

Identity and Life Satisfaction



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Plan

1. Introduction
2. Identity and psychological well-being
3. Identity and well-being: A conceptual model
4. Empirical verification of the conceptual model
5. Discussion and further research



Introduction

- Wide-ranging and extensive literature is available on identity theory and research.
- We focus on ethno-linguistic (or ethnic) identity, an aspect of group identity.
- Two key theorists have influenced research and approaches: Erikson (1968) and Tajfel (1981).



Introduction

Based on Erikson (1968) and Marcia (1966, 1980), Phinney (1989) proposes a three-stage identity process:

- a) Unexamined ethnic identity
- b) Ethnic identity search
- c) Achieved ethnic identity



Introduction

- Tajfel (1978,1981) and Tajfel and Turner (1986) proposed **social identity theory** (SIT).
- According to this theory, social identity is:
*“That part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from [their] **knowledge of [their] membership** [of] a social group (or group) together with the **value and emotional significance** attached to that membership.”*
(Tajfel 1981, p. 255)



Introduction

- According to SIT, social identity is constructed from the *social categorization* and *social comparison process*, and a person's search for a “positive psychological distinctiveness”.
- Social identity refers to “us”. Personal identity refers to “I”.



Introduction

- The group's association with a low status and negative attributes may promote low **self-esteem** or, conversely, high self-esteem.
- Different individual and group strategies are possible in the search for a positive identity.



Introduction

- Our approach is based on SIT but also other theories.
- Our approach focuses, not on stages, but on different types of ethno-linguistic socialization.
- “Achieved” ethnic identity (EI) results from the quantity and quality of this socialization.



Identity and psychological well-being

- Ethnic (or racial) identity has been measured in a variety of ways and associated with several aspects of **psychological well-being**.
 - **Self-esteem** (such as Abu-Rayya,2005; Phinney,1990,1995; Phinney and Chavira,1992; Phinney *et al.*, 1996, 1997; Martinez and Dukes, 1997; Carlson *et al.*, 2000; Roberts *et al.*,1999; Umana-Taylor, 2004; Umana-Taylor, Diversi and Fine 2002; Umana-Taylor and Shin, 2007)



Identity and psychological well-being

- **Life satisfaction** (such as Suzuki-Crumly and Hyers, 2004; Lieber *et al.*, 2001; Utsey *et al.*, 2002)
- **Self-confidence and sense of effectiveness** (such as Martinez and Dukes, 1997; Chavous *et al.*, 2003; Wigfield et Eccles, 1994; Phillips *et al.*, 1999)



Identity and psychological well-being

- **Strategies for adjusting to discrimination** (Yoo and Lee, 2005; Alvarez and Kimura, 2001; Phinney, Madden and Santos, 1998)
- **Coping with acculturative stress** (such as Phinney *et al.*, 2001; Liebkind *et al.*, 2004; Phinney and Kubatsu, 1997; Sellers *et al.*, 2003; Nesdale *et al.*, 1997; Dubow *et al.*, 2000)
- The results are not always constant (Noh *et al.*, 1999; Beiser and Hou, 2006; Hoggs, Abrams and Patel, 1987; White and Burke, 1987; Neto, 2001), and sometimes correlation is poor.



Identity and psychological well-being

- Few conceptual models
- Umana-Taylor, Bhanot and Shin (2006) recently verified a conceptual model showing the **role of the family as a determinant** in the development of ethnic identity.



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

Our model is based on three premises.

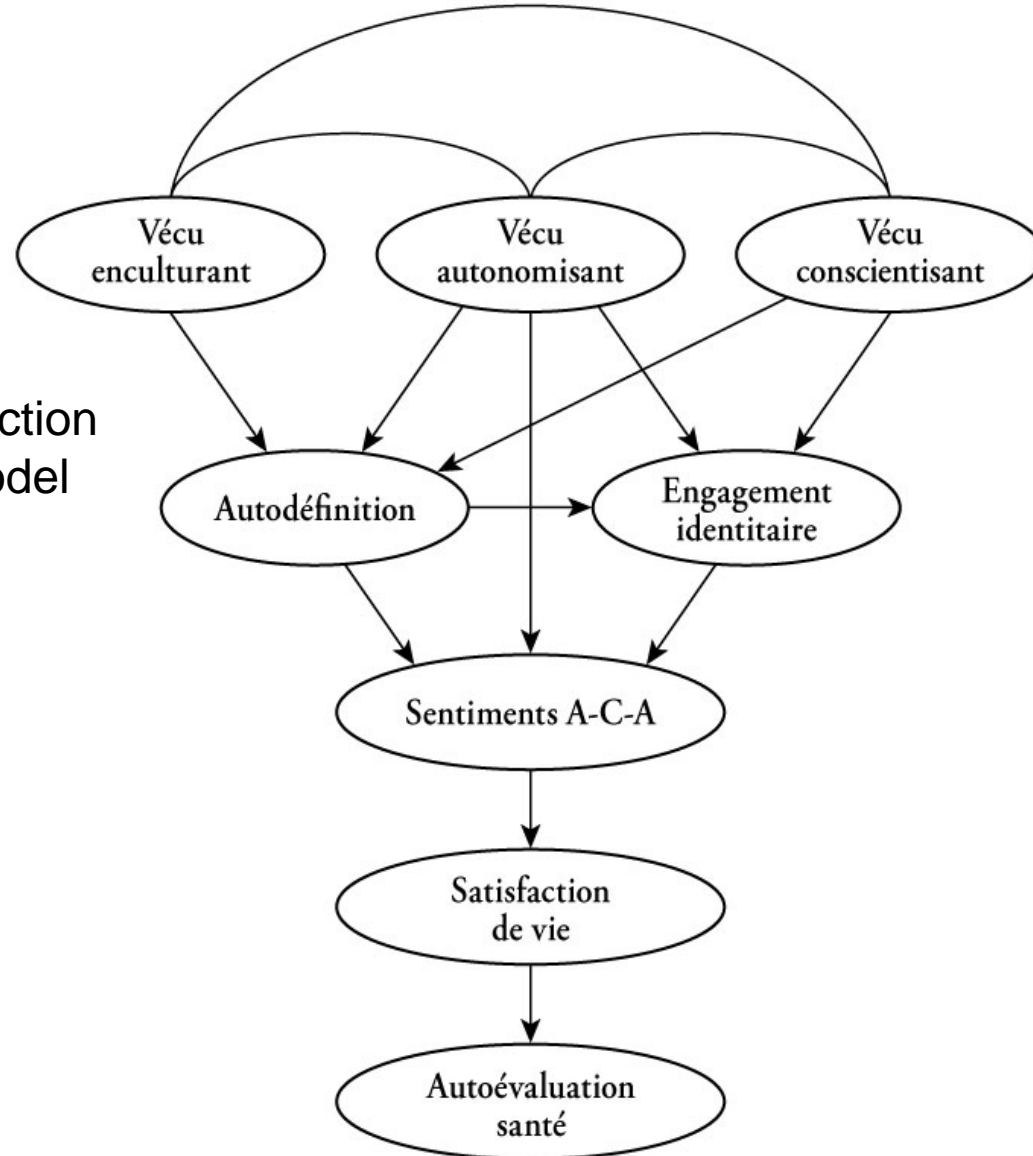
Identity construction:

- Involves a socialization process and a personal choice.
- Forms part of self-actualization and social integration processes.
- Contributes to the person's well-being when socialization supports the person's organismic tendency toward self-determination.



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

The Identity Construction and Well-being model (ICWB)



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

Three types of ethno-linguistic socialization:

- a) Enculturation
- b) Personal autonomization
- c) Conscientization (consciousness-raising experience)



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

Enculturation

- Quantity and frequency of contact
- Importance of private sphere or “socializing proximity”
- Learning of **norms** (social and behavioural rules)
- More or less conscious process
- Strongly tied to the vitality of the group



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

Personal autonomization

- Related to the **quality** of contact
- Fosters satisfaction of three basic needs (Deci and Ryan, 1985, 2000, 2002)
- Promotes behavioural autonomy and internalized motivation (Deveau, 2007)



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

Conscientization

- Related to the **quality** of contact
- Development of **group consciousness** and **critical consciousness** (Freire, 1983) with regard to social conditions related to legitimacy and stability of the group's vitality
- Promotes identity commitment and committed behaviour



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

Ethno-linguistic identity

- The individual seeks a positive social identity to nurture **self-esteem** (Tajfel and Turner, 1986).
- Ethno-linguistic identity is often defined as a “feeling of belonging to a group” (such as Clément, Gauthier et Noels, 1993).
- Answers the question “**Who am I?**” in terms of language and culture (such as Landry et Allard, 1990).



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

Can be measured based on the **degree of identification** with **different aspects**:
culture, language, ancestors, future,
education, ethnic group, or territory.
Example:

Based on my **culture** (how I think, how I act, my beliefs,
my values), I consider myself:

Non-Francophone ::::: Francophone



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

- This is the **self-definition** component.
- Does not fully measure identity as Tajfel (1981) defines it.
- Defining oneself as Francophone does not guarantee committed action as a Francophone (such as symbolic identity: Gans, 1978).



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

- Second component (Deveau, Landry and Allard, 2005): **Identity commitment**
- Comprises **three facets** of the evaluation and affective meaning of identity. **A single factor?**
 - **Self-categorization** (Turner *et al.*, 1987)
 - **Collective self-esteem** (Luthanen and Crocker, 1992)
 - **Affective commitment** (Ellemers, Ouwerkerk and Kortecas, 1999)



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

Basic feelings or senses:

Autonomy (De Charms, 1968) :

- to have one's behaviour emanate from the self

Belonging (Baumeister and Leary, 1995) :

- being valued and accepted

Competence (White, 1959) :

- to interact with the environment in an effective way



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

Life satisfaction:

- An index of psychological well-being often used in psychology
- Saturated on the same factor as self-esteem and absence of psychological problems: depression, anxiety and psychosomatic symptoms (Berry, Phinney, Sam and Vedder, 2006).

Health self-assessment:

- Physical and mental



Identity and well-being: A conceptual model

The model assumes that ethnic identity (EI) is **indirectly** related to life satisfaction.

Identity construction appears to be related to self-esteem and life satisfaction when it occurs in an empowering, consciousness-raising environment.



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Methodology

SAMPLE:

- 8,124 students (81% in Grade 11) from 30 Francophone school boards outside Quebec
- 53% girls, 47% boys (average age: 16.4)
- First language: French (75.5%), English (20.9%), other (3.7%)



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Methodology

Measurements:

Enculturation experience (private): 3 indicators of language spoken between ages 2 and 12:

- Immediate family (parents, brother(s), sister(s), grandparents)
- Friends
- Schoolmates
- **9-point scale:** 1 = Always English
5 = English and French equally
9 = Always French



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Methodology

Measurements:

Autonomization: 3 indicators (average scores) measuring support for self-determination since childhood, in three social contexts: family / relatives, courses at school, friends / acquaintances

- **Autonomy:** Encouraged to be own self; opportunities to make own decisions, allowed to make choices
- **Competence:** Encouraged when facing difficulties, explained why things are done, congratulated when successful
- **Belonging:** Warm and welcoming, interested in what the person does, shows appreciation
- **9-point scale:** 1 = Completely disagree
9 = Completely agree



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Methodology

Measurements:

Conscientization: 3 indicators (average scores on four questions each), measuring frequency of contact since childhood with surrounding individuals who:

1. value the French language and culture;
2. affirm their identity;
3. assert their rights.

- **9-point scale:**

1 = never, 5 = from time to time, 9 = very often



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Methodology

Measurements:

Identity: 3 indicators measuring self-definition, 3 indicators measuring identity commitment:

- **Self-definition:** Francophone identity score on a 9-point semantic differentiation scale (1 = non-Francophone, 9 = Francophone) from three perspectives: culture, language(s), ancestors
- **Identity commitment:** Average scores (4 questions each) for self-categorization, collective self-esteem and affective commitment
- **9-point scale:** 1 = Completely disagree
9 = Completely agree



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Methodology

Measurements:

ABC feelings or senses: 3 indicators made up of typical questions measuring each feeling or sense:

- **Autonomy:** Generally speaking, when I must learn or use French, it is because I choose to do so.
- **Belonging:** I feel supported in my relationships with Francophones around me.
- **Competence:** Generally speaking, when I must learn or use French, I feel competent.
- **9-point scale:** 1 = Completely disagree
9 = Completely agree



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Methodology

Measurements:

Life satisfaction: 3 out of 5 of the indicators on the Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin scale (1985):

- Generally speaking, my life closely reflects the objectives I set for myself.
- I am satisfied with my life.
- If I could change anything in my life, I would change almost nothing.
- **9-point scale:** 1 = Completely disagree, 9 = completely agree



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Methodology

Measurements:

Health self-assessment: 2 indicators:

Generally speaking, how do you assess ...

- Your physical health?
- Your mental health?

- **9-point scale:** 1 = Very poor, 9 = Very good



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Methodology

Procedure

- Questionnaires and tests were administered during two class periods over two days.
- Group administration
- The three feelings or senses, and ethno-linguistic identity, were measured on different days of the three language socialization experiences.



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Methodology

Analyses

Verification of the theoretical model by the structural equation method (EQS Software, Bentler et Wu, 1995)

- **Measurement component:**
 - Latent variables
 - Indicators
- **Structural component:**

Relationships among the latent variables specified in the model, and fit between the theoretical model and relationships and the variables observed



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Results

Table 1
Saturation of latent variables on indicators and errors

Latent variables	Degree of saturation	Perturbations	Error
Enculturation(private)	—		—
•Immediate family	0.81		0.59
•Friends	0.93		0.36
•Schoolmates	0.87		0.49
Autonomization	—		—
•Autonomy	0.87		0.48
•Belonging	0.92		0.39
•Competence	0.92		0.39
Conscientization	—		—
•Values	0.85		0.52
•Affirms	0.79		0.62
•Makes demands	0.81		0.59
Identity: Self-definition	—	0.73	—
•Culture	0.86		0.51
•Language(s)	0.81		0.69
•Ancestors	0.62		0.79



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Results

(Continued) Table 1
Saturation of latent variables on indicators and errors

Identity: Commitment		0.64	
•Self-categorization	0.93		0.37
•Collective self-esteem	0.94		0.34
•Affective commitment	0.86		0.61
Feelings		0.55	
•Autonomy	0.53		0.85
•Belonging	0.72		0.69
•Competence	0.71		0.70
Life satisfaction		0.90	
•Objectives	0.65		0.76
•Satisfied	0.86		0.51
•Change	0.71		0.70
Health self-assessment		0.69	
•Physical	0.58		0.81
•Mental	0.72		0.69



Empirical verification of the conceptual model

Results

ADJUSTMENT of the model*:

$X^2(216) = 3973,02, P < 0.001$

Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.95

Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) = 0.95

Root Mean-Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.058

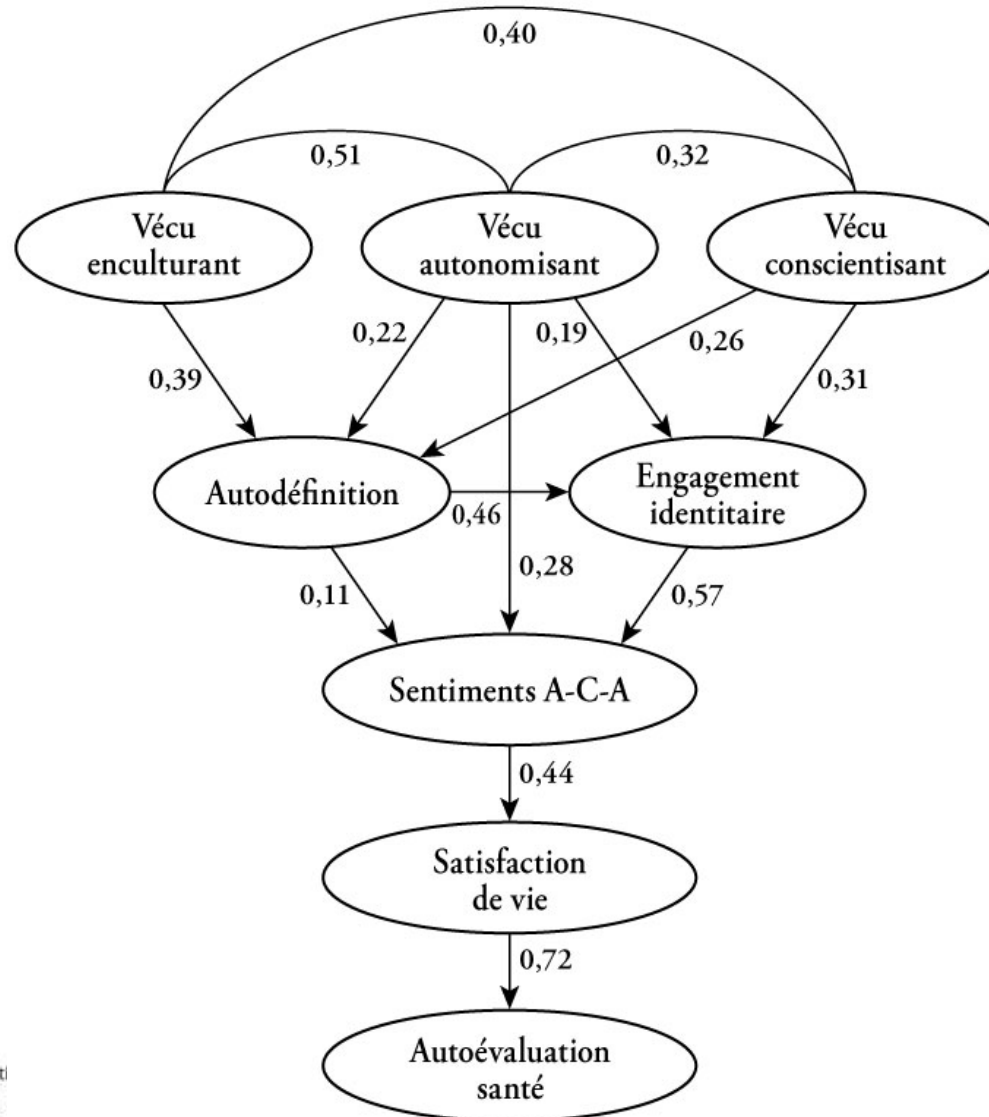
Confidence interval 90% of RMSEA (0.056 to 0.059)

* Another similar model: Add direct link between autonomization and life satisfaction (additional 1% of variance explained)



Empirical verification of conceptual model

Results



Empirical verification of conceptual model

Results

Variance explained: Endogenous variables

Self-definition = 47%

Identity commitment = 60%

ABC feelings = 70%

Life satisfaction = 19%

Health self-assessment = 52%



Discussion and further research

This exploratory study supports the theoretical model according to which ethno-linguistic identity...

- is the product of three types of ethno-linguistic socialization;
- mediates the link between experience and ABC feelings or senses;
- indirectly contributes to life satisfaction and health self-assessment through its relationship to feelings of self-determination.



Discussion and further research

- Private enculturation experience is related to self-definition, but only indirectly related to identity commitment.
- Autonomization and conscientization are related to the two components of identity.
- Identity commitment appears to depend more on the **quality** of enculturation than on the **quantity**.



Discussion and further research

- Self-definition relates positively to identity commitment, but both components relate separately to ABC feelings or senses.
- Identity commitment relates the most strongly to ABC feelings or senses.



Discussion and further research

- In accordance with the theory of self-determination (Deci and Ryan, 1985, 2000, 2002), personal autonomization relates to ABC feelings or senses independently of its relationship to identity.
- The three ABC feelings or senses reflect the person's organismic tendency toward self-determination. They relate to life satisfaction to a considerable degree, and indirectly to health self-assessment.



Discussion and further research

Further research

- Relationship to risk behaviour?
- Is “empowered” Anglophone identity among Francophones positively related to life satisfaction? (See Noels, Pon and Clément, 1996; Noels and Clément, 1996; Gaudet and Clément, 2004).
 - Clément model (1980, 1984):

Contact = Confidence = Psychological adjustment



Discussion and further research

Further research

- Is identification to both communities (**integration** acculturation profile based on the Berry model, 1984) positively related to life satisfaction and to **psychological** and **socio-cultural** adjustment?
 - Do relationships vary depending on **family structure**: endogamy, exogamy, and allogamy?

Which of the three ABC feelings or senses relate most strongly to life satisfaction and psychological adjustment?

