IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEXT

An Integrated Approach in Understanding Aspects of Ethnicity and Gender

Fanny Gyberg

UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEXT

An Integrated Approach in Understanding Aspects of Ethnicity and Gender

Degree of Licentiate in Psychology
Department of Psychology
University of Gothenburg
December 8, 2016

Printing: Repro Lorensberg
Gothenburg, Sweden, 2016
ISSN 1101-718X Avhandling/Göteborgs universitet, Psykologiska inst.
ISRN GU/PSYK/AVH--348--SE

“To be is to do” — Socrates
“To do is to be” — Jean-Paul Sartre
“Do be do be do” — Frank Sinatra

From Deadeye Dick by Kurt Vonnegut

ABSTRACT

Gyberg, F. (2016). *Identity development in context: An integrated approach in understanding aspects of ethnicity and gender*. Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

The overall aim of this thesis was to investigate identity from different perspectives and at different ages in Sweden. Specifically, in **Study I**, the aim was to explore what types of ethnicity-related experiences were prevalent and whether these types of experiences differed depending on immigrant status, self-identified ethnicity, or age group. Using a narrative approach, 95 participants (87% women, 66% immigrants, 57% emerging adults, 43% adolescents, M_{age} = 19.62) shared their ethnicity-related experiences. Through thematic analysis, we found that most of the stories were about feelings of not fitting in, regardless of age, ethnicity, or immigrant status. The aim of **Study II** was to investigate gender differences in identity status globally and across domains as well as to investigate potential differences in social comparison between identity statuses. The results indicated that most of the 124 young adults (50% women, M_{age} 33.29 years) had made identity-defining commitments, and gender differences in identity status were found in the occupational and parenthood domains. In addition, differences in social comparison orientation were only found in the parenthood domain, with those assigned to moratorium scoring higher in social comparison than did those assigned to foreclosure or diffusion. In sum, this thesis emphasizes the complexity of identity as well as the importance of integrating different identity theories and approaches in order to better understand the processes and content that constitute identity.

Keywords: identity, ethnic identity, identity status, adolescence, emerging adulthood, young adulthood, gender, social comparison.

Fanny Gyberg, Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg, Box 500, 405 30 Gothenburg, Phone: +46 31 786 1638, E-mail: fanny.gyberg@psy.gu.se

SAMMANFATTNING (Swedish Summary)

Vem är du? Svaret på den frågan belyser olika aspekter av din identitet. Det kan vara vem du är i din yrkesroll, vem du är som partner, vem du är som förälder och vem du är i relation till din etniska tillhörighet. Allt detta och mer därtill gör att du är du och jag är jag. De områden i livet som är viktiga för vår identitet varierar mellan oss och skiljer sig åt under olika faser i livet. Det finns flera olika sätt att närma sig och förstå begreppet identitet, liksom det finns olika sätt att måla av ett landskap – där en konstnär fokuserar på himlens färgskiftningar och en annan på haren som skuttar över fälten. Ändå porträtterar de båda konstnärerna samma landskap. I denna licentiatuppsats är det övergripande syftet att studera identitet på olika sätt, inom olika områden och under olika faser i livet för att på så vis få en ökad förståelse för några av de aspekter som ryms i svaret på frågan: *Vem är du?*

I **Studie I** användes ett narrativt tillvägagångssätt för att förstå individers etniska identitet, det vill säga den del av identiteten som är kopplad till unga människors etniska tillhörighet. I ett narrativt tillvägagångssätt står individers personliga berättelser i fokus. Synsättet inom detta perspektiv kännetecknas av att identiteten formas och ges mening genom de berättelser vi skapar om oss själva, vår omvärld och våra erfarenheter. Syftet med Studie I var således att undersöka vilka typer av erfarenheter relaterade till etnicitet som unga hade och om dessa erfarenheter skilde sig åt beroende på åldersgrupp (tonåringar och unga vuxna), etnisk tillhörighet (svensk, annan än svensk, svensk och annan än svensk) och invandrarbakgrund (minst en förälder född utanför Sverige eller inte). Gymnasieelever och universitetsstudenter fick skriftligen beskriva erfarenheter då de känt att deras syn på sig själva (deras berättelse) skiljt sig från vad som ansetts normalt, förväntat eller accepterat. Av de 437 berättelser som samlades in handlade 95

(22%) av dem om erfarenheter kopplade till etnicitet. Vi fann att berättelser om etnicitet var vanligare hos kvinnor med invandrarbakgrund än hos andra. När vi undersökte deltagarnas berättelser om erfarenheter kopplade till etnicitet så fann vi sex typer av berättelser. Den vanligaste typen av berättelse var om *diskriminering och rasism* där erfarenheterna handlade om att utsättas för, eller se andra utsättas för, rasism, fördomar och diskriminering. Vanligt förekommande var också berättelser om *generella skillnader*, vilket oftast handlade om att se kulturella skillnader mellan sig själv och andra. Ytterligare ett tema var *att vara en annan sorts svensk*, där berättelserna handlade om att känna sig som svensk men inte bli sedd som svensk av andra, eller det motsatta, att bli sedd som svensk av andra men själv inte känna sig svensk. Ett annat tema var *distansering till kultur eller etnicitet*, där berättelserna handlade om att aktivt ta avstånd från aspekter kopplade till den etniska bakgrund individen helt eller delvis tillhörde. Vi fann även berättelser på temat *att vara mittemellan kulturer/etniska tillhörigheter*, där deltagarna berättade om att inte veta vilken etnisk tillhörighet de hade, där de upplevde det som att de befann sig i en gråzon eller ett ingenmansland. Ett ytterligare tema var *kulturella ideologier*, där deltagarna delade med sig av mer åsiktsbaserade berättelser om alla människors lika värde. Vi fann att det var vanligare att tonåringar skrev om *att vara en annan sorts svensk* än unga vuxna. Däremot så påverkade varken etnisk tillhörighet eller huruvida individerna hade en invandrarbakgrund vilken typ av berättelse de berättade. Sammantaget visar resultaten från denna studie att erfarenheterna dessa unga individer delade med sig av ofta handlade om att inte passa in i det svenska samhället på grund av sin etniska bakgrund. Att inte passa in kan skapa en känsla av utanförskap vilket i sin tur kan få psykologiska konsekvenser som påverkar identitetsskapandet negativt.

I **Studie II** var syftet att undersöka identitetsskapandet hos kvinnor och män i trettioårsåldern, både generellt och inom viktiga identitetsområden såsom yrke, relationer, föräldraskap och prioriteringar mellan yrke och familj. Ett sätt att förstå identitetsskapande är att undersöka i vilken grad människor utforskar och tar ställning till frågor som är viktiga för deras identitet. Med andra ord, hur individer tar sig an frågan *Vem är du?* Genom att studera individers grad av utforskande och ställningstagande så är det också möjligt att se vilken typ av identitetsskapande, vilken identitetsstatus, de har. Det finns fyra olika typer av identitetsstatus: ställningstagande efter att ha utforskat olika alternativ viktiga för identiteten (uppnådd identitet), ställningstagande utan att ha utforskat olika alternativ viktiga för identiteten (för tidig identitet), aktivt utforskande av olika alternativ viktiga för identiteten utan att ha tagit ställning (moratorium) och frånvarande eller vagt ställningstagande och utforskande av frågor viktiga för identiteten (diffus identitet). I Studie II undersökte vi således hur vanliga de olika identitetsstatusarna var bland 62 kvinnor och 62 män i trettioårsåldern samt om det fanns några könskillnader i identitetsstatus både generellt och inom olika identitetsområden. Vi undersökte också om det fanns något samband mellan vilken identitetstatus deltagarna hade och hur mycket de jämförde sig med andra människor, så kallad social jämförelse. Deltagarna intervjuades om viktiga identitetsområden och fick svara på enkätfrågor om social jämförelse. Resultaten visade att majoriteten av deltagarna hade utforskat och tagit ställning till viktiga identitetsfrågor både generellt och inom specifika identitetsområden. Resultaten visade också att det fanns könsskillnader inom vissa identitetsområden. Vi fann att fler kvinnor än män hade utforskat innan de tagit ställning till frågor rörande yrke och föräldraskap. När det kom till relationen mellan identitetsstatus och i vilken utsträckning deltagarna jämförde sig med andra så fann vi få samband. Det enda samband vi fann mellan identitetsstatus och social jämförelse var inom området föräldraskap.

Mer specifikt fann vi att de som aktivt utforskade frågor om föräldraskap jämförde sig mer med andra än de som inte hade utforskat dessa frågor. Sammantaget visar fynden från Studie II att identitetsskapandet kan se olika ut för kvinnor och män inom olika identitetsområden och att människors jämförelse med andra överlag inte tycks vara beroende av om de har utforskat eller tagit ställning till viktiga identitetsfrågor.

Sammantaget belyser denna licentiatuppsats vikten av att studera identitet på flera olika sätt, inom olika identitetsområden och under olika faser av livet. Genom att integrera teorier och metoder kan vi få en ökad förståelse för aspekter som ryms i svaret på frågan: *Vem är du?*

PREFACE

This licentiate thesis is based on a summary of the following two papers, referred to in the text by their roman numerals.

I. Gyberg, F., Frisén, A., Syed, M., Wängqvist, M., & Svensson, Y. (in press). "Another kind of Swede": Swedish Youth's Ethnic Identity Narratives. *Emerging Adulthood*.

II. Gyberg, F., & Frisén, A. (2016). *Identity status, gender, and social comparison among young adults*. Manuscript in preparation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

"*Who am I?*" The question starting off this thesis. For me, I would not be the person, the daughter, the lover, the friend, the student, or the researcher that I am today without all the incredible people I am fortunate to have in my life. For that, I am eternally grateful. You see, no woman is an island, nor can a thesis be written by one hand solely.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor **Ann Frisén** for your invaluable guidance and for making it possible for me to follow my longtime dream of studying identity. I also want to thank my second supervisor, **Moin Syed**, for always encouraging me to think bigger and wider. I am very fortunate to have you both as my supervisors! In addition, I want to acknowledge my examiner for my first two years, **Tomas Tjus**, and my current examiner **Inga Tidefors**. Thank you both for your interest in my work, your feedback, and for being there with your warmth and support. In addition, thanks to **Margreta Bohlin,** for your insightful comments reviewing this thesis. Also, thank you **Ann Backlund** for all your support and **Leif "Chili" Strömwall** for your help and encouragement, whether concerning methodological issues or issues of self-doubt.

Also, big thanks to all my **GReY** colleagues: **Sofia Berne**, **Johanna Carlsson**, **Py Liv Eriksson**, **Johan Melander Hagborg**, **Bo Helsing**, **Kristina Holmqvist Gattario**, **Philip Hwang**, **Therése Skoog**, and my co-authors on study I: **Ylva Svensson** and **Maria Wängqvist**. A special thanks to **Jonas Burén** for all the tea-breaks, **Johanna Kling** for being such a great friend, and **Carolina Lunde** for taking me under your wings from the get-go, you are a true inspiration!

To all my friends and colleagues, thank you for giving me the strength and motivation, I am forever grateful for all our conversations

whether being over a cup of coffee or a glass of wine. A special thanks to **Lisa "Kickass" Rudolfsson** for the love, the tears, and the laughter – I love smashing patriarchy with you! Thanks to **Kerstin "Friday animal" Adolfsson** for always having a positive take on things, and **Emelie "Crazy cat lady" Ernberg** for being the best partner in crime, always. Thanks to **Elin Alfredsson**, **Elisabeth Punzi**, and **Jenny Rangmar**, you have become dear friends I value greatly. **Radosveta Dimitrova**, thank you for being such a supporting colleague and friend, reminding me that there is a larger world out there. Thank you **Sara Ingevaldson** for being my life raft through this process, it has meant the world to me having you by my side. Also, many thanks to my friends on the outside, especially **Nina Engelbrektsson**, **Baharan Kazemi**, and **Anita Tarverdi**, although I have not always been there – you have.

Thanks to all the kids and leaders in **Passalen** for keeping me grounded and giving me perspective on what is important in life. Spending the weekends with you has given me the strength and energy to move forward. Also, I would like to express my gratitude to all the participants in the two studies for so generously sharing your stories.

Finally, my largest thank you goes out to my crazy, wonderful, mildly psychotic, warm, loving, and highly dysfunctional family, for whom without, I never would have turned to the field of psychology to begin with. A special thanks to you **Mamma**, for constantly encouraging me and your endless interest and support in whatever I choose to do. ILY! Finally, **Jakob**, if I could put all the cheesy love songs together in one sentence, I would. There are no words describing what you have meant for me during this process other than that my love for you is like two red lobsters.

Fanny Gyberg

November, 2016

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

> For, indeed, in the social jungle of human existence, there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity.
>
> Erik H. Erikson

Identity is integral to our lives as human beings. In fact, few aspects of our lives are as essential as is the sense of an identity, as emphasized in the above quotation by Erikson (1968). Stemming from the Latin word *idem*, which means being the same, identity may be defined as the notion of being the same—in the past, present, and future (Erikson, 1968). Identity therefore concerns the conception of remaining the same while being different from all other human beings in the universe. To summarize, identity is what constitutes the answer to the fundamental question "Who am I?"

Identity is thus something to which we all must relate, in one way or another, regardless of our own personal answer to the question "Who am I?" Identity may be seen both as a whole, a global concept, and the combination of our identities in the various identity-defining areas of life, for example, who we are in relation to our ethnic group, at work, as partners, and as parents. Identity is a developmental process that comes to the foreground in adolescence and continues throughout the lifespan in which the importance of identity domains, such as occupation, romantic relationships, parenthood, and the balance between these, varies between ages (Marcia, 1993, 2001). It is therefore crucial to study identity in different areas of life and at different ages in order to better understand the concept (Schwartz, Luyckx, & Crocetti, 2015).

This thesis includes two studies of identity. Specifically, in study I, ethnic identity is examined by investigating ethnicity-related experiences narrated by adolescents and emerging adults, with and without an immigrant background. In study II, identity status in different identity domains among young adults is examined through investigating gender differences. The relationship between identity status and social comparison is also studied.

In the first section of this thesis, the concept of identity will be investigated from various perspectives followed by a section on identity in different periods of life, setting the stage for the two appended papers. The emphasis is on Erikson's *theory of identity development* (Erikson, 1968), integrating aspects from both *narrative identity theory* (McAdams, 1993, 2001) and *social identity theory* (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) in adolescence, emerging adulthood, and young adulthood. Moreover, as identity is created in the interplay between the internal and external worlds and may be viewed as reflecting the larger cultural environment (Azmitia, 2015; Erikson, 1968), the Swedish cultural context will then be addressed. The succeeding section concerns various identity-defining areas that are important to the age groups included in the two studies, ethnic identity being allocated a separate section, followed by a section about the concept of social comparison and its relationship with identity. Lastly, the two studies are summarized, followed by a general discussion of their results and of the studies' strengths, limitations, and implications for future research.

UNDERSTANDING IDENTITY

> What kind of mental models do you have in your head when you think about identity? A map with clear boundaries or the British coastal line of varying scale? In practice, both map types work.
>
> Thomas Hylland Eriksen

Identity is a universal aspect of life, and several theories and schools of thought address what forms and constitutes it. As the quotation above indicates (Hylland Eriksen, 2004), identity can be mapped in various ways. Three identity theories are treated in this thesis. First, Erikson's theory of identity is described, which is the main theory used in both appended studies, followed by narrative identity theory, which is addressed in study I, and finally social identity theory, which reoccurs in both studies.

Erikson's Theory of Identity Development

The most common identity theory used in developmental psychology, and the primary theory that informs this thesis, is Erikson's theory of identity development (Erikson, 1950, 1956, 1968). According to Erikson, identity formation is a lifelong process taking place at the intersection of the self and one's social context (Erikson, 1956, 1968). More specifically, in what is called the psychosocial perspective, Erikson postulated that identity has three dimensions; biological, psychological, and social, all of which influence the formation and development of an identity (Kroger, 2007).

Furthermore, Erikson (1950, 1968) developed a model of psychosocial development over the lifespan comprising eight stages, each with important developmental tasks to be resolved in order to obtain

psychological resources. Figure 1 shows all eight stages together with their main tasks. Although formulated as comprising stages, Erikson's psychosocial model should not be interpreted as steps in a hierarchical staircase; each stage should instead be regarded as continuing throughout the lifespan with new stages adding on as building blocks (Kroger, 2007).

This thesis focuses on the task of identity versus role confusion, which arises as a pronounced issue in adolescence and continues to be important throughout adulthood (Kroger, 2007). The following stages and key tasks (i.e., intimacy versus isolation and generativity versus stagnation) in Erikson's psychosocial model (Figure 1) have been described as "flavors", adding to the process of identity development (Kroger, 2015). The different aspects of identity across adolescence, emerging adulthood, and young adulthood will be discussed further later in this thesis.

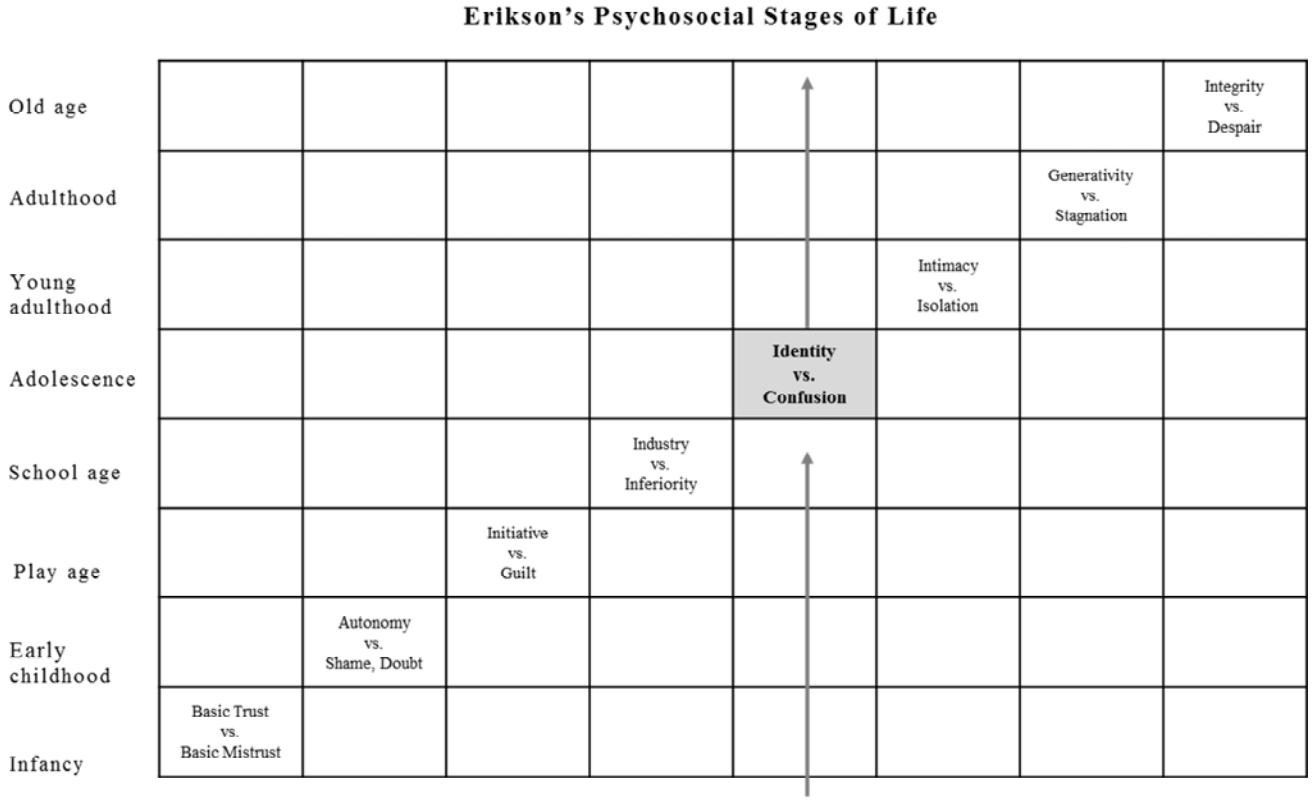

Figure 1. Erikson's psychosocial model of development.

The Identity Status Model

To conceptualize Erikson's theory of identity formation, Marcia (1966) developed a model based on the degree of identity exploration and identity commitment (see Figure 2). Identity exploration may be understood as the process by which the individual actively explores identity-defining alternatives with the aim of reaching a decision (Kroger & Marcia, 2011; Marcia, 1966). Identity commitment, on the other hand, concerns making decisions with regard to identity-defining issues (Kroger & Marcia, 2011; Marcia, 1966). From these processes of exploration and commitment, four identity-formation positions were formulated by Marcia (1966): identity achievement (commitment after exploration), identity foreclosure (commitment without exploration), moratorium (continuing active exploration without commitment), and identity diffusion (absent/vague) exploration and no commitment).

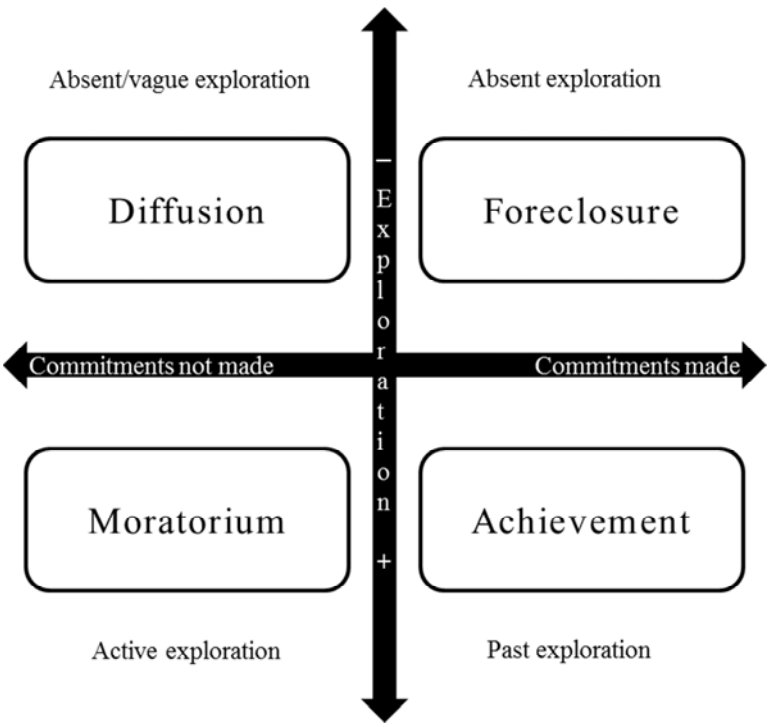

Figure 2. Marcia's identity status model.

Identity achievement. People in identity achievement are characterized as having made identity-defining commitments after a time of exploration (Kroger & Marcia, 2011; Marcia et al., 1993). These people have been described as hard to persuade yet flexible in the decisions they have made concerning identity-related issues (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). Also, a pronounced feature of people in identity achievement is a high level of moral reasoning (Jespersen, Kroger, & Martinussen, 2013; Marcia et al., 1993), and an internal locus of control (Lillevoll, Kroger, & Martinussen, 2013; Marcia et al., 1993).

Identity foreclosure. People in foreclosure characteristically have made commitments without exploring possible alternative values or goals (Marcia et al., 1993). People in foreclosure are therefore often considered as having an ascribed rather than a constructed identity (Kroger, 2015). Generally, people in foreclosure are not as flexible as are people in identity achievement; instead, they hold on to their commitments and have less autonomy (Kroger & Marcia, 2011; Marcia et al., 1993). In addition, people in identity foreclosure have been described to have an external locus of control (Lillevoll, Kroger, & Martinussen, 2013; Marcia et al., 1993), as well as scoring higher on authoritarianism than the other identity statuses (Marcia et al., 1993; Ryeng, Kroger, & Martinussen, 2013).

Moratorium. Moratorium is described as the identity position of active exploration without making any commitments (Marcia et al., 1993). People in moratorium accordingly experiment with various alternative roles, values, and goals with the aim of making identity-defining commitments (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). People in moratorium are in the midst of what Erikson (1968) called an identity crisis, although this crisis may be more or less intense (e.g., Arnett, 1999). In addition, people in moratorium are characterized by being very engaged, sometimes intensely so in their exploration of identity-defining alternatives (Marcia et al., 1993).

Identity diffusion. This final identity position was originally described by Marcia (1966) as characterizing those who have not explored nor made any commitments. Subsequent research has found that identity diffusion varies in style and that people may engage in what has been described as a weak form of exploration (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). Characteristically, people in identity diffusion often lack an internal sense of self-definition and are without any clear direction in life (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). People in identity diffusion have been found to either be carefree individuals going with the flow (e.g., Schwartz et al., 2011) or more troubled individuals without a clear sense of purpose (Kroger & Marcia, 2011).

The Theory of Narrative Identity

Another way to understand the various aspects of identity and to bring meaning to the concept is to study personal narratives (McAdams, 2001; McAdams & McLean, 2013). McAdams' *life story model* (1993, 2001) is based on Erikson's theory of identity and claims that identity is formed through the construction of stories. McAdams (2011) suggest that the story might be the best way for people to organize their lives in time. In the narrated self, people therefore attribute meaning to events to make sense of themselves and their lived experiences in the past, present, and imagined future (McAdams, 1993). These life stories are internalized and evolve over the lifespan providing individuals with temporal continuity, unity, and a sense of purpose (McAdams, 1993). Lastly, whereas research into Erikson's identity theory has tended to focus on processes, narrative identity research concentrates on the in-depth content of identity—the stories we construct about ourselves and our surroundings.

Social Identity Theory

One of the most important identity theories from a sociocultural perspective is social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Primarily, social identity theory provides a means of understanding intergroup behavior and is considered the first theory to conceptualize identity at a group level (Spears, 2011). Social identity theory may be understood as addressing the part of people's identities derived from the social group to which they consider themselves to belong (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). According to Tajfel and Turner (1979), it is not enough for others to consider a person part of a group to create a sense of social identity; instead, group membership needs to be internalized within the person's sense of self. Social identity theory further posits that people favorably compare the groups to which they belong (i.e., in-groups) to other relevant groups (i.e., out-groups) to create value and positively distinguish their group from others (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Ultimately, this quest for distinctiveness, as Spears (2011) puts it, conveys information on who we are. Lastly, Spears (2011) also emphasizes that the original idea of social identity was not that it should be seen as more important than other forms of identity, but that it should be seen as an aspect of identity that may be more or less salient depending on the context.

Limitations of the Different Identity Theories

Clearly, each of these perspectives on identity has characteristic strengths and weaknesses. Although the psychosocial perspective positions itself as combining nature and nurture, it is sometimes criticized for primarily concerning itself with individual processes and psychological growth theorized as universal developmental stages (e.g., Arnett, 2015), not taking cultural context, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, or gender into account (Lalander & Johansson, 2007). However, few other theories have been able

to capture identity processes at an individual level over time, as has been done in the Eriksonian field of identity (Kroger & Marcia, 2011).

Although identity researchers increasingly acknowledge the value of studying narrative identity (e.g., Arnett, 2015; Kroger, 2015; Syed & McLean, 2015), the approach has certain acknowledged limitations. The narrative perspective arguably has difficulties capturing general processes of identity (Kroger, 2007). Furthermore, the narrative approach has been criticized for being unable to capture isolated personality features as it conceives of the identity as an integrated whole (Kroger, 2007). However, the narrative approach is able to capture the actual content of what constitutes identity (Syed & McLean, 2015).

As for the sociocultural perspective on identity, used mostly by social psychologists, it has been criticized for primarily emphasizing social processes and interpersonal relationships, not taking inner processes or the subjective meaning of identity into account (e.g., Huddy, 2001; Kroger, 2007). However, the sociocultural approach takes context into account to a much greater extent than does the psychosocial approach (Kroger, 2007).

In conclusion, these abovementioned limitations may best be addressed by approaching identity from a variety of perspectives and using multiple methods, something that has also been called for in the literature (e.g., Syed & McLean, 2015). The following section will accordingly address the importance of taking an integrated approach to identity.

Integrating Identity Theories

At first glance, some of the various theories of identity may seem to contradict each other, when it instead is a matter of seeing identity from different perspectives. For example, a developmental psychologist may tend to zoom in on the internal psychological processes of identity, whereas a social psychologist may zoom out, seeing the external social processes of

identity. None of these perspectives is necessarily better than another; they are simply different ways of understanding and mapping the concept of identity. Applying an integrated approach to identity is beneficial as it helps us better understand the different components and complexity inherent in the concept of identity (Côté, 2015; Schwartz et al., 2015; Syed & McLean, 2015).

In this thesis, identity is investigated mainly from an Eriksonian standpoint. However, theories and concepts integrating other identity perspectives are brought in as well. In study I, ethnic identity is studied, which combines Eriksonian identity theory with social identity theory, using a narrative approach stemming from narrative identity theory. In study II, social identity theory is brought into the Eriksonian approach through the theory of social comparison.

Bringing identity concepts, such as social identity theory, from social psychology into the Eriksonian field of identity arguably could provide several important insights into the field of identity (Côté, 2015). This brings out the social aspect in Erikson's psychosocial approach, which has been somewhat neglected in prior research (Syed & McLean, 2015). Syed and McLean (2015) argue that it is important to acknowledge the social aspect of identity, as identity always develops in a social context. In addition, as Eriksonian identity research has traditionally concentrated on process, the narrative approach adopted in study I yields important insight into the content of identity. Syed and McLean (2015) emphasize that narrative content provides a better understanding of identity processes, giving insight into what constitutes identity.

IDENTITY AND DEVELOPMENTAL PHASES

> I don't believe in aging. I believe in forever altering one's aspect to the sun.
>
> Virginia Woolf

Unsurprisingly, research on identity from a developmental perspective mostly applies an Eriksonian identity perspective. Although resolving identity versus role confusion is an essential developmental task of adolescence, Erikson (1980) emphasized that identity formation continues into adulthood, which has been supported in previous research (see, e.g., Kroger, Martinussen, & Marcia, 2010 for a meta-analysis). It is also important to bear in mind that Erikson treated the developmental stages rather fluidly, as he seldom specified any particular age limits for the separate developmental phases (Syed & McLean, 2015). Given the prolonged duration of youth in today's society (Côté & Allahar, 1994; Syed & McLean, 2015), with, for example, leaving home, becoming established in the labor market, and starting a family occurring much later than it did fifty years ago, what Erikson meant by adolescence would in today's terminology often encompass adolescence, emerging adulthood, and even young adulthood.

When investigating the developmental aspects of identity, the various phases of life can be approached in different ways. The age spans of each developmental phase are not universal and individual and cultural differences may affect the specific age at which one enters a new phase. The constituent studies of this thesis used Arnett's (2000, 2012) suggested age spans, adolescence being proposed to occur largely between 10 and 18 years of age, emerging adulthood between 18 and 29, and young adulthood between 30

and the early forties. In the following section, the developmental phases will be presented as ranging along a continuum rather than defined by discrete age groups, highlighting the aspects that may be particularly important to each developmental phase. As Woolf's (Bell, 1982) comment implies, aging represents a continuum of altering one's orientation to life, to other people, and to oneself.

Identity from Adolescence, through Emerging Adulthood, and into Young Adulthood

Despite being a lifelong developmental process, identity formation often comes to the foreground in adolescence due to biological and social changes (Erikson, 1968). The onset of puberty accompanied with bodily changes forces adolescents to reevaluate and question the continuity of their sense of self (Erikson, 1968). These individual and societal changes occur together with adolescents' starting to seek identifications other than from their parents: peer relationships start to become more important, which has been theorized to put greater emphasis on identity formation (Erikson, 1968, 1980). According to McAdams (1993, 2001), the narrated identity, meaning the stories we construct about ourselves, also begins to take form in late adolescence, as growing cognitive skill enables individuals to reflect on past, present, and future events.

Adolescence is a time when individuals start to have both the space and the ability to explore who they are as individuals and who they are in relation to other people (Erikson, 1950, 1968). Furthermore, adolescence is a period when the individual's sense of self is integrated with the social milieu and the group with which he or she identifies (Cross & Cross, 2008). The developmental task of identity versus confusion (Figure 1) formulated by Erikson (1968) is resolved by successfully integrating different aspects of the identity. Integrating the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of

identity is particularly important in adolescence (Phinney, 1993), whereas integrating multiple areas of identity becomes especially important moving into emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000; Azmitia, Syed, & Radmacher, 2008).

Emerging adulthood has been described as the period between adolescence and young adulthood (Arnett, 2012). What is particularly pronounced in emerging adulthood is that it is a time when instability, possibilities, self-focus, feeling "in-between," and identity exploration are emphasized (Arnett, 2000). Instability refers to the fact that most emerging adults finish school during this time and need to sort out whether or not they should continue with their studies, start working, or travel around the world. In addition, this is a time when many move away from their parents, so living arrangement are often unstable as well. In this period, there are multiple choices in multiple areas that emerging adults need to explore and commit to, which is what Arnett (2000) means by saying that emerging adulthood is a time of possibilities. Also, the feeling of being in-between is typical of this period of life, which lies between adolescence and adulthood, meaning that one feels like neither a child nor an adult (Arnett, 2000). Thus, emerging adulthood is seen as a time of continued identity development marked by exploration of future goals and directions in life (Arnett, 2000, 2006).

However, this time of possibilities arguably may prolong identity moratorium, with possible negative psychological consequences (Côté & Allahar, 1994). It has been argued that, alongside the rapid changes in today's society, experiences have become more individualized among young people, each of whom is responsible for his or her fate (Bauman, 2001; Côté & Allahar, 1994; Furlong & Cartmel, 2007; Giddens, 1991). In this individualized society, youth must reflexively alter their identities to adapt to their changing experiences, creating heightening feelings of risk and insecurity (Bauman, 2001; Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1991). Consequently, this

heightened sense of risk may have a negative impact on both the content and process of individual identity formation (Motti-Stefanidi, 2015).

Moving into young adulthood, individuals often face new experiences and changing life circumstances that may challenge their sense of identity (Kroger, 2015). For example, according to Statistics Sweden (SCB), many people start a family in their thirties (SCB, 2015a) after having established themselves in the labor market (SCB, 2015b), and during these years some have begun to advance in their careers. These new life experiences also need to be further integrated into the self-concept (Kroger, 2015; Syed & McLean, 2015), meaning that the narrated identity also evolves with these new experiences (McAdams & Zapata-Gietl, 2015). In sum, young adulthood is a time in life when people start putting the decisions they made in their twenties, concerning, for example, love and work, into practice.

THE SWEDISH CULTURAL CONTEXT

> Every age, every culture, every custom and tradition has its own character, its own weakness and its own strength, its beauties and cruelties …
>
> Hermann Hesse

At the beginning of this thesis, it was described how identity can be seen as reflecting the larger cultural context in which it is positioned, because all cultures have their own characters as Hesse (1927/1975) observed. It is therefore important to understand the cultural context of Sweden, as it is the backdrop of the identity studies included in this thesis. The norms and values of a particular cultural context will likely affect how identity issues are dealt with, as identity is formed in interaction between the internal and the external worlds (Erikson, 1968; McAdams, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The following briefly describes cultural values, aspects of gender, and ethnicity in Sweden to highlight the contextual features important for the two studies included in this thesis.

Cultural Values

Sweden stands out, according to the World Value Survey (WVS, 2015), which measures aspects of culture in 100 countries worldwide. As shown in Figure 3, people in Sweden have been found to have the highest self-expression values and the second highest secular-rational values relative to people in other countries (WVS, 2015). Self-expression values refer to prioritizing environmental protection, participation in decision-making concerning economics and politics, and values of equality regarding gender, sexuality, and ethnicity. Secular-rational values refer to placing less

importance on religion, family values, and authority. As the values and beliefs of a society are likely to be integrated into the personal identity (Hammack, 2008, 2011; McAdams & Zapata-Gietl, 2015), these cultural values may thus affect how identity is expressed in the Swedish context.

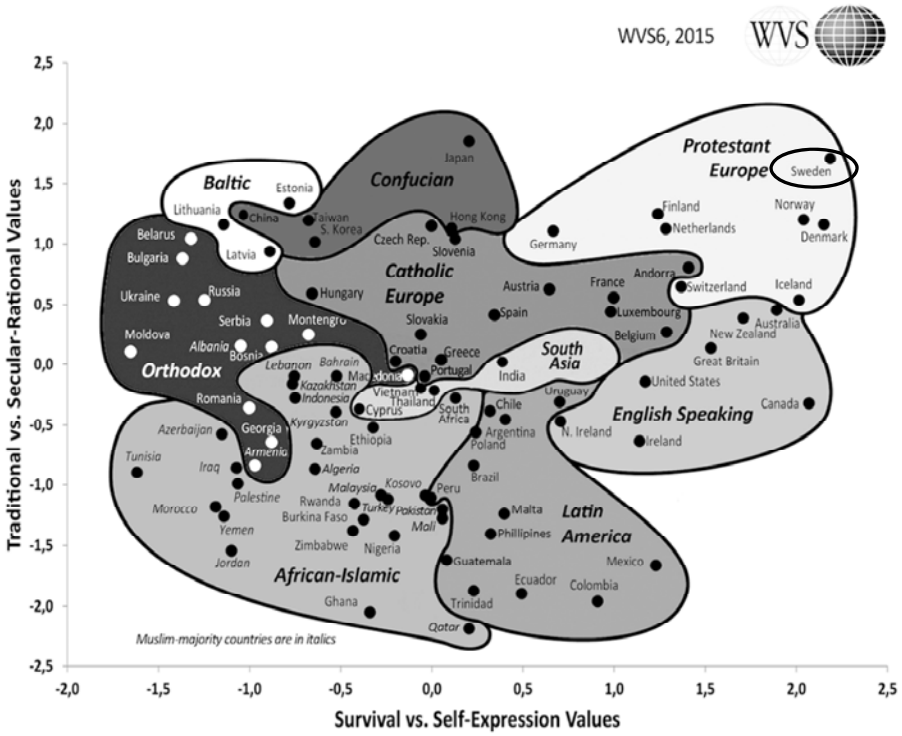

Figure 3. Inglehart-Welzel cultural map.

Gender Values

Sweden is often referred to as one of the most gender-equal countries in the world (European Institute of Gender Equality, 2015; World Economic Forum, 2015). Compared with other countries such as the UK, the USA, and Australia, Swedes conform less to traditional gender role norms (Stavrova, Fetchenhauer, & Schlösser, 2012), though this may be more of an ideological preference than a reflection of values in everyday life (Towns, 2002). In other

words, the ideological norms of gender equality in Sweden are reflected in the many policies and laws in favor of living lives as gender-equally as possible. For example, both parents are encouraged to take parental leave and are expected to share responsibilities concerning work and family (Johansson & Klinth, 2008; Sommestad, 1997). In practice, however, Swedish mothers take more parental leave than do fathers, even though most fathers do take some parental leave (SCB, 2016a). More specifically, women take 78% of parental leave days and men take only 22% (SCB, 2016a).

Gender role norms in a society, like the cultural values mentioned above, are also likely to be internalized and integrated into individual identity (Fivush & Zaman, 2015). It is therefore particularly interesting to study gender differences and similarities in the Swedish cultural context. The norm of gender equality may make gender differences less obvious in the Swedish context, as it offers more arenas for exploration for both women and men. However, the historical shift towards gender equality may have primarily affected women (England, 2010). It is women who have received greater room for exploration when it comes to occupations, for example, and although men have the opportunity to take parental leave, it is still women who in fact take the most parental leave and have the largest responsibility for caring for children (Björnberg, 2002; SCB, 2016a). Taking gender into account when studying identity, regardless of the approach, may thus shed further light on similarities and differences in identity between women and men, as is one of the aims of study II.

Ethnicity

Another important aspect of cultural context is ethnicity (Worrell, 2015). Sweden is a country that has increasingly diversified in the last several decades, where approximately one out of six citizens is born outside of Sweden (SCB, 2016b). In Sweden, approximately 29% of the population

comes from immigrant families, meaning that at least one of the parents is born outside of Sweden (SCB, 2015c). Historically, Sweden has had multiple waves of immigration, from European countries and more recently from countries outside Europe (Berry, Westin, Virta, Vedder, Rooney, & Sang, 2006). As with the gender equality norm, Sweden has been ranked as the country with the most integration-promoting polices in the world (MIPEX, 2011). For example, rather than being forced to learn only the official national language, as is customary in many other countries that stress the importance of assimilation, immigrant children in Sweden are often provided with school resources to maintain their heritage language while also learning Swedish and English (Ferrer-Wreder, Trost, Lorente, & Mansoory, 2012). However, political discussions increasingly emphasize monocultural ideals expressed using nationalist rhetoric (Hellström & Nilsson, 2010), and Sweden has been referred to as endorsing cultural assimilation (SOU, 2005). Thus, it may be that although Sweden has many integration-promoting policies, they may not be experienced in everyday life by many young people with immigrant backgrounds.

Ethnicity has been widely studied from a social identity perspective, as ethnicity often is a salient group identity among people. In addition, research combining the Eriksonian perspective on identity and social identity theory has increasingly explored what has been called ethnic identity (Phinney, 2000). Ethnic identity will accordingly be more thoroughly described later in this thesis (see p. 24), as it is the main concept investigated in study I.

IDENTITY-DEFINING AREAS

> I have parents and occupation. I have family, children, interests. My self must be in the combination of all this.
>
> Sven-Eric Liedman

As Erikson postulated in his theory of identity, life includes several identity-defining areas, as highlighted by the above quotation (Liedman, 1999). Although often viewed as a global construct, identity is also suggested to be reflected in various areas of life, also called identity domains (Marcia, 1966; Goossens, 2001). Several advantages of studying identity domains have been highlighted (e.g., Goossens, 2001). For example, by studying identity domains separately, differences may be captured that otherwise might not be obvious when studying global identity, such as different trajectories for women and men across different identity domains (Archer, 1989; Fadjukoff, Pulkkinen, & Kokko, 2005).

Erikson (1968) theorized that the occupational and ideological domains were the most important ones, whereas Marcia (1966) separated the ideological domain into the political and religious domains. Later, Grotevant, Thorbecke, and Meyer (1982) added the interpersonal domains of friendship, dating, and sex roles. The salience of different areas for individuals generally depends on what is important for the particular age group and cultural context involved (Marcia, 2001; Marcia et al., 1993). Previous studies have demonstrated that in Sweden, important life domains are occupation, romantic relationships, parenthood, and work/family priorities (e.g., Frisén & Wängqvist, 2011).

The following is a brief overview of the domains addressed in study II: occupational, romantic relationships, parenthood, and work/family priorities. Ethnic identity, the domain investigated in study I, will be discussed separately in the next section.

Occupation

Occupation starts to become important in adolescence, when 10% of young adolescents (aged 13–15 years) in Sweden work at least once a month to earn extra money (SCB, 2015d). According to Statistics Sweden (SCB, 2015b), the employment rate increases from 44% at ages 15–24 to 85% at ages 25–34 years. The occupational context is clearly an issue that becomes more important during the progression towards adulthood, as most young people need to face issues of, for example, desired occupation, finding employment, and building a career (Erikson, 1980; Kroger, 2007).

Romantic Relationships

For many individuals, romantic relationships begin to be important in adolescence, continuing on through emerging adulthood and into young adulthood (Collin, Welsh, & Furman, 2009; Meier & Allen, 2009). On their way towards adulthood, people become more intimate in their romantic relationships (Erikson, 1980; Kroger, 2007), and it has been suggested that the exploration of romantic relationships is a particularly important developmental task in emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). In Sweden, many young people have experiences of romantic relationships (Frisén & Wängqvist, 2011), indicating that romantic relationships may be a salient identity-defining domain for many young Swedes.

Parenthood

Parenthood can become a salient domain during young adulthood, as many people choose to start a family at this time (Erikson, 1980; Kroger, 2007). In Sweden, the mean age of entering parenthood is 29.1 years for women and 31.5 years for men (SCB, 2015a). Many Swedes cohabit and start families without being married (Björnberg, 2001), as most young people do not see marriage as important in itself, viewing it as primarily symbolic (Wängqvist, Carlsson, van der Lee, & Frisén, 2016). Moreover, it has been demonstrated that becoming a parent is a strong norm in Sweden, although many emerging adults want to postpone having children (Frisén, Carlsson, & Wängqvist, 2014). Although many Swedes do not become parents until reaching young adulthood, parenthood is an issue most people need to deal with and reflect on earlier.

Work/Family Priorities

As occupation, romantic relationships, and parenthood are important identity-defining domains for many young people, the balance between them (i.e., work/family priorities), are likely to constitute an issue that is salient and needs to be dealt with in everyday life. Furthermore, identity in the work/family priorities domain is likely to be influenced by the dual-breadwinner norm in Swedish society, in which women and men, as discussed earlier, are expected to equally share work and family responsibilities (Johansson & Klinth, 2008; Sommestad, 1997). Still, no prior study has investigated identity in the work/family priorities domain at an age when these issues are likely to be particularly pronounced. Therefore, this is one of the aims of study II.

ETHNIC IDENTITY

so, here you are
too foreign for home
too foreign for here.
never enough for both.

Ijeoma Umebinyuo

Building on both Erikson's theory of identity and social identity theory, the concept of ethnic identity has been suggested to be "based on a universal need to define oneself in one's context" (Phinney, 2000, p. 30). Ethnic identity may be described as the degree to which individuals identify themselves in relation to beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors associated with their ethnic group or groups (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). The formation of ethnic identity may be explained as people's exploration of their own ethnicity, of the meaning, expectations, and knowledge that ethnicity brings to their understanding of themselves (Phinney, 1990).

Furthermore, ethnic identity may become especially pronounced for young people with immigrant backgrounds as they are more likely to experience contrasting beliefs and attitudes from different cultures that they need to integrate into their self-concept (Phinney, Ong, & Madden, 2000). This is portrayed in the poem above, called "Diaspora blues" (Umebinyuo, 2015), which highlights the issue many immigrants face in having to navigate between two or more worlds (García Coll & Marks, 2012; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014).

Ethnic Identity in Adolescence, Emerging Adulthood, and Young Adulthood

From a developmental perspective, adolescence is a period when an understanding of shared (or unshared) experiences of ethnic identity becomes especially pronounced (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). Moving into emerging adulthood and later young adulthood, ethnic identity content may become more complex as it may have to be integrated into other parts of life as the contexts often change and the social setting expands (Syed, 2010; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). Establishing a sense of ethnic identity is thus an important developmental task during adolescence and emerging adulthood (Phinney, 2006; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). Moreover, possessing an integrated ethnic identity, that is, feeling part of both one's ethnic group and of larger society, has been linked to several positive outcomes, such as positive psychological functioning and well-being (Quintana, 2007; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014; Smith & Silva, 2011).

Ethnic identity is formed not only through an in-group understanding of one's ethnicity but also through lived experiences in a broader societal context, which are integrated into the self-concept (Phinney & Ong, 2007; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). Ethnic identity therefore concerns both interpersonal aspects and intergroup relationships, and depends greatly on cultural context (Syed, 2015; Worrell, 2015).

Ethnic Identity in Sweden

We know very little about the development of ethnic identity in the Swedish cultural context as little research has been conducted (Ferrer-Wreder et al., 2012). There are, however, a few studies from the International Comparative Study of Ethnocultural Youth (ICSEY), comparing 13 countries around the world (including Sweden). These studies demonstrate that ethnic identity is related to more positive outcomes among Swedish youths than in the other

studied countries (e.g., Vedder & Virta, 2005; Virta, Sam, & Westin, 2004). However, we still know little about the content of ethnic identity in Sweden, that is, the lived experiences, as there only have been a few sociological studies that have examined ethnic identity narratives in Sweden (i.e., Johansson & Olofsson, 2011; Wikström, 2007; Wigg, 2008).

The only studies, to my knowledge, of the content of ethnic identity in Sweden have found that people with an immigrant background struggle to fit in and adapt to Swedish society. Wikström (2007) interviewed parents and young adults from seven Iranian families in Sweden, identifying three types of experiences connected to their ethnic identity: experiences of distancing to the Iranian heritage, experiences of being both Swedish and Iranian, and experiences of being neither. In a study by Wigg (2008), interviews with eight emerging adults, all but one from the former Yugoslavia, demonstrated that experiences of being an immigrant in Sweden included elements of both being part of a community and being an outsider. The main themes identified in these interviews were *having an outsider identity* and *having a torn identity*. The third study, by Johansson and Olofsson (2011), was a case study of four young individuals with an immigrant background. The main conclusion of Johansson and Olofsson (2011) was that the study participants tried to adapt to expectations of "Swedishness." These three studies, which suggest areas for future research, are all based on sociological theories of identity. Also, these studies do not take differences in experience due to age, immigrant status, or self-identified ethnicity into account. We therefore need to further explore these findings from a psychological identity perspective, investigating ethnicity-related experiences among Swedish youth and how these experiences might vary by age and among individuals with various ethnic backgrounds. This is the aim of study I.

SOCIAL COMPARISON AND IDENTITY

> The counterplayers of the "selves" are the "others", with which the "I" compares the "selves" continually—for better and for worse.
>
> Erik H. Erikson

Originally formulated by Festinger (1954), social comparison theory aims to explain how and why people compare themselves with others. Fetsinger claimed that the drive to compare oneself to similar others is inherent in all humans as a means to evaluate how one stands in life regarding opinions and abilities in various areas of life, the more important the area, the stronger the need for social comparison (Festinger, 1954). Postulated as essential to human social life, social comparison has been found to be associated with multiple factors related to various self-concepts, such as neuroticism, openness, narcissism, low self-esteem, and uncertainty about the self (e.g., Buunk & Gibbons, 2007). Moreover, according to social identity theory, it is partly through social comparison that a sense of the self as an individual is formed (Spears, 2012; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

The link between social comparison and Eriksonian identity theory is not tenuous, given that social comparison concerns "our quest to know ourselves, about the search for self-relevant information and how people gain self-knowledge and discover reality about themselves" (Mettee & Smith, 1977, pp. 69–70). In fact, Erikson (1968) wrote about the importance of social comparison for identity formation, as illustrated by the opening quotation of this section. As Erikson's (1968) idea was that identity was

created through interaction between the inner and outer worlds, one such interaction is likely the process of comparing oneself with other people.

Social comparison has primarily been studied in the sociocultural research field where, as previously mentioned, it is considered an important part of social identity (e.g., Spears, 2011; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Although Erikson wrote about the importance of social comparison for identity formation, research linking social comparison and identity status is scarce. To address this lack, study II investigates the relationship between social comparison and identity status globally and across domains.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDIES

The overall aim of the two studies in this thesis was to investigate different aspects of identity in different periods of life among young people in Sweden. More specifically, study I investigated ethnic identity content through a narrative approach and study II investigated gender differences in identity status among young adults and the relation between identity status and social comparison.

Study I

Aim. The purpose of study I was to investigate the types of ethnicity-related experiences prevalent in the lives of adolescents and emerging adults in Sweden and whether these types of experiences differed depending on immigrant status, self-identified ethnicity, or age group.

Participants and procedure. The aim of the study was addressed through conducting a narrative study of adolescents and emerging adults, using both qualitative and quantitative data analyses. The sample was drawn from the larger study Gothenburg Research on Ethnicity-related Experiences and identity Narratives (GREEN), which recruited 437 adolescents and emerging adults from upper secondary schools and universities in western and southern Sweden. The current study was based on a sub-sample of 95 participants (22%) who wrote narratives about ethnicity-related experiences (87% women, 66% with immigrant backgrounds, 57% emerging adults, 43% adolescents, M_{age} = 19.62). These 95 individuals included more individuals with an immigrant background than without, and more women with an immigrant background than individuals with other combinations of gender and immigrant status.

Measures. Participants completed questionnaires in which they reported their age, gender, self-identified ethnicity, as well as birth country for both themselves and their parents. Using a narrative prompt (Alpert, Marsden, Szymanowski, & Lilgendahl, 2014), where the participants were asked to write a story and be as detailed as possible. The prompt begins with a brief text explaining that life may be viewed as a story and that we all have our own personal stories based on our experiences that may differ from what others expect. This is followed by a question worded as follows: "Have you ever felt that your story diverged from what was considered to be normal, expected, or accepted – by family, peers, society etc.?". Corresponding with the aim of the study, we chose to further investigate the narratives concerning ethnicity.

Data analysis. In the qualitative part of the study, we sought to capture the participants' own voices about their ethnicity-related experiences. This was done using thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006) to identify both broad themes and more specific subthemes. Overall inter-rater percent agreement between two raters on 55 of the narratives was 86%, with an average kappa of .83. In the quantitative component, chi-square analyses and Fisher's exact test were used to assess the prevalence of these experiences and analyze whether any experiences were more common in specific age groups, self-identified ethnicities, or differences depending on immigrant status.

Main findings. We found that most of the reported experiences concerned feelings of not fitting in, where six themes were found (see Table 1). These themes included *experience of prejudice or racism*, *experience of general difference*, *experience of being another kind of Swede*, *experience of distancing to culture*, *experience of being in-between cultures or ethnicities*, and *experience of cultural ideologies*. Furthermore, the results indicated that

more adolescents than emerging adults wrote about the theme *experience of being another kind of Swede*.

Table 1. *Distribution and Descriptions of Ethnicity-Related Experiences among Participants.*

Experience theme	Total *n* (%)	Description
Experience of Prejudice or Racism	29 (31%)	Experience of prejudice, discrimination, or racism, or more elaborate thoughts on these issues.
Experience of General Difference	26 (27%)	Experience of being different or acknowledging others being different with regards to culture, nationality or appearance.
Experience of being 'Another Kind of Swede'	13 (14%)	Experience of identifying oneself as having a different ethnicity than is attributed by other people.
Experience of Distancing to Culture or Ethnicity	13 (14%)	Experience of distancing to or actively breaking norms connected to host culture or culture of family origin.
Experience of being In-between Cultures/Ethnicities	10 (10%)	Experience of not knowing which ethnicity to belong to.
Experience of Cultural Ideologies	4 (4%)	Experience on a more ideological level, not always personal experience, about all people having the same worth.

Conclusion. The themes identified in this study reflect complex and multicultural identities. The findings mirror issues of otherness and segregation that may play an important part in many young people's identity formation. The ethnicity-related experiences found in the present study were salient not just for immigrants or a specific age group (except for the *another kind of Swede* theme) but also for young people in Swedish society in general.

Study II

Aim. The aim of study II was to investigate identity status in young adulthood both globally and across central identity domains (i.e., occupational, romantic relationships, parenthood, and work/family priorities), and to determine whether there were any differences due to gender. Also, we wanted to investigate whether the degree of social comparison orientation differed between young adults assigned to different identity statuses.

Participants and procedure. This study was based on the tenth wave of data collection in the Gothenburg Longitudinal study of Development (GoLD) and includes 124 participants (50% women, M_{age} = 33.29) born in Gothenburg. At the time of data collection, 69% of the participants (n = 86) were working, 7% (n = 8) were on parental leave, 4% (n = 5) were unemployed or on sick leave, 3% (n = 4) were studying, and 17% (n = 21) were combining work, parental leave, sick leave, and studies. In addition, 83% of the participants (n = 103) were in a romantic relationship and 66% of the participants (n = 82) were expecting or had children. All of the participants were interviewed and given a questionnaire.

Measures. To assess identity status, the semi-structured Identity Status Interview was used (Marcia, 1966; Marcia et al., 1993). The identity domains explored, chosen for their importance during young adulthood, were: occupational, romantic relationships, parenthood, and family/work priorities. One example question is: "What do you think has influenced your choice of occupational career?" By assessing the individuals' exploration and commitment as evidenced in the answers, the participants were assigned to one of four identity status positions (i.e., achievement, foreclosure, moratorium, or diffusion, see p. 7 for a description). The inter-rater

agreement varied between 85% and 90% with a Cohen's kappa of between .70 and .89, both globally and across the domains.

To measure social comparison orientation, we used only the first six items of the Iowa–Netherlands Comparison Orientation Measure (INCOM; Gibbons & Buunk, 1999) due to space and time constraints. One example item of the scale is: "I always pay a lot of attention to how I do things compared with how others do things." In addition, the participants were asked about their background through a structured interview.

Data analysis. To investigate identity status in young adulthood, we explored the frequencies of individuals' assigned identity status both globally and across domains followed by chi-square analyses and Fisher's exact test in order to evaluate gender differences. To investigate the relationship between identity status and social comparison, we used a one-way ANOVA followed by the Hochberg post hoc test. In addition, due to small cell sizes, we also conducted the Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test.

Main findings. The results indicated that most participants were assigned to an achieved global identity status and had made commitments across domains. Gender differences in identity status were found in the occupational and parenthood domains, where women more often were assigned to identity achievement. Men, on the other hand, were more often assigned to identity foreclosure in the occupational domain and, although few, more men were assigned to identity diffusion in the parenthood domain. Generally, the identity statuses did not differ in the degree of social comparison orientation except in the parenthood domain, where those assigned to moratorium scored higher in social comparison orientation than did those assigned to foreclosure and diffusion.

Conclusion. The results indicate that, although there are more similarities than differences in identity status between young adult women and men, differences in identity status are present in some areas of life. What

can be concluded from the study is that the women in the study more often explored issues of occupation and parenthood before making identity-defining commitments. Our findings also suggest that social comparison may be particularly important for young adults actively exploring issues of parenthood. Taken together, these results bring important knowledge to our understanding of identity formation in young adulthood.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The aim of the two studies included in this thesis was to investigate various aspects of identity among young people in Sweden. Specifically, study I explored ethnic identity content among adolescents and emerging adults. More specifically, the aim in study I was to investigate the different types of ethnicity-related experiences of young individuals and whether these experiences differed depending on immigrant status, self-identified ethnicity, or age group. Study II investigated identity status globally and across central domains among young adults. In addition, we investigated gender differences in identity status and whether and how social comparison orientation was related to identity status. The results of these two studies are further discussed below, followed by a discussion of the strengths and benefits of using an integrated perspective when studying identity. Intersectionality, methodological and ethical considerations are subsequently discussed, before the conclusions of this thesis are finally drawn.

For Whom is Ethnic Identity a Salient Domain?

In study I, we found that ethnicity-related experiences may be important and pressing for many young people in Sweden, as 22% chose to write about such experiences when asked an open question encouraging them to narrate what separated them from what was expected or accepted by others or society. Unsurprisingly, it was mostly individuals with an immigrant background who wrote about ethnicity-related experiences. This result corresponds to previous findings suggesting that ethnic identity may be especially important for those belonging to a minority group (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). It has been suggested that ethnicity may become a pronounced issue when people face contrasting beliefs and attitudes from different cultures (Phinney et al., 2000).

Hence, although we all have an ethnicity, it may not be an important part of the identity for everyone.

Furthermore, study I demonstrated that it was common for women with an immigrant background to share ethnicity-related experiences. This could be explained by theories of intersectionality (see, e.g., Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1991), which posit that having two or more subordinate group identities tends to make ethnicity-related experiences even more pronounced. However, other group identities, such as social class or belonging to a specific ethnic group, may be important for the salience of ethnic identity. It is possible that ethnic identity, for example, may be more pronounced for a working-class woman of African background than for a middle-class man of European background, as she would belong to several subordinate group identities. Intersectionality in relation to both studies will be discussed in more detail later on in this thesis.

Ethnic Identity Content

The content of ethnic identity was investigated in study I by analyzing ethnicity-related experiences among Swedish adolescents and emerging adults. Most of the participants' stories were about various types of awareness of difference, with stories about not fitting in being common. The feeling of not fitting in may make it harder to achieve an integrated ethnic identity. Having an integrated ethnic identity, meaning feeling part of both one's ethnic group and of larger society, is important, as it has been linked to several positive outcomes, such as positive psychological functioning and well-being (Quintana, 2007; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014; Smith & Silva, 2011).

One of the most surprising findings of study I was that most participants' stories were about negative experiences. In light of the notion that Sweden has the most integration-promoting policies in the world (MIPEX, 2011), we expected more positive stories of connectedness and

being proud of one's heritage, as has previously been found among young Americans (see Syed & Azmitia, 2008, 2010). Our findings may, however, reflect recent public debate in Sweden about immigration, in which nationalistic voices are increasingly heard, trying to define what is or is not "Swedish enough." Moreover, compared with the USA, Sweden lacks a strong tradition of publicly celebrating diverse cultural heritages, for example, through cultural events and organizations, and ethnicity and culture may not be frequently discussed in the media. All of these differences may afford fewer opportunities for youth in Sweden, than for US youth, to have positive experiences in which they connect to their ethnic background.

In the following, the results of the thematic analysis will be discussed theme by theme.

Experience of prejudice or racism. *Experience of prejudice or racism*, was the most common theme identified, and stories of discrimination have also been found in research from the USA (Syed, 2015). Discrimination and racism are serious problems with several negative psychological consequences for the individual exposed to them (Pascoe & Smart Richman, 2009). However, it has been found that group identification serves as a protective factor for the possible negative health effects associated with perceived discrimination (Pascoe & Smart Richman, 2009). Nevertheless, it may be that many young people in Sweden lack such protective group identifications, as most of the stories identified were about not fitting in. Future research is required in order to confirm this observation.

Experience of general difference. The second most common theme, *experience of general difference*, has also been found to be common in previous research in the USA (Syed & Azmitia, 2008, 2010). Noticing that one differs from others in terms of, for example, culture and appearance often occurs when changing contexts, meeting new people (Syed & Azmitia, 2008), and broadening one's peer group, as is often the case during both

adolescence and emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2004; Kroger, 2007). In addition, as Sweden has historically had waves of immigration, mostly from Europe and more recently from other parts of the world (Berry et al., 2006), awareness of differences, especially with regard to culture, may be more common among young people attuned to Sweden's increasingly heterogeneous society.

Experience of being another kind of Swede. Another common theme was the *experience of being another kind of Swede*. This theme was about identifying oneself as Swedish but not being seen as Swedish by other people, or the other way around, where the person was seen as Swedish but did not identify as such. The prevalence of this theme may be due to the normative expectation in Swedish society about being *Swedish enough*, as has been pointed out by Johansson and Olofsson (2011). As many stories featured the role of appearance, not looking Swedish enough according to the norms and standards of society, such experiences may become especially prevalent for second- and third-generation of immigrants. One may wonder if this theme is more prevalent among second- and third-generation of immigrants who are born in Sweden but still seen as immigrants by many due to, for example, the color of their skin?

Experience of distancing to culture or ethnicity. Furthermore, we identified stories about distancing to culture or ethnicity, including stories about actively breaking norms or rules of one's family or culture. It has been suggested that such distancing is a way of guarding against being the marginalized and stigmatized immigrant, by attempting to fit the norm of being a Swede (Johansson & Olofsson, 2011; Wikström, 2007). This distancing may also be an effect of assimilation norms in Swedish society and of increasingly negative attitudes towards immigration and immigrants.

Experience of being in-between cultures or ethnicities. In the narratives about *experience of being in-between cultures or ethnicities*, the

participants often expressed feelings of being stuck in a grey area or "no-man's land." In a country such as Sweden, where one is viewed either as a Swede or as an "immigrant" (Johansson & Olofsson, 2011), it may be even more difficult to feel at home in only one of these categorizations. Being both an immigrant and a Swede may create ambivalence between these identifications, which both renegotiate and reinforce the duality of being an immigrant and a Swede simultaneously (Wikström, 2007). The experience of being a minority in a new and unfamiliar culture can make ethnicity a more salient aspect of identity, and raise questions about having to navigate between "two worlds" (García Coll & Marks, 2012; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). It has been suggested that youth with an immigrant background are especially prone to feeling this type of "in-betweenness," which may affect their identity formation due to difficulties with ethnic identity integration (Sam & Berry, 2010).

Experience of cultural ideologies. The least frequent theme, although still present, was *experience of cultural ideologies*, which concerned stories about all human beings having the same worth regardless of ethnicity. The low prevalence of this theme was likely due to the narrative prompt, which specifically asked participants to share a *personal* experience, though this theme operates on a more ideological level. Still, that the theme was found at all may be attributable to current public debate about immigration in Sweden, which may have induced several participants to follow up on this issue.

Differences in Experiences due to Immigrant Status, Self-Identified Ethnicity, and Age

The results of study I indicated that none of the themes found was more common depending on immigrant status or self-identified ethnicity. However, it may be argued that our conceptualization of immigrant status as

that of having at least one parent born outside Sweden is far too simple. For example, the experience of integration in Swedish society could well be very different for a person born in Sweden, with one parent born in Sweden, compared with that of a person not born in Sweden or with both parents born in another country. Therefore, we also tested for this, but found no difference in the reported experiences. It may still be that ethnicity-related experiences differ depending on the specific ethnic group to which individuals belong. Nevertheless, the stories told by the participants were not always solely about the participants themselves, but could be about friends or family members, which could explain why we did not find any differences attributable to immigration status or self-identified ethnicity.

Similar non-significant results were found when comparing age groups, with one exception. For the theme *experience of being another kind of Swede*, more adolescents narrated this type of story than did emerging adults. This result could be interpreted from a developmental perspective in which adolescence is also a period with more pronounced role expectations than is emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2006). In other words, it may be more important for adolescents to label themselves as belonging to one specific ethnicity. Furthermore, it has been suggested that it is in adolescence that an understanding of shared (or unshared) experiences of ethnic identity become particularly relevant (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). However, most of the narratives captured by the themes seem to convey common ethnicity-related experiences among young people regardless of age.

Identity Status in Young Adulthood

Study II focused on identity status in young adulthood both globally and across important identity domains such as occupation, romantic relationships, parenthood, and work/family priorities. We wanted to know whether there

were any gender differences in identity status and whether or not social comparison was related to identity status.

The results showed that most young adults participating in the study had made identity-defining commitments when in their thirties, both globally and across domains. These findings add to the notion that most young adults either have an achieved or a foreclosed identity (Kroger et al., 2010), meaning that most people in their thirties have settled on decisions concerning work, family, and the balance between them. Globally, most participants were assigned to identity achievement, meaning that they had made identity-defining commitments after a time of exploration. Others had not explored different options to a large extent, and were assigned to identity foreclosure. Less frequent were participants being assigned to moratorium and identity diffusion, which is not surprising seeing that most people are expected to have made commitments by this time in life (e.g., Kroger, 2007; Kroger et al., 2010).

Identity Status and Gender

Identity status research has seldom found gender differences in global identity status. However, it has been pointed out that women and men may follow different trajectories across domains (Archer, 1989; Fadjukoff et al., 2005). This notion corresponds to our results, as we did not find any gender differences globally but found gender differences in identity status in two domains.

We found that more women than men were assigned to identity achievement in the occupational domain and that more men than women were assigned to identity foreclosure in this domain. In other words, more women were found to have made commitments after a time of exploration and that men had more often made commitments without exploring different options in the occupational domain. In addition, more women than men were

assigned to identity achievement in the parenthood domain, in which it also was found that more men were assigned to identity diffusion. However, as no woman and only a few men were assigned to identity diffusion in the parenthood domain, this limits the ability to draw firm conclusions. Still, this result corresponds to results from a prior wave with the same participants that did not have the same issues with low cell sizes (Frisén & Wängqvist, 2011).

These results should be seen in the light of the gender equality norm in the Swedish context and the fact that the participants in study II are the "children of the gender revolution," as Gerson (2010, p. 3) puts it. As the gender revolution has primarily affected women (England, 2010), it is in fact women who have obtained greater space for exploration, not men. For example, it was primarily women who were affected by the gender revolution regarding occupational possibilities, women having been encouraged to enter male-dominated jobs while men have not been encouraged to enter female-dominated jobs (England, 2010). Also, in the Swedish context, both women and men are expected to care for their families and to have careers (Johansson & Klinth, 2008; Sommestad, 1997). However, it still is primarily women who take parental leave and are the most responsible for caring for children (SCB, 2016a). Parenthood may therefore be a more pronounced issue for women to explore before they make commitments. The fact that only men—although only a few—were assigned to identity diffusion in the parenthood domain could indicate that parenthood is not a salient identity domain for some men, whereas women are expected to make some kind of commitment regarding this issue to a greater extent, a pressure that has been found in a previous study (Frisén, Carlson, & Wängqvist, 2014).

However, as research into identity status among people in their thirties from other cultures is so far lacking, it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions about these patterns. One could question whether these gender

differences would be the same in other cultural contexts with, for example, more traditional norms and values regarding gender role norms.

Social Comparison

When bringing social comparison theory to the identity status field, as was done in study II, we expected that people assigned to moratorium would compare themselves more with others than would those assigned to any of the other identity statuses, both globally and across domains. More specifically, we expected that the more one explores one's identity, the more one would also compare oneself with others, as social comparison is a process of evaluating where one stands in life in relation to others (Festinger, 1954). However, this assumption was not found, neither globally nor in most of the domains, with the exception of the parenthood domain. In the parenthood domain, the results indicated that people assigned to moratorium engaged in more comparison behavior than did people assigned to foreclosure or diffusion.

It is possible that although love and work are central domains, young adults may have had more experience in them than in the parenthood domain, meaning that, during their identity exploration, they do not need to compare themselves with others as much in those domains as in the parenthood domain. As the love and work domains might have been important for much longer, the need for comparison might not be as strong. Furthermore, as Erikson (1968, p. 87) has described the identity-formation process as a "persistent adolescent endeavor to define, overdefine, and redefine themselves and each other in often ruthless comparison," the process of social comparison might be especially important at younger ages when they have less experience in these domains. This question calls for future research, in order to fully understand the relationship between identity formation and social comparison across developmental phases.

The fact that it was in the parenthood domain that differences between identity statuses in social comparison orientation were found supports this suggestion. This also corresponds to Festinger's (1954) theory of social comparison, which states that the need for social comparison increases the more pronounced the domain. It may be that people use social comparison in their explorations towards making identity-defining commitments in areas that have new salience, as is the case in the parenthood domain. In the thirties, parenthood is something that does in fact have new salience for many, as most people have just started their families at this point in life (SCB, 2015a), which was also true for the participants in this study.

Integrating Identity Perspectives

Both the constituent studies of this thesis combined aspects from different identity theories. In study I, we investigated ethnic identity, a concept derived from both Erikson's (1968) identity theory and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). We conducted the study using a narrative approach, including narrative identity theory (McAdams, 1993, 2001) in the study design and in understanding the results of the study. In study II, we used Marcia's (1966) identity status model, derived from Erikson's identity theory, and also measured social comparison, which is an important aspect of social identity theory. Thus, this thesis can be said to have taken an integrated approach to identity, although its main focus is Eriksonian.

Although the present studies have added some important knowledge to the field of identity, several questions remain to be answered. Also, there are additional possible ways of integrating the various theories and concepts studied here. For example, one could employ the narrative approach when studying the relationship between social comparison and identity to more fully investigate the relationship between these two concepts. Another germane question concerns what narrative differences can be found in

different identity statuses depending on ethnicity, age, gender, and social class. Furthermore, perspectives on identity other than those studied here remain to be integrated.

As no researcher acting alone can fully uncover the processes and content that together constitute identity, we need to work together. Instead of pitting theories against each other, we need to see them as supplying different pieces of the puzzle of identity. As Côté (2015) argued, there is a need to be judgment free and open to other theories and ideas. We need an integrated approach to the complex concept that is identity, otherwise we will not succeed in moving forward. That is also what has been argued to be the future of identity research by many researchers in the field (Arnett, 2015; Kroger & Marcia, 2011; Schwartz et al., 2015; Syed & McLean, 2015). This thesis, and its constituent studies, adds several new pieces to the puzzle of identity research, in its attempt to integrate identity theories and to take cultural context into account.

Intersectionality

Before moving on to methodological and ethical considerations, there is a need to discuss the concept of intersectionality, especially since intersectionality relates to both methodological and ethical considerations in this thesis. In the introduction it was briefly explained how intersectionality is a framework that helps in understanding how different subordinate group identities may intersect with each other (e.g., Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1991). It is also important to acknowledge that belonging to two or more social groups cannot merely be added on in order to understand how different group identities intersect (Bowleg, 2008). Rather, it may be that the meaningful whole these group identifications create is the most identity-defining aspect for many individuals. For example, being an immigrant working class woman in Sweden may be more important for the identity than being a woman and

an immigrant, and working class. In other words, the combination of different group identities, how they intersect, may be more important for people's sense of who they are compared to studying them separately or using them in an additive way (Bowleg, 2008).

In this thesis, I have discussed how norms concerning ethnicity and gender may have an effect on people's identities, but neither study I nor study II in itself investigated how gender intersects with, for example, ethnicity or social class, in relation to people's identities. This is a limitation of both studies due to study design and sample size constraints, as our quantitative analyses relied on categorical grouping of data, which has been argued to have difficulties in capturing the complexity of intersectionality (Bowleg, 2008; McCall, 2005). Thus, future studies would benefit from incorporating an intersectional approach in order to capture the complexity in identity more fully. It has been suggested that the best way to succeed in incorporating such an approach is by, as previously been emphasized, integrating different perspectives and methods as this may reduce existing disciplinary boundaries (Bowleg, 2008; McCall, 2005).

Methodological Considerations

One major limitation of the present studies is that, as previously discussed, they contribute only a few new pieces to the puzzle. Each study has not fully integrated all discussed aspects of identity theory and concepts, such as bringing social comparison orientation into study I, or narrative identity into study II. Also, as both studies were cross-sectional, only a snapshot of identity formation was captured. Future studies would accordingly benefit from longitudinally investigating the identity aspects considered here, namely, ethnic identity, gender, and social comparison, in order to capture stability and change in both content and process over time. Further

limitations and methodological considerations concerning data collection, measures, and data analyses will be discussed below.

Data collection methods and measures. In study I, data were collected using a narrative prompt, which entails a few limitations. One concern is that it may not be representative to draw conclusions based on a single self-reported memory, as several surrounding factors may affect what memory comes to mind (Syed, 2015). However, the same concern applies to other methods of measuring psychological experiences. Also, using an open prompt, as was done in study I, permits a variety of interpretations and answers. For example, we could have asked directly about ethnicity-related experiences, which might have resulted in different types of narratives. Still, asking a broad question allowed us to investigate the individuals for whom ethnicity-related experiences were especially prominent. In addition, using a narrative approach has been suggested to allow people's own voices to be heard, which is difficult to do using scale measures (Syed, 2015). Identifying themes about differences when asking for narratives about what separates someone from what is expected may not be that surprising. Eliciting such themes by asking such a broad question encourages young people to reflect on themselves in relation to societal norms, allowing for qualitatively different experiences to be reported, as seen in the results of study I.

Another limitation of study I was that we were unable to control for differences across specific self-identified ethnicities or gender due to sample size constraints. It may be that individuals from a specific ethnic group are more at risk of being subjected to racism, while individuals from another ethnic group are more at risk of distancing themselves from their culture or ethnicity or origin, which could be an area for future research. In addition, categorizing immigrant status only in terms of "immigrants" and "non-immigrants" may reinforce the normative notion in Sweden that views people with diverse immigrant backgrounds as constituting one homogenous group.

We therefore tested an additional conceptualization of immigrant status, in which individuals without an immigrant background were grouped with those who had one parent born in Sweden and individuals who were either first- or second-generation of immigrants constituted another category. The results were the same. This may be because there is a strong emphasis on the concept of "immigrants" as an ascribed position contrasted to "Swedes" (e.g., Johansson & Olofsson, 2011; SOU, 2005), which is likely to be internalized in people's ethnic identity.

In study II, data on identity status were collected through interviews. Using interviews to establish identity status has been criticized for relying too much on people's verbal abilities (van Hoof, 1999). With the interview format come challenges of social desirability, and of responses being affected by the interviewer–respondent relationship (Bourne, 1978). However, both the interview and coding manuals were developed to minimize the risk of confounding variables (Marcia et al., 1993). In addition, all interviewers were thoroughly trained and inter-rater reliability was tested to ensure reliable coding. The advantages of the interview format outweigh the disadvantages in that it yields a large quantity of rich data that might have been lost using another data collection method.

Using a self-report measure of social comparison orientation, as was done in study II, limits our in-depth understanding of what constitutes the process of comparing oneself with others. We used only a short version of INCOM (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999) due to space and time constraints. It is therefore possible that we could not fully capture social comparison. Still, the short-version scale has been found to be a valid representation of the full scale (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). In addition, a narrative approach may have been more suitable for capturing the relationship between social comparisons and identity, as the status paradigm has been criticized for being too static and being unable to capture identity development after identity-defining

commitments have been made (McAdams & Zapata-Gietl, 2015). Therefore, analyzing qualitative data on the content of the identity–social comparison relationship could yield important knowledge of the types of comparisons used and those to whom people compare themselves. Future research would benefit from more thoroughly investigating the relationship between identity status and social comparison as well as from studying the relationship between social comparison and identity at different ages of life, as discussed earlier.

Data analyses. Concerning data analyses, certain limitations warrant discussion. First, both studies have major power issues due to sample size constraints that limit both the type of analyses that could be conducted as well as the generalizability of the results. The small cell sizes also prevented us from taking a more intersectional approach by adding, for example, gender to the analyses in study I and social class to the analyses in study II. Moreover, in study II, very few or no participants were assigned to moratorium or identity diffusion when investigating gender differences in identity status across domains, which makes it hard to draw firm conclusions. However, the small number of people assigned to moratorium or identity diffusion corresponds to the results of the few identity studies examining people in their thirties (Kroger et al., 2010), adding important knowledge of gender differences in identity status in this stage in life. In addition, there is a risk of type-II error in study II, in that the small cell sizes of the ANOVA might make it difficult to find effects due to issues of power. Although we performed non-parametric tests in study II, we could not test for interaction effects in the relationship between identity, gender, and social comparison, so effects may remain that we could not capture. Therefore, future research would benefit from using larger samples when investigating gender differences in identity status and the relationship between identity status and social comparison. Also, studying the relationship between identity status and

social comparison at younger ages could be beneficial, as more people are expected to be assigned to moratorium at younger ages.

Lastly, as the thematic analysis conducted in study I could have been influenced by coder preconceptions and pre-understandings, five coders were involved in the coding process in order to ensure validity. Furthermore, inter-rater reliability was tested on a large portion of the sample with good results. Using a data-driven thematic analysis, as was done in study I, yields deeper knowledge and broadens our understanding of ethnic identity, as the participants themselves determined what ethnicity-related experiences were particularly important for them.

Ethical Considerations

Although ethical considerations for the two studies were carefully taken into account and reviewed before conducting the studies based on the Swedish Ethical Review Act (SFS 2003:460), Personal Data Act (SFS 1998:204) and Ethical Standards derived from the American Psychological Association (see, APA, 2002), which require researchers to adapt high ethical ideals, there are some ethical issues that warrant further discussion.

With the responsibility as a researcher to do good and avoid to do harm, there are always potential risks that participants may be exposed to (Alderson & Morrow, 2011; APA, 2002). For example, since both studies in this thesis included questions about the participants' lives, thoughts, and feelings, this could create discomfort for some participants. Therefore, the participants were carefully informed about the aims of the studies and how data would be stored and archived before giving their informed consent. It was emphasized that participation in the studies was voluntary, that the participants had the right to avoid question they did not feel comfortable answering, and that they could withdraw from participation at any time. Also, using broad questions that can be answered in many different ways, as was

done in both studies, where a narrative prompt was used in study I and the semi-structured Identity Status Interview (Marcia et al., 1993) was used in study II, allowed the participants to tell their stories as they wanted to tell them.

In addition, the background questions used in study I, for example, to collect information about gender and ethnicity, were open-ended, allowing the participants themselves to define their gender and ethnicity. By giving the participants the possibility for self-definition limits the risk of only using narrow categories of, for example gender and ethnicity, which could reinforce stereotypical notions of differences. However, due to analytical restrictions, we ended up categorizing the self-definitions and categorizing the participants as either having an immigrant background or not in the analysis. This issue has previously been discussed in this thesis, and it is an issue that is important to put emphasis on. In a society where ethnic groups often are increasingly positioned against each other, where you might be considered either an immigrant or a Swede, it is particularly important for us researchers to reflect on what effects our categorizations of participants' ethnicity, gender etc. may have and the signals we send when conducting and presenting our research. Similar issues can be found in study II, where searching for gender differences risk reinforcing stereotypical gender role norms, even though our findings add to the notion that there are more similarities than differences between women and men in general in psychological research (Hyde, 2005).

Another issue that requires discussion concerns protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of participants. Although study I was anonymous and we carefully masked any possible identifiable information when selecting the quotes presented, there is still a small risk that someone might recognize their own phrases. Study II on the other hand, being part of a longitudinal project, relied on personal data in order to get in contact with the

participants. Therefore, great measures have been taken to ensure that data is handled in accordance with Swedish law (SFS 1998:204) in that all personal data is kept separate from other data where possible identifiers have been removed. Also, all coders were blind to individual data from previous waves and we tried to make sure that the interviewer had not met the participant in a prior wave of data collection, as that could risk influencing both the interview and the subsequent coding.

In sum, although there were potential risks for the participants caused by the two studies, our belief is that the beneficence was greater and outweighed these risks due to the measures taken in both planning and conducting the two studies.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of the two studies included in this thesis reflect some of the complex aspects of identity. Study I indicated issues of otherness and segregation in the ethnicity-related experiences young people in Sweden encountered in their everyday lives, which may play an important role in these young people's identity formation. In addition, we found indications that ethnic identity was a particularly pronounced identity domain for women with an immigrant background. Study II explored identity status among young adults in Sweden, where it was found that most people in their thirties had made identity-defining commitments in important areas of life concerning work and family. Although there were more similarities than differences between women and men, women had explored more alternatives than had men when it came to aspects of occupation and parenthood. Overall, contradicting our expectations, the degree of social comparison orientation did not differ between identity statuses. There was one exception, however: individuals exploring alternatives in the parenthood domain engaged in more social comparison in pursuing identity-defining commitments concerning

issues of parenthood. As a whole, this thesis highlights the importance of applying an integrative approach to understanding identity in order to capture its complexity and multiple dimensions.

REFERENCES

Alderson, V., & Morrow, V. (2011). *The ethics of research with children and young people: A practical handbook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Alpert, L., Marsden, E., Szymanowski, K., & Lilgendahl, J. P. (2014, February). *Feeling different: The roles of social and personality factors in shaping self-defining stories of master narrative deviation experiences*. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Austin, TX.

American Psychological Association (APA, 2002). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct. *American Psychologist, 57,* 1060–1073. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.57.12.1060

Archer, S. L. (1989). Gender differences in identity development: issues of process, domain and timing. *Journal of Adolescence, 12*, 117-138. doi: 10.1016/0140-1971(89)90003-1

Arnett, J. J. (1999). Adolescent storm and stress, reconsidered. *American Psychologist, 54*, 317-326. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.54.5.317

Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, *55*, 469. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.55.5.469

Arnett, J. J. (2006). Emerging adulthood: Understanding the new way of coming of age. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 3–19). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Arnett, J. J. (2012). New horizons in research on emerging and young adulthood. In A. Both, S. L.Brown, N. S. Landale, W. D. Manning, & S. M. McHale (Eds.), *Early adulthood in a family context* (Vol. 2, pp. 231-244). New York, NY: Springer.

Arnett, J. J. (2015). Identity development from adolescence to emerging adulthood: What we know and (especially) don't know. In K. C. McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 53–64). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Azmitia, M. (2015). Reflections on the cultural lenses of identity development. In K. C. McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 286–296). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Azmitia, M., Syed, M., & Radmacher, K. (2008). On the intersection of personal and social identities: Introduction and evidence from a longitudinal study of emerging adults. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development, 2008*, 1-16. doi:10.1002/cd.212

Bauman, Z. (2001). *The individualized society*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Beck, U. (1992). *Risk society: Towards a new modernity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Bell, A. O. (Ed.). (1982). *The diary of Virginia Woolf* (Vol. 4). London, UK: Hogarth Press.

Berry, J. W., Westin, C., Virta, E., Vedder, P., Rooney, R., & Sang, D. (2006). Design of the study: Selecting societies of settlements and immigrant groups. In J. W. Berry, J. Phinney, D. L. Sam, & P. Vedder (Eds.), *Immigrant youth in cultural transition* (pp. 15–45). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Björnberg, U. (2002). Ideology and choice between work and care: Swedish family policy for working parents. *Critical Social Policy, 22*, 33-52. doi:10.1177/02610183020220010401

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*, 77-101. doi: 10.1037/1524-9220.5.1.40

Bourne, E. (1978). The state of research on ego identity: A review and appraisal. Part II. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence,* 7, 371–392. doi:10.1007/bf01537806

Bowleg, L. (2008). When black + lesbian + woman ≠ black lesbian woman: The methodological challenges of qualitative and quantitative intersectionality research. *Sex Roles, 59*, 312-325. doi:10.1007/s11199-008-9400-z

Buunk, A. P., & Gibbons, F. X. (2007). Social comparison: The end of a theory and the emergence of a field. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 102*, 3-21. doi:10.1016/j.obhdp.2006.09.007

Collins, W. A., Welsh, D. P., & Furman, W. (2009). Adolescent romantic relationships. *Annual Review of Psychology, 60*, 631-652. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163459

Côté, J. E. (2015). Identity formation research from a critical perspective: Is a social science developing? In K. C. McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 527–538). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Côté, J. E., & Allahar, A. L. (1994). *Generation on hold: Coming of age in the late twentieth century.* New York, NY: New York University Press.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review, 43*, 1241-1299. doi:10.2307/1229039

Cross, W. E., Jr., & Cross, T. B. (2008). Theory, research, and models. In S. Quintana & C. McKown (Eds.) *Handbook of race, racism, and child development.* (pp. 154-181). New Jersey, NJ: John Wiley and Sons.

Cole, E. R. (2009). Intersectionality and research in psychology. *American Psychologist*, *64*, 170. doi:10.1037/a0014564

de los Reyes, P. (2005). Det problematiska systerskapet: Om svenskhet och invandrarskap inom svensk genushistorisk forskning [The problematic sisterhood: On Swedishness and immigration status in Swedish gender research]. In P. de los Reyes, I. Molina, & D. Mulinari (Eds.), *Maktens (o)lika förklädnader: Kön, klass och etnicitet i det postkoloniala Sverige* [The different disguises of power: Gender, class and ethnicity in post-colonial Sweden] (pp. 31-48). Stockholm, Sweden: Atlas.

England, P. (2010). The gender revolution: Uneven and stalled. *Gender and Society, 24*, 149-166. doi:10.1177/0891243210361475

Erikson, E. H. (1950). *Childhood and society*. New York, NY: Norton.

Erikson, E. H. (1956). The Problem of Ego Identity. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association, 4*, 56-121. doi:10.1177/000306515600400104

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis.* New York, NY: Norton.

Erikson, E. H. (1980). *Identity and the life cycle*. New York, NY: Norton.

Ethical Review Act of 2003, 460 Swedish Law §§1-41. Available from http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-2003460-om-etikprovning-av-forskning-som_sfs-2003-460

European Institute of Gender Equality (2015). *Gender equality index and gender statistics*. Retrieved from http://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics

Fadjukoff, P., Pulkkinen, L., & Kokko, K. (2005). Identity processes in adulthood: Diverging domains. *Identity, 5*, 1-20. doi:10.1207/s1532706xid0501_1

Ferrer-Wreder, L., Trost, K., Lorente, C. C., & Mansoory, S. (2012). Personal and ethnic identity in Swedish adolescents and emerging adults. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 61–86. doi: 10.1002/cad.20022

Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations, 7*, 117-140. doi:10.1177/001872675400700202

Fivush, R., & Zaman, W. (2015). Gendered narrative voices: Sociocultural and feminist approaches to emerging identity in childhood and adolescence. In K. C. McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 33–52). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Frisén, A., Carlsson, J., & Wängqvist, M. (2014). "Doesn't everyone want that? It's just a given": Swedish 25-year-olds' thoughts and feelings about a future parenthood. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *29*, 67-88. doi:10.1177/0743558413502537

Frisén, A., & Wängqvist, M. (2011). Emerging adults in Sweden: Identity formation in the light of love, work and family. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 26, 200-221. doi:10.1177/0743558410376829

Furlong, A., & Cartmel, F. (1997). *Young people and social change: individualization and risk in late modernity*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

García Coll, C. T., & Marks, A. K. (Eds.). (2012). *The immigrant paradox in children and adolescents: Is Becoming an American a Developmental risk?* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Gerson, K. (2010). *The unfinished revolution: Coming of age in a new era of gender, work, and family*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Gibbons, F. X., & Buunk, B. P. (1999). Individual differences in social comparison: Development of a scale of social comparison orientation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *76*, 129-142. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.76.1.129

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Goossens, L. (2001). Global versus domain-specific statuses in identity research: A comparison of two self-report measures. *Journal of Adolescence, 24*, 681-699. doi:10.1006/jado.2001.0438

Grotevant, H. D., Thorbecke, W., & Meyer, M. L. (1982). An extension of Marcia's Identity Status Interview into the interpersonal domain. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 11*, 33-47. doi:10.1007/bf01537815

Hammack, P. L. (2008). Narrative and the cultural psychology of identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 12*, 222-247. doi:10.1177/1088868308316892

Hammack, P. L. (2011). *Narrative and the politics of identity: The cultural psychology of Israeli and Palestinian youth*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Hellström, A., & Nilsson, T. (2010). 'We Are the Good Guys': Ideological positioning of the nationalist party

Sverigedemokraterna in contemporary Swedish politics. *Ethnicities, 10*, 55-76. doi:10.1177/1468796809354214

Hesse, H. (1927/1975). *Steppenwolf* (Basil Creighton, Trans.). London, UK: Penguin Books.

Huddy, L. (2001). From social to political identity: A critical examination of social identity theory. *Political Psychology, 22*, 127-156.

Hyde, J. S. (2005). The gender similarities hypothesis. *American Psychologist, 60*, 581-592. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.60.6.581

Hylland Eriksen, T. (2004). *Rötter och fötter: Identitet i en föränderlig tid* [Roots and feet: Identity in a time of change]. Nora, Sweden: Nya Doxa.

Jespersen, K., Kroger, J., & Martinussen, M. (2013). Identity status and moral reasoning: A meta-analysis. *Identity, 13*, 266-280. doi:10.1080/15283488.2013.799472

Johansson, T., & Klinth, R. (2008). Caring fathers: The ideology of gender equality and masculine positions. *Men and Masculinities*, 11, 42–62. doi:10.1177/1097184X06291899.

Johansson, S., & Molina, I. (2005). Kön och ras i rumsliga identitetskonstruktioner [Gender and race in spatial identity constructions]. In P. de los Reyes, I. Molina, & D. Mulinari (Eds.), *Maktens (o)lika förklädnader: Kön, klass och etnicitet i det postkoloniala Sverige* [The different disguises of power: Gender, class and ethnicity in post-colonial Sweden] (pp. 263-284). Stockholm, Sweden: Atlas.

Johansson, T., & Olofsson, R. (2011). The art of becoming 'Swedish': Immigrant youth, school careers and life plans. *Ethnicities*, *11*, 184-201. doi:10.1177/1468796811398827

Kroger, J. (2007). Identity development: Adolescence through adulthood (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Kroger, J. (2015). Identity development through adulthood: The move toward "wholeness." In K. C. McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 65–80). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Kroger, J., & Marcia, J. E. (2011). The identity statuses: Origins, meanings, and interpretations. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research (Vol. 1, pp. 31-53)***.** New York, NY: Springer.

Kroger, J., Martinussen, M., & Marcia, J. E. (2010). Identity status change during adolescence and young adulthood: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Adolescence, 33*, 683-698. doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2009.11.002

Lalander, P., & Johansson, T. (2008). *Ungdomsgrupper i teori och praktik* [Youth groups in theory and practice] (3rd ed.). Lund, Sweden: Studentlitteratur.

Liedman, S-E. (1999). *Att se sig själv i andra: Om solidaritet* [To see yourself in others: About solidarity]. Stockholm, Sweden: Bonnier Essä.

Lillevoll, K. R., Kroger, J., & Martinussen, M. (2013). Identity status and locus of control: A meta-analysis. *Identity, 13*, 253-265. doi:10.1080/15283488.2013.799471

Marcia, J. E. (1966). Development and validation of ego-identity status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 3*, 551-558. doi:10.1037/h0023281

Marcia, J. E. (1993). The ego identity status approach to ego identity. In J. E. Marcia, A. S. Waterman, D. R. Matteson, S. L. Archer, & J. L. Orlofsky (Eds.), *Ego identity: A handbook for psychosocial research* (pp. 3-21). New York, NY: Springer.

Marcia, J. E. (2001). A commentary on Seth Schwartz's review of identity theory and research. *Identity, 1*, 59-65. doi:10.1207/S1532706XMARCIA

Marcia, J. E., Waterman, A. S., Mattesson, D. R., Archer, S. L., & Orlofsky, J. L. (Eds.). (1993). *Ego identity. A handbook for psychosocial research*. New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

McAdams, D. P. (1993). *The stories we live by: Personal myths and the making of the self*. New York, NY: Morrow.

McAdams, D. P. (2001). The psychology of life stories. *Review of General Psychology*, *5*, 100–122. doi: 10.1037/1089-2680.5.2.100

McAdams, D. P. (2011). Narrative identity. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (Vol. 1, pp. 99-115). New York, NY: Springer.

McAdams, D. P., & McLean, K. C. (2013). Narrative identity. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 22*, 233-238. doi:10.1177/0963721413475622

McAdams, D. P., & Zapata-Gietl, C. (2015). Three strands of identity development across the human life course: Reading Erik Erikson in full. In K. C. McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 81–94). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

McCall, L. (2005). The complexity of intersectionality. *Signs, 30*, 1771-1800. doi:10.1086/426800

Meier, A., & Allen, G. (2009). Romantic relationships from adolescence to young adulthood: Evidence from the national longitudinal study of adolescent health. *The Sociological Quarterly*, *50*, 308–335. doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.2009.01142.x

Mettee, D. R., & Smith, G. (1977). Social comparison and interpersonal attraction: The case for dissimilarity. In J. M. Suls & R. L. Miller (Eds.), *Social comparison processes: Theoretical and empirical perspectives* (pp. 69-101). Washington, DC: Hemisphere.

MIPEX (2011). *Migrant Integration Policy Index III*. Brussels: British Council and Migration Policy Group.

Motti-Stefanidi, F. (2015). Identity development in the context of the risk and resilience framework. In K. C. McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 472–489). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Pascoe, E. A., & Smart Richman, L. (2009). Perceived discrimination and health: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin*, *135*, 531. doi:10.1037/a0016059

Personal Data Act of 1998, 204 Swedish Law §§1-53. Available from http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/personuppgiftslag-1998204_sfs-1998-204

Phinney, J. S. (1990). Ethnic identity in adolescents and adults: Review of research. *Psychological Bulletin*, *108*, 499-514. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.108.3.499

Phinney, J. (1993). A three-stage model of ethnic identity development. In M. Bernal & G. Knight (Eds.), *Ethnic identity: Formation and transmission among Hispanics and other minorities* (pp. 61-79). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Phinney, J. S. (2000). Identity formation across cultures: The interaction of personal, societal, and historical change. *Human Development*, *43*, 27-31. doi:10.1159/000022653

Phinney, J. S. (2006). Ethnic identity exploration in emerging adulthood. In J. J. Arnett & J. L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adulthood:*

Coming of age in the 21st century (pp. 117–134). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Phinney, J. S., & Ong, A. D. (2007). Conceptualization and measurement of ethnic identity: Current status and future directions. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *54*, 271. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.54.3.271

Phinney, J. S., Ong, A., & Madden, T. (2000). Cultural values and intergenerational value discrepancies in immigrant and non-immigrant families. *Child Development*, *71*, 528-539. doi:10.1111/1467-8624.00162

Quintana, S. M. (2007). Racial and ethnic identity: Developmental perspectives and research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 54*, 259-270. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.54.3.259

Rivas-Drake, D., Syed, M., Umaña-Taylor, A. J., Markstrom, C., French, S., Schwartz, S. J., & Lee, R. M. (2014). Feeling good, happy, and proud: A meta-analysis of positive ethnic-racial affect and adjustment. *Child Development, 85*, 77-102. doi: 10.1111/cdev.12175'

Ryeng, M. S., Kroger, J., & Martinussen, M. (2013). Identity status and authoritarianism: A meta-analysis. *Identity, 13*, 242-252. doi:10.1080/15283488.2013.799434

Sam, D. L., & Berry, J. W. (2010). Acculturation: When individuals and groups of different cultural backgrounds meet. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *5*, 472–481. doi:10.1177/1745691610373075

Schwartz, S. J., Beyers, W., Luyckx, K., Soenens, B., Zamboanga, B. L., Forthun, L. F., . . . Waterman, A. S. (2011). Examining the light and dark sides of emerging adults' identity: A study of identity

status differences in positive and negative psychosocial functioning. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 40*, 839-859. doi:10.1007/s10964-010-9606-6

Schwartz, S. J., Luyckx, K., & Crocetti, E. (2015). What have we learned since Swhartz (2001)? A reappraisal of the field of identity development. In K. C. McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 539-561). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Smith, T. B., & Silva, L. (2011). Ethnic identity and personal well-being of people of color: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *58*, 42. doi: 10.1037/a0021528

Sommestad, L. (1997). Welfare state attitudes to the male breadwinning system: The United States and Sweden in comparative perspective. *International Review of Social History, 42*, 153-174. doi:10.1017/S0020859000114828

SOU (2005). *Det blågula glashuset – Strukturell diskriminering i Sverige* [The blue and yellow glasshouse – Structural discrimination in Sweden] (No. 2005:56). Stockholm, Sweden: Government Office .

Spears, R. (2011). Group identities: The social identity perspective. In J. S. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & L. V. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* (pp. 201-224). New York, NY: Springer New York.

Statistics Sweden (SCB, 2015a). [Interactive table of population statistics in Sweden 2015, Mean age first child]. Retrieved from http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se.

Statistics Sweden (SCB, 2015b). [Interactive table of population statistics in Sweden 2015, Employment]. Retrieved from http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se.

Statistics Sweden (SCB, 2015c). [Interactive table of population statistics in Sweden 2013, Swedish/Foreign background]. Retrieved from http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se

Statistics Sweden (SCB, 2015d). *Youths in Sweden*. Retrieved from http://www.sverigeisiffror.scb.se/hitta-statistik/sverige-i-siffror/manniskorna-i-sverige/ung-i-sverige/#7e9adb52-e7d8-4aae-88d0-f2df4b619e8a

Statistics Sweden (SCB, 2016a). *På tal om kvinnor och män. Lathund för jämställdhet 2016*. [Women and men in Sweden 2016. Facts and figures]. Retrieved from http://www.scb.se/en_/Finding-statistics/Publishing-calendar/Show-detailed-information/?publobjid=27674

Statistics Sweden (SCB, 2016b). *Från massutvandring till rekordinvandring* [From mass emigration to record immigration]. Retrieved from http://www.sverigeisiffror.scb.se/hitta-statistik/sverige-i-siffror/manniskorna-i-sverige/in-och-utvandring/

Stavrova, O., Fetchenhauer, D., & Schlösser, T. (2012). Cohabitation, gender, and happiness: A cross-cultural study in thirty countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 43, 1063–1081. doi:10.1177/0022022111419030.

Syed, M. (2010). Developing an integrated self: Academic and ethnic identities among ethnically diverse college students. *Developmental Psychology, 46*, 1590-1604. doi:10.1037/a0020738

Syed, M. (2015). Theoretical and methodological contributions of narrative psychology to ethnic identity research. In C. E. Santos & A. J. Umaña-Taylor (Eds.) *Studying ethnic identity: Methodological and conceptual approaches across disciplines*

(pp. 27-54). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Syed, M., & Azmitia, M. (2008). A narrative approach to ethnic identity in emerging adulthood: Bringing life to the identity status model. *Developmental Psychology, 44*, 1012-1027. doi:10.1037/0012-1649.44.4.1012

Syed, M., & Azmitia, M. (2010). Narrative and ethnic identity exploration: A longitudinal account of emerging adults' ethnicity-related experiences. *Developmental Psychology*, 46, 208-219. doi:10.1037/a0017825

Syed, M., & McLean, K. (2015). The future of identity development research: Reflections, tensions, and challenges. In K. McLeans & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 562-573). New York: Oxford University Press.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33-47). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Towns, A. (2002). Paradoxes of (in)equality: Something is rotten in the gender equal state of Sweden. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 37,157–180. doi:10.1177/0010836702037002975.

Umaña-Taylor, A. J., Quintana, S. M., Lee, R. M., Cross, W. E., Rivas-Drake, D., Schwartz, S. J., Syed, M., Yip, T., Seaton, E. (2014). Ethnic and racial identity revisited: An integrated conceptualization. *Child Development, 85*, 21-39. doi:10.1111/cdev.12196

Umebinyuo, I. (2015). *Questions for Ada*. Publisher: Author.

van Hoof, A. (1999). The identity status field re-reviewed: An update of unresolved and neglected issues with a view on some alternative

approaches. *Developmental Review, 19*, 497-556. doi: 10.1006/drev.1999.0484

Vedder, P., & Virta, E. (2005). Language, ethnic identity, and the adaptation of Turkish immigrant youth in the Netherlands and Sweden. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *29*, 317-337. doi: 10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.05.006

Virta, E., Sam, D. L., & Westin, C. (2004). Adolescents with Turkish background in Norway and Sweden: A comparative study of their psychological adaptation. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, *45*, 15-25. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9450.2004.00374.x

Vonnegut, K. (1982). *Deadeye Dick*. New York, NY: Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence.

Wigg, U. (2008). *Bryta upp och börja om: Berättelser om flyktingskap, skolgång och identitet* [Being up-rooted and starting over: Stories about being a refugee, schooling and identity] (Doctoral thesis, Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden). Retrieved from http://liu.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:133426/FULLTEXT02.pdf

Wikström, H. (2007). *(O)möjliga positioner: Familjer från Iran & postkoloniala reflektioner* [(Im)possible positions: Families from Iran & postcolonial reflections] (Doctoral thesis, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden). Retrieved from: https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/2077/10308/1/gupea_2077_10308_1.pdf

World Economic Forum (2015). *The global gender gap report 2015*. Retrieved from: http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/

World Value Survey. (WVS, 2015). Retrieved from http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp

Worrell, F.C. (2015). Culture as race/ethnicity. In K. McLeans & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 249-268). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Wängqvist, M., Carlsson, J., van der Lee, M., & Frisén, A. (2016). Identity development and romantic relationships in the late twenties. *Identity, 16*, 24-44. doi:10.1080/15283488.2015.1121819

APPENDIX

I. Gyberg, F., Frisén, A., Syed, M., Wängqvist, M., & Svensson, Y. (in press). "Another kind of Swede": Swedish Youth's Ethnic Identity Narratives. *Emerging Adulthood*.

II. Gyberg, F., & Frisén, A. (2016). *Identity status, gender, and social comparison among young adults*. Manuscript in preparation.