


Is There an Oppositional Culture Among Immigrant Adolescents in the Netherlands?

Youth & Society
2016, Vol. 48(2) 202–219
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DOI: 10.1177/0044118X13486901
yas.sagepub.com


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Abstract

This study examines oppositional culture among immigrant and majority adolescents in the Netherlands. Oppositional culture theory expects that immigrant adolescents would uphold positive attitudes towards education. The social exclusion theory predicts instead that immigrant adolescents develop an oppositional culture, particularly in ethnically concentrated schools. To test these ideas, we make use of one of the first large-scale studies on oppositional culture in the Netherlands, and in Europe more generally. Applying multilevel analyses to a survey across 340 schools among 11,215 adolescents aged 11 to 19, we find no clear evidence that immigrant adolescents support oppositional culture either more or less than majority adolescents. Results however showed that oppositional culture differs across schools and that in more ethnically concentrated schools, there is a higher tendency for ethnic minority adolescents to skip classes. Furthermore, oppositional culture finds more support among adolescents who are in a higher grade, male, and who attend a lower education track.

Keywords

immigrant children, second generation, school effects, oppositional culture, Netherlands

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Introduction

Ethnic disadvantage in school performance has been a topic of interest to scholars for many years. In the United States and Europe, researchers have shown that children of ethnic and racial minority groups perform less well in school than majority groups (Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008). In the United States, it is found that in particular African Americans have higher dropout rates and attain lower grades than do Whites (Kao & Thompson, 2003). In Europe, non-Western immigrant children are at a disadvantage (Heath et al. 2008), such as those with a Turkish ancestry (e.g., in Germany, Norway, Belgium, and the Netherlands), those with a Moroccan background (e.g., in Belgium, France, and the Netherlands), and those from Pakistani origin (in England and Wales).

One explanation for ethnic and racial differences in school performance has to do with attitudes towards school and oppositional behavior (Demagnet & Van Houtte, 2011; Ogbu 1991). It is well-known that beliefs like anti-school attitudes and low educational aspirations, as well as anti-school behavior, affect students' achievement (Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey, 1998). Less is known whether these attitudes and behavior differ across ethnic or racial groups. In the United States, many studies have focused on possible Black–White differences (e.g., Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey, 1998; Downey, 2008; Harris, 2008; Lundy & Firebaugh, 2005; Ogbu & Simons, 1998). In Europe, few studies have been done on such ethnic differences in anti-school attitudes and behavior (Luciak, 2004). The rapidly growing number of immigrants and their children makes it particularly interesting to study these processes in Europe (Hermans, 2004).

We investigate anti-school attitudes and behavior among adolescents in the Netherlands. We compare anti-school attitudes and behavior of immigrant adolescents to that of adolescents with a Dutch origin. More specifically, we study immigrant children who belong to the four largest “non-western” immigrants groups in Holland: Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, and Dutch Antilleans. Turkish and Moroccan male immigrants were recruited in the 1960s for low-skilled manual work in the Netherlands. When many become unemployed in the 1980s, most of them nevertheless remained and they were reunited with their wives and children. Virtually all Turks and Moroccans are Muslim, quite many of them have problems with speaking the Dutch language, and over 90 % of the Turkish and Moroccan immigrants and their children are married within the own immigrant group (Gijsberts & Dagevos, 2009).

Suriname and the Dutch Antilles were former Dutch colonies. A large group involuntary migrated to these countries, as slaves, and a substantial

group is dark skinned. Many people migrated (voluntary) from Suriname and the Antilles to the Netherlands from the 1970s onwards. The migrants from these countries are diverse in terms of religion (majority Christians, but also Muslims), many speak the Dutch language well at arrival, and endogamy rates are around 50 to 60 % (Gijsberts & Dagevos, 2009). On average, Surinamese and Dutch Antillean immigrants and their children are higher educated, more often employed and have higher status jobs than those with a Turkish or Moroccan origin.

In this study, we develop and test hypotheses about ethnic differences in anti-school attitudes and behavior in the Netherlands. We derive these hypotheses from two (largely alternative) theories, namely: oppositional culture theory and social exclusion theory.

Oppositional Culture Theory

The oppositional culture theory argues that *involuntary* minority groups, such as the Blacks in the United States, have been enslaved, colonized, or conquered, and as a result of this, members of these groups oppose dominant White institutions (Ogbu 1991; Ogbu & Simons, 1998). These minority groups have developed a separate system of behaviors considered appropriate for themselves; an oppositional cultural frame of reference. The most consequential expression of this oppositional culture is rejection of schooling. Groups that migrated *voluntary* and *majority* members are said to have more positive attitudes towards schooling. Voluntary minority groups compare their condition to that of relatives in the homelands, which is mostly a favorable comparison. Involuntary minority groups, on the other hand, lack a clear foreign reference group as a result of their involuntary incorporation in society, which leads them to compare their condition with that of the dominant group, which is not a favorable comparison. In the United States, where oppositional culture theory has received extensive attention, an ongoing debate exists about the theory's claims and merits. The key hypothesis tested is whether African Americans show stronger signs of oppositional culture than voluntary minority groups (such as Asian immigrants), and the dominant (White) group (e.g., Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey, 1998, 2002; Downey, 2008; Farkas, Lleras, & Maczuga, 2002; Fryer & Torelli, 2010; Harris, 2006, 2008; Lundy & Firebaugh, 2005).

Which predictions can be made with respect to adolescents from Turkey, Morocco, Suriname, and Dutch Antilles in the Netherlands? Following oppositional culture theory, one would classify the adolescents from Turkey, Morocco, Suriname, and the Dutch Antilles as voluntary immigrants. Their parents migrated voluntarily to the Netherlands, mostly

to improve their economic conditions, and they thereby resemble voluntary groups like the Asians in the United States. In both cases, the comparison to the situation in their country of origin is supposed to promote optimism. Consequently, oppositional culture theory would expect to see that the children of these voluntary migrant groups show signs of *optimism* regarding their chances in school and the returns to school investments, even more so than majority members do. The oppositional culture theory would thus predict that *compared to Dutch majority children, children of immigrants with a Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese, and Dutch Antillean origin will score lower on the key elements of oppositional culture* (Hypothesis 1).

Social Exclusion Theory

Contrary to the oppositional culture theory, there is an alternative line of reasoning, which we label as the *social exclusion theory* (cf., Demanet & Van Houtte, 2011; Hermans, 2004; Luciak, 2004). This theory emphasizes the role of perceived discrimination and exclusion. In the Netherlands, and in Europe more generally, children from non-Western origin are confronted with discrimination and exclusion. Children of immigrant parents, particularly those with a Turkish and Moroccan background, are confronted with discrimination in school and in the labor market (Dagevos, Nievers, Andriessen, & Boog, 2007; Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008). Many non-Western immigrant children perceive their chances in school and in the labor market as being hampered by discrimination (Dagevos et al., 2007; Veling et al., 2007). These children, born themselves in the Netherlands, perform less well in school and often drop-out from school prematurely (Kalmijn & Kraaykamp, 2003). Furthermore, they have higher unemployment rates and more often low-skilled work (Gijsberts & Dagevos, 2009).

Immigrant children, and in particular Turkish and Moroccan children, grow up in ethnically segregated neighborhoods (Gijsberts & Dagevos, 2009). Non-Western immigrant children tend to have predominantly coethnic ties, and this tendency is particularly strong among children from Turkish and Moroccan origin (Gijsberts & Dagevos, 2009). In addition, non-Western immigrants are negatively perceived by the majority population, in particular because of cultural differences (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007) and anti-Muslim sentiments (Coenders, Lubbers, Scheepers, & Verkuyten, 2008).

Previous studies have shown that perceived discrimination negatively affects the school outcomes of adolescents, as indicated by lower grades, increased chances of school dropout and lower levels of academic motivation

(Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, Bámaca, & Zeiders, 2009; DeGamo & Martinez, 2006; Eccles, Wong, & Peck, 2006). Given that perceptions of discrimination and exclusion are more prevalent among Turkish and Moroccan children than among Surinamese and Dutch Antillean children, the following testable hypothesis is derived: *compared to Dutch majority adolescents, Surinamese and Antillean adolescents will score higher on the key elements of oppositional culture, and Turkish and Moroccan pupils the highest (Hypothesis 2).*

Following the rationale of social exclusion theory, immigrant adolescents are more likely to develop anti-school attitudes and behavior at high ethnic concentration schools. Oppositional forces are based on beliefs and perceptions about inequality and marginalization, and these perceptions are developed by day-to-day conversations with significant others. Peers at school are significant others who play a critical role in the development of oppositional identities. When immigrant adolescents attend a school with many immigrant students, they are more likely to hear stories of ethnic discrimination than when they attend schools with few immigrant students. Second, a large group of minority students in school increases the pressure from minority members to behave in accordance with the oppositional cultural frame of reference. Therefore, it is expected that *the higher the percentage of immigrant children in school, the higher immigrant children will score on the key elements of oppositional culture (Hypothesis 3).*

Data, Measurement, and Method

Data

Data are from the National Survey of Students in the Netherlands (NSO), which was conducted in 1994, 1996, 1999, and 2001 [National Institute for Budget Information (NIBUD), 1994-2001]. The survey contains a broad collection of measures on pupils who are enrolled in secondary education in the Netherlands. Children go to secondary education in the Netherlands when they finish primary education, around the age of 12. The Dutch secondary school system is stratified, ranging from low to high tracks. For the collection of the data, invitations were sent to all secondary schools in the Netherlands. From among schools that responded positively, a selection based on region, school's religious denomination, educational level, and school grade was made to obtain a representative sample. To ensure a sufficient number of immigrant children, lower tracks and schools from the four largest cities were overrepresented. Written questionnaires were sent to the schools, where students had to fill in the questionnaire (self-completion).

Measures

Oppositional Culture. The measures that we used are quite similar to the ones used by Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey (1998). We study whether pupils report that *their education has not much value for future jobs*. For this measure, a 5-point scale was used (1 = *does not fit me at all*, 5 = *fits me completely*). As pointed out by Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey (1998), measuring “resistance to school” poses a special challenge. According to Mickelson (1990), measures of pupil’s attitudes regarding everyday events, so called *concrete* attitudes, are good predictors of school resistance. We analyzed these “concrete attitudes”, by using measures on whether a pupil indicates that he or she *goes to school reluctantly*, and whether he or she *believes the school system is too strict*. Both measures used a 5-point scale (1 = *does not fit me at all*, 5 = *fits me completely*).

According to Ogbu (1991), only looking at attitudinal indicators of resistance to school may be inadequate. In order to learn what minorities believe about how they get ahead in the host country, one should also find out what they actually do. What students do—their skills, habits, and styles—is also important for understanding resistance to school (Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey, 1998; Swindler, 1986). For the analyses of “skills, habits, and styles”, we used four measures. The first one was whether pupils *pay no attention in class* (1 = *does not fit me at all*, 5 = *fits me completely*). Secondly, we considered whether pupils *spend not much time on homework during a normal school week* (1/0). The third and fourth measures assessed *whether pupils have had a conflict with a teacher in the past 12 months or not* (1/0) and *whether they had skipped school once in the last month* (1/0).

National Origin. Immigrant children are, as is standard practice in the Netherlands, classified by the country of origin of their parents. Thus, a student is classified as a Turkish immigrant child, when at least one of his or her parents was born in Turkey. Also in line with common practice in the Netherlands, the child was assigned the national origin of the nonnative parent in case one of the parents was native-born Dutch and the other one not native-born Dutch. It should be noted that in our study, we focus only on four larger non-Western immigrant groups (i.e., Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, Antilleans), and we are therefore not able to generalize our conclusions to other (Western) immigrant groups, for which samples sizes are too small. We include a dummy variable for mixed marriages, i.e., marriages between an immigrant parent and a nonimmigrant parent (around 22% of the sample, see Table 1). The very small group of respondents whose parents were both immigrant but from different origins were left out of the analyses. Note that third generation

Table 1. Range, Means and Standard Deviations for All Variables Used in the Analysis: Secondary School Pupils, 1994-2001.

Variable name	Range	Mean total sample	Mean immigrants only
Dependent variables:			
<i>Perceptions of future opportunity</i>			
Education has no value for future jobs	1-5	1.89	1.90
<i>Resistance to school</i>	1-5	2.22	2.27
<i>Concrete attitudes</i>			
Going to school reluctantly; school system too strict for me	1-5	2.65	2.67
<i>Skills, habits, styles</i>			
No attention in class	1-5	2.65	2.66
Spend not much time on homework	0/1	0.50	0.51
Skipping school last months	0/1	0.23	0.25
Conflict with a teacher last 12 months	0/1	0.35	0.36
Independent variables:			
<i>National origin</i>			
Dutch majority	0/1	0.52	—
Caribbean	0/1	0.09	0.18
Turkish	0/1	0.06	0.12
Moroccan	0/1	0.06	0.14
Other origin	0/1	0.27	0.56
Father unemployed	0/1	0.12	0.21
<i>Ethnic concentration at school (%)</i>			
0-5	0/1	0.10	0.03
5-10	0/1	0.22	0.13
10-30	0/1	0.48	0.49
30-50	0/1	0.06	0.09
>50	0/1	0.14	0.26
Male	0/1	0.50	0.50
School grade	1-6	2.99	2.95
<i>Educational level</i>			
Lowest (VBO)	0/1	0.23	0.25
Low (MAVO)	0/1	0.25	0.26
Middle (HAVO)	0/1	0.21	0.20
Highest (VWO)	0/1	0.19	0.18
Bridge-level (Brugklas)	0/1	0.12	0.11
<i>Highest education parents</i>			
Primary education	0/1	0.04	0.06
Secondary education	0/1	0.42	0.33
Tertiary education	0/1	0.27	0.27
Don't know	0/1	0.27	0.34
Mixed marriage	0/1	0.22	0.46
Two-parent family	0/1	0.88	0.83
<i>Survey year</i>			
1994	0/1	0.27	0.25
1996	0/1	0.19	0.19
1999	0/1	0.31	0.32
2001	0/1	0.23	0.24

immigrant children cannot be identified in the data, but there were hardly any third generation immigrant children in the 1990s within the age category examined here.

The percentage of Dutch majority pupils (i.e., children whose parents were born in the Netherlands) in this data file was approximately 83. To obtain a more balanced sample, a random sample of 20 % was drawn from Dutch majority pupils. Since there were too few Antilleans, they were merged with the Surinamese pupils (“Caribbean” group). The final sample used for this research contained 11,215 pupils, of which 5,792 from Dutch origin, 983 Caribbean, 668 Turkish, and 729 Moroccan. The children are divided over 340 schools. It also contained 3,043 “other” minority pupils, included in the analyses for explorative purposes. We were unable to interpret the results for this group in more detail, as immigrant background was not recorded.

Ethnic Concentration. We used information on national origin available in the survey to construct an aggregated variable of the percentage of immigrant children at school. To capture possible nonlinear effects, we constructed the following dummy variables: 0% to 5%, 5% to 10% (reference group), 10% to 30%, 30 to 50, and >50%.

Control Variables. We controlled for the *Sex* of the respondent (1 = *male*), *School grade* (1-6) and *Educational level* of the pupil. The Netherlands works with a system with different education tracks. We differentiate between the lowest level (VBO), low (MAVO), high (HAVO), and highest (VWO). ‘Brugklas’ is a bridge-level in which children are placed the first one or two years of their secondary school education when it is not clear yet which level suits them best. We included the current *Unemployment situation of the father*. A dummy variable was constructed (1 = *worked 0 hours*, 0 = *1 hour or more*). Because of excessive missing information on parents occupation, this variable could not be controlled for. Furthermore, we controlled for *Highest education of the parents* (dummy variables for primary education, secondary education, tertiary education, and don’t know), and *Family type* (1 = *two-parent family*, 0 = *other type of family*). Lastly, we included dummy variables for the *Wave* of the survey (1994, 1996, 1999, 2001). We did not add age as a control variable, as it correlated too highly with school grade. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the variables included.

Method

Depending on the measurement of the outcome variables, this study used linear or logistic regression analyses. As the adolescents in this sample were

clustered in schools, these analyses were done in a multilevel design (with two levels and no random slopes), using the software package MLwiN. Taking the hierarchical structure of the data is important for estimating the correct standard errors. Inspection of the intra-class correlations (i.e., the variance at the school level as a percentage of the total variance) in the empty models (i.e., without any explanatory variables except the intercept) suggested that some aspects of oppositional culture vary more strongly across schools than other elements. Specifically, we find intra-class correlations going from 2% (going to school reluctantly), 3% (no attention in class), 4% (education has not value for future jobs), 6% (school system too strict), 8% (spend not much time on homework), 8.7% (skipping school), to 9.8% (conflict with teacher).

To compare our results as closely as possible with Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey (1998), which is the most comprehensive study on oppositional culture conducted in the United States, we follow their empirical strategy and study all dependent variables separately instead of using structural equation modeling (SEM). Another reason to follow their methodological strategy, is that Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey (1998) found differential effects, and by running separate regressions on different items of oppositional culture this can be more easily analyzed. For example, Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey (1998) found some evidence for the oppositional culture theory when they compared the “skills, habits and styles” of African Americans and Whites. However, contrary to the theory, African Americans reported more pro-school attitudes than White students. These opposing results underscore the idea that one should be careful in studying a single latent concept of “oppositional culture”, but rather needs to study their subdimensions, and preferably even specific items.

For each of the dependent variables, we assess gross differences across national origin groups in Model 1. Subsequently, we include additional variables (Model 2), and we run a separate model among immigrants only (Model 3), as Hypothesis 3 specifically concerns immigrant children.

Results

Table 2 shows that only the Moroccan group differs significantly from Dutch majority children on the value of education for future jobs. However, Model 2 indicates that this difference can be attributed to other factors, such as educational level and grade.

When it comes to concrete attitudes (Table 3a), there is no evidence for differences across origin groups. Students with a Caribbean and Moroccan background are no more likely to go to school reluctantly than Dutch majority

Table 2. Unstandardized Coefficients From Multilevel Linear Analyses on Perceptions of Future Opportunity: Secondary School Pupils, 1994-2001.

Independent variables	Education has no value for getting a job later on		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Caribbean	0.012	-0.027	0.000
Turkish	0.027	-0.026	0.002
Moroccan	0.127*	0.057	0.077
Other	-0.013	-0.031	0.011
Father unemployed		-0.005	0.008
Ethnic concentration (%):			
0-5		0.048	-0.018
10-30		-0.023	0.059
30-50		-0.006	0.033
>50		0.002	0.063
Male		0.067**	0.075*
School grade		0.026*	0.020
Education Level:			
Low (MAVO)		-0.094*	-0.138**
Middle (HAVO)		-0.324***	-0.401***
Highest (VWO)		-0.547***	-0.599***
Bridge-level (Brugklas)		-0.387***	-0.518***
Parent's highest education:			
Secondary		-0.037	0.040
Tertiary		-0.046	-0.031
Don't know		-0.041	-0.006
Mixed marriage		0.083~	0.090~
Two-parent family		-0.038	-0.029
Survey year:			
1996		-0.259***	-0.256***
1999		-0.211***	-0.159***
2001		-0.195***	-0.221***
Variance:			
σ^2	1.458	1.448	1.496
$\sigma\mu^2$	0.061	0.015	0.006

Note. For the dependent variable, a 5-point scale was used (1 = does not fit me at all, 5 = fits me completely). Model 1 and 2 are tested on the full sample, Model 3 on the immigrant sample. In Models 1 and 2, Dutch majority is the referent category. In Model 3, Caribbean is the referent category. The referent category for Minority concentration is 5-10%, for Level of education Lowest (VBO), for Parent's highest education 'Primary', and for Wave '1994'. ~ $p < .1$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$ (two-sided tests).

Table 3a. Unstandardized Coefficients From Multilevel Linear Analyses of Concrete Attitudes: Secondary School Pupils, 1994-2001.

Independent variables	Going to school reluctantly			School system too strict		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Caribbean	0.051	0.015	0.000	-0.005	-0.018	0.000
Turkish	-0.063	-0.125~	-0.128~	0.012	0.041	0.076
Moroccan	0.090	0.050	0.039	0.055	0.098	0.107
Other	0.104**	0.076	0.053	0.034	-0.003	0.013
Father unemployed		0.051	0.053		-0.043	-0.022
Ethnic concentration (%):						
0-5		-0.017	-0.002		0.122*	-0.063
10-30		0.050	0.095		-0.031	-0.121~
30-50		0.070	0.050		-0.022	-0.095
>50		0.013	0.042		-0.027	-0.095
Male		0.161***	0.142***		0.158***	0.069~
School grade		0.072***	0.065**		0.061***	0.082***
Educational level:						
Low (MAVO)		-0.003	-0.012		0.108**	0.022
Middle (HAVO)		-0.068*	-0.043		0.044	-0.036
Highest (VVO)		-0.181***	-0.125~		-0.080~	-0.091
Bridge-level (Brugklas)		-0.041	-0.153*		-0.128*	-0.185*
Parent's highest education:						
Secondary		-0.031	0.038		0.008	0.164*
Tertiary		-0.072	-0.006		-0.051	0.035
Don't know		-0.049	-0.016		-0.023	0.105
Mixed marriage		0.189***	0.008		0.086~	0.083~
Two-parent family		-0.108**	-0.064		-0.072~	-0.041
Survey year:						
1996		0.041	-0.010		0.210***	0.216***
1999		0.042	0.017		0.193***	0.197***
2001		0.189***	0.145*		-0.168***	-0.212***
Variance:						
σ^2	1.537	1.527	1.615	1.513	1.503	1.535
$\sigma\mu^2$	0.031	0.020	0.013	0.090	0.049	0.050

Note. For the dependent variables, a 5-point scale is used (1 = does not fit me at all, 5 = fits me completely). Model 1 and 2 are tested on the full sample, Model 3 on the immigrant sample. In Models 1 and 2, Dutch majority is the referent category. In Model 3, Caribbean is the referent category. The referent category for Minority concentration is 'Low', for Level of education Lowest (VBO), for Parent's highest education 'Primary', and for Wave '1994'. ~ $p < .1$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$ (two-sided tests).

students. There is some evidence that Turkish immigrant adolescents less often go to school reluctantly than majority students, but the effect is only marginally significant. On strictness of the school, no significant differences

were found between majority and immigrant pupils. The results on the skills, habits, and styles (Table 3b) revealed that in a model with only national origin (Model 1) none of the immigrant children paid significantly less attention in class than majority pupils.

We find national origin differences in the time students spend on homework. In the model with only national origin (Model 1) Moroccan pupils have higher odds to spend not much time on homework as majority pupils. A marginally significant difference was also found between Turkish and majority pupils. However, when other variables were introduced (Model 2), these differences disappeared. Only Caribbean pupils had higher odds of conflict with teachers than majority pupils, a difference which disappeared after including control variables.

Significant differences were found between Turkish pupils and majority pupils with respect to skipping school. Turkish pupils displayed higher odds to skip classes than majority pupils ($OR = 1.42$), a difference that remains after including control variables. In addition, controlling for other factors, Moroccan pupils also have higher odds to skip classes than their majority peers ($OR = 1.16$), though the difference is not significant at conventional levels. The group of "other" immigrant children equally appears to be more likely to skip classes than majority youth.

The third hypothesis stated that ethnic concentration in school would result in higher scores on the key elements of oppositional culture. Ethnic concentration did not seem to affect immigrant pupil's judgment of the value of education for future jobs (Table 2). Furthermore, no effects of coethnic concentration were found on concrete attitudes (Table 3a). As for the skills, habits, and styles (Table 3b), no significant effects were found on attention paid in class, time spent on homework and conflicts with teachers.

The results for skipping school, however, are quite close to expectations. In the full sample (Model 2), adolescents at the lowest ethnic concentration schools (i.e., 0-5%) were significantly less likely to skip school as compared to pupils at slightly higher (i.e., 5-10%, the reference group) and much higher (i.e., 30-50%) ethnic concentration schools. Although the effect of immigrant concentration is not linear, and not present at the most concentrated schools, the results do suggest a positive association between ethnic concentration and the odds of skipping school.

This study revealed several interesting results which concerned the control variables. Male students more often express oppositional attitudes and behavior than female students (Tables 2, 3a and 3b). Furthermore, the higher the grade pupils were in, the more oppositional attitudes and behavior students expressed. Significant differences were also found across education level; pupils who followed a higher level of education expressed less

Table 3b. Unstandardized Coefficients From Multilevel Linear and Logit Analyses of Skills, Habits and Styles: Secondary School Pupils, NSO 1994-2001.

Independent variable	No attention in class			Spend not much time on homework			Conflict with teacher			Skipping school		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Caribbean	0.000	-0.086~	0.000	0.114	0.041	0.000	0.201*	-0.032	0.000	0.001	-0.121	0.000
Turkish	0.041	-0.043	0.084	0.187~	-0.065	0.041	0.065	0.014	0.228	0.350**	0.390**	0.595***
Moroccan	0.183	0.031	0.130*	0.365**	0.119	0.183	0.118	0.118	0.269	0.044	0.151	0.260
Other	-0.046	-0.098*	0.003	-0.020	-0.095	-0.046	0.063	0.141~	0.009	0.169*	0.086	0.265*
Father unemployed	-0.154~	0.011	0.015	-0.113	-0.113	-0.154~		-0.054	-0.019		0.035	0.079
Ethnic concentration (%):												
0-5	-0.279	0.098*	0.149	-0.012	-0.012	-0.279		0.087	0.078		-0.248*	-0.405
10-30	0.086	0.034	0.049	0.086	0.086	0.086		0.062	0.013		0.036	0.106
30-50	0.108	0.084	0.102	0.172	0.108	0.108		0.326**	0.207		0.285*	0.468**
>50	0.059	0.029	0.039	0.088	0.088	0.059		0.128	0.173		0.075	0.159
Male	0.407***	0.016	-0.030	0.464***	0.407***	0.407***		0.010	-0.006		0.066	-0.018
School grade	-0.060~	0.067**	0.036	-0.033	-0.033	-0.060~		0.128***	0.137***		0.452***	0.402***
Level of education:												
Low (MAYO)	-0.500***	0.058~	0.090~	-0.492***	-0.492***	-0.500***		0.137~	0.236*		0.053	0.216~
Middle (HAVO)	-1.058***	-0.013	0.026	-1.043***	-1.043***	-1.058***		-0.249***	-0.186~		0.233**	0.394**
Highest (VWO)	-1.296***	-0.116**	-0.026	-1.285***	-1.285***	-1.296***		-0.539***	-0.499***		-0.086	0.067
Bridge-level (Bruggklas)	-0.747***	-0.090*	-0.099	-0.748***	-0.748***	-0.747***		-0.314***	-0.280*		-0.023	0.231

(continued)

Table 3b. (continued)

Independent variable	No attention in class			Spend not much time on homework			Conflict with teacher			Skipping school		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Parent's highest education:												
Secondary	-0.059	0.077	0.067	0.067	0.273*	0.105	0.408**	-0.068	0.149			
Tertiary	-0.029	0.064	0.068	0.068	0.275~	0.235~	0.453**	0.057	0.123			
Don't know	-0.011	0.088	0.181	0.181	0.392**	-0.056	0.138	-0.232~	-0.088			
Mixed marriage	0.160***	0.143***	0.182*	0.182*	0.167*	0.264***	0.258**	0.059	0.056			
Two-parent family	-0.116***	-0.120**	0.028	0.028	-0.009	-0.374***	-0.472***	-0.349***	-0.337***			
Survey year:												
1996	0.079*	0.019	0.089	0.089	0.084	0.303***	0.064	0.074	0.133			
1999	0.054~	-0.025	0.157*	0.157*	-0.005	0.350***	0.265**	0.241***	0.275*			
2001	0.340***	0.365***	0.371***	0.371***	0.155	0.339***	0.223*	0.688***	0.841***			
Variance:												
σ^2	0.099	1.142	1.233	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
σu^2	0.011	0.009	0.285	0.119	0.099	0.093	0.051	0.344	0.158	0.133	0.133	0.133

Note. "pays no attention in class" (1 = does not fit me at all, 5 = fits me completely); "spend not much time on homework" (1/0); "whether pupils have had a conflict with a teacher in the past twelve months" (1/0); "whether they had skipped school once in the last month." Model 1 and 2 are tested on the full sample, Model 3 on the immigrant sample. In Models 1 and 2, Dutch majority is the referent category. In Model 3, Caribbean is the referent category. The referent category for Minority concentration is 'Low', for Level of education Lowest (VBO), for Parent's highest education 'Primary', and for Wave '1994'. ~p < .1. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001 (two-sided tests).

oppositional attitudes and behavior. Mixed marriages and type of family also seemed to matter; pupils whose parents come from different national origins and pupils from families other than two-parent households expressed more oppositional attitudes and behavior. Lastly, significant differences were found between the survey years; with some exceptions, pupils who participated in more recent surveys showed to display more oppositional attitudes and behavior.

Discussion

We contributed to the literature by studying anti-school attitudes and behavior among adolescents in the Netherlands. It is one of the first studies which uses large-scale survey data to examine such oppositional patterns among adolescents in Europe (see also Demanet & Van Houtte, 2011, 2012). Applying multilevel analyses to a unique survey of 11,215 adolescents aged 11 to 19, conducted in 340 schools, we show that there is no clear evidence that non-Western immigrant adolescents in Holland develop either more or less strongly oppositional identities and behavior than Dutch majority adolescents. Thus, our results go against the highly discussed oppositional culture theory, which expects to see that immigrant children hold more pro-school attitudes and behavior than majority members. Our overall findings also question the alternative social exclusion hypothesis, as it appears that immigrant children do not develop an oppositional culture more so than Dutch majority adolescents. In line with processes of social exclusion, however, we do find that some immigrant groups skip classes more frequently, and that this is particularly happening in ethnically concentrated schools.

The various findings of our study are based on high quality, large-scale survey data, but some limitations of this study should be kept in mind. First, our study is based on the Netherlands, and it remains a question whether our results can be generalized to other European countries. Replication work is needed. Second, our data are based on self-reports, which could bias measurements. Preferably, further research supplements evidence from self-reported data with observations by teachers, parents, and researchers. Note that in this sense our study is not unique, as virtually all studies in this field have relied on self-reports of adolescents. Third, our study did not include direct measures of mediating concepts like “perceptions of discrimination” and “exclusion”, and follow-up research is encouraged to do so. At the same time, it should be noted that this omission is not so problematic, as the focus of this study is on ethnic group differences and previous studies showed that many ethnic minorities in the Netherlands feel discriminated against, and

think their chances in school are hampered by discrimination (Dagevos et al., 2007; Veling et al., 2007).

Several key findings of this study deserve further attention. We highlight two.

First, an interesting but unanticipated observation is that, rather than “national origin” or “ethnicity” being driving forces, oppositional identities and behavior seem to be more strongly related with gender, educational track, and school grade (i.e., age). Oppositional culture is more prevalent among males, those who attend lower educational tracks, and those who are in higher school grades (i.e., who are older). Possibly, adolescents who attend lower educational tracks are frustrated about their future chances, as their education prepares them for lower paid jobs. It seems of high importance to study whether not only in the Netherlands, but also in other European countries that have a stratified educational system, such stratified oppositional identities exist. Equally interesting is to study why oppositional forces rise with age. Perhaps, this has to do with children developing their own identity and distance themselves more from the rules imposed by institutions, such as the school.

Our finding that anti-school attitudes and behavior are more prevalent among boys is in line with earlier research in the United States (Lundy & Firebaugh, 2005) and in Belgium (Demanet & Van Houtte, 2011, 2012); higher levels of school misconduct among boys were also reported in the study by Demanet and Van Houtte (2011). Possibly, biopsychological differences might play a role, with boys engaging more often in risky and nonconformist behavior than girls (Van Houtte 2004). It could also be that as a result of socialization and peer pressure, boys are more often encouraged to distance themselves from typical female behavior. If boys gain status and popularity from such disobedient behavior, they are more likely to skip classes, not to make homework, and to oppose pro-school behavior in general (Lundy & Firebaugh, 2005; Van Houtte, 2004).

Second, this study finds support for a crucial behavioral element of oppositional culture, namely skipping classes. In line with the social exclusion hypothesis, Turkish and, to a lesser extent, also Moroccan adolescents have higher odds to skip school classes than native Dutch pupils. Skipping classes can have important effects for premature school dropout, and previous research has indeed shown that non-Western immigrant adolescents have a higher odds to drop out from school prematurely (Kalmijn & Kraaykamp, 2003). Interestingly, our study shows that the odds of skipping classes differ quite strongly across schools, and that for pupils in schools with a high percentage of immigrant students, the odds of skipping classes were higher. Possibly, non-Western immigrant children (who have a higher propensity of omitting classes) influence other children (both immigrant and majority

Dutch) within the same school. Further research could study such peer influence processes with dynamic data of friendship networks in schools.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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