw definite conclusions about the reliance of the novel measure. Nonetheless, it is reasonable to believe that the different structure of the ILLCQ from classical psychometric questionnaires would require a complex work, which would have been too demanding for this study. Again, this issue represents a priority for advances in the validation of the ILLCQ.

Finally, an important aspect of identity that we could not assess in this study, but that we firmly suggest to add to the ILLCQ concerns virtual identities. Indeed, as we reviewed, this dimension is paramount in the study of current identity development.

Despite these limitations, we believe that the current study has contributed identity literature with an effort to integrate, both at theoretical and empirical level, existing theories on identity development; and with the presentation of an innovative

methodology for research not only in psychology, but for all social sciences dealing with the research on complex constructs.

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APPENDIX[11]

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[11] Full online batteries of questionnaires administered both in USA and in Italy.

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English ▼

Default Question Block

The Department of Humanistic Studies of the University of Naples Federico II and the Center for Family Studies of the University of Miami are carrying out a study about youths of your age in which you are invited to participate.
The research topic is Identity, namely how each of us thinks to be per se and related to others.
You can answer sincerely to the questions you will find in the following pages. The survey is anonymous to guarantee your privacy[1].
There are not right or wrong answers; the average time to complete the survey is about 70 minutes.
You may find it long but it is important to us that you try to answer to all questions.

Contact person: Simona Picariello
simona.picariello@unina.it

[1]According to and due to art.13 of D.Lgs 196/2003

○ I AGREE to participate in the study

○ I DO NOT AGREE to participate in the study

1. Age

☐

2. Sex

[▼]

3. City and State of residence

[   ]

4. Attended grade

1st; (Write the type of school/Degree)	2nd (Write the type of school/Degree)	3rd (Write the type of school/Degree)	4th (Write the type of school/Degree)	5th (Write the type of school/Degree)	I DO attend school/[
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	
○	○	○	○	○	○

5. Whom do you live with?

○ Parents

○ Parents and brothers/sisters

○ Parents, brothers/sisters and grandparents/aunts/uncles

○ Other (specify)
[   ]

6. If you have brothers and/or sisters, what is your place within the offspring? <u>(In the box write the total number of children)</u>

○ 1st
[   ]

○ 2nd
[   ]

○ 3rd
[   ]

○ 4th or further
[   ]

○ I am only child

7. Have you always lived in your current town?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

7a. Where did you live before?

[   ]

7b. How old were you when you moved?

[   ]

8. What is your parents' highest degree or level of school?

	Qualification					
	Doctorate degree	Master's degree	Bachelor's degree	High school graduate	Some high school, no diploma	No schooling completed
Father	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mother	○	○	○	○	○	○

9. What do they do currently?

	Job						
	Out of work	Employee	Self-employed	Workman	Bussinessman	Housemaker	Retired
Father	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mother	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

10. Do you have a stable group of friend with whom you usually hang out?

○ Yes

○ No

11. Do you have a "best friend" with whom you share experiences, feelings and interests in a preferred manner compared to the others?

○ Yes

○ No

12. Have you a romantic partner?

○ Yes

○ No

12a. How long has your relationship been lasting?

[   ]

Block 1

ASPECTS OF IDENTITY QUESTIONNAIRE (AIQ)

These items describe different aspects of identity. Please read each item carefully and consider how it applies to you. Fill in the blank next to each item by choosing a number from the scale below:

Not important to my sense of who I am	Slightly important to my sense of who I am	Somewhat important to my sense of who I am	Very important to my sense of who I am	Extremely important to my sense of who I am
1	2	3	4	5

	Not important	2	3	4	Extremely important
1. The things I own, my possessions	○	○	○	○	○
2. My personal values and moral standards	○	○	○	○	○

	Not important	2	3	4	Extremely important
3. My popularity with other people	○	○	○	○	○
4. Being a part of the many generations of my family	○	○	○	○	○
5. My dreams and imagination	○	○	○	○	○
6. The ways in which other people react to what I say and do	○	○	○	○	○
7. My race or ethnic background	○	○	○	○	○
8. My personal goals and hopes for the future	○	○	○	○	○
	Not important	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Extremely important**
9. My physical appearance: my height, my weight, and the shape of my body	○	○	○	○	○
10. My religion	○	○	○	○	○
11. My emotions and feelings	○	○	○	○	○
12. My reputation, what others think of me	○	○	○	○	○
13. Places where I live or where I was raised	○	○	○	○	○
14. My thoughts and ideas	○	○	○	○	○
15. My attractiveness to other people	○	○	○	○	○
16. My age, belonging to my age group or being part of my generation	○	○	○	○	○
	Not important	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Extremely important**
17. My gestures and mannerisms, the impression I make on others	○	○	○	○	○
18. The ways I deal with my fears and anxieties	○	○	○	○	○
19. My sex, being a male or a female	○	○	○	○	○
20. My social behavior, such as the way I act when meeting people	○	○	○	○	○
21. My feeling of being a unique person, being distinct from others	○	○	○	○	○
22. My relationships with the people I feel close to	○	○	○	○	○
23. My social class, the economic group I belong to whether lower, middle, or upper class	○	○	○	○	○
24. My feeling of belonging to my community	○	○	○	○	○
	Not important	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Extremely important**
25. Knowing that I continue to be essentially the same inside even though life involves many external changes	○	○	○	○	○
26. Being a good friend to those I really care about	○	○	○	○	○
27. My self-knowledge, my ideas about what kind of person I really am	○	○	○	○	○
28. My commitment to being a concerned relationship partner	○	○	○	○	○
29. My feeling of pride in my country, being proud to be a citizen	○	○	○	○	○
30. My physical abilities, being coordinated and good at athletic activities	○	○	○	○	○
31. Sharing significant experiences with my close friends	○	○	○	○	○
32. My personal self-evaluation, the private opinion I have of myself	○	○	○	○	○
	Not important	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Extremely important**
33. Being a sports fan, identifying with a sports team	○	○	○	○	○
34. Having mutually satisfying personal relationships	○	○	○	○	○
35. Connecting on an intimate level with another person	○	○	○	○	○
36. My occupational choice and career plans	○	○	○	○	○
37. Developing caring relationships with others	○	○	○	○	○

	Not important	2	3	4	Extremely important
38. My commitments on political issues or my political activities	○	○	○	○	○
39. My desire to understand the true thoughts and feelings of my best friend or romantic partner	○	○	○	○	○
40. My academic ability and performance, such as the grades I earn and comments I get from teachers	○	○	○	○	○
41. Having close bonds with other people	○	○	○	○	○
42. My language, such as my regional accent or dialect or a second language that I know	○	○	○	○	○
43. My feeling of connectedness with those I am close to	○	○	○	○	○
44. My role of being a student in college	○	○	○	○	○
45. My sexual orientation, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual	○	○	○	○	○

Block 2

Erikson Psychosocial Stage Inventory (EPSI)

Read carefully the following statements and rate how much they are true for you from 1 to 5 on the following scale:

Hardly ever true	Sometimes true	Neither true nor false	Often True	Almost always true
1	2	3	4	5

	Hardly ever true	2	3	4	Almost always true
1. I am able to take things as they come	○	○	○	○	○
2. I can't make sense of my life	○	○	○	○	○
3. I can't make up my own mind about things	○	○	○	○	○
4. I change my opinion of myself a lot	○	○	○	○	○
5. I'm never going to get on in this world	○	○	○	○	○
6. I've got a clear idea of what ! want to be	○	○	○	○	○
	Hardly ever true	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Almost always true**
7. I feel mixed up	○	○	○	○	○
8. I know when to please myself and when to please others	○	○	○	○	○
9. The important things in life are clear to me	○	○	○	○	○
10. I've got it together	○	○	○	○	○
11. I know what kind of person I am	○	○	○	○	○
12. I really believe in myself	○	○	○	○	○
	Hardly ever true	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Almost always true**
13. I can't decide what I want to do with my life	○	○	○	○	○

	Hardly ever true	2	3	4	Almost always true
14. I have a strong sense of what it means to be female/male	○	○	○	○	○
15. I like myself and am proud of what I stand for	○	○	○	○	○
16. I don't really know what I'm on about	○	○	○	○	○
17. I find I have to keep up a front when I'm with people	○	○	○	○	○
18. I don't really feel involved	○	○	○	○	○

	Hardly ever true	2	3	4	Almost always true
19. I like to make my own choices	○	○	○	○	○
20. I don't feel confident of my judgment	○	○	○	○	○
21. I can stand on my own two feet	○	○	○	○	○
22. I find it hard to make up my mind	○	○	○	○	○
23. I like my freedom and don't want to be tied down	○	○	○	○	○
24. I am ashamed of myself	○	○	○	○	○

Block 8

VERY GOOD! YOU HAVE ALREADY TAKEN HALF OF THE SURVEY! WE ASK YOU STILL FEW MINUTES OF CONCENTRATION...

Identity Labels and Life Contexts Questionnaire (Part 1) – How I define myself

Thinking about yourself in the way you are today, try to label yourself with reference to all identity dimensions mentioned in the table below. Then, for each of them write down the adjective that best describe you in regard to that specific label.

In each cell in the grid, mark alongside how much each dimension is important for you in the different contexts of your life, such as family or peer group, using a scale from 1(=Unimportant), to 5 (=Very important).

Unimportant	Slightly Important	Quite Important	Important	Very Important
1	2	3	4	5

If you think that in your self-description it is important to add any dimension that we did not use , you can add it in the blank boxes at the end of the table.

While answering, follow the example in the table for the dimension "Citizenship": the person who answered labeled his/herself as "Italian" and he/she reported his/her main characteristic linked to this label "Attached to traditions"). Then, he/she marked that the feature of being "Italian" is quite important for the self-image in the context of his/her family, in the contexts of school/university and in his/her neighborhood; very important for his/her group of friends; slightly important in the religious contexts and with regard to dating

	Family	School/ University	Neighborhood	Friends group	Spare time	Religious places	Dating
Citizenship Italian:attached to traditions	3	3	3	5	5	2	1

	Family	School	Neighborhood	Friends group	Spare time	Religious places	Dating
Dimension (do NOT insert numbers on this line)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1. Gender (Female, male, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Life phase (young boy, young girl, adult, adolescent etc)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Socio-economical status (rich, poor, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Race/ethnicity (caucasian; mulatto, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Sexual orientation (heterosexual; gay etc)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. School success	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Physical appearance (beautiful, nice etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Look/Dressing style	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Youth sub-cultures (Punk, Emo, Hippie, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Political orientation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Religious faith	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Music	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Sport	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. Other dimension							
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Block 9

<div align="center">

Identity Labels and Life Contexts Questionnaire (Part 2) – How others see me
</div>

The way how we see ourselves is not always exactly the same as the way others see us.

Thinking about the labels you wrote above, try to imagine how much some important people of your life (your parents, your friends, your romantic partner, teachers, or others) would agree with your self-description.

Rate the level of agreement, writing a number form 1(=Strongly disagree) to 5 (=Strongly agree) in the table below.

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Do not know	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

	Friends	Parents	Partner	Teachers
1. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2} (Gender)	▼	▼	▼	▼
2. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3} (Stage of life)	▼	▼	▼	▼
3. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/4} (Socio-economical status)	▼	▼	▼	▼
4. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/5} (Race/Ethnicity)	▼	▼	▼	▼
5. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6} (Sexual Orientation)	▼	▼	▼	▼
6. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7} (School success)	▼	▼	▼	▼
7. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8} (Psysical appearance)	▼	▼	▼	▼
8. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9} (Look)	▼	▼	▼	▼
9. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10} (Youth sub-culture)	▼	▼	▼	▼
10. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/11} (Political orientation)	▼	▼	▼	▼
11. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/12} (Religious faith)	▼	▼	▼	▼
12. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/13} (Music)	▼	▼	▼	▼
13. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/14} (Sport)	▼	▼	▼	▼
14. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/15} (Other dimension)	▼	▼	▼	▼

Identity Labels and Life Contexts Questionnaire (Part 3) – How others affect my way of being

Our way of being and acting very often is influenced by the contexts where we live. Indeed, external pressures let us enhance some our positive and authentic features. Some other times, instead, they make us hide these features, or they make us assume others which seem not to really belong to us.

For each of following life contexts on the left, state whether it allows you to be yourself, or rather you feel that it makes you alter the display of your identity, **DRAGGING AND DROPPING** it in one of the boxes on the right: "Life contexts which influence your way of being positively"; "Life contexts which influence your way of being negatively"; "Life contexts which DO NOT influence your way of being".

Items	Life contexts which influence your way of being positively	Life contexts which influence your way of being negatively
1. Family		
2. School/University		
3. Neighborhood		
4. Friends group		
5. Spare time	Life contexts which DO NOT influence your way of being	
6. Places of religion		
7. Dating		

48. Is there any aspect of your identity that you feel as not recognized by others?

○ Yes

○ No

48a. Which one?

48b. Especially by whom is it not recognized?

49. If you could, which aspect of your identity would you change?

○ I would change ... (list the aspects you would change)

[   ]

○ I would NOT change any aspect of my identity.

50. Write briefly one or more events in your life that you consider fundamental in making you the person you are today:

Event 1   [   ]

Event 2   [   ]

Event 3   [   ]

Event 4   [   ]

51. Is there any aspect of your identity that you try to hide from others?

○ Yes

○ No

51a. Which one?

[   ]

51b. In which context do you mainly try to hide it/them?

[   ]

AT THIS POINT THE MOST IS DONE. ONLY THREE PAGES ARE LEFT ...

Block 3

Self Perception Profile – What I am like

In each of the following lines two kinds of people are presented (one on the left, one on the right), you have to choose to which one you feel more like.
Sometimes it will be on one side of the page, another time it will be on the other side of the page, but you can only check one box for each sentence. YOU DON'T CHECK BOTH SIDES, JUST THE ONE SIDE MOST LIKE YOU.

	Really true for me	Sort of true for me	WHILE	Sort of true for me	Really true for me	
TYPE 1	○	○	○	○		TYPE 2
1. Some people feel that they are just as smart as others their age	○	○	○	○		Other people aren't so sure and wonder if they are as smart
2. Some people find it hard to make friends	○	○	○	○		Other people find it pretty easy to make friends
3. Some people do very well at all kinds of sports	○	○	○	○		Other people don't feel that they are very good when it comes to sports
4. Some people are not happy with the way they look	○	○	○	○		Other people are happy with the way they look
5. Some people feel that they are ready to do well at a part-time job	○	○	○	○		Other people feel that they are not quite ready to handle a part-time job
6. Some people feel that if they are romantically interested in someone, that person will like them back	○	○	○	○		Other people worry that when they like someone romantically, that person won't like them back
7. Some people usually do the right thing	○	○	○	○		Other people often don't do what they know is right
8. Some people are able to make really close friends	○	○	○	○		Other people find it hard to make really close friends
9. Some people are often disappointed with themselves	○	○	○	○		Other people are pretty pleased with themselves
10. Some people are pretty slow in finishing their school work	○	○	○	○		Other people can do their school work quickly
11. Some people know how to make classmates like them	○	○	○	○		Other people don't know how to make classmates like them
12. Some people think they could do well at just about any new athletic activity	○	○	○	○		Other people are afraid they might not do well at a new athletic activity
13. Some people wish their body was different	○	○	○	○		Other people like their body the way it is
14. Some people feel that they don't have enough skills to do well at a job	○	○	○	○		Other people feel that they do have enough skills to do a job well
15. Some people are not dating the people they are really attracted to	○	○	○	○		Other people are dating those people they are attracted to
16. Some people often get in trouble because of things they do	○	○	○	○		Other people usually don't do things that get them in trouble
17. Some people do know how to find a close friend with whom they can share secrets	○	○	○	○		Some other people *don't* know how to find a close friend with whom they can share secrets

18. Some people don't like the way they are leading their life	○	○	○	○	Other people do like the way they are leading their life.
19. Some people do very well at their classwork	○	○	○	○	Other people don't do very well at their classwork
20. Some people don't have the social skills to make friends	○	○	○	○	Other people do have the social skills to make friends
21. Some people feel that they are better than others their age at sports	○	○	○	○	Other people don't feel they can play as well
22. Some people wish their physical appearance was different	○	○	○	○	Other people like their physical appearance the way it is
23. Some people feel they are old enough to get and keep a paying job	○	○	○	○	Other people do not feel that they are old enough, yet, to really handle a job well
24. Some people feel that people their age will be romantically attracted to them	○	○	○	○	Other people worry about whether people their age will be attracted to them
25. Some people feel really good about the way they act	○	○	○	○	Other people don't feel that good about the way they often act
26. Some people do know what it takes to develop a close friendship with a peer	○	○	○	○	Other people don't know what to do to form a close friendship with a peer
27. Some people are happy with themselves most of the time	○	○	○	○	Other people are often not happy with themselves
28. Some people have trouble figuring out the answers in school	○	○	○	○	Other teenagers almost always can figure out the answers
29. Some people understand how to get peers to accept them	○	○	○	○	Other people don't understand how to get peers to accept them
30. Some people don't do well at new outdoor games	○	○	○	○	Other people are good at new games right away
31. Some people think that they are good looking	○	○	○	○	Other people think that they are not very good looking
32. Some people feel like they could do better at work they do for pay	○	○	○	○	Other people feel that they are doing really well at work they do for pay
33. Some people feel that they are fun and interesting on a date	○	○	○	○	Other people wonder about how fun and interesting they are on a date
34. Some people do things they know they shouldn't do	○	○	○	○	Other people hardly ever do things they know they shouldn't do
35. Some people find it hard to make friends they can really trust	○	○	○	○	Other people are able to make close friends they can really trust
36. Some people like the kind of person they are	○	○	○	○	Other people often wish they were someone else
37. Some people feel that they are pretty intelligent	○	○	○	○	Other people question whether they are intelligent
38. Some people know how to become popular	○	○	○	○	Other people do not know how to become popular
39. Some people do not feel that they are very athletic	○	○	○	○	Other people feel that they are very athletic
40. Some people really like their looks	○	○	○	○	Other people wish they looked different
41. Some people feel that they are really able to handle the work on a paying job	○	○	○	○	Other people wonder if they are really doing as good a job at work as they should be doing
42. Some people usually don't go out with people they would really like to date	○	○	○	○	Other people do go out with people they really want to date
43. Some people usually act the way they know they are supposed to	○	○	○	○	Other people often don't act the way they are supposed to
44. Some people don't understand what they should do to have a friend close enough to share personal thoughts with	○	○	○	○	Other people do understand what to do to have a close friend with whom they can share personal thoughts.
45. Some people are very happy being the way they are	○	○	○	○	Other people often wish they were different

Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scale (FACES-IV)

Describe your family, indicating how much do you agree with the following statements. Please, answer following the scale below.

Strongly Disagree	Generally Disagree	Undecided	Generally Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	Strongly agree
1. Family members are involved in each other's lives	○	○	○	○	○
2. We get along better with people outside our family than inside	○	○	○	○	○
3. We spend too much time together	○	○	○	○	○
4. We never seem to get organized in our family	○	○	○	○	○
5. Family members feel very close to each other	○	○	○	○	○
6. Family members seem to avoid contact with each other when at home	○	○	○	○	○
7. Family members feel pressured to spend most free time together	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	Strongly agree
8. It is hard to know who the leader is in our family	○	○	○	○	○
9. Family members are supportive of each other during difficult times	○	○	○	○	○
10. Family members know very little about the friends of other family members	○	○	○	○	○
11. Family members are too dependent on each other	○	○	○	○	○
12.Things do not get done in our family	○	○	○	○	○
13. Family members consult other family members on important decisions	○	○	○	○	○
14.Family members are on their own when there is a problem to be solved	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	Strongly agree
15. Family members have little need for friends outside the family	○	○	○	○	○
16. It is unclear who is responsible for things (chores, activities) in our family	○	○	○	○	○
17. Family members like to spend some of their free time with each other	○	○	○	○	○
18. Our family seldom does things together	○	○	○	○	○
19. We feel too connected to each other	○	○	○	○	○
20. There is no leadership in our family	○	○	○	○	○
21. Although family members have individual interests, they still participant in family activities	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	Strongly agree
22. . Family members seldom depend on each other	○	○	○	○	○
23. We resent family members doing things outside the family	○	○	○	○	○
24. Our family has a hard time keeping track of who does various household tasks	○	○	○	○	○
25. Our family has a good balance of separateness and closeness	○	○	○	○	○
26. Family members mainly operate independently	○	○	○	○	○
27. Family members feel guilty if they want to spend time away from the family	○	○	○	○	○
28. Our family feels hectic and disorganized	○	○	○	○	○

Block 4

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ-Ita)

For each item, please mark the box for Not True, Somewhat True or Certainly True. It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain. Please give your answers on the basis of how things have been for you over the last six months.

	Not true	Somewhat true	Certainly true
1. I try to be nice to other people. I care about their feelings	○	○	○
2. I am restless, I cannot stay still for long	○	○	○
3. I get a lot of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness	○	○	○
4. I usually share with others, for example CD's, games, food	○	○	○
5. I get very angry and often lose my temper	○	○	○
6. I would rather be alone than with people of my age	○	○	○
7. I usually do as I am told	○	○	○
	Not true	Somewhat true	Certainly true
8. I worry a lot	○	○	○
9. I am helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill	○	○	○
10. I am constantly fidgeting or squirming	○	○	○
11. I have one good friend or more	○	○	○
12. I fight a lot. I can make other people do what I want	○	○	○
13. I am often unhappy, depressed or tearful	○	○	○
14. Other people my age generally like me	○	○	○
	Not true	Somewhat true	Certainly true
15. I am easily distracted, I find it difficult to concentrate	○	○	○
16. I am nervous in new situations. I easily lose confidence	○	○	○
17. I am kind to younger children	○	○	○
18. I am often accused of lying or cheating	○	○	○
19. Other children or young people pick on me or bully me	○	○	○
20. I often offer to help others (parents, teachers, peers)	○	○	○
21. I think before I do things	○	○	○
	Not true	Somewhat true	Certainly true
22. I take things that are not mine from home, school or elsewhere	○	○	○
23. I get along better with adults than with people my own age	○	○	○
24. I have many fears, I am easily scared	○	○	○
25. I finish the work I'm doing. My attention is good	○	○	○

CONGRATULATIONS!

THIS WAS THE LAST SECTION OF THE SURVEY. IF YOU ARE SURE ABOUT ANSWERING TO ALL QUESTIONS, CLICK ON "NEXT PAGE". IF, ON THE CONTRARY, YOU WANT TO FINISH ANSWERING IN A LATER MOMENT, SIMPLY CLOSE THE WINDOW WHERE YOU ARE WORKING: ONCE YOU CLICK "NEXT PAGE", YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO RECOVER THE ANSWERS GIVEN.

Block 9

Did you access the survey through Amazon's Mechanical Turk?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Block 6

We are sorry, but in order to participate in the study it is necessary you explicitly express your agreement.

Block 8

Default Question Block

Il Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici dell'Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, insieme con il Center for Family Studies dell'Università di Miami, sta svolgendo una ricerca sui giovani della tua età a cui ti invita a partecipare.

L'argomento della ricerca riguarda *l'identità*, ossia come ciascuno di noi pensa di essere di per sé e rispetto agli altri.

Puoi rispondere con sincerità alle domande che troverai nelle pagine seguenti. Il questionario è anonimo per garantire la tua riservatezza[1]. Non ci sono risposte giuste o sbagliate, la compilazione ti richiederà tra i 45 e i 70 minuti.
Forse potrà sembrarti lungo, ma per noi è importante che tu cerchi di rispondere a tutti i quesiti.

Referente: dott.ssa Simona Picariello
simona.picariello@unina.it

[1]Ai sensi dell'art. 13 del D.Lgs 196/2003

○ Accetto di partecipare alla ricerca

○ NON accetto di partecipare alla ricerca

1. Età

☐

2. Sesso

[▼]

3. Dove vivi? (Provincia)

[   ]

4. Classe (anno di corso) frequentata

1° (indica il tipo di scuola/Corso di Laurea)	2° (Indica il tipo di scuola/Corso di Laurea)	3° (Indica il tipo di scuola/Corso di Laurea)	4° (Indica il tipo di scuola/Corso di Laurea)	5° (Indica il tipo di scuola/Corso di Laurea)	Non fr nes scuola/U
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	
○	○	○	○	○	

5. Con chi vivi?

○ Genitori

○ Genitori e fratelli/sorelle

○ Genitori, fratelli/sorelle, nonni/zii

○ Altro (specificare)
[   ]

6. Se hai fratelli e/o sorelle, qual è il tuo posto nella filiazione? <u>(Nel riquadro riporta il numero totale di figli)</u>

○ 1°
[   ]

○ 2°
[   ]

○ 3°
[   ]

○ 4° od oltre
[   ]

○ Sono figlio/a unico/a

7. Hai sempre vissuto nella tua città attuale?

- ○ Sì
- ○ No

7a. Dove vivevi prima?

[   ]

7b. Quanti anni avevi quando ti sei trasferito/a?

[   ]

8. Qual è il titolo di studio posseduto dai tuoi genitori?

	Titolo di studio posseduto					
	Titolo Post-laurea	Laurea	Diploma	Qualifica professionale	Licenza media	Licenza elementare
Padre	○	○	○	○	○	○
Madre	○	○	○	○	○	○

9. Quale lavoro svolgono attualmente?

	Lavoro svolto						
	Disoccupato	Impiegato/a	Libero/a professionista	Operaio/a	Imprenditore/trice	Casalinga/Inoccupato/a	Pensionato/a
Padre	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Madre	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

10. Hai un gruppo stabile di amici che frequenti assiduamente?

○ Sì

○ No

11. Hai un "migliore amico" con cui condividi esperienze, sentimenti ed interessi in maniera privilegiata rispetto agli altri?

○ Sì

○ No

12. Hai un partner sentimentale?

○ Sì

○ No

12a. Da quanto tempo dura la vostra relazione?

☐

Block 1

QUESTIONARIO SUGLI ASPETTI DELL'IDENTITÀ (AIQ)

Le seguenti affermazioni fanno riferimento a diversi aspetti dell'identità. Per favore leggi ciascuna di esse attentamente e considera quanto si addice alla tua persona. Inserisci accanto a ciascun item un numero da 1 a 5 seguendo la scala qui indicata:

Per nulla importante per il senso della mia identità	Poco importante per il senso della mia identità	Piuttosto importante per il senso della mia identità	Molto importante per il senso della mia identità	Estremamente importante per il senso della mia identità
1	2	3	4	5

	Per nulla importante	2	3	4	Estremamente importante
1. Le mie cose, gli oggetti che mi appartengono	○	○	○	○	○
2. I miei valori personali e morali	○	○	○	○	○
3. La mia popolarità tra le altre persone	○	○	○	○	○

	Per nulla importante	2	3	4	Estremamente importante
4. Essere parte delle molte generazioni della mia famiglia	○	○	○	○	○
5. I miei sogni e le cose che immagino	○	○	○	○	○
6. Il modo in cui le persone reagiscono a ciò che dico e faccio	○	○	○	○	○
7. La mia razza o la mia provenienza etnica	○	○	○	○	○
8. I miei obiettivi personali e le mie speranze per il futuro	○	○	○	○	○

	Per nulla importante	2	3	4	Estremamente importante
9. Il mio aspetto fisico: la mia altezza, il mio peso, e la forma del mio corpo	○	○	○	○	○
10. La mia religione	○	○	○	○	○
11. Le mie emozioni e i miei sentimenti	○	○	○	○	○
12. La mia reputazione, quello che gli altri pensano di me	○	○	○	○	○
13. I luoghi in cui vivo o in cui sono cresciuto	○	○	○	○	○
14. I miei pensieri e le mie idee	○	○	○	○	○
15. Essere attraente per le altre persone	○	○	○	○	○
16. La mia età, appartenere al mio gruppo di coetanei o essere parte della mia generazione	○	○	○	○	○

	Per nulla importante	2	3	4	Estremamente importante
17. Il miei gesti e movimenti, l'impressione che faccio agli altri	○	○	○	○	○
18. Il modo in cui affronto le mie paure e le mie ansie	○	○	○	○	○
19. Il mio sesso, essere un ragazzo o una ragazza	○	○	○	○	○
20. Il mio comportamento sociale, ad esempio il modo in cui agisco quando sto con le altre persone	○	○	○	○	○
21. Sentirmi una persona unica, distinta dagli altri	○	○	○	○	○
22. Le mie relazioni con le persone a cui voglio bene	○	○	○	○	○
23. La mia classe sociale ed economica, quale che sia bassa, media o alta	○	○	○	○	○
24. Il sentimento di appartenenza alla mia comunità	○	○	○	○	○

	Per nulla importante	2	3	4	Estremamente importante
25. Sapere che continuo ad essere essenzialmente lo stesso dentro di me anche se la vita porta molti cambiamenti all'esterno	○	○	○	○	○
26. Essere un buon amico di coloro a cui tengo realmente	○	○	○	○	○
27. La conoscenza di me stessa/o, le mie opinioni sul tipo di persona che sono veramente	○	○	○	○	○
28. Essere impegnato in una relazione sentimentale stabile	○	○	○	○	○
29. Il sentimento di orgoglio per il mio paese, essere orgoglioso della mia cittadinanza	○	○	○	○	○
30. Le mie abilità fisiche, avere una buona coordinazione ed essere bravo nelle attività sportive	○	○	○	○	○
31. Condividere le mie esperienze significative con i miei amici stretti	○	○	○	○	○
32. La mia auto-valutazione, la mia opinione personale che ho di me stessa/o	○	○	○	○	○

	Per nulla importante	2	3	4	Estremamente importante
33. Essere un/a tifoso/a, identificarmi con una squadra sportiva	○	○	○	○	○
34. Avere relazioni reciprocamente soddisfacenti	○	○	○	○	○
35. Entrare in contatto ad un livello intimo e profondo con un'altra persona	○	○	○	○	○
36. Le mie scelte scolastiche e i miei progetti lavorativi	○	○	○	○	○
37. Sviluppare relazioni di cura reciproca con gli altri	○	○	○	○	○

	Per nulla importante	2	3	4	Estremamente importante
38. Le mie decisioni politiche e le mie attività in quest'ambito	○	○	○	○	○
39. Il desiderio di capire i veri pensieri e sentimenti del mio migliore amico o del mio partner	○	○	○	○	○
40. Le mie capacità scolastiche e il mio rendimento, come ad esempio i voti che prendo e i giudizi che ricevo dagli insegnanti	○	○	○	○	○
	Per nulla importante	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Estremamente importante**
41. Avere relazioni strette con altre persone	○	○	○	○	○
42. La mia lingua, come ad esempio il mio accento, il dialetto della mia regione, o una seconda lingua che conosco	○	○	○	○	○
43. Sentirmi in vero contatto con qualcuno a cui tengo	○	○	○	○	○
44. Il mio ruolo di studente	○	○	○	○	○
45. Il mio orientamento sessuale, quale che sia eterosessuale, omosessuale o bisessuale	○	○	○	○	○

Block 2

Erikson Psychosocial Stage Inventory (EPSI)

Leggi attentamente le seguenti affermazioni e indica quanto sono vere per te, cliccando su un numero da 1 a 5, secondo la seguente scala:

Quasi mai vero	A volte vero	Ne' vero, ne' falso	Spesso vero	Quasi sempre vero
1	2	3	4	5

	Quasi mai vero	2	3	4	Quasi sempre vero
1. Riesco a prendere le cose come vengono	○	○	○	○	○
2. Non riesco a trovare un senso alla mia vita	○	○	○	○	○
3. Non riesco a farmi una mia personale opinione sulle cose	○	○	○	○	○
4. Cambio facilmente l'opinione che ho di me stesso/a	○	○	○	○	○
5. Non riuscirò mai a farmi strada in questo mondo	○	○	○	○	○
6. Ho un'idea chiara di come voglio essere	○	○	○	○	○
	Quasi mai vero	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Quasi sempre vero**
7. Mi sento confuso/a	○	○	○	○	○
8. So quando fare qualcosa che piace a me e quando farne una che piace agli altri	○	○	○	○	○
9. Mi è chiaro quali sono le cose importanti nella vita	○	○	○	○	○
10. Sento di essere una persona unitaria	○	○	○	○	○
11. So che tipo di persona sono	○	○	○	○	○

	Quasi mai vero	2	3	4	Quasi sempre vero
12. Credo realmente in me stesso	○	○	○	○	○
13. Non riesco a decidere cosa fare della mia vita	○	○	○	○	○
14. Ho chiaro il senso di cosa voglia dire essere maschio o femmina	○	○	○	○	○
15. Mi piaccio come sono e sono orgoglioso di ciò che rappresento	○	○	○	○	○
16. Non capisco fino in fondo qual è il mio senso	○	○	○	○	○
17. Sento di dovermi costruire una facciata quando sto con le persone	○	○	○	○	○
18. Non mi sento molto coinvolto/a	○	○	○	○	○

	Quasi mai vero	2	3	4	Quasi sempre vero
19. Mi piace prendere decisioni mie personali	○	○	○	○	○
20. Non mi fido dei miei giudizi	○	○	○	○	○
21. Non so dare un passo da solo	○	○	○	○	○
22. Per me è molto difficile prendere una decisione	○	○	○	○	○
23. Mi piace la mia libertà e non voglio essere legato	○	○	○	○	○
24. Mi vergogno di me stesso/a	○	○	○	○	○

Block 8

COMPLIMENTI, SEI GIÀ A METÀ DELL'OPERA!! TI CHIEDIAMO ANCORA QUALCHE MINUTO DI CONCENTRAZIONE...

Etichette identitarie e contesti di vita (Parte 1) – Come mi definisco

Pensando a te come sei oggi, prova ad assegnarti un'etichetta in relazione alle dimensioni d'identità riportate nella tabella seguente, scrivendola nel relativo box.
Per ciascuna, poi, scrivi nello stesso box l'aggettivo che maggiormente ti descrive in relazione a quella specifica etichetta.
Successivamente, tenendo in mente tale etichetta, segna accanto quanto ciascuna dimensione sia importante per te nei diversi contesti della tua vita, come la famiglia, oppure il gruppo di amici, esprimendo il grado di importanza con un numero da 1= Per nulla importante a 5= Importantissimo.

Per nulla importante	Poco importante	Abbastanza importante	Molto importante	Importantissimo
1	2	3	4	5

Se ritieni che nella descrizione di te stesso sia importante inserire una dimensione che non abbiamo riportato, puoi aggiungerla tu stesso negli spazi vuoti alla fine della tabella.
Nel rispondere, segui l'esempio di seguito riportato a rispetto alla dimensione "Cittadinanza": la persona

che ha risposto si è data come etichetta "Italiano" e ha riportato la sua caratteristica principale che collega a tale etichetta ("Legato alle tradizioni"). Poi, ha segnato che per lui la qualità di "Italiano" è abbastanza importante per l'immagine di sé nel contesto familiare, nel contesto scolastico/universitario e nel suo quartiere; importantissima rispetto al gruppo di amici e ai contesti del tempo libero; poco importante nei contesti legati alla religione e per niente importante rispetto alle relazioni sentimentali.

	Famiglia	Scuola/ Università	Quartiere	Gruppo di amici	Luoghi di tempo libero	Luoghi di religione	Relazioni sentimentali
Cittadinanza Italiano; Legato alle tra	3	3	3	5	5	2	1

	Famiglia	Scuola/ Università	Quartiere	Gruppo di amici	Luoghi di tempo libero	Luoghi di religione	Relazioni sentimentali
Dimensione non inserire numeri su questa riga)							
1. Genere (maschio, femmina, etc)							
2. Fase della vita (giovane adulto, adolescente, etc)							
3. Status socio-economico (ricco, povero, etc)							
4. Razza/etnia (bianco, mulatto, etc)							
5. Orientamento sessuale (eterosessuale, omosessuale, etc)							
6. Andamento scolastico							
7. Aspetto fisico (bello, carino, brutto, etc)							
8. Look/Modo di vestirsi							
9. Cultura giovanile (Emo, Punk, etc)							
10. Orientamento politico							
11. Credo religioso							
12. Musica							
13. Sport							

14. Altra dimensione								
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Block 9

<u>**Etichette identitarie e contesti di vita (Parte 2) – Come mi vedono gli altri**</u>

Il modo in cui vediamo noi stessi non sempre corrisponde esattamente al modo in cui ci vedono gli altri.

Facendo riferimento alle etichette che ti sei attribuito sopra, prova ad immaginare quanto alcune persone importanti nella tua vita (genitori, amici, partner sentimentali, insegnanti, o altre) sarebbero d'accordo con le definizioni che hai dato di te stesso.

Indica il livello di accordo di ciascuno di loro, scrivendo un numero da 1=Fortemente in disaccordo a 5 = Fortemente in accordo nella tabella sottostante.

	Fortemente in disaccordo	Abbastanza in disaccordo	Non so	Abbastanza in accordo	Fortemente in accordo
	1	2	3	4	5

	Amici	Genitori	Partner sentimentali	Insegnanti
1.${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2} (Genere)	▼	▼	▼	▼
2.${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3} (Fase della vita)	▼	▼	▼	▼
3.${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/4} (Status socio-economico)	▼	▼	▼	▼
4. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/5} (Razza/Etnia)	▼	▼	▼	▼
5. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/6} (Orientamento sessuale)	▼	▼	▼	▼
6. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/7} (Andamento scolastico)	▼	▼	▼	▼
7. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/8} (Aspetto fisico)	▼	▼	▼	▼
8. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/9} (Look/Modo di vestire)	▼	▼	▼	▼
9. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/10} (Cultura giovanile)	▼	▼	▼	▼
10. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/11} (Orientamento politico)	▼	▼	▼	▼
11. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/12} (Credo religioso)	▼	▼	▼	▼
12. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/13} (Musica)	▼	▼	▼	▼
13. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/14} (Sport)	▼	▼	▼	▼
14. ${q://QID54/ChoiceTextEntryValue/15} (Altra dimensione)	▼	▼	▼	▼

Etichette identitarie e contesti di vita (Parte 3) – Come gli altri condizionano il mio modo di essere

Molto spesso il nostro modo di essere e di comportarci è influenzato dai diversi contesti in cui viviamo. A volte, infatti, i condizionamenti esterni ci consentono di valorizzare alcune nostre qualità positive e più autentiche, altre volte, invece, ci costringono a reprimere tali caratteristiche o ad assumerne altre che sembrano non appartenerci.

Per ciascuno dei contesti di vita elencati a sinistra, indica se ti consente di essere te stesso o senti che ti costringe a "forzare" il senso della tua identità, trascinandolo in uno dei tre box a destra: "Contesti di vita che influenzano positivamente il tuo modo di essere"; "Contesti di vita che influenzano negativamente il tuo modo di essere"; "Contesti di vita che non influenzano il tuo modo di essere".

Elementi

1. **Famiglia**
2. **Scuola/Università**
3. **Quartiere**
4. **Gruppo di amici**
5. **Luoghi di tempo libero**
6. **Luoghi di religione**
7. **Relazioni sentimentali**

Contesti di vita che influenzano positivamente il tuo modo di essere	Contesti di vita che influenzano negativamente il tuo modo di essere
Contesti di vita che non influenzano il tuo modo di essere	

---

48. C'è qualche aspetto della tua identità in particolare che senti non riconosciuto dagli altri?

○ Sì

○ No

48a. Quale?

48b. Maggiormente da chi non viene riconosciuto?

49. Cambieresti qualche aspetto della tua identità?

○ Sì, cambierei ... (elenca gli aspetti che cambieresti)

○ Non cambierei nessun aspetto

50. Riporta brevemente uno o più eventi che ritieni siano stati fondamentali nel renderti la persona che sei oggi:

Evento 1

Evento 2

Evento 3

Evento 4

51. C'è qualche aspetto della tua identità che cerchi di tenere nascosto agli altri?

○ Sì

○ No

51a. Quale?

51b. Maggiormente in quale contesto in particolare cerchi di nasconderlo?

A QUESTO PUNTO IL PIÚ È FATTO. RESTANO SOLTANTO TRE PAGINE ANCORA...

Self Perception Profile for Adolescent – Come sono io

Per ogni riga successiva troverai due affermazioni che descrivono due tipi di ragazzi (uno a destra e uno a sinistra). Non ci sono risposte giuste o sbagliate poiché tutti i ragazzi sono molto diversi gli uni dagli altri, perciò potrai liberamente scegliere una tra le affermazioni che troverai elencate.

Leggi attentamente entrambe le affermazioni, scegli a quale dei due tipi pensi di somigliare di più (*quello a destra o quello a sinistra*) e poi segna se questo è *in parte vero per te* o *proprio vero per te.*

E' possibile segnare una sola X per ogni riga, come nell'esempio.

	Proprio vero per me	In parte vero per me	MENTRE	In parte vero per me	Proprio vero per me	
ESEMPIO: Ad alcuni ragazzi piace andare al cinema nel tempo libero	○	◉		○	○	Ad altri piace andare a vedere una gara sportiva o una partita

TIPO 1	Proprio vero per me	In parte vero per me	MENTRE	In parte vero per me	Proprio vero per me	TIPO 2
	○	○		○	○	
1. Alcuni ragazzi pensano di essere intelligenti quanto i loro coetanei	○	○		○	○	Altri ragazzi non ne sono sicuri e si chiedono se sono intelligenti come i loro coetanei
2. Per alcuni ragazzi è difficile fare amicizia	○	○		○	○	Per altri ragazzi è abbastanza facile fare amicizia
3. Alcuni ragazzi riescono bene in ogni tipo di sport	○	○		○	○	Altri ragazzi non si sentono bravi nello sport
4. Alcuni ragazzi non sono contenti del proprio aspetto	○	○		○	○	Altri ragazzi sono contenti del proprio aspetto
5. Alcuni ragazzi pensano di essere in grado di svolgere un lavoro part-time	○	○		○	○	Altri ragazzi non si sentono ancora pronti per svolgere un lavoro part-time
6. Alcuni ragazzi se sono attratti da qualcuno pensano di potere essere ricambiati	○	○		○	○	Altri ragazzi quando sono attratti da qualcuno temono di non essere ricambiati
7. Alcuni ragazzi abitualmente si comportano come dovrebbero	○	○		○	○	Altri ragazzi spesso non si comportano come dovrebbero
8. Alcuni ragazzi sono capaci di farsi dei veri amici	○	○		○	○	Per altri ragazzi è difficile farsi dei veri amici
9. Alcuni ragazzi spesso sono insoddisfatti di sé	○	○		○	○	Altri ragazzi sono abbastanza soddisfatti di se stessi
10. Alcuni ragazzi sono piuttosto lenti nel completare i compiti scolastici	○	○		○	○	Altri ragazzi riescono a completare i compiti velocemente
11. Alcuni ragazzi hanno molti amici	○	○		○	○	Atri ragazzi non hanno molti amici
12. Alcuni ragazzi pensano di riuscire bene quando intraprendono una attività	○	○		○	○	Altri ragazzi non sono sicuri di riuscire bene in una attività sportiva

sportiva nuova					nuova
13. Alcuni ragazzi vorrebbero avere un corpo diverso	○	○	○	○	Ad altri ragazzi piace il proprio corpo così com'è
14. Alcuni ragazzi pensano di non essere capaci di svolgere bene un lavoro	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi pensano di avere sufficienti abilità per fare bene un lavoro
15. Alcuni ragazzi non escono con la persona da cui si sentono molto attratti	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi escono con la persona da cui si sentono molto attratti
16. Alcuni ragazzi si mettono spesso nei guai col loro comportamento	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi di solito non fanno cose che li mettono nei guai
17. Alcuni ragazzi hanno un vero amico a cui confidare i propri segreti	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi non hanno un vero amico a cui confidare i propri segreti
18. Ad alcuni ragazzi non piace il proprio stile di vita	○	○	○	○	Ad altri ragazzi piace il proprio stile di vita
19. Alcuni ragazzi hanno buoni risultati a scuola	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi non hanno buoni risultati a scuola
20. Per alcuni ragazzi è difficile piacere agli altri	○	○	○	○	Per altri ragazzi è facile piacere agli altri
21. Alcuni ragazzi pensano di essere più bravi dei loro coetanei nelle attività sportive	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi pensano di non essere bravi come i loro coetanei nelle attività sportive
22. Alcuni ragazzi vorrebbero avere un aspetto fisico diverso	○	○	○	○	Ad altri ragazzi piace il proprio aspetto fisico così com'è
23. Alcuni ragazzi pensano di avere l'età giusta per trovare un lavoro retribuito	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi non pensano di essere abbastanza grandi per avere un lavoro retribuito
24. Alcuni ragazzi pensano di suscitare interesse sentimentale nei loro coetanei	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi sono preoccupati di non suscitare interesse sentimentale nei coetanei
25. Alcuni ragazzi sono soddisfatti del proprio modo di comportarsi	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi non sempre sono soddisfatti del proprio modo di comportarsi
26. Alcuni ragazzi vorrebbero avere un vero amico con cui condividere i propri interessi	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi hanno un vero amico con cui condividere i propri interessi
27. Alcuni ragazzi sono quasi sempre contenti di sé	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi spesso non sono contenti di sé
28. Alcuni ragazzi hanno difficoltà a rispondere bene alle interrogazioni scolastiche	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi quasi sempre rispondono bene alle interrogazioni scolastiche
29. Alcuni ragazzi sono popolari tra i coetanei	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi non sono molto popolari
30. Alcuni ragazzi non riescono bene nei giochi all'aperto che non hanno mai provato	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi riescono subito bene nei nuovi giochi all'aperto
31. Alcuni ragazzi si sentono belli	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi pensano di non essere belli
32. Alcuni ragazzi pensano che potrebbero svolgere meglio il lavoro che fanno	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi pensano che stanno svolgendo al meglio il loro lavoro
33. Alcuni ragazzi si sentono divertenti e affascinanti quando escono con qualcuno	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi si chiedono come fare per essere divertenti e affascinanti quando escono con qualcuno
34. Alcuni ragazzi fanno cose che sanno che non dovrebbero fare	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi quasi mai fanno cose che sanno che non dovrebbero fare
35. Per alcuni ragazzi è difficile avere amici di cui potersi davvero fidare	○	○	○	○	Altri ragazzi riescono a trovare amici di cui potersi davvero fidare

	Fortemente in disaccordo	2	3	4	Fortemente in accordo	
36. Ad alcuni ragazzi piace il proprio modo di essere	○	○	○	○		Altri ragazzi vorrebbero spesso essere come qualcun altro
37. Alcuni ragazzi si sentono abbastanza intelligenti	○	○	○	○		Altri ragazzi si chiedono se sono abbastanza intelligenti
38. Alcuni ragazzi si sentono accettati dai propri coetanei	○	○	○	○		Altri ragazzi vorrebbero sentirsi maggiormente accettati dai propri coetanei
39. Alcuni ragazzi non si sentono molto atletici	○	○	○	○		Altri ragazzi si sentono molto atletici
40. Alcuni ragazzi sono completamente soddisfatti della propria immagine	○	○	○	○		Altri ragazzi vorrebbero cambiare la propria immagine
41. Alcuni ragazzi pensano di essere in grado di sostenere l'impegno di un lavoro retribuito	○	○	○	○		Altri ragazzi si chiedono se sono in grado di sostenere l'impegno di un lavoro retribuito
42. Alcuni ragazzi di solito non escono con la persona con cui veramente vorrebbero uscire	○	○	○	○		Altri ragazzi di solito escono con la persona con cui vorrebbero uscire
43. Alcuni ragazzi abitualmente si comportano nel modo in cui ci si aspetta da loro	○	○	○	○		Altri ragazzi spesso non si comportano nel modo in cui ci si aspetta da loro
44. Alcuni ragazzi non hanno un amico così intimo da potere condividere i propri pensieri	○	○	○	○		Altri ragazzi hanno un amico così intimo da potere condividere pensieri ed emozioni
45. Alcuni ragazzi sono davvero felici di essere come sono	○	○	○	○		Altri ragazzi vorrebbero essere diversi

Questionario sulle relazioni familiari (FACES-IV)

Descrivi la tua famiglia, indicando quanto sei d'accordo con le seguenti affermazioni. Ti preghiamo di rispondere utilizzando la seguente scala.

Fortemente in disaccordo	Abbastanza in disaccordo	Non so	Abbastanza in accordo	Fortemente in accordo
1	2	3	4	5

	Fortemente in disaccordo	2	3	4	Fortemente in accordo
1. Ogni membro della famiglia è coinvolto nella vita degli altri	○	○	○	○	○
2. Ci sentiamo più legati a persone esterne alla famiglia che ai nostri familiari	○	○	○	○	○
3. Trascorriamo troppo tempo insieme	○	○	○	○	○
4. Nella nostra famiglia sembra che non ci riusciamo mai ad organizzare	○	○	○	○	○
5. Ci si sente molto uniti gli uni agli altri	○	○	○	○	○
6. I membri della famiglia sembrano evitare il contatto gli uni con gli altri quando sono a casa	○	○	○	○	○
7. I membri della famiglia si sentono costretti a passare insieme quanto più tempo libero possibile	○	○	○	○	○
	Fortemente				

	in disaccordo	2	3	4	Fortemente in accordo
8. E' difficile dire chi sia il capo nella nostra famiglia.	○	○	○	○	○
9. Ci si chiede aiuto l'un l'altro durante i momenti difficili.	○	○	○	○	○
10. I membri della famiglia sanno molto poco delle amicizie degli altri familiari	○	○	○	○	○
11. I membri della famiglia sono troppo dipendenti gli uni dagli altri	○	○	○	○	○
12. Nella nostra famiglia le cose non vengono mai portate a termine	○	○	○	○	○
13. In famiglia ognuno si consulta con gli altri quando si devono prendere decisioni importanti	○	○	○	○	○
14. Nella nostra famiglia ognuno risolve i suoi problemi da solo	○	○	○	○	○

	Fortemente in disaccordo	2	3	4	Fortemente in accordo
15. I membri della famiglia hanno poco bisogno di trovarsi amici fuori dalla cerchia familiare	○	○	○	○	○
16. Non è chiaro chi sia il responsabile delle cose (faccende, attività) nella nostra famiglia	○	○	○	○	○
17. Ai membri della famiglia fa piacere trascorrere un po' del loro tempo libero insieme	○	○	○	○	○
18. Nella nostra famiglia raramente si fanno cose tutti insieme	○	○	○	○	○
19. Ci sentiamo troppo legati l'uno all'altro	○	○	○	○	○
20. Nella nostra famiglia non c'è un capo	○	○	○	○	○
21. Sebbene ciascun membro della famiglia abbia i propri interessi partecipa comunque alle attività della famiglia	○	○	○	○	○

	Fortemente in disaccordo	2	3	4	Fortemente in accordo
22. Raramente i membri della famiglia dipendono l'uno dall'altro	○	○	○	○	○
23. Ci sentiamo offesi quando qualche membro della famiglia fa cose fuori dalla famiglia	○	○	○	○	○
24. Nella nostra famiglia è difficile tenere il conto di chi svolge le diverse faccende di casa	○	○	○	○	○
25. La nostra famiglia ha un buon equilibrio fra vicinanza e distanza	○	○	○	○	○
26. I membri della famiglia agiscono soprattutto in autonomia	○	○	○	○	○
27. In famiglia ci si sente in colpa se si vuole passare del tempo lontano dalla famiglia	○	○	○	○	○
28. La nostra famiglia appare caotica e disorganizzata	○	○	○	○	○

Block 4

Questionario sulle capacità e sulle difficoltà (SDQ-Ita)

Per ciascuna domanda metti un crocetta su una delle tre caselle: Non vero, Parzialmente vero, Assolutamente vero. Sarebbe utile che rispondessi a tutte le domande nel migliore dei modi possibile, anche se non sei completamente sicuro o la domanda ti sembra un po' sciocca! Devi rispondere sulla base della tua esperienza negli ultimi sei mesi.

	Non vero	Parzialmente vero	Assolutamente vero
1. Cerco di essere gentile verso gli altri; sono rispettoso dei loro sentimenti	○	○	○
2. Sono agitato(a), non riesco a stare fermo per molto tempo	○	○	○
3. Soffro spesso mal di testa, mal di stomaco o nausea	○	○	○
4. Condivido volentieri con gli altri le mie cose	○	○	○
5. Spesso ho delle crisi di collera o sono di cattivo umore	○	○	○
6. Sono piuttosto solitario, tendo a giocare da solo	○	○	○
7. Generalmente sono obbediente e faccio quello che mi è stato detto	○	○	○
	Non vero	Parzialmente vero	Assolutamente vero
8. Ho molte preoccupazioni	○	○	○
9. Sono di aiuto se qualcuno si fa male, è arrabbiato o malato	○	○	○
10. Sono costantemente in movimento; spesso mi sento a disagio	○	○	○
11. Ho almeno un buon amico o una buona amica	○	○	○
12. Spesso litigo. Costringo gli altri a fare quello che voglio	○	○	○
13. Sono spesso infelice o triste; piango facilmente	○	○	○
14. Generalmente sono ben accettato(a) dalle persone della mia età	○	○	○
	Non vero	Parzialmente vero	Assolutamente vero
15. Sono facilmente distratto(a); trovo difficile concentrarmi	○	○	○
16. Le situazioni nuove mi rendono nervoso(a), mi sento poco sicuro di me stesso	○	○	○
17. Sono gentile con i ragazzi più giovani di me	○	○	○
18. Sono spesso accusato(a) di essere un bugiardo o un(a) ingannatore(trice)	○	○	○
19. Sono preso(a) di mira e preso(a) in giro dai miei coetanei	○	○	○
20. Sono spesso volontario per aiutare gli altri (genitori, insegnanti, compagni)	○	○	○
21. Penso prima di fare qualcosa	○	○	○
	Non vero	Parzialmente vero	Assolutamente vero
22. Ho rubato degli oggetti che non mi appartenevano da casa, da scuola o dagli altri posti	○	○	○
23. Ho migliori rapporti con gli adulti che con le persone della mia età	○	○	○
24. Ho molte paure, mi spavento facilmente	○	○	○

25. Sono in grado di finire ciò che mi viene chiesto; rimango concentrato(a) per tutto il tempo necessario	○	○	○

COMPLIMENTI!

Questa era l'ultima sezione del questionario. Se sei sicuro di aver risposto a tutte le domande, clicca su "Vai alla pagina successiva". Se, invece, hai intenzione di terminare la compilazione in un altro momento, chiudi semplicemente la finestra in cui stai lavorando: una volta che avrai cliccato "Vai alla pagina successiva", non sarà più possibile recuperare le risposte già date.

Block 9

Hai avuto accesso al questionario tramite la piattaforma Mechanical Turk di Amazon?

○ Si

○ No

Block 6

Siamo spiacenti, ma per poter partecipare alla ricerca è necessario che tu esprima il tuo esplicito consenso.

Block 8