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Value differentiation and Self-Esteem among Majority and Immigrant Youth

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To cite:

Daniel, E., Boehnke, K., & Knafo-Noam, A. (2016). Value differentiation and adolescent self-esteem in three cultural groups. *Journal of Moral Education*, early view. doi: 10.1080/03057240.2016.1204273

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Acknowledgments.

The study was supported by a grant from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and from the Martin and Vivian Levin Center for the Normal and Psychopathological Development of the Child and the Adolescent to the first author.

We thank the adolescents for their participation in the study.

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Abstract

As they inhabit complex social worlds, adolescents often learn competing values, resulting in value differentiation, within-individual variability in value importance across contexts. But what are the implications of value differentiation across age groups and cultures? A study of 4,007 adolescents aged 11 to 18 ($M = 14.41$, $SD = 2.16$), of three Israeli groups (majority, former Soviet Union immigrants, Arabs) discovered negative relations between value differentiation and self-esteem, suggesting confusion may result from value incoherence. The relations were stronger among younger adolescents than older ones and were especially strong among younger first generation immigrant adolescents, pointing to the need to address the value differentiation of immigrant adolescents.

Key words: Values, value differentiation, self-esteem, adolescence, cross cultural psychology

Value differentiation and Self-Esteem among Majority and Immigrant Youth

Adolescents develop within complex environments, assuming multiple roles and taking part in a variety of contexts, such as the family and the school. Each context may promote a different system of expectations, norms, and values (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Moreover, in an increasingly multicultural environment (van Oudenhoven & Benet-Martinez, 2015), these contexts are likely to be embedded within specific cultural traditions (Navas, Rojas, Garcia, & Pumares, 2007). Cultural diversity increases the likelihood of variability in value influences, especially among minority group members (Daniel et al., 2012). An important but hitherto unanswered question is the role of value variability in psychological adjustment, specifically self-esteem. If value differentiation is related to self-esteem, this opens the door to interventions by educational practitioners aiming to support healthy value development that promotes psychological adjustment.

The current study investigated the role of disparities in value priorities across contexts (i.e. *value differentiation*) in the self-esteem of adolescents from three cultural groups in Israel: majority members, immigrants from the former Soviet Union (FSU), and Arab minority members. We hypothesized that value differentiation would be negatively related to self-esteem. We also hypothesized this relationship would decrease as adolescents mature and would differ between majority and minority group members. The research drew on a sample of 4,007 adolescents between the ages of 11 and 18.

Motivation for Self-Consistency

Value differentiation may be related to self-esteem because of the basic individual motivation for self-consistency. Individuals strive for consistency in their self-views, as this consistency supports a coherent perception of interactions and events. Self-

consistency also promotes constancy in an individual's behavior and, as a result, in the reactions of others to that individual (Swann et al., 2003). The lack of self-consistency is hypothesized to be related to reductions in psychological adjustment generally and self-esteem specifically. In line with this hypothesis, consistency in personality traits across roles has been linked to poor self-esteem, emotional and social adjustment, both concurrently and longitudinally (Campbell, Assanand & Di Paula, 2003; Constantino, Wilson & Horowitz, 2006; Diehl, & Hay, 2011; Fukushima, & Hosoe, 2011). Such relations have also been found in adolescents, with one study relating adolescents' lack of self-consistency to decreases in their emotional adjustment (Moksnes et al., 2012).

Although evidence supports a negative association of *personality* inconsistency and self-esteem (e.g. Campbell et al., 2003; Constantino et al., 2006), limited research has examined links between *value* inconsistency and self-esteem.

Value differentiation

Values are abstract concepts or beliefs, describing desirable end-states, which serve as guiding principles in people's lives (Schwartz, 1992). Values vary in importance among individuals and across cultures. Schwartz has identified ten universal values based on their motivational content. For example, conformity values describe the motivation to limit one's actions and urges in order to avoid violation of social expectations; benevolence values describe the motivation to care for the welfare of close others (Fontaine, Poortinga, Delbeke, & Schwartz, 2008).

Individuals learn to prioritize their values in a process that is directed by the surrounding social environment (Daniel, Hofmann-Toufigh, & Knafo, 2013; Schwartz, 2008). For that reason, values may be even more likely than personality traits to differ in importance across contexts. Adolescents often perceive socialization

agents' values to be different or even to conflict across contexts (Arunkumar, Midgley, & Urdan, 1999). For example, in one study, immigrant adolescents reported striking disparities between home and school values and ideas (Brown-Wright et al., 2013); in other studies, they have noted disparities between their cultural identities (Kiang & Harter, 2008; Schwartz, et al., 2015).

Given the disparity in values taught in different contexts, adolescents often rate values differently, based on their social roles and group memberships (Daniel et al., 2012; Salmivalli & Peets, 2009; Stelzl & Seligman, 2009). When operating in a given context, the relevant values will be activated (Markus & Kitayama, 2010). For example, adolescents may value achievement in the student context (Daniel et al., 2012) and put less emphasis on it elsewhere.

Value differentiation is the individual's level of diversity of value importance across contexts. Some adolescents report consistent values across contexts, while others report differences across contexts (Daniel et al., 2012). Increases found in value differentiation throughout adolescence have been attributed to cognitive gains that enable comparison between values across contexts (Daniel et al., 2012; Krettenauer, Murua, & Jia, 2016). In addition, higher value differentiation has been found among individuals who identify with multiple social contexts that are strikingly different (Daniel & Crabtree, 2014), such as immigrants (Daniel et al., 2012), than among those who identify with relatively homogenous social contexts.

Much like personality differentiation, we hypothesized that value differentiation would be associated with feelings of dissonance, confusion, and fragmentation (Krettenauer & Hertz, 2015; Stroink & Lalonde, 2009; Tyler et al., 2008). Existing studies have already established that individuals reporting an internal goal conflict are likely to experience negative mood states (Emmons & King, 1988). Inconsistencies

between a person's values and implicit goals have also been associated with reduced life satisfaction (Hofer, Chasiotis, & Campos, 2006).

Specifically, differentiation between the values internalized at different life contexts may be damaging for psychological adjustment. A dissonance between the home and the school belief systems has been associated with low self worth, and frequent self-deprecation (Arunkumar et al., 1999). Such tension can also be found between the values learned within private contexts, such as the family, and public contexts, such as the nation. For example, adolescents feeling disparities between the values of their parents and the general society have reported high levels of tension (Kennedy & MacNeela, 2014). By the same token, transnational adoptees who felt their receiving country's culture and their home culture are disparate were found more likely to show behavioral problems (Manzi, Ferrari, Rosanti, & Benet-Martinez, 2014). However, value disparities seem debilitating for majority and minority adolescents alike (Arunkumar et al., 1999; Brown-Wright et al., 2013).

The role of value differentiation in self-esteem may change during adolescence. Harter (2012) has demonstrated that personality inconsistency becomes less associated with self-esteem toward middle adolescence. In another study, middle adolescents learned to integrate contradicting traits and to tolerate differentiation without suffering confusion (Harter, Bresnick, Bouchey & Whitesell, 1997). Adolescents may gradually acquire a number of integration strategies that will lead to a reduction in the magnitude of the association between differentiation and self-esteem. They may identify with abstract traits, such as "flexible", that encompass the contextualized traits (Harter, 2012). They may also justify the differentiation rationally, thus reducing feelings of confusion. Last, they may identify principles that do not differentiate across contexts and identify with them, not with the differentiated

principles (Krettenauer & Hertz, 2015). All these strategies require metacognitive skills. As these develop during adolescence (Schneider, 2008), they are more likely to be accessible to older adolescents than younger ones. We therefore hypothesized that value differentiation will be more strongly related to self-esteem among younger adolescents than among older adolescents.

Value differentiation and Self-esteem across Cultures

Majority group members typically experience cultural environments that are less complex than those experienced by immigrants and minority members (Arunkumar et al., 1999; Tyler et al., 2008). They live in a relatively homogenous cultural environment, in which their multiple social contexts share characteristics such as religion, race, and socioeconomic status (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Roccas & Brewer, 2002). The school culture may even be experienced as an extension of the home culture (Arunkumar et al., 1999). Hence, they learn a relatively coherent set of cultural values across life contexts.

Immigrants and minority members rarely experience a comparable level of social consistency. Their socialization agents are embedded within a multicultural environment. The family, in many cases, is heavily influenced by the culture of origin. In contrast, the school often represents the majority culture (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Brown-Wright et al, 2013; Tyler, et al., 2008). In extreme cases, the school culture may devalue their origin culture (Arunkumar et al., 1999). First generation immigrants are especially likely to learn different values across contexts (Noels & Clément, 2015). They are exposed to the origin culture first-hand, before their immigration, and have the chance to establish cultural norms and values within that environment (Giguère, Lalonde, & Lou, 2010). Not surprisingly, then, in a recent

study, first generation immigrants reported higher levels of value differentiation than second generation immigrants (Daniel et al., 2012).

How does this cultural value diversity influence immigrant and minority adolescents' self-esteem? These adolescents may rationalize the differentiation in their value system: they may feel that self-inconsistency is a legitimate manifestation of life in an inconsistent world. In that case, they may find value inconsistency to be benign (Arthi, 2012; Provencher, 2011). Such rationalization of value differentiation has been suggested by at least one study to attenuate the associations between differentiation and self-esteem (Krettenauer & Hertz, 2015). If this is the case, immigrant and minority adolescents may show weaker relations between value differentiation and self-esteem than majority members.

Alternatively, value differentiation may be especially salient to immigrant and minority adolescents. Context specific values are likely to be activated when the individual is exposed to context specific environmental cues (Markus & Kitayama, 2010). Thus, when immigrant and minority adolescents transfer between social contexts, they are also likely to transfer between value priorities and, therefore, to become more aware of value discrepancies. As a result, immigrant and minority adolescents' feelings of confusion may increase, resulting in stronger relations between value differentiation and self-esteem for them than for majority group members. The association between value differentiation and self-esteem is also likely to be stronger among first generation immigrants than among the second generation. In addition, it is likely to be stronger among minority member who live in multicultural environments than among those who live in cultural enclaves. In both cases, the frequency of exposure to multiple values will influence the salience of value differentiation and its relations with self-esteem. Unfortunately, because of a

lack of empirical evidence, we were unable to form directional hypotheses on the effect of minority status on the relations between value differentiation and self-esteem.

The Current Study

We investigated value differentiation and self-esteem in a large cross-sectional sample of adolescents (ages 11-18). Given the age range of participants, the study is well positioned to examine the associations between the variables across the wide age range of early to late adolescence. The adolescents originate from three cultural groups in Israel: one majority group (Israeli majority) and two minority groups (diaspora FSU immigrants and a native minority group of Arab citizens of Israel). The groups differ in the level of environmental variety to which they are exposed. Majority Israelis typically learn the same dominant culture in both private and public contexts, including family, school and nation. Immigrants from the FSU, specifically first generation immigrants, may be exposed to FSU culture at home, but learn Israeli culture in the school and nation contexts. Arab citizens of Israel adolescents live in homogenous Arab villages and towns. They are exposed to the ethnic Arab culture within the family and school contexts. However, they may experience the Israeli majority culture within the public domain: national institutions, media, workplaces, etc. Given the differences between these three groups, the study is able to investigate the role of minority status in the association of differentiation and self-esteem.

Method

Procedure

Schools were randomly sampled from two major urban centers, in towns with a large percentage of immigrants, and in Arab towns and villages. Schools were approached by telephone, and 44 schools (56%) agreed to participate.

Questionnaires were distributed and explained by trained research assistants to all students whose parents consented to participation (over 99% of the students).

Majority adolescents answered the questionnaire in Hebrew. FSU immigrant adolescents answered it in the language in which they were more fluent, Russian or Hebrew. Arab adolescents answered the questionnaire in Arabic. The questionnaires were translated using translation and back translation procedures. The questionnaires were anonymous, and participation was voluntary. The study was approved by the ethical review board.

Participants

The research included 4,343 adolescents from the three cultural groups described above. Not included in the study were nine adolescents older than 18 years of age; 5% of the adolescents who were of different ethnic origin than the ones studied; and 3% of the adolescents who did not report their ethnic origin. Consequently, all analyses were conducted on $n = 4,007$ adolescents (analyses performed on the full sample yielded similar results to those reported below).

Majority Israelis ($n = 2,180$, mean age = 14.37, $SD = 2.12$, 53% females) are defined as those born in Israel, and whose parents did not immigrate to Israel as adults but may have immigrated as children. Majority Israelis represent 75.4% of the Israeli population (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), 2013). Their cultural values are similar in many respects to English speaking cultures (Schwartz, 2008). Because of the large percentage of immigrants in the overall population (33%, Israel CBS, 2008), people who immigrated decades ago are not considered immigrants (Knafo & Schwartz, 2001). Therefore, we define the adolescents whose parents immigrated as children as majority Israelis.

FSU immigrants to Israel ($n = 709$, mean age = 15.01, $SD = 2.10$, 45% females) are those who have immigrated from the Former Soviet Union themselves (first generation, 66%), or whose mother or father immigrated as an adult from the FSU (second generation, 34%). They are diaspora immigrants of Jewish descent. Most FSU immigrants, approximately 1 million, arrived in Israel after the fall of the Iron Curtain, typically since 1990 (Israel CBS, 2013). They are perceived by the society as home comers to the land of their ancestors and are supported institutionally in numerous ways, including being given immediate citizenship, social security and material support (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, Hoernczyk, & Schmitz, 2003; Titzmann, Silbereisen, Mesch, & Schmitt-Rodermund, 2011). Adolescent FSU immigrants learn in the same schools as majority members.

Arab citizens of Israel ($n = 1,119$, mean age = 14.17, $SD = 2.19$, 60% females) study in the Arab school system and speak Arabic as a first language. They include ethnic Palestinians who are citizens of Israel and whose families have typically been living in what is now the State of Israel since before its foundation. This minority group represents 21% of the Israeli population (Israel CBS, 2013). In line with the composition of the overall Arabic population, our sample includes Muslim (88%) and Christian (11%) adolescents. These groups hold cultural values similar in many respects to the Arabic-speaking Middle East (Schwartz, 2008). Both religious affiliations share the ethnic affiliation (Abu-Rayya & Abu-Rayya, 2009) and social position within the Israeli society. Arab citizens in Israel live mostly in homogenous Arab villages, towns or neighborhoods, and study in homogeneous Arab schools (Al-Haj, 1995). They maintain contact with the majority culture via interaction with national institutions, the media, the workplace, etc.

Measures

Value differentiation. We measured the importance of values in different life contexts using the Values in Context Questionnaire (VICQ) (Daniel et al., 2012). The VICQ adapts the Schwartz Value Survey to life contexts (Schwartz, 1992). Our participants described the importance of their values in three contexts: as a family member, a student, and an Israeli. Value items were rated using a 6-point scale, ranging from “*not at all important to me*” to “*very important to me.*”

To ensure the contexts were relevant to the lives of all adolescents, we measured the centrality of the family, the student, and the Israeli identity to the identity of each adolescent (for details of the measure, see Benish-Weisman, Daniel, & Knafo-Noam, 2015). Results indicated that although mean centrality of the three identities differed between groups, all identities scored higher than the middle of the scale (majority: $mean_{family} = 5.70, SD = .67, mean_{school} = 4.81, SD = 1.32, mean_{Israeli} = 5.48, SD = .96$; FSU immigrants: $mean_{family} = 5.46, SD = 1.01, mean_{school} = 4.50, SD = 1.42, mean_{Israeli} = 4.45, SD = 1.59$; Arab citizens: $mean_{family} = 5.56, SD = .94, mean_{school} = 5.28, SD = 1.12, mean_{Israeli} = 3.35, SD = 1.89$).

Following a pretest, we decided to reduce questionnaire demands by focusing on only four of the ten Schwartz (1992) value types described in his Theory of Universal Values. We wanted to incorporate all aspects of the values continuum, however, so we selected one value to represent each of the four ends of Schwartz’s two dimensions, selecting values most relevant to our hypotheses. Each value was assessed using three items. In the final questionnaire, the dimension of self-enhancement versus self-transcendence was represented by the values of achievement (items: capable, ambitious, successful) and benevolence (items: honest, helpful, forgiving), respectively. The dimension of conservation versus openness to change

was represented by the values of conformity (items: obedient, polite, self-disciplined) and self-direction (items: curious, creative, seeking freedom), respectively.

Each of the resulting 12 value items (three items testing each of the four values) was addressed repeatedly in each context. For example, the importance of the self-direction item “creativity” was assessed in the family, school, and Israeli contexts using the following: "as a family member, it is important to me to be creative", "as a student, it is important to me to be creative" and "as an Israeli, it is important to me to be creative". All items pointing to a single context were presented on the same page, and the different contexts were presented on different pages, to minimize comparison of answers to the same value item across contexts. Thus, first page might have included items measuring the importance of achievement, benevolence, conformity and self-direction values within the family context. The second page would then include items measuring the importance of the same values in another context, such as the school context. The order of the contexts, as well as the order of the value items within the contexts, was balanced across participants.

We averaged the importance assigned to the three items measuring the same value in a specific context to create a scale. The results were controlled for scale use by centering on the individual’s mean answer in the context, as recommended by Schwartz (1992).

Value differentiation was calculated as the standard deviation of the mean contextualized values (scores calculated in the previous step) across the three contexts. For example, we calculated the standard deviation of achievement values based on the variability among achievement scores in the contexts of family member, student, and Israeli. Higher variance in the values represented a more differentiated value system. The standard deviation across the contexts in each one of four values of

achievement, benevolence, self-direction and conformity, were averaged to form the value differentiation score (Cronbach's $\alpha = .83$). In a confirmatory factor analysis, the groups did not differ significantly in the structure of the differentiation variable, $CFI d = .002$, meeting the CFI difference test criteria of .01 (Byrne, 2009). We therefore regarded the value differentiation variable as similarly structured across groups.

Positive self-esteem (PSE). The five positive items of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1989) measured self-worth as the positivity of one's regard for oneself (Cronbach's $\alpha = .81$), for example: "I take a positive attitude toward myself". We chose to use all five positive items, as these were shown to be equivalent in meaning across cultures, making them useful for cross-cultural studies (Schmitt & Allik, 2005). Items were rated using a 7-point scale, ranging from "highly disagree" to "highly agree". Using confirmatory factor analysis, we found the cultural groups did not differ significantly in the structure of self-esteem, $CFI d = .002$. We therefore regarded the self-esteem variable as similarly structured across groups.

Results

Missing Values Treatment and Analysis Plan

The percentage of missing values was 7% and the $MCAR$ test was significant, $\chi^2(9) = 128.76, p = .01$ (Little, 1988). Therefore, we carried out multiple imputation using SPSS 20, and all further analyses were conducted on ten imputed files.

We tested our hypotheses using a hierarchical multiple regression model. First, we centered value differentiation and age to control for multicollinearity. The culture variable was dummy coded, separately contrasting the first generation FSU immigrants, second generation FSU immigrants, and Arab adolescents to the reference group of majority Israeli adolescents. Second, we used value differentiation and the moderators, age and culture, to predict self-esteem. Third, we added the two-

way interaction terms between value differentiation and age, value differentiation and culture, and age and culture to the model. Last, we included the three way interactions between the variables.

Preliminary Analyses

Descriptive statistics and correlations between the study variables are presented in Table 1. As the table shows, in line with past studies on adolescents, we found value differentiation positively related to age (Daniel et al., 2012; Krettenauer et al., 2016). As hypothesized, we found value differentiation negatively related to self-esteem.

We ran preliminary regression analyses in which gender did not significantly predict self-esteem, nor did it interact with age, value differentiation or both to predict self-esteem. Gender was therefore excluded from future analyses. In another preliminary analysis, Muslim and Christian religious affiliation did not interact with value differentiation in predicting self-esteem. Moreover, the variable coding Arab group membership did not interact with value differentiation in predicting self-esteem. To keep the model parsimonious, we dropped the nonsignificant two-way and three way interaction terms and ran a reduced model. The results of this latter model will be reported hereinafter.

In a last set of preliminary regression analyses, we conducted analyses controlling for the personal value importance (Baird, Le, & Lucas, 2006). To do so, we constructed a value differentiation score net of value importance: we predicted the value specific standard deviation across contexts by the importance of the relevant value (measured across contexts) and saved the residual standard deviation. We then computed the average residual standard deviation across values, that is, the new value

differentiation score. We conducted the analyses using this value differentiation score; the results were identical to those found without controlling for value importance.

Hierarchical Model

As hypothesized, value differentiation was negatively related to self-esteem, $b = -.48$, $p < .001$ (Table 2). Adolescents who showed more diversity within their values reported lower levels of self-esteem. Age was also negatively related to self-esteem, $b = -.03$, $p < .001$. First generation and second generation immigrants, as well as Arab adolescents, reported lower self-esteem than majority members $b = -.21$, $p = .003$; $b = -.19$, $p = .035$; $b = -.13$, $p < .001$, respectively.

In line with the second hypothesis, age moderated the relations between value differentiation and self-esteem $b = .05$, $p < .001$. Unstandardized beta weights were used to plot self-esteem levels at high and low levels of value differentiation and age (Figure 1). We calculated the slope for each line and tested for significance (Aiken & West, 1991; Holmbeck, 2002). Value differentiation was significantly and negatively related to self-esteem for both younger and older adolescents, but with different slopes: $b = -.63$, $p = .001$ among younger adolescents ($-1 SD$: age = 11.87), and $b = -.38$, $p = .001$ among older adolescents ($+1 SD$: age = 17.00). In other words, the relations between value differentiation and self-esteem were more prominent among younger adolescents than among older ones.

First generation immigration, but not second generation immigration, was a significant moderator of the relations between value differentiation and self-esteem, $b = -.36$, $p = .02$; $b = -.23$, $p = .25$, first and second generation respectively. When we probed the interaction more closely, we discovered a significant three way interaction between value differentiation, age and first generation immigrant adolescents, $b = .19$, $p = .02$. Again, the slope for each line was calculated and tested for significance

(Aiken & West, 1991; Holmbeck, 2002). The simple slopes of the interaction indicated that among young adolescent immigrants from the FSU, value differentiation was most strongly related to self-esteem, $b = -1.23$, $p < .001$, more than among young adolescent majority members, $b = -.61$, $p < .001$, or older adolescent immigrants and majority members, $b = -.33$, $p = .001$; $b = -.38$, $p < .001$, respectively. We did not find a significant three way interaction between value differentiation, age, and second generation immigrant adolescents, $b = .11$, $p = .29$.

As previously reported, Arab membership was not a significant moderator of the relations between value differentiation and self-esteem. Like the reference group of majority members, Arab adolescents showed a negative association between value differentiation and self-esteem.

Discussion

As we had hypothesized, we found value differentiation was negatively related to self-esteem. These relations were replicated across three cultural groups and across ages in adolescence. In addition, age moderated the magnitude but not the presence of the negative relations between value differentiation and self-esteem. Finally, first generation FSU immigration moderated the size of relations between value differentiation and self-esteem. First generation FSU immigrants, specifically younger FSU immigrants, showed stronger associations between the variables than any other group.

The study adds to our understanding of value differentiation. Previous studies established that individuals prioritize their values differently across their various life roles, with values frequently diverging across roles (Daniel et al., 2012; Krettenauer et al., 2016). Individuals are also known to display different levels of value differentiation, with some reporting a coherent set of values across contexts and

others reporting divergent values across contexts (Daniel et al., 2012; Krettenauer et al., 2016). The present study adds to this literature by establishing that value differentiation is negatively related to adolescents' self-esteem. Value priorities are part of an adolescent's identity (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004), and internal inconsistencies between values may pose a threat to the experience of internal integrity. Individuals strive for self-consistency (Swann et al., 2003), and a lack of such consistency may hamper well-being (e.g. Diehl, & Hay, 2011; Fukushima, & Hosoe, 2011). Our findings suggest inconsistencies in the value system are similarly detrimental for self-esteem.

Past studies have found associations between value priorities and well-being (Sagiv, Roccas, & Oppenheim-Weller, 2015; Sortheix, & Lonnqvist, 2014). In one study, benevolence and hedonism values were positively related to life satisfaction (Sortheix, & Lonnqvist, 2014). In another, the fit between the values of the individual and the environment was related to well-being (Sagiv et al., 2015). Based on the present research, we propose a third mechanism drives the values-well-being association: value consistency, a characteristic of the value system structure, is associated with self-esteem.

Development of the Relations between Value differentiation and Self-Esteem

According to cross-sectional studies, value differentiation increases during adolescence. Thus, as adolescents mature, they show more coherent values across roles (Daniel et al., 2012; Krettenauer et al., 2015). It has been suggested that adolescents develop the ability to compare self-aspects (Harter, 2012) and become increasingly aware of the shifting moral priorities under varying circumstances (Krettenauer et al., 2015). Our study illuminates another aspect of this developmental process: older adolescents tolerate value inconsistencies better than younger

adolescents and may perceive them as less confusing. This effect may be attributed to metacognitive developments during adolescence (Schneider, 2008), enabling the integration of conflicting attributes (Harter, 2012). For example, adolescents who can increasingly think in abstract terms may find meta-values that describe their values across contexts. They may also identify ideas they value across contexts, ones that are not differentiated (Harter, 2012; Krettenauer & Hertz, 2015).

Relations between Value differentiation and Self-Esteem across Cultures

The first generation FSU immigrants stood out from the rest of our participants in one respect: we found stronger negative relations between value differentiation and self-esteem for this group in general and among the younger adolescents of the group in particular. Like many other immigrant adolescents (Tyler et al., 2008), members of the FSU immigrant group are caught between the influences of the FSU culture in the family context and the majority culture in the school context (Brown-Wright et al., 2013). In line with the ecological model of development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), younger adolescents' experience of heterogeneous value influences, particularly those encountered by immigrants, may be associated with higher value differentiation and consequently, lower self-esteem (Arunkumar et al., 1999; Brown-Wright et al., 2013). Following this thinking, the present results suggest immigrant status increases the salience of value differentiation, a salience associated with reduced self-esteem. The results do not support the hypothesis that immigrant status makes value differentiation more easily rationalized and therefore more benign.

Although differences between values across contexts may be disadvantageous for self-esteem, the mere identification with multiple contexts has been found constructive (Benish-Weisman et al., 2015). Similarly, biculturalism, a strategy of including the culture of origin and the new culture in identity, may be constructive for

immigrant well-being (Nguyen, & Benet-Martinez, 2013). That said, biculturalism may be more constructive if the individual's identities are not experienced as highly differing or conflictual (Haritatos & Benet-Martínez, 2002; Manzi et al., 2014). The present study goes even farther by suggesting that value differentiation may be one form of bicultural identity disintegration that is harmful to immigrants' well-being.

Interestingly, the ethnic minority group studied here, Arab adolescents, did not show stronger relations between value differentiation and self-esteem than the majority group. Arab adolescents live in homogenous villages and towns (Al-Haj, 1995) and study in homogenous Arab schools. This relative lack of contact with the majority group may make value differentiation less salient, thereby reducing the relations with self-esteem. Based on the current study, we suggest frequent exposure to both cultures, not minority status, is likely to influence value differentiation-self-esteem relations.

Educational Implications

Educational practitioners could benefit from our findings that the value differentiation of young adolescent first generation immigrants is a risk factor in self-esteem. Our results complement the findings on the positive effects of biculturalism on well-being (Nguyen, & Benet-Martinez, 2013). They suggest that young adolescent immigrants may benefit from learning how to live in a multicultural world and hold a varied identity, while keeping a sense of internal consistency and coherence. We therefore suggest educational and counseling efforts should focus on assisting young adolescent immigrants to integrate their identity (Manzi et al., 2014) and on helping them acquire the metacognitive strategies that will make value differentiation benign. For example, educators and counselors might support adolescents by legitimizing value differentiation, highlighting flexibility as an

appreciated self-quality and identifying meta-values that integrate aspects of both cultures.

Strengths and Limitations

The study has several major methodological strengths. The samples were large and varied. The similar pattern of relations between value differentiation and self-esteem across three cultural groups supports the robustness of the findings. Moreover, by including two distinct minority groups residing in the same society, we were able to identify factors augmenting the negative association of value differentiation and self-esteem. Future studies should examine these factors in greater detail and replicate them in other societies.

The study employed questionnaires of values and self-esteem. Although self-report measures are vulnerable to social desirability and self-presentation issues, they provide an invaluable tool for research into individual differences (Blascovich, & Tomaka, 1991), because of their ability to address such inherently subjective constructs as self-esteem.

The interaction between value differentiation and age in the prediction of self-esteem suggests an important developmental process. As the process was investigated using a cross-sectional data set, future research could employ longitudinal designs to address this developmental pattern more directly.

Concluding Remarks

Because they live in complex social worlds, adolescents tend to develop differentiated value systems. As the preceding discussion makes clear, such value differentiation is frequently related to lower self-esteem, especially among younger adolescents. Those most at risk are young first generation immigrant adolescents.

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Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations between Study Variables

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	2	3
1. Value differentiation	.88	.49	.13**	-.26**
2. Age	14.41	2.16		-.10**
3. Self-esteem	6.15	1.01		

Note. * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$

Table 2.

Hierarchical Linear Regression Predicting Self-Esteem in Overall Sample

Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>
Value differentiation	-.51**	.03	-.48**	.03	-.48**	.03
Age	-.03**	.01	-.03**	.01	-.03**	.01
FSU membership first generation	-.20**	.07	-.20**	.07	-.21**	.07
FSU membership second generation	-.16	.09	-.18	.09	-.19*	.09
Arab membership	-.14**	.04	-.13**	.04	-.13**	.04
Value differentiation*Age			.06**	.01	.05**	.02
Value differentiation*First generation			-.13	.12	-.36*	.16
Value differentiation*Second generation			-.25	.19	-.23	.19
First generation*Age			-.02	.03	.01	.03
Second generation*Age			-.03	.04	-.04	.04

Value differentiation*Age*First generation		.19*	.08
Value differentiation*Age*Second generation		.11	.10
<hr/> R ²	.075	.082	.083
R ² Change		.008**	.002*
<hr/>			

Note. * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$;

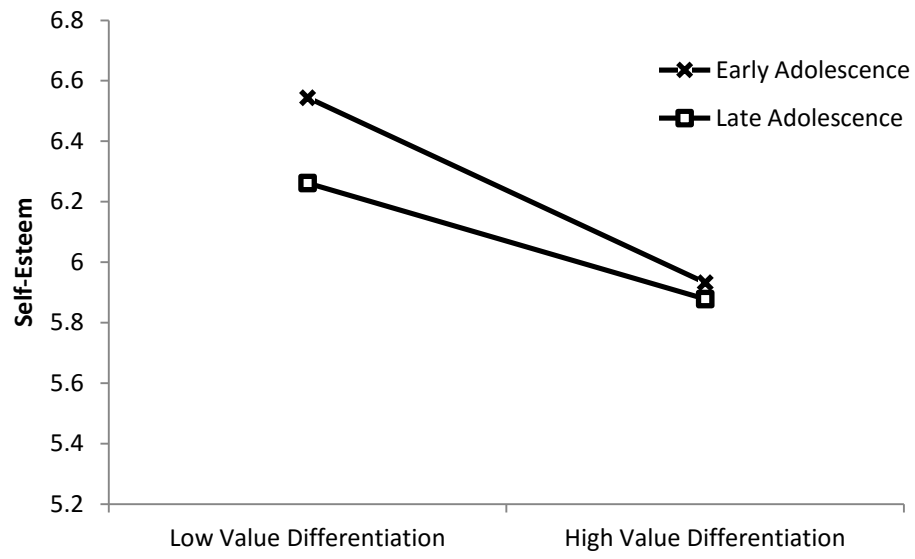


Figure 1.

Interaction between Value differentiation and Age in Predicting Self-Esteem