

Thematic session 3 Immigrant and minority adolescents

Group membership functions and perception of social integration-segregation in the development of deviant behaviour

Graziani A., Rubini M. and Palmonari A.
University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy

The role of different functions of group membership and the role of the perception of social integration-segregation are examined in a study on the development of deviant behaviour in adolescents informal peer groups. The analysis revealed the existence of seven functions of group membership: ingroup identification, self-insight and social understanding, intergroup competition and comparison, intragroup comparison, romantic involvement, leadership and cooperation. The groups highlighted different functions: members of deviant groups emphasised intergroup competition and comparison, non-deviant group members stressed self-insight and social understanding. Furthermore, deviance results to be related to the perception of social segregation in the social contexts: members of deviant groups perceive negative relations between themselves, their group and the adults of their environment (parents, teachers and police). Group membership functions are differently related to the perception of social integration-segregation: ingroup identification is correlated with a perception of social integration, while intergroup competition and comparison is correlated with a perception of social segregation.

Citizenship and identity: negotiation of difference and belonging by gypsy adolescents

Nata G. and Menezes I.
Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, Porto University, Portugal

The negotiation of identity/difference is a major challenge faced by democracy nowadays (Benhabib, 1996). In a previous study we considered how NGO's in Portugal in the area of minority rights conceive the discrimination faced by gypsy citizens. Results show a gap in the way the minority group problems are viewed and conceived by the majority society and the minority itself, with a strong connection of the latter between the problems of the gypsy community and quests for identity. In order to better understand this tension between citizenship and identity we used a focus group methodology with gypsy adolescents. Our goal is to explore how identity as a gypsy is constructed in a context of social discrimination, and how adolescents balance ethnic and social sense of belonging and identities.

How are YOU? Well-being and social support of immigrant and nonmigrant adolescents

Szigetvari E., Sirsch U. and Kiedler K.
University of Vienna, Austria

According to some past research adolescents growing up in an immigrant family experience less well-being and diminished mental health than teenagers from nonmigrant families. To get a closer look at this issue we applied an approach promoted by Diener (1984) according to which subjective well-being consists of two related but independent dimensions namely positive and negative affect. Furthermore we were interested in variables influencing the two aspects of well-being. Questionnaires designed to assess well-being, perceived social support, and worries were administered to 482 12-13-years-old adolescents living in Vienna (39.1 % female, 60.9 % male). The sample consisted of three language groups: host adolescents with German mother-tongue (37.1 %), and first and second generation immigrants with Serbo-Croatian (37.6 %), and Turkish (25.3 %) mother-tongues. Results indicated no differences between the three language groups regarding positive well-being. Turkish-speaking adolescents reported higher negative well-being than the German group but there were no such differences between host adolescents and the Serbo-Croatian group. Girls of all groups indicated higher negative and lower positive well-being. In general, worries of the adolescents predicted negative well-being and social support from family and friends was strongly associated with positive well-being.